

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BEDE C of E (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105251

Headteacher: Mr J Hatch

Reporting inspector: Dr B Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 14th - 17th January 2002

Inspection number: 198045

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Morris Green Lane Bolton
Postcode:	BL3 3LJ
Telephone number:	(01204) 61899
Fax number:	(01204) 61344
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr H Hirst
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23868	Dr B Blundell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1234	Mrs T Bradley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20348	Mrs M Marriott	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design	
24031	Mrs I Idle	Team inspector	Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30590	Mr P Tuttle	Team inspector	English Music	
11528	Mr M Wainwright	Team inspector	Science Geography Physical education	
20009	Mr D Cann	Team inspector	Spanish	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10 - 11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14 - 15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16 - 19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	20 - 34

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Bede Infant and Junior School is a school for boys and girls, aged 3 to 11, situated in Morris Green, Bolton. There are 404 pupils on roll, including 30 children in the Nursery. The ethnic background of the pupils is largely white with United Kingdom heritage, with a number of pupils having Pakistani, Indian, Chinese and Caribbean heritages. Thirty-one pupils have English as an additional language; the major languages spoken by these pupils include Punjabi, Gujarati, Urdu and Persian. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Whilst the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, the proportion with statements of special needs is average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes moderate learning difficulties, and emotional, behavioural and speech difficulties. Pupil mobility is relatively low overall, although in the 2001 cohort of pupils aged eleven, it was higher than average, being about 15 per cent. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards for pupils currently aged eleven are above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. The overall quality of teaching is good, and leadership and management are good.

The school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average for pupils aged seven and eleven.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good; the teaching of literacy skills is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall; relationships are very good.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for children in the Nursery is very good.

What could be improved

- The school lacks a dedicated play area for the under-fives; the accommodation in the reception classes is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment of pupils' work and its use to track pupils' progress in the foundation subjects, whilst improving, is in need of further development.
- A minority of lessons lack sufficient pace.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October, 1997. The overall quality of teaching has greatly improved. Standards in English and mathematics have improved. The key issue to raise standards in design and technology and history in the infant phase of the school has been met. The issue to raise standards in the junior phase in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education has been addressed. The key issue to improve assessment has been met well in literacy and numeracy, but has yet to be fully addressed in the foundation subjects. Teachers' planning has been developed appropriately and individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately in place. Resources are now good overall. There is an effective range of teaching styles. The provision for pupils' cultural development has been addressed and is now satisfactory. The school has improved well since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	C	C	A
Mathematics	A	C	D	C
Science	A	B	E	D

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

In the national tests in 2001 for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in English. Pupils' performance in mathematics was below average, and well below average in science. Compared with schools of a similar type, pupils' results were well above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 taken together, pupils have left St Bede's over half a term ahead of pupils nationally in English and mathematics and just ahead of the national average in science. Results at the end of the junior phase, up to 2001, rose at a similar rate to results nationally.

Standards attained by pupils aged 7 in 2001 were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. In the science teacher assessments, standards were above average. Compared to schools of a similar type, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading, average in writing and very high in mathematics, being in the top five per cent of similar schools nationally. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 taken together, pupils have left the infant phase over one term ahead of pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, and just ahead in writing. The school's targets are appropriately ambitious. In the work seen during the inspection, standards for pupils aged eleven were above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Standards for pupils aged seven were above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and average in science. For pupils aged seven and eleven, standards in design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), history, physical education, geography and art and design met national expectations; there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in music in the infant phase, but in the junior phase standards met national expectations. The majority of children aged five met the majority of the Early Learning Goals. (The Early Learning Goals are the nationally expected standards for children at the end of the Foundation Stage.) Pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards at this school are now sufficiently high.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classrooms, is good. However, there were isolated examples of unsatisfactory conduct, both in and out of the classrooms.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good; relationships are very good.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is good and above national averages. Unauthorised absence is broadly average.

Pupils are generally keen and enthusiastic. In an effective Year 5 assembly, pupils displayed exemplary attitudes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics throughout the school is good; the skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. Overall, teaching was excellent in six per cent of lessons, very good in 23 per cent, good in 30 per cent, satisfactory in 38 per cent and unsatisfactory in three per cent of lessons seen. Strengths in teaching include class management and teachers' knowledge and understanding. A weakness is the slow pace of a minority of lessons.

The school meets the needs of all its pupils well.

Particular strengths in pupils' learning include pupils' interest and concentration.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good; for their moral, social and cultural development, it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well.

The school works well in partnership with parents. A strength in the curricular opportunities offered to pupils is the provision of Spanish. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and senior management team are good and effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' fulfilment of their responsibilities is good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is good.
The strategic use of resources	The school's strategic use of resources is good.

Levels of staffing are good overall. Support staff are used well, although in some classes in the afternoons there are too few of them. The administrative officer and school secretaries help ensure the smooth running of the school. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and is well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Learning resources are good. A strength in leadership and management is the calibre of the senior management team.

The school applies the principles of best value well; as a cheque-book school, it ensures that its money is well spent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school sets high expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents are not happy with the level of homework. • Some parents would like to see a greater range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views; it finds the range of extra-curricular activities and levels of homework to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. **Children enter the school in the Nursery and then proceed to Reception. Shortly after they enter Reception,** they are assessed to see what they know, understand and can do; social and physical skills are also noted. This is known as the baseline test. The intake in 2001 was judged to be below average. An analysis of previous intakes shows these also to be below average.
2. **By the age of five, near to the end of their time in Reception,** children are again assessed against national standards known as the Early Learning Goals. The majority of the children currently in Reception should attain the majority of these goals.
3. **At the age of seven, close to the end of their time in Year 2,** pupils take the end of infant phase national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils who sat these tests in 2001 obtained levels that were well above national averages in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Their attainment when compared to schools of a similar type was well above average in reading, average in writing and very high in mathematics, being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Those who took the tests in 2000 attained standards that were also well above average in reading and mathematics; standards were above average in writing. Taking the results over the last three years from 1999 to 2001, averaged together, pupils' performance has been over one term ahead of national averages in reading and mathematics and just ahead in writing. In all three areas, boys and girls have performed at similar levels, although in mathematics girls were half a term ahead.
4. **Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 2, who will take their national tests in May, 2002, are reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and average standards in science. Standards in speaking and listening are good.** Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, history, design and technology, geography and physical education meet national expectations. There was too little evidence to judge standards in music.
5. **By the age of eleven, near to the end of Year 6,** pupils take the end of junior phase national tests in English, science and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 2001 tests in terms of national curriculum points scores was average in English, compared with schools nationally, below the national average in mathematics and well below average in science; when considering these results, it must be remembered that the incidence of pupil mobility in 2001 was greater than usual. Pupils' performance was well above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science, when compared with that of pupils in schools of a similar type. Taking the three years from 1999 to 2001 together, pupils have left the junior phase over half a term ahead of pupils nationally in English and mathematics and just ahead in science. This does not necessarily mean that pupils' performance has gone backwards during the junior phase. To see if this is the case, we need to look at how the same group of pupils has performed in each key stage. For example, if we consider those pupils who took their end of infant phase tests in 1997 and then went on to sit the end of junior phase tests in 2001, the results show that pupils have made good progress overall.
6. **Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 6** are working at above average standards in English and mathematics and at average standards in science. Standards in speaking and listening are good. The quality and quantity of work in their books show that they have made good progress over the last 12 months in all three subjects. The programmes of guided reading and writing have been particularly effective in raising standards in literacy. As with pupils lower down the school, standards in information and communication technology, physical education, geography, art and design, history, music and design and technology meet national expectations.

7. **Since the last inspection**, standards have risen for pupils aged eleven in English, mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In other areas, standards for eleven year olds have been broadly maintained. Standards for pupils aged seven have improved in English, mathematics, geography, history and design and technology; in other areas standards have been maintained.
8. **Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.** The school is committed to raising the standard of achievement for all pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Test results are analysed and pupils' learning difficulties are assessed at an early stage. Targets are set in individual education plans. Progress towards the targets is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, and good by the ages of seven and eleven.
9. Pupils are achieving well, considering their prior attainments.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school have remained positive since the last inspection. They are enthusiastic members of their school clubs, including the choir and are willing to talk about their favourite lessons and activities. Pupils like their teachers and want to come to school, where they have favourite subjects and activities. Children in the Foundation Stage know the rules and routines of the nursery and school and respond well to their new experiences. In most lessons pupils are eager to join in and work well to please their teachers. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have positive attitudes to their work because of the extra support they receive, which matches their learning needs.
11. The standard of behaviour is mainly good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and want to learn. For example, pupils in a Year 3 English lesson were keenly interested in their task and worked hard throughout the lesson. The quality of pupils' behaviour in school ranges from satisfactory to excellent, with exceptional standards of behaviour in school assemblies and in lessons where teaching is challenging and inspirational. However, some pupils do not have the maturity or self-discipline to behave appropriately. These pupils, at times, spoil the learning experiences and playtimes of others and damage their own relationships with their friends.
12. No sexist or racist behaviour was observed during the inspection, but minor aggressive behaviour was observed on three separate occasions during the second day of the inspection. However, behaviour on the playground used by pupils in Years 5 and 6 did improve and no further incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour were seen. Two pupils were excluded from school for a fixed term of five days during the last academic year. No other exclusions have taken place.
13. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory. Younger children grow in independence and confidence in school. This was observed in a reception class where pupils interacted very well in the play *café*. Their role play involved 'waitresses' with 'menus' and a 'cashier' who presented a 'bill' for payment.
14. Most pupils carry out minor duties in the classrooms and aspire to achieve prefect status when they are older. Pupils in Year 5 formally apply to become school prefects, and undertake ambassadorial roles for the school. They perform their duties well throughout the school, helping teachers in the classrooms and in the dining hall. However, the opportunities for prefects to organise team games or counsel other pupils are still underdeveloped, although the school is considering the election of a school council. Respect for the property of others is well developed in school. Cloakroom areas are kept tidy and pupils take pride in this success, which is acknowledged by the school.
15. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and encourage positive attitudes to learning in the pupils. Pupils like their teachers and work hard to meet the standards that are expected of them. They understand the school rules and sanctions and feel that they are fair. For example,

in a Year 6 lesson on personal, social and health education, excellent relationships between teacher and pupils were the key to the lesson's success. Pupils spoke with confidence and listened to others with a sympathetic ear, whilst accepting the guidance of their teacher.

