

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANNE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sale

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106343

Headteacher: Mrs J Brahney

Reporting inspector: Jean-Pierre Kirkland
4483

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th May 2001

Inspection number: 213417

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Trinity Road Sale Cheshire
Postcode:	M33 3ES
Telephone number:	(0161) 912 3660
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M McDonald
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4483	Jean-Pierre Kirkland	Registered inspector	Foundation stage Science Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
9928	Alan Dobson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
30439	Malcolm Heyes	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Geography History	
17710	Maureen Sillifant	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Anne's Church of England Primary School is voluntary aided and has a close relationship with its local parish church. There are 198 pupils on roll, making it about average in size nationally. The school is situated in an area of owner occupied housing, although the pupils come from a wider area, including a significant number from houses for rent from the local authority. The very small percentage of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds (under two per cent) is fluent in English and there is no language barrier at all. Attainment on entry is generally below average as the initial assessments show that the school has few children in the higher attaining category, but a significant number in the lower attaining bracket. There are approximately nineteen per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is about average, but a significant proportion need the involvement of outside specialists, including the one per cent with a Statement of Special Educational Need. A significant proportion of pupils enters and leaves the school at times other than the normal entry and leaving times, causing some disruption to their education. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals has been increasing recently, and the school currently has twenty-two per cent in this category, a figure above the national average. At the previous inspection in 1999, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Anne's is now a good school with improvements in many significant areas. Standards are rising and are broadly in line with national averages for seven-year-olds and above national averages for eleven-year-olds. Teaching, learning and the quality of the curriculum are good. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. The quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher is very good, and particularly effective in initiating change and sustaining progress. With low costs per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables pupils to achieve well above average standards in music, and above average standards in English, science, art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) at the age of eleven.
- Provides good teaching throughout the school, thereby enabling pupils to learn well in a majority of lessons.
- Encourages and develops very good attitudes to work from pupils, with very good levels of personal development.
- By providing a calm and orderly learning environment, achieves very good relationships at all levels throughout the school, and very good levels of behaviour.
- Gives pupils the confidence to succeed, by ensuring that provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Has achieved a very good level of leadership and management, so that there is clarity of vision for the future and a clear and shared commitment to continue to improve and to raise standards.

What could be improved

- Providing work which is challenging for higher attaining pupils, and which extends their knowledge and understanding more effectively.
- Ensure that assessment knowledge is used consistently across the school to set tasks which match the levels of all pupils in order to help them make the best possible progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a very good level of improvement since the school was inspected two years ago in 1999 when it was identified as having serious weaknesses. Those weaknesses have now been eradicated to a significant extent and there have been improvements in other areas as well. Teaching has improved substantially – there is now no unsatisfactory teaching in the school, and most teaching is good. Inspectors found standards rising as a result, with better quality learning taking place in classrooms. ICT

has improved in terms of overall provision and in terms of pupils' standards of achievement. There has been a significant improvement in curriculum provision and behaviour from pupils, resulting in rising standards. Moral and personal development is now good, and there are effective strategies in place for governors to examine their spending decisions critically. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of leadership and management in the school, providing a stable and secure base for continued improvements, of which the school is very capable.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's results in recent years have been affected adversely by the disruption caused through huge changes in staffing and increased numbers of pupils entering and leaving mid-way through their education. Some caution needs to be exercised in the interpretation of these past results, but overall inspectors found standards rising in Year 6. Pupils' work and lesson observations showed that significant gains had been made in knowledge and understanding during the year, with similar improvements taking place in the work of other pupils in other classes. Currently in Year 6, standards of work seen were above national averages in English and science, and close to the national picture in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in all these subjects, however