16. Pupils continue to attend school regularly and, generally, arrive on time for their lessons. The level of attendance is good, higher than the national average. The importance of regular and punctual attendance is acknowledged by parents and has a positive effect on the progress their children make in school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching is good; this school has a hard working and committed team of teachers. Overall, teaching in the lessons seen was good in the Foundation Stage, good in the infant phase and good in the junior phase. Examples of good teaching were seen in every class in the school. In all except three lessons observed, teaching was at least satisfactory. Overall, it was unsatisfactory in three per cent of lessons, satisfactory in 38 per cent of lessons, good in 30 per cent, very good in 23 per cent and excellent in six per cent. Excellent lessons were seen in Years 2, 3, 5 and 6; additionally, examples of very good teaching were seen in Years 3, 4 and the Nursery.
18. The biggest strengths in teaching include the helpful manner in which teachers often share the learning objectives for lessons with their pupils, the way in which they manage their pupils, which is good and teachers' knowledge and understanding.
19. Pupils are generally aware of what is expected from them in terms of behaviour and respond appropriately. However, in a small minority of lessons, pupils' behaviour was unsatisfactory. For example, in an unsatisfactory Year 5 literacy lesson, the inappropriate behaviour of a minority of pupils was not successfully dealt with. This resulted in unsatisfactory learning by the whole class. In an excellent Year 2 numeracy lesson on doubling and halving numbers, the teacher showed excellent class management, resulting in excellent learning by all pupils. In a very good lesson for special needs children in Years 5 / 6, the pupils responded very well to the clear class management. Classroom support assistants throughout the school make a most valuable contribution to pupils' learning. However, in some classes in the afternoons, there are too few support staff present.
20. The pace of lessons is good through the school overall; in a minority of lessons in all three sections of the school, however, the pace is too slow, resulting in too little learning. The majority of lessons have a brisk and purposeful pace, with pupils given tight but appropriate time targets to complete their exercises.
21. The level of challenge in lessons is good overall. In the majority of lessons, teachers' expectations are high, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In a small minority of lessons, in all three sections of the school, the degree of challenge is insufficient to stretch the higher attaining pupils, which results in pupils learning less than they might.
22. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are well taught. Lessons generally start with effective question and answer sessions, to revise previous work and set pupils thinking. For example, in an excellent numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher asked searching questions about previous work on mental strategies for adding numbers, that thoroughly assessed pupils' levels of understanding. This culminated in pupils being expected to add as many as eight numbers, briskly selected by other pupils!
23. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good in all subject areas. The coordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics and ICT have particularly good expertise and by spreading this to other staff, they have made a positive impact on pupils' learning.

24. In both the infant phase and the junior phase, day-to-day marking of pupils' work is good, with appropriate comments to praise pupils' efforts. In some classes, there could be more in the way of comments to stretch pupils who have obtained full marks for their work.
25. Literacy and numeracy lessons generally have clear learning objectives and these are looked at again at the end of lessons, to see how far they have been met. In other subject areas, however, it is not as common to share learning objectives with pupils. The use of homework is satisfactory overall.
26. Teachers' organisation and planning for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good throughout the school. The teachers within the classroom and the teaching assistants give pupils additional help. Pupils who need more help are withdrawn in small groups to work with a specialist teacher. These groups are flexible and when pupils are progressing well, other pupils are identified for additional help. The focus for this work is to support pupils' literacy skills. They receive half an hour's targeted help on three mornings each week. This work is closely linked to their work in class and there is good liaison between the specialist teacher, the special needs co-ordinator and the classroom teachers. Teaching and learning are good for all pupils with special educational needs in school.
27. The school provides a teacher from the local education authority to give specific help to pupils with English as an additional language.
28. Standards of teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. At that time, around 15 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The proportion of very good or better teaching has doubled.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory. The curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and gives them a reassuring start to their education. The school meets all statutory requirements and adequate time is allowed to teach the full range of subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, the time allocated for physical education is still below the average found in other schools. The drawing up of policies for subjects and other aspects of the school's curriculum provision has ensured that there is a much better focus on what is to be taught and how, with an emphasis on raising standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Booster classes to achieve level 4 take place for all core subjects. There is a booster class for Year 6 pupils in science, and a Level Six club offers additional help for higher attaining pupils. The teaching of Spanish in Years 5 and 6 further enhances the learning opportunities provided and the curriculum offered prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good and a strength of the school. The special educational needs Register is up to date and comprehensive. Pupils are assessed early in their school life, to identify any difficulties quickly. Clear targets are set for pupils in their individual education plans, especially in literacy and in social development. This aspect has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are withdrawn from class in small groups for additional literacy teaching by a specialist teacher. The very good teaching they receive links carefully to their work in class and helps them to make good progress. They also receive effective, additional teaching from classroom assistants. Boys and girls are treated equally and there is no significant difference in their progress.
31. The provision for the teaching of literacy skills is very good and for numeracy skills is good. The provision of extra time for both guided reading and guided writing is very good and is having a most positive impact on pupils' learning.

32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils take part in a range of sporting events, playing against other local schools. Both girls and boys play football. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn a range of brass instruments and recorders. The school choir is very popular and competes successfully in the local musical festival each year. Pupils also have opportunities to extend their creative skills in the craft club. The school provides an After School Club until 6 pm each school day. A group of older pupils spend a long weekend each year at an activity park in Shropshire. A range of visitors, such as artists and people from the local church and community, comes into the school, working with the pupils and talking about their skills and experience.
33. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Circle time is planned for each class, when they get the chance to think about relationships, caring for others and personal development. For example, a Year 3 class had opportunities to think about kindness. They identified good qualities of others in the class and shared with each other. Due attention is given to health education. The nurse comes into school to talk about dental care and other issues. The police discuss drugs with the older pupils. Pupils take responsibility in and around the school. Prefects are elected and, as part of their role, they sit with the younger pupils and help them at lunchtime. They prepare the hall for assembly and ensure that the ICT suite is ready each day.
34. The school has good links with the community. There is a close link with the church and with the nearby residential home for elderly people. The residents attend concerts and performances in school and have donated a House cup to the school. Local businesses support the school in a variety of ways, such as donating funds each year for additional physical education equipment. Pupils are contributing to the community by designing panels to be included on the fences and gates of the local park. The school has good contacts with the wider community through the Internet. Older pupils send regular messages, using e-mail, to their pen pals in a school in Sweden.
35. The liaison with local schools is satisfactory. Teachers in the Foundation Stage have sound links with a local beacon nursery. Pupils are able to choose the secondary school they attend and have opportunities to visit these schools. When they have made their selection, they spend half a day taking part in lessons there, prior to leaving their primary school. Teachers from the secondary schools link closely with their primary colleagues to ensure a smooth move into secondary education.
36. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils show an understanding of the needs of others and have opportunities to share these during circle time. For example, pupils in Year 3 consider positive qualities to describe each other and explain "thoughtful" as meaning 'caring for others and helping them.' An appropriate atmosphere is created in assemblies to help pupils to develop their spiritual awareness. Time is given for pupils to reflect on the beauty of the world around them. Older pupils experience awe and wonder when they anticipate what would come out of a Martian space ship, in their literacy lesson. Prayers written by pupils are read at the end of the school day in many classes and show the sensitivity of pupils' thoughts for their families and their friends in school. During Lent, pupils have Lenten activities, by which they raise money for a local children's hospice. This also has an impact on their moral and social understanding
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. Pupils develop an understanding of what is right from an early age. In their studies in Literacy in Year 3, pupils discuss the morals found in Aesop's Fables and understand that, 'it doesn't matter who is best, as we can all do different things.' Circle time is used well. It offers opportunities for the older pupils to consider playtimes and how these can be improved. They respond maturely and suggest 'more play equipment' and the need to use strategies to 'calm down in angry situations.' All staff set a positive example and show pupils the benefits of positive behaviour and its effect on others.
38. The provision for social development is satisfactory. Teachers provide good opportunities for older pupils to work together. For example, in Year 4, pupils work well in groups in their design and

technology lesson to create a pop-up book suitable for infants. They have to decide who does which task and plan the layout of the book together. Pupils listen to each other's ideas sensitively and contribute confidently in discussions. They are given opportunities to help with classroom routines and in assemblies. Circle time is used well to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The school's house system, with house captains and prefects, extra-curricular activities and a residential trip are other good provisions for pupils' social development.

39. The provision for cultural development is now satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Visitors from the local community talk to the pupils about their work. Peripatetic music teaching is provided for brass instruments and a brass group and string quartet give performances for the pupils. A theatre group visits the school. Pupils visit a mosque as part of their religious education studies and learn about Islam and Judaism. An artist worked with the younger pupils to design and paint murals on the infant library walls. Strong links have been formed with a school in Stockholm and the school prefects became entrepreneurs in order to raise most of the cost of flying to Luton to meet pupils from another link school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to provide good care for its pupils. The school has procedures in place to check the quality of this support. For example, health and safety assessments are carried out regularly and the school is aware of potential hazards. All staff are trained in first aid procedures, and teachers are kept informed of the medical conditions of their pupils. Staff are mindful of safety procedures during lessons and on school trips; for example, physical education lessons are conducted safely and pupils wear seat belts when travelling to and from their swimming lessons. The school meets its obligations to carry out regular fire drills.
41. Child protection arrangements have been improved since the last inspection. A child protection co-ordinator has been nominated and trained to manage any concerns. The co-ordinator keeps teaching and non-teaching staff informed of changes in procedures and checks the needs of vulnerable children appropriately. Pupils who are looked after by the local authority's social services are supported in school.
42. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is based on appropriate records kept by class teachers and the children's records of achievement. Older pupils are kept informed of their lesson objectives for literacy and numeracy. In some year groups, younger pupils know their lesson objectives, but the discussion period at the end of lessons is usually devoted to checking the level of learning and understanding. Positive attitudes and values are stimulated through the teaching of personal, social and health education in a way that encourages pupils to debate and voice their opinions with confidence. The school invites visiting specialists to support its teaching of sex education and drugs awareness. An up-to-date discipline policy operates fairly, with rewards for good efforts and sanctions for misdemeanours. There are no policies specifically designed to discourage racism and sexism, but a new anti-bullying policy is near completion. This policy promotes effective reaction to complaints about bullying, but its strategies to prevent bullying are underdeveloped.
43. The assessment of pupils' work and its use to plan future work is satisfactory overall, but could be better in the foundation subjects in particular. It is good in literacy and numeracy. Whilst progress in this area has been made since the last inspection and some tracking is now taking place, assessment is not yet consistently implemented through the school in all subjects. The school appropriately uses the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Nonetheless, the tracking of pupils' academic progress, particularly in the foundation subjects, could be improved.
44. The school's procedures for tracking pupils' attendance are satisfactory. Parents keep school well informed of their children's absences. Class teachers monitor unexplained pupil absences and they alert the office staff appropriately. Such absences are checked and, when necessary, referred to the school's education welfare officer. The home/school agreement supports the importance of regular attendance and punctuality and has a positive effect on attendance.

45. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language, whose needs are assessed regularly. The special needs co-ordinator analyses test results and discusses these with the class teachers. If it is thought necessary, a full assessment of an individual pupil's learning needs takes place. The experienced specialist teacher, who is employed by the school for three morning sessions each week, fulfils this task very well and consults appropriately with parents. This assessment is used to make recommendations to the class teacher and the co-ordinator. The school identifies pupils with learning difficulties from an early age and this ensures that appropriate additional help is made available. There is regular monitoring of individual education plans.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents have a good opinion of the school and their support has increased since the last inspection. Most parents are pleased with the school and believe that their children are happy and make good progress. They feel that staff are approachable and that teachers' expectations are high. Some parents are unhappy with the inconsistent requirement of homework and do not feel well informed about their children's progress. The inspection concurs with the positive views held by parents. Homework is judged to be appropriate and matching the needs of pupils.
47. The quality of information sent to parents is generally satisfactory. Newsletters inform parents well of coming school events, but there is little information about the work pupils will be covering in their lessons. Reports to parents show what children have achieved and generally identify what skills pupils need to develop to improve their learning in English and mathematics. There is little information on how to improve learning in science.
48. The school holds up to three parents' evenings each year for formal discussion between parents and teachers and a system of weekly surgeries has been adopted to deal with urgent concerns. The school prospectus provides parents with the information they need to know about the school.
49. The school's links with parents are good. These start in the nursery, where children spend half a day and receive a home visit from their nursery teachers. Parents, school and pupils sign a home/school agreement that supports the school's behaviour policy and ensures that all adults work together to support the children as they progress through school. The parent teachers' association makes a very good impact on the work of the school and is a strong feature of the school's partnership with its parents. Parents have raised large amounts of money to provide extra resources for the school, including much of the school's information and communications technology suite. Teachers and parents work together to provide a good social life for families within the school community. Parents give practical support in school as governors and as helpers in the classroom and on school visits. The school makes effective use of their skills and values their help.
50. Parents contribute well to their children's education in and out of school. Most hear their children read at home and make sure that they complete their homework. The school encourages parents to take part in their children's learning by consulting them and acting upon their concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and are invited to attend regular discussions about their individual learning programmes.
51. There are good links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language. Parents' agreement is always sought before putting a pupil on the Special Educational Needs Register. Parents are invited into school for reviews each term. The majority of parents attend these discussions and also support their child's learning at home. They are keen to know the difficulties and how they can help.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management by the headteacher are good, in both the academic and pastoral aspects. The headteacher is hard working, committed and able and he knows exactly how he wants the school to develop. His leadership ensures clear educational direction for the school and he is fully backed by the governing body. The headteacher wants the best for his pupils. The school's aims and values are easily seen in the daily routines of the school and the school's aims are re-drafted annually, following discussions with staff, governors and parents. The deputy headteacher coordinates the senior management team, which includes four assistant headteachers. The latter are the managers of the Foundation Stage, the infant phase and lower and upper junior phase. These managers, appropriately, each have responsibility for an area of the school - the curriculum, assessment, pastoral care and special educational needs; they carry out their responsibilities well. They also have an overview of curriculum areas, providing an overlap with the curriculum coordinators. The subject coordinators manage their subjects appropriately,

monitoring planning and marking; they are also actively involved in the monitoring of teaching in their subjects, delivering both verbal and written feedback.

53. The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is good. The governors want the best for the school and are determined that it should continue to succeed. Their role in helping to shape the educational direction of the school is good. Governors visit the school regularly, and have monitored the implementation of some of the curriculum appropriately, particularly numeracy, literacy and special educational needs. The governing body has a good understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. Between them, the governors bring a wide range of expertise to the running of this church school.
54. The school's targets are appropriate and sufficiently ambitious. Pupil mobility has had an adverse effect on results in 2001, but inspection evidence suggests that the targets for 2002 in English, mathematics and science will be met. The school has a good capacity to succeed.
55. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. The school has a comprehensive induction policy and managers from each section of the school have mentored recently appointed teachers appropriately. Suitable policies and plans are in place for performance management.
56. A member of the school's management team is the co-ordinator for special educational needs. He works closely with the specialist part-time teacher and with class teachers. He has a good overview of individual education plans, manages the funding and consults regularly with the governor with responsibility for special educational needs. A management decision was made in 2000 to employ a part-time teacher to be responsible for working with pupils with special educational needs. It was felt that teaching opportunities for these pupils to work in a small group would be more effective than additional help in classrooms. This has proved to be very successful, as 12 pupils from a group of 25 were removed from the Special Needs Register at the end of the last academic year. Management of pupils having English as an additional language is good; appropriate class-based help is provided where needed.
57. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is currently good, although the provision of support staff in the afternoon is not always adequate. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and is very well maintained. However, the school lacks a dedicated play area for the children under five and the accommodation for children in the reception classes is very crowded. Classrooms have attractive displays. Resources are generally good in quality and quantity.
58. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is very good. The school's competent administrative officer and school secretaries ensure the smooth running of the school. Finances are handled well and the school applies the principles of best value well. Specific grants are used appropriately. The school development plan is a most useful working document that clearly prioritises the school's needs.
59. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher's leadership was described as sound; this is now both good and effective.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further improve the school, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- provide a dedicated play area for the under-fives and improve accommodation and resources in the reception classes (paragraph 57):
- develop still further the assessment of pupils' work and its use to track pupils' progress in the foundation subjects (paragraph 43); and

- ensure that all lessons are conducted with adequate pace (paragraph 20).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	89
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	20	27	34	3	0	0
Percentage	6	23	30	38	3	0	0

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

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)	29	375
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	60

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	31

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	20	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	27	29
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	47	45	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94(88)	90(92)	96(94)
	National	84(83)	86(84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	29	29
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	46	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92(92)	96(94)	96(96)
	National	85(84)	89(88)	89(88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	22	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	20
	Girls	20	13	17
	Total	38	31	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84(80)	69(78)	82(93)
	National	75(75)	71(72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	15	12	15
	Total	30	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67(78)	64(80)	71(91)
	National	72(70)	74(72)	82(79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	21
Pakistani	10
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	281
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14.3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	810160
Total expenditure	830256
Expenditure per pupil	1987
Balance brought forward from previous year	22843
Balance carried forward to next year	2747

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	260
Number of questionnaires returned	137

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	36	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	45	12	2	0
The teaching is good.	61	38	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	9	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	34	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	51	4	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	54	42	3	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	39	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	39	13	2	12

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

60. Since the last inspection, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage has been maintained overall, with improvements in teaching in the reception classes and the development of speech and language skills for all children. In the nursery, provision has been maintained and is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in the nursery. The use of base line assessment has helped teachers to identify strengths in the children's achievements and to cater well for specific needs. A very thorough system to track attainment ensures that learning moves forward at a good pace for each individual. The re-organisation of the curriculum in the nursery has resulted in the provision of a very good range of learning opportunities. In the reception classes, the curriculum is under review and teachers regularly evaluate their planning to ensure that children receive a range of learning opportunities. Facilities for physical development are restricted, as there is unsatisfactory provision in the outdoor area. The school is aware of this, but at present there are insufficient funds to provide a properly resourced dedicated outdoor area. Teachers manage the curricular provision for physical development effectively by using space in the annexe, so there is no detrimental effect on children's progress, but they have fewer chances of using large-wheeled and adventure resources. The nursery is very well organised and managed and has good resources for learning. The reception classes are as well organised as they can be in unsuitable accommodation.
61. Children enter the nursery on a staggered basis in the September when they are three years old. The nursery teacher visits each home before children enter, which gives parents an opportunity to ask any questions they may have and to meet the teacher. Children stay in the nursery for one year. Most children then transfer to the reception classes. Children enter the reception classes when they are four years old and stay in these classes for one year, when they transfer to Year 1. At the time of inspection there were two classes of 30 children in each class. Children visit the reception classes in small groups and, on the designated date, all children and parents if they wish spend a morning and lunchtime in reception classes. The reception class teachers organise an induction meeting for parents, but at present, do not visit children's homes.
62. Initial assessment shows that children enter school with a diverse range of skills, knowledge and understanding that, overall, are below average. All make good progress and at the end of the reception year, many are working within the early stages of the national curriculum for English and mathematics. Very good assessment procedures are being implemented, which are enabling teachers to plan suitable programmes of work and to set targets for improvement for all children, including those for whom English is an additional language, those with special educational needs and those who are capable of higher attainment. This assessment procedure is at a very early stage in development and is not yet fully implemented into classrooms.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. The school gives priority to the personal and emotional needs of young children and they achieve well. Most will exceed the stepping stones for learning and the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they leave the reception class. This reflects the school's emphasis on personal and social development. In the nursery, children soon learn to follow routines such as registration and to care for themselves and their belongings. They respond to the high expectations set for them and begin to manage fastenings effectively. This is continued in the reception classes where children continue to develop their personal and social skills. However, some young children find it hard to settle into a more formal routine.. Children dress efficiently after physical exercise and organise their belongings into the correct places. Teachers, the nursery nurse and assistants provide a welcoming and secure environment in which children gain in confidence in choosing what they would like to do from a range of activities. Children learn to take turns; for example, when sitting on the carpet waiting for their turn to hold 'badger' and tell the group something that

they had done that day. They sit still and are patient as they wait excitedly for 'badger' to come. When playing with sand and water they collaborate well and share the equipment without fuss. In the nursery, their behaviour is excellent for young children, and most only require a friendly prompt from an adult if they stray from a task. In the reception classes, behaviour overall is good; children are eager to learn, but many find the length of the Literacy and numeracy hour very tiring, particularly at the beginning of the lesson when they are required to sit still on the floor for a long time. When engaged in activities, children's behaviour is usually good and children stay on task well. A very good example of personal and social development was seen in one class, where 'Chance cards' were given to children who have shown consideration for others, positive relationships or other personal and social skills, such as holding the door open for someone, helping another person or being kind. These cards are put into a hat. One card is drawn out at the end-of-week assembly and that child has a small reward. The overall quality of teaching is good.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Most children make good gains in their learning and the higher attaining children in the nursery are on course to achieve the stepping stones and some are already working within the Early Learning Goals. In the reception classes likewise, higher attaining children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Children interact well with each other. They listen attentively to stories. After reading 'Andrew's Bath', children talk confidently about their own bath time and who is going to join them in the bath. The following day, children remembered the story and told the class who came in their bath with them that night, for example, a dinosaur. During the introduction of the letter of the week, 'R', children refined and developed their listening skills to identify words beginning with 'R', such as 'rat', and sing the 'rat song' enthusiastically. Skills were further developed as children found as many words in the classroom as possible beginning with 'R'. Staff use oral sessions to good effect to develop communication skills. In one role-play session, children acted out different roles in the 'Mermaid café'. They shared experiences enthusiastically, and developed their knowledge and understanding well. They develop their phonic skills well, for example, finding three letter words ending with 'at'. Children handle books appropriately and identify the title page, author and illustrator. By the time they leave the reception class, the higher attaining children are reading simple books confidently. One enthusiastic little boy said that he enjoyed reading to his teddies at midnight! Children begin to develop a good control of pencils in the nursery. They are provided with many opportunities to develop these skills in the 'office' area and on the writing table. In the reception classes, children maintain these early skills and begin to write purposefully with good control, in the many areas provided for them. Many children write their name and begin to copy sentences written by teachers.
65. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good. Children are managed well. This helps children achieve well in communication, reading, writing and handwriting skills. In the reception classes, teachers use the Literacy Framework to its full extent. The young children in Reception find it very tiring sometimes and can become distracted from their task, particularly when sitting in a large group for a long time. However, teachers are currently reviewing the curriculum and are re-considering this element. Comprehension is developed through the use of well-known stories and rhymes, where children are given many opportunities to sequence the plot and discuss the characters, as when reading 'Jack in the box'. Children are encouraged to enjoy books, but reading books are in short supply. The reception classes have an inadequate stock of good quality books for teachers and children to use.

Mathematical understanding

66. Children make good progress in developing their mathematical understanding. In relation to their initial assessment, they make good gains in their learning because of very good teaching in the nursery and good teaching in the reception classes. Children develop their early mathematical skills in the nursery through a range of interesting practical activities, which include number rhymes and songs and very good support from the nursery nurse and the teacher. In the reception classes, children continue to build on the very good learning in the nursery and by the time they leave reception, higher achieving children are working within the early stages of the national

curriculum. They develop number skills through practical activities; for example, children learn how to count reliably to 10 with a given number of objects. One child securely sequenced numbers to 60 and could count back from 30. In one lesson, the teacher gave children cards displaying a number between one and 20. As they received the card, the children identified the number. Skills were further developed as the lesson progressed, with the teacher offering different challenges, such as, 'Stand up if your number is less than 5'. This was followed by a whole class session of 'Cheeky Charlie Monkey', who gets his sums wrong. Children then correct him. This part of the lesson enthused the children and ensured that learning was fun and was a very good example of interactive learning. Children combine numbers and recognise that 5 is one more than 4. Higher attaining children, using mathematical reasoning, work out sums such as $6+3=9$ with confidence. They begin to handle money in the 'Mermaid café' and give bills and change. Children learn about two- and three-dimensional shapes in their construction activities. They enjoy exploring capacity through appropriate sand and water activities.

67. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good and in the reception classes is good. Class management is good. This helps the children achieve well in counting, calculating and in shape, space and measure. Systematic provision allows children to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics. The use of topic work, stories, games and imaginative play enables children to develop skills in number. Adult provision supports all children and praise is used to raise self-esteem and encourage learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Children make good gains in their learning and the higher attaining children achieve the expected level by the time they leave the reception class. Children discuss control technology and learn enthusiastically about programmable toys; for example, in one lesson children demonstrated their skills as they programmed different toys such as a lorry, a robot and a seal. They confidently programmed 'Roamer' to move forwards and backwards and understood what they had to do. They learn about floating and sinking and identify those objects that will float and those that will sink. Children predicted that a toothbrush would float, a spoon would sink and a boat would float. Children made a good contribution to the lesson and suggested ideas about where water came from and goes to, such as 'water comes into the bath'. Through well-constructed lessons, they learn the correct terminology for parts of the computer. They manipulate the mouse effectively and follow on-screen prompts. They choose suitable words from a word bank to make a simple sentence and with help print this out and take a copy home. The support the classroom assistant gave during this activity was of a very high quality.
69. Teaching in this area of learning is good and has a positive impact on developing exploratory and investigative skills. Planning supports the learning effectively and is based on purposeful activities. Adults ensure that children remain interested by providing a range of experiences. Resources are good.

Physical development

70. Children are on course to achieve the standards expected of them by the time they leave the reception class. They are acquiring skills in movement and are developing a sense of space and body awareness. Children find a space of their own and perform a variety of body actions as they listen to a tape. They mime the actions to 'wind the bobbin' and learn to clap to a steady beat. Children use tools with increasing dexterity, following outlines when cutting.
71. They take care when working with construction kits and manipulating dough into recognisable shapes, as when making peppermint sweets. Planning shows there are many opportunities for children to experience work in physical education games and creative activities. Teachers take children outside into the nursery outdoor area whenever possible.
72. Teaching is good. Planning requires a sharper focus, but does cover all elements of the curriculum and provides opportunities for children to experience a feeling of being healthy and active.

Creative development

73. Creative skills develop well and children make good progress. Most are on course to meet the expected standard by the time they leave the reception classes. In the nursery, children develop their skills well as they stick ivy leaves onto paper to make a vine, paint pictures using evergreen leaves and explore and create collage pictures. Teachers encourage children to express their feelings through exploring media and materials, dance, story making and imaginative play. They have many opportunities to explore colour through painting and crayoning. Children recognise familiar songs and rhymes and make their own instruments, such as a rain stick. They develop an early interest in music and explore the possibilities of various instruments. In the underwater play area and in the 'Mermaid café', children use imaginative play and develop social and negotiating skills.

ENGLISH

74. Standards in English have risen since the previous inspection. At the end of both infant and junior phases of the school, overall standards in English are now above the national average.
75. In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age in reading was well above the national average and for writing the proportion was in line with the national average. This was the same when comparing results with schools of a similar background. Teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 show that pupils' speaking and listening skills are above the national average, reading skills are well above average and writing skills in line with the national average. In response to these lower standards in writing, the school has introduced a guided writing initiative to raise standards further.
76. In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, results show attainment to be in line with the national average. It is well above the national average, when compared with the attainment of pupils in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher grade was below average. The school's guided writing initiative is being targeted to raise standards for this age group, as well as for the infants. There was no significant difference between the results of boys and girls; this was also the case during the inspection, with boys and girls achieving equally well in both age groups.
77. Standards in speaking and listening are being developed well in the infants and in Year 2 they are presently above expectation. Teachers encourage pupils to express ideas and provide them with opportunities to answer both closed and more searching, open questions during the introduction to literacy lessons. Most pupils listen with interest and are attentive. They are keen to answer questions and give ideas. A good example was seen in a Year 2 lesson, when the teacher used a non-fiction book as the shared text. Pupils analysed the description of a pencil sharpener and made suggestions, with reasoning, for the words the teacher had covered in the text.
78. Junior pupils develop their skills in speaking and listening well and overall, standards are above expectations. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher challenged pupils to predict an ending for the story 'The Six Suns', read partially during the shared text phase of the lesson. It was clear from the interesting and varied ideas they gave that the vast majority had listened attentively. Older pupils in the juniors readily form opinions and express them with assurance and confidence. This was seen in a lesson of higher attaining Year 6 pupils, during a debate about bullying and how to deal with bullies. They demonstrated a very mature approach to this area of discussion in concluding that,
- ... there are two equal sides to the argument; on the one hand, bullies deserve a second chance but on the other hand, victims should not have to suffer.*
79. Support provided by classroom assistants helps pupils to build confidence in giving ideas and in volunteering to answer questions. In a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were given additional help, pupils rose to the challenge set by the teacher and gave good, accurate examples of how an

author creates suspense by using powerful adjectives. Teachers are careful to include all pupils in speaking and listening phases of the lessons. This gives the opportunity for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language to take a full part in the lesson. As a result, all pupils make good progress and achieve well.

80. Standards of reading are above expectation overall. Younger infants are still developing their reading skills and make good progress but are still below expectation. Pupils continue to make good and very good progress in the older infant class and they achieve very well, with the majority reaching beyond expectation. Pupils' skills in reading are systematically developed through effective guided reading sessions; a targeted area identified by the school in order to raise standards. Lower attaining pupils are well supported in their reading by additional support from classroom assistants. Detailed records and plotting progress and achievement through reading scheme books, ensure continuity and progression in reading skills development for all pupils in the infant phase. Parents and close relations give good support to their children by hearing them read regularly at home, monitoring their progress. Higher attaining pupils are able to find non-fiction books in their library and can explain the use of the contents, index and glossary to glean information. The rapid progress and high achievement levels of the pupils is testimony to the effectiveness of the school's reading initiative in the teaching and learning of English.
81. Junior pupils continue to make good progress in the acquisition of reading skills and by the end of the juniors, the vast majority read in line with expectations and many surpass them. Pupils read accurately with confidence, fluency and expression. They are able to talk about the story line and make predictions as to how the story might develop. They indicate a love of literature and reading. When asked how often she read, a higher attaining pupil replied, "*All the time, I just love reading.*"
82. Pupils of all ability levels have favourite authors and can articulate reasons for their choices; favourite authors included Jacqueline Wilson and Dick King-Smith. Pupils enjoy being able to take guided reading books home to read and this is again another example of the positive impact being made by the school's reading initiative.
83. Standards of writing are above expectation by the end of both the infant and junior age groups. However, the number of pupils reaching the higher levels for each age group is below expectation. The school has identified this as an area to target for improvement. They have mounted an initiative to raise standards in writing throughout the school, which is already having the desired effect. An analysis of pupils' work across all age groups indicates that by the end of both the infant and junior phases, there are now more pupils achieving the upper levels. As well as this, the quality of handwriting and the content of work indicate that all pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Pupils have regular handwriting practice and they have been taught strategies for spellings; they have access to dictionaries from early in the infants. Standards of punctuation are very good in the older infants and this contributes well to the overall standards the pupils are now achieving in writing. A higher attaining pupil in a Year 2 class, when writing about 'The Mysterious Musical Instrument', indicated her punctuation skills were well developed and nearly perfect when she wrote:
- After a while the tambourine said. "Hello, I'm taking you on a trip." The girls said "wow, wee." Next the tambourine said "you're going to Portugal."*
84. Overall, the attainment in writing for eleven-year-olds is in line with national averages. However, the impact of the guided writing and reading initiatives is presently raising the standards in pupils' writing by the end of the juniors. Teachers model handwriting extremely well. This was seen in a Year 4 handwriting session and pupils were keen to practise to achieve the very good standard set. Higher attaining pupils in upper juniors use lively words and phrases to make their writing more interesting. A Year 5 pupil in a well-taught lesson on poetry wrote,

A gust of cold air bursts upon the clear glass window.

85. An average attaining pupil in a Year 6 class reached a high standard in descriptive writing when, in writing a sequel to a scientific story, he wrote,

As I was dragged of by Grakker, my heart was pounding like a dog's tongue. I was thinking about missing the main part of my life as a teenager.

86. Overall, pupils have a very positive attitude in literacy lessons and they behave well. They show an enthusiasm for work and apply themselves well. Many are praised for their achievements and as a result, their self-esteem is raised. In a small number of the lessons observed during the inspection, the teacher failed to intervene to modify the behaviour of a few pupils. Because of this, the pace of these lessons was spoiled and pupils' learning was affected.
87. There are many opportunities taken to use computers to support the teaching and learning of English. Pupils in a Year 1 class used computers in an interactive way to bring animated characters to life and to change sections of a story. Pupils in Year 3 develop their language and literacy skills when they word-process their work after choosing 'better' adjectives for the story, 'Not-so-nice Monster'. Pupils in Year 6 use laptop computers to word process and to give views on topical issues.
88. Teaching in the majority of lessons (60 per cent) is good or better; very good teaching and one excellent lesson was observed in the juniors. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, in the juniors, the teacher did not manage pupils' behaviour appropriately. The literacy hour is well established and this, combined with the additional guided reading lessons, makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers' planning for literacy is always good and their knowledge and understanding of the subject is very secure. Teachers use lively methods to introduce lessons, sharing objectives with their pupils. This focuses pupils' minds as well holding their interest. Basic skills in literacy are well taught and pupils are able to practise acquired skills in a wide range of writing activities provided during the literacy hours. Pupils of all levels of ability make gains in literacy skills because basic skills are taught so effectively. Teachers share their love of language with pupils, who respond very well. A good example was seen in a Year 4 literacy lesson, when the shared text included an example of the figure of speech, onomatopoeia. The teacher explained the author's use of this to bring added feeling and expression to the text. Further examples of figures of speech such as alliteration, metaphors and similes were explored in other junior literacy lessons. The majority of lessons have a sound pace, so that pupils with lower attention levels do not lose interest. In a small minority of lessons, the pace is slow because teachers have to deal with the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority of pupils. Classroom assistants give good support to pupils during literacy lessons. Teachers' deployment of the assistants is more effective when they involve them from the start of the lesson. In this way, the assistants are more able to deal with queries and questions raised by the pupils at later stages. When the assistants take a passive role during the early part of the lesson, they are less effective. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the support they receive. Some pupils, on higher stages of special educational need, have good individual education plans and additional support means they make very good progress towards meeting their individual targets. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress along with other pupils and all pupils achieve well because of the quality of teaching in English. The school promotes inclusive education for pupils and there is full access to the curriculum for all its pupils, irrespective of ability, gender or ethnicity.
89. The assessment procedures in English are good and results are used effectively in order to set targets for improvement. Teachers mark their pupils' work carefully, and written guidance is given to pupils to indicate how to improve and develop their English skills and standards of their writing further. Formal and summative assessments are made and recorded, and these are analysed along with the results of standardised and national tests. This information is then used to set both group and individual targets for improvement with a view to raising pupils' standards in English.
90. Co-ordination of English is shared; there is a co-ordinating teacher from both infant and junior age groups. These two teachers work closely together, monitoring teaching and planning as well as analysing pupils' work. They give good support to their colleagues, the support following the introduction of the guided reading and writing initiatives being a good example. Additionally, an

assistant headteacher, with a very good working knowledge and experience of literacy and its co-ordination, has oversight for this subject. This style of combined management is most effective and the quality of leadership and management of the subject is very good.

91. The reading-book resources are supplemented well by using a local library loan system. The school's stock of books has recently been audited and reviewed. Many older well-worn books have been withdrawn and replaced. Present library resources are adequate and the co-ordinators are aware of the need to develop their library provision further. However, there has been a positive development since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

92. On the basis of 2001 national test results based on average national curriculum points scores, attainment was well above the national average for pupils aged seven. The percentage of pupils obtaining level 2, the expected level, was average; the proportion obtaining the higher level 3 at the end of the infant phase was well above the national average. Pupils' performance in this mathematics test was very high in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, being in the top five per cent of similar schools. The average attainment of pupils in the three years 1999 to 2001 was just over six months ahead of the national average in the tests for seven year olds. The performance of girls was slightly higher than that of boys; on average, they were half a term ahead.
93. In the 2001 national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment in terms of points scores was below the national average. The proportion of pupils obtaining level 4, the expected level nationally, was average but the proportion reaching the higher level five was below average. Over the last three years taken together, pupils have left the junior phase over half a term ahead of pupils nationally. When compared with pupils from schools of a similar type, standards were average. The performance of boys has been slightly higher than that of girls over the last three years.
94. Pupils are streamed in years two, three and four according to their attainment in English and are then put in sets in years five and six according to their mathematics attainment. The lessons observed, analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, indicate that attainment is above average for both seven year olds and eleven year olds. Within the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, many pupils in the infant phase showed good levels of attainment related to investigative mathematics and number. However, some of the pupils in the classes in the lower stream, in both infant and junior phases, are not reaching as high a standard as they could, because they do not have a "main" formal method to use for addition. In both phases, however, pupils are particularly adept at mental mathematics, but pupils in the junior phase do not have sufficiently good instant re-call of their multiplication tables, because they are not practised in class with sufficient regularity. This hinders attainment in other areas of mathematics. Pupils aged eleven can recall addition and subtraction facts to 10000 and make shapes accurately, given the dimensions, on plain paper. They use brackets accurately and with confidence. Pupils generally use correct mathematical vocabulary, which helps their learning. They develop their own strategies when solving problems in their heads, and can explain why they have chosen a particular method. Pupils aged seven are proficient when doubling or halving given numbers and solve problems involving terms such as "greater than" and "less than". There was no discernible difference in the performance of girls and boys in the lessons seen. Standards in mathematics are currently higher than at the time of the last inspection for pupils aged seven and those aged eleven. To raise standards of attainment further in both key stages, there is a need to continue the work of building up a coherent mathematical vocabulary, to ensure that all pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables and that lower attaining pupils, in particular, have access to a "main" formal method for operations such as addition.
95. Overall, learning of pupils in mathematics is good in both the infant and junior phases; this includes those pupils having special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Factors aiding progress include the generally very positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and the overall good standard of teaching. The teaching observed was excellent in four of the fourteen lessons seen, very good in two lessons, good in five lessons and satisfactory in the other three. Common features that made the best lessons excellent and contributed to a very high rate of learning, were the highest possible academic expectations on the part of the teachers, coupled with a brisk pace in which the teachers set appropriate time targets for pupils. Such lessons generally clearly explained what the learning objectives were at the outset and re-visited these at the end of the session to see how far they had been achieved. Teachers in most numeracy lessons begin with effective question and answer sessions, to revise previous work and assess understanding. Occasionally, lessons would benefit from a faster pace and greater challenge, particularly in some of the classes in the lower stream.

96. Assessment methods in mathematics are greatly improving; the school is using a detailed system to track pupils' progress across the school. Pupils' achievement is good. The coordinators for mathematics in both the infant and junior phases are keen, enthusiastic and competent. Information and communication technology is used very well to support numeracy, and resources are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

97. Standards in science are similar to those expected of the majority of pupils by the ages of 7 and 11. The test results for pupils aged 11 for the year 2001, when there was a higher than usual number of late entrants to the school, show the attainment of pupils to be below that of pupils in similar schools, and were not in line with previous results. Those pupils who have attended the school from an early age learn successfully and achieve well. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
98. The school has recently placed greater emphasis on involving the pupils in practical tasks. They are learning through investigation. Pupils predict what they think will occur, giving reasons for their predictions. They work in a scientific way, recording what they do and including diagrams effectively. Results are recorded in tables and graphically and pupils draw conclusions from what they observe. Year 6 pupils plan and carry out their own investigations.
99. Teaching seen in lessons was good. A scrutiny of pupils' work through the school does show, however, some significant variation in the levels of expectation. The work of pupils in Years 4 and 6 shows that those teachers have been particularly demanding in both the amount of work recorded and in its presentation. In the best lessons, the teachers' planning seeks to arouse the pupils' enthusiasm. A Year 4 class investigated the insulation properties of different materials. The teacher planned and presented a 'real' problem. The pupils listened intently as he spoke of his aunt's need for ice. The excellent relationship between teacher and pupils meant that they responded very quickly, followed instructions and understood what they were trying to do. Tasks were accomplished quickly and sensibly. Throughout the lesson, the pupils responded to the challenge at an enthusiastic pace. Learning was very good and enjoyable. In most classes, behaviour is good, with pupils responding to teachers who are firm but friendly. In one lesson, the behaviour of some pupils was poor. Too much attention was given to a minority of pupils so that the lesson lost impetus. As a consequence, the learning in the lesson was unsatisfactory. A Year 2 teacher showed great patience when working with a group of lower attaining pupils, some of them having special needs. As a result they made similar progress to their peers, correctly illustrating everyday items made from materials such as wood or wool.
100. Many teachers use effective questioning techniques so that the pupils are required to give reasons for their opinions or findings. A Year 6 teacher managed a lively class very well. She made clear her expectations and set high standards, such as in her own presentation on the board. While the pupils worked at the task, the teacher was very aware of those who needed additional support and gave it. In another Year 6 class, the pupils discussed their work on solids, liquids and gases. They used vocabulary such as 'solution' and 'particles' without prompting, clearly understanding the terms. Throughout the school, however, key science vocabulary is not sufficiently highlighted so that all pupils can see and use it with confidence. This would aid, for example, some Year 4 pupils who confuse 'thermometer' with 'temperature'. Marking of work varies. Teachers' comments are generally encouraging. They rarely guide the pupils' further progress. Not all teachers choose to point out misspelling of specific science vocabulary. Occasionally, as in both Year 6 classes, the teachers pose a question such as "What do you notice about your results?" to which the pupil responds.
101. Some assessment is in place so that the teachers are aware of the learning that pupils make in the various topics studied. However, it is not always put to best use. Although some pupils leave the Infant phase having been assessed at a higher level, some of the tasks provided in Year 3 are not taking account of this. The subject makes good use of and reinforces both literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are required to write full records of their work and often use graphs to enhance it and to illustrate results. No use was seen of information and communication

technology. The co-ordinator is given time to observe lessons in other classes, which is good practice. Learning is enhanced by visits to science museums. Few displays of work were seen, but the one in a Year 6 class gave a good indication of what the pupils had found out about air resistance and reinforced their learning. Resources are satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

102. During the inspection, no lessons were seen in the infant stage, but pupils' present and previous work was examined and discussions took place with teachers in relation to work undertaken. Inspection evidence shows that attainment is in line with the national average at both infant and junior stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language, achieve well and make satisfactory progress in the subject. Standards have improved since the last inspection, when they were just in line with the national average. The school has adopted national initiatives in the subject and this is reflected in the planning. There is an effective policy document and resources are satisfactory.
103. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, use a range of media and materials to develop their skills and techniques in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 2 develop their knowledge of famous artists by using the computer to create pictures in the Mondrian style, using a 'paint box' program. Year 1 pupils develop their skills using a variety of techniques, including weaving and pencil work, when working on a self-portrait. Sketchbooks are used to develop early skills, which are enhanced as they move through Year 2. Collage work is developed and design techniques improved. Pupils draw a self-portrait annually. This is then placed in pupils' individual record of achievement folder as a part of ongoing assessment.
104. In Year 3, pupils recognise and produce a repeating pattern, using a range of given materials and a standard grid. This activity links well with mathematical development and pupils used mathematical language well. In Year 4, pupils develop their map-making skills, as well as their sketching skills, by drawing a map of a journey from home to school. Year 5 pupils investigated materials and combined them as they explored their ideas of a container. Pupils worked hard, and demonstrated good use of reasoning skills to develop their learning. A recording frame was used to record what they had achieved. For example, a group of pupils chose to work with clay; they used moulding techniques to make a cylinder, others to make a square and others to make a coil container. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated maturity and personal responsibility as they moved from one activity to another. The very good lesson observed was part of a planned succession of lessons about hats. Pupils were given opportunities to evaluate a range of different hats, to make pom-poms, to make designs using feathers, beads and pipe-cleaners, to stitch and stuff head bands, to make a mosaic and to do research using the Internet. All activities were focused on hats and the face. The lesson ended with the teacher showing pupils a wasps' nest. Pupils displayed awe and wonder at this construction, and posed questions as to how it had been made.
105. As no lessons were seen in the infant stage, the quality of teaching cannot be judged. In the Junior stage, teaching was satisfactory overall, with some very good teaching seen in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have a sound and often very good knowledge and understanding of the subject, providing pupils with appropriate learning opportunities. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers give clear instructions and guidance to help pupils improve their basic skills. Most pupils have good attitudes in lessons and listen carefully to their teacher.
106. The subject is being managed by a caretaker co-ordinator at present. She is well-organised and enthusiastic. She leads by example and her classroom contains very stimulating and high quality displays of art work. Resources are well managed and organised and adequate to teach the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Boys and girls in both Year 2 and Year 6 attain the nationally expected standards of work in design and technology and achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. Standards have improved since the last inspection, largely because a nationally agreed scheme of work is in place throughout the school, which gives teachers a clear planning structure and enables pupils to experience the 'design, make and evaluate' process in their activities.
108. In the infant classes, younger pupils make houses using cardboard and glue. They draw windows and doors using felt tip pens. They understand the need for a floor in their house and comment that 'there is no cardboard on the bottom, so we can't put anything inside.' Pupils in Year 2 create various designs for Joseph's coat, using tissue paper and a range of fabrics. They link this work to their work in religious education and information and communication technology, using a paint program to create a colourful design for the coat. However, they do not have the opportunity to make a coat for Joseph. They extend their designing and making skills by learning to use small hand tools, such as a hacksaw and bench hook. These are used to cut dowel, to make an axle to wind 'Incy Wincy Spider' up the spout. When the teaching is good, pupils are taught these skills in small groups, while other pupils design their models.
109. Pupils ask very relevant questions prior to starting their designs and suggest that 'they need the time to think about their ideas.'
110. In Year 3, pupils develop their designing and making skills further by investigating a range of photograph frames. They explore the strength of card by making prototypes of frames and discuss the reasons why one frame is better than another with confidence. Pupils design their own frame and show more than one view on their design sheet. They have to think about who the frame is for and list the materials they wish to use. Year 4 pupils develop their understanding of fabrics and stitching, by making a money container using hessian. Their task during the inspection was to design and make a pop-up story book, suitable for younger children. They looked at a range of books that included moving parts and explained that 'if the book has a soft back, the pictures won't stand up.' Pupils worked well in groups to create their books and tasks were shared, through discussion, in order to complete the book. They used their own ideas for the story, as well as familiar stories. For example, one group decided to use 'Three Little Wolves' instead of 'Three Little Pigs', because 'the wolf is their favourite character in the story.'
111. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have had opportunities to make biscuits and bread as part of their food technology work. They investigated the properties of a range of biscuits and bread and also the designs used on packets of biscuits. Pupils were able to design and make their ideal biscuit and bread successfully. Their clear evaluations show the things they like about their end product and what they will change if they make it again. Pupils in Year 5 have had a very exciting time making musical instruments. They used their knowledge of instruments to decide whether to make "pluckers, shakers or drums." Their design sheets showed a very clear understanding of the 'design, make and evaluate' process and contained clearly labelled designs. After testing the strength of a range of materials, they selected appropriate materials for their own instruments. The finished instruments were attractive and made a successful sound.
112. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some examples of good teaching in the Infant phase and is very good in the Junior phase. In the very good lessons seen, time was used very well and instructions were clearly communicated to the pupils. Pupils understand the process of designing and making and are given opportunities to discuss their ideas in small groups and as a whole class. Pupils' relationships with their teachers are very good in these lessons and pupils respond very well. They are keen to learn and confident in trying out their ideas. The response of pupils is not as good where the teaching lacks pace, when the work planned gives pupils little opportunity to do practical tasks, and pupils are not interested in the tasks they have to perform.
113. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the work undertaken in school and a sound understanding of the design and make process. Design and technology is taught for half a term, each term and pupils complete three projects each year. In some year groups, this work is linked to work in other areas of learning. A nationally agreed scheme of work is in place, but this needs to be reviewed and adapted to ensure that pupils have more opportunities for practical tasks. Younger

pupils need more opportunities to explore their own ideas, rather than use one idea for all their models. There is a need to look at the progression of pupils' understanding of mechanisms throughout the school and how manufactured construction kits are used to help pupils to understand how things move. A portfolio of work is available showing a small sample of work undertaken during the last four years. Photographs are also used to keep a record of work achieved. Assessment sheets are in place to record the development of designing and making skills of individual pupils when the product is completed, but these are not implemented throughout the school. The storage for design and technology materials is satisfactory. Resources have improved since the last inspection, but there are still limited resources for food technology and the school requires more manufactured construction kits. ICT is used appropriately to support pupils' work.

GEOGRAPHY

114. Standards are similar to those expected of pupils by the ages of 7 and 11. This reflects satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below national expectations. Pupils are achieving well, including those with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language. Only one lesson was seen in the Infant phase, and because of the organisation of the curriculum, only a limited amount of recorded work was seen. Discussions with pupils, however, gave a clear picture of what the pupils know about the subject, the Year 6 pupils being particularly informative and enthusiastic.
115. Pupils in Year 2 have an awareness of places other than their own locality. They make sensible comparisons between Manchester, Liverpool and Bolton. From their studies of a Scottish island, they know that the houses there are not terraced but are often spaced out widely, with more land available. The travels of Barnaby Bear give pupils some perspective and knowledge of a much wider world. An attractive display indicates the places he visits and gives information about them. As a consequence, pupils know the names of places abroad and something of the climate and the food. A good link has been made with history in pupils' learning about Captain Scott. They know about the expedition to the Antarctic, and are aware of the impact of the climate on the people involved. Their knowledge of their own locality is rather meagre.
116. Pupils in Year 6 have been studying rivers. Although no fieldwork took place, some ingenious teaching allowed the pupils to investigate the flow of water and erosion. They have created their own maps on a local walk and they are familiar with the basic elements of maps, such as the use of symbols, keys and scale. Their local knowledge is limited, with one suggestion for a local river being the Thames! However, pupils do know about the wider implications of the subject. They understand the link between people and places and make comparisons between other peoples' lives and their own. In some classes, there is insufficient recording of work and there is no reflection of the knowledge and understanding that the pupils express verbally. The recently introduced scheme of work is adhered to very closely and has not yet been adapted to the school's needs. Opportunities are missed to widen pupils' experiences. For example, Year 5 pupils study water. The opportunity to consider areas of drought, such as in Africa, and to think about how children there have to cope, is not exploited. Such a consideration would add not only to the pupils' knowledge of geography, but also to their understanding of and empathy with other cultures.
117. The new co-ordinator has already been very active in her role, comparing samples of pupils' work and monitoring lessons. She is aware of the need to increase the use of field studies and visitors to enhance learning. There is no formal assessment in place which tracks pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Literacy is well supported, with pupils using a range of writing activities such as weather reports, diaries and letters, in a Year 3 class. No examples were seen of pupils using mathematical skills. Older pupils, particularly, make good use of information and communication technology, using the Internet for research. Pupils' learning is further enhanced when teachers take the trouble to provide displays, such as an excellent Year 6 display of work on rivers. Resources are satisfactory.

HISTORY

118. Standards are in line with national expectations by the ages of both seven and eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A nationally agreed scheme is now in place, the time allocated for this subject has increased and more emphasis is placed on the use of historical sources for investigation. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving at a satisfactory level and making good progress.
119. In the infant classes, younger pupils learn about homes long ago and show an understanding of differences between the past and the present when identifying items in the kitchen. They know that they find information about homes in the past by asking their grandparents, looking in books and by visiting museums. Pupils are beginning to understand the concepts of 'old' and 'new' when they look at old toys and compare them with the toys they have today. For example, they comment on a wooden boat, linking this to Noah's Ark, and suggest that 'it might not float as well as a plastic boat.' In Year 2, pupils study historical events, such as the Fire of London and consider the lives of Florence Nightingale, Guy Fawkes and Captain Scott.
120. In Year 3, pupils use historical evidence well to find out about the Vikings and how they travelled to other countries. They offer many ideas, in discussion, about what the ships would be like and good resources are available for them to investigate their ideas. They use this evidence well and present their findings confidently, giving reasons for their answers. Pupils list the occasions when Britain was invaded accurately and by whom, giving the correct dates in chronological order.
121. The older pupils study the Ancient Greeks and compare the similarities and differences between their religion and our own. They show clear understanding of what a Greek archaeologist does, suggesting that "he finds artefacts to go into museums." Pupils use a range of maps well to compare the explorer's knowledge of the world in Tudor times with that of the present day and to discover how maps changed as a result of these explorations. They compare exploration at the time of the Tudors with exploration of the world today. For example, they suggest that the Tudors explored new lands by sea, but today explorers study space and life in the depths of the ocean. In Year 6, pupils have good opportunities to work in groups when learning about Greek scholars. They use good reference sources, including the Internet, to find their information and good links are made by the teacher between Greek inventions such as the Archimedes screw and their use in today's world. The more able pupils in Year 6 study the Greek alphabet, and write and decode messages. They use a good selection of books to retrieve information about Greek writing and record this well.
122. The quality of the teaching observed during the inspection was just satisfactory at the age of seven and satisfactory with some good and very good teaching observed by the age of eleven. Where the teaching is good and very good, teachers plan lessons well, with a clear statement of the learning intended in the lesson. This helps pupils to understand what they are doing, and they apply themselves to their tasks enthusiastically. Where teachers' expectations of pupils are high, pupils rise willingly to the challenge and are keen to learn. There is a lack of challenge and an over reliance on duplicated work sheets in the teaching of younger pupils and this leads to pupils losing interest and not giving of their best. Many teachers manage behaviour very positively but, on occasions, this is not the case and pupils' learning is affected. The teaching of history has improved as more resources have been purchased for each unit of work. However, there is a need to provide more artefacts to further support pupils' learning. The subject leader is new to this post, but has a sound overview of the work throughout the school. Since teachers changed classes at the start of this academic year, they are all teaching new aspects of the history curriculum. A curriculum review will take place at the end of the academic year and there will be adjustments or changes where necessary to improve the provision for history throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Attainment at the end of the infant phase and at the end of the junior phase meets national expectations. Standards in this subject are greatly enhanced by the provision of a superb information and communication technology (ICT) suite. By the end of the infant phase, pupils use ICT to design a new coat for Joseph using "paint". They are able to generate text and insert appropriate pictures and save and retrieve information. By the end of the junior phase, pupils are able to use Powerpoint to write multi-media presentations about themselves and their families. They can use spreadsheets appropriately, for example, when compiling data about football clubs. Pupils are aware of their audience and the need for quality in their presentations. Pupils at St Bede routinely use ICT as a tool to help their work in other areas of the curriculum, particularly literacy.
124. Teaching and learning is good in both the infant and junior phases, for all pupils, including those having special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. It was possible to see five lessons in this subject; in three of these the teaching was very good and in the other two it was good. The school makes very efficient use of its ICT suite; all classes are timetabled for one hour per week there and the computers are networked to the computers in the classrooms, enabling further work to be carried out in class. Assessment is not yet used effectively to monitor pupils' progress in this subject. The school development plan appropriately identifies further work in control, monitoring and modelling as a priority.
125. Pupils' response is very good indeed. They show great eagerness for, and interest in, this subject. Pupils work hard in practising their skills and work co-operatively very well.
126. The co-ordinator for this subject is extremely capable. She has already provided some in-service training for colleagues and has monitored teaching in classes through the school, providing colleagues with both verbal and written feedback. There are appropriate computers in every classroom, which are all networked together and networked to the suite. The school is linked to the Internet and has its own web site. Great improvements have been made since the last inspection in terms of the hardware available; standards remain in line with national expectations.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Spanish

127. Pupils attain levels appropriate to their age by Year 6. The subject is taught in weekly sessions of 30 minutes. As pupils develop the skills of listening to and communicating in Spanish it makes a valuable extension to their cultural awareness, speaking and listening skills and confidence. Teaching is of a good standard and currently benefits from the enthusiastic input of a native speaker, who works in tandem with the regular specialist teacher. As a result, pupils are making good progress and by Year 6 they achieve a level of understanding that is above average and speaking skills that are in line with those expected.
128. Pupils understand a range of classroom instructions, such as 'stand up', 'sit down', 'repeat' and 'copy'. They know how to greet one another and respond to greetings and they have a good command of numbers up to 60. Higher attaining pupils count beyond this and are developing convincing accents. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the alphabet and are beginning to differentiate between the sounds of letters. They enjoy playing games of hangman where they have to identify spellings accurately. Pupils' understanding is good and they benefit from listening to the natural delivery and speed of a native speaker. Pupils follow instructions and corrections readily and strive to imitate the given accent with much enjoyment and application. Teaching places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' command of sounds and this is reflected in the attainment of most pupils. However, in the lessons seen there was not enough time for them to repeat and practise phrases. Pupils are good at pronouncing individual words, but are not always confident at stringing these together into sentences. They identify key words and respond well to instruction, which is almost exclusively in Spanish. In Year 5, pupils know the day of the week and some of the months of the year. They know how to tell their own name and their age. Nonetheless, this information is generally given in single word answers rather than in phrases. In

Year 6, pupils understand a wider range of vocabulary and talk about the weather, the time and their family. They have increased confidence in speaking but their responses are still limited to a few words, rather than fluent phrases.

129. Teaching is good and creates a challenging environment, to which pupils respond very positively. The teacher's quick fire questions on numbers prompted a rapid response from pupils and encouraged a sense of fun and competition. In playing hangman, pupils were intensely committed to outwitting their teacher. Lessons are generally conducted at a brisk and stimulating pace, but when activities over-run, they are not always curtailed in order to make full and balanced use of the short time available. Teaching places an appropriate emphasis on spoken as against written activities, but pupils' reading skills are satisfactorily developed through the written prompts that are displayed in class. Pupils develop their writing skills by copying vocabulary and phrases. The amount they are asked to write and learn for homework is appropriate in quantity and quality. Pupils are helped to acquire vocabulary through linking new words to pictures, but their work is not always thoroughly checked and marked to eradicate errors. Pupils have enjoyed a beneficial correspondence with a school in Spain, but this has ceased since the recent reorganisation of the Spanish school. There are plans to establish contact with another Spanish school and there are some useful links with schools and pupils in other parts of Europe. There is a very positive approach to encouraging pupils' awareness of foreign languages and culture. Pupils are encouraged to practise any foreign language they know when the opportunity arises, such as in replying to registers. Assessment of pupils' progress is effective but informal and is used to guide teachers' planning of their learning. No objective testing of pupils takes place to help establish their levels of competence against suggested National Curriculum levels. Records of pupils' attainment are satisfactory and shared with the secondary schools when pupils transfer.

MUSIC

130. The previous inspection found that standards were just in line with national expectations by the end of the infant phase, but just below the national average by the end of the junior phase. It is not possible to make a judgement of present standards for the infants, due to lack of firm evidence. However, standards by the time pupils leave school at eleven are now in line with national expectations, showing an improvement since the previous inspection.
131. Infant and junior pupils sing 'Make the world a better place' during an assembly. They sing with interest and enthusiasm, keeping good time and rhythm. Infant pupils in Year 2 start to learn about pitch. They are taking time to appreciate the new vocabulary and its meaning and therefore progress is slow; judgements on standards achieved are not possible. Pupils in the junior phase develop singing further. For example, in Year 4, pupils perform well and sing with confidence, matching appropriate actions to 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. They improve their performance further whilst singing, 'One finger, one thumb', again accompanying their singing with actions. They are challenged to use their thinking skills by leaving out stanzas but continuing with the actions. This gives added interest and pupils really enjoy their singing, seeking to improve their performances. Overall their learning is sound. Year 5 pupils, sing with good levels of attention and correct pitch when singing 'London's Burning'. They sing in harmony, experimenting with singing in two parts and then four; they achieve a good level of success. Year 6 pupils select sounds to match events within storylines, then discuss how composers work, learning soundly from their experienced teacher. A Year 6 pupil relates how she learned about the different types of instruments and how they function when she was a Year 5 pupil. She adds that she learned a lot about music in Year 5.
132. Junior pupils are able to develop their musical skills during additional lessons and extra-curricular activities. Thirteen Year 5 and 6 pupils practise their brass instruments (five trumpets, two cornets, two trombones, a euphonium, a baritone and tenor horn and a tuba). Pupils make good progress in a useful, purposeful lesson seen; they show real enthusiasm in their work. Over 30 pupils attended choir practice during the week of the inspection. They practise singing in two parts and they achieve well. The choir, run by a former member of staff, is supported well by an assistant headteacher. Pupils also benefit by listening to visiting musicians; a string quartet has previously played for the pupils at the school.

133. Music in assemblies introduces pupils to different musicians and to different types of music. During the inspection period, pupils were able to listen to music by Chopin.
134. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and, in one lesson, very good. In the very good lesson, the teacher demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and as a result pupils made very good gains in their knowledge and skills. All other lessons were satisfactory, with some areas of strengths such as good introductions, when teachers review previous learning and some good direct teaching. However, a few teachers show a lack of self-assurance and confidence in their teaching. Pupils of all ability levels achieve satisfactorily, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. However, a small minority of pupils spoil the flow of lessons by behaving inappropriately. When these pupils do focus and apply themselves, following teacher intervention, they likewise achieve at a satisfactory level.
135. The co-ordinator, new to the post, provides sound leadership for the subject. The nationally agreed scheme of work has been adopted. This combination of schemes is used in the junior phase, but it has only just commenced in the infant phase and is taking time to establish. The co-ordinator is aware that she needs to attend both music and co-ordinator training to develop further. She is also aware of the need to support staff in the adoption of the nationally agreed scheme. The co-ordinator and an assistant headteacher regularly monitor teachers' planning. The co-ordinator has been able to monitor teaching of the older pupils, and plans now to monitor teaching in the Infant phase. Resources have been extended since the previous inspection, but more are needed to give all pupils the opportunity to develop their performing skills. The co-ordinator is presently looking to develop the use of an annexe building as a music base. This will give more opportunity for pupils to sing and to perform music in a freer setting.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. Standards in physical education are broadly in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of both the infant and junior phases. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The only aspect of the curriculum seen taught during the inspection was gymnastics.
137. Pupils learn to swim in Year 5. Standards overall are similar to those seen in most schools. A significant number are achieving a standard well in excess of the basic National Curriculum level. However, around 20 per cent of the current Year 6 have not achieved the basic level. There is no strategy in place to address this. The facilities for swimming are not ideal, in that those pupils who cannot swim are restricted to a small area of the pool and queue to enter the water.
138. The teaching of gymnastics is satisfactory. Teachers manage lessons well, with great stress given to safety in both performance and in handling apparatus. Pupils are dressed appropriately with some teachers providing particularly good role models in this respect. They have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and performance. Pupils respond accordingly, with hard effort and application to improve themselves. The behaviour of the vast majority is good. Although teachers look for quality in performance, not all take the opportunities to emphasise skills sufficiently. Occasionally, their concern for safety results in some lack of pace to the lesson. A very good lesson for Year 4 pupils was based on vigorous but purposeful activity throughout. The pupils reflected the very good role model of the teacher and worked with energy and enthusiasm. The teacher ensured that the pupils understood their tasks and set time limits for them to practise. No time was wasted. When given the opportunity to observe others perform, pupils made helpful comments about improvements and then worked at improving their own performance. They showed above average ability in balancing activities and in their attitude to the subject. Pupils in Year 6 show levels of control and co-ordination in line with expectations for their age. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
139. The subject has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. The impact of a new and enthusiastic co-ordinator is beginning to be felt. As his own teaching of the subject is of a very

high standard, the opportunities for him to monitor the teaching of others are beneficial. Pupils are taught a full curriculum, but its organisation and the time allocated to physical education mean that pupils experience only one aspect of it each week. This arrangement should be reviewed. The co-ordinator is aware of some deficiencies in resources. For example, most of the gymnastics benches are unsuitable for all except upper juniors. The storage of games equipment is unsatisfactory. There is little assessment of pupils' acquisition of skills and personal development and swimming records do not appear to be maintained regularly. Extra provision is made through various clubs for football and netball. There are links with professional clubs. A residential opportunity for all pupils in Years 5 and 6 provides them with experiences of outdoor and adventurous activities as well as supporting their personal development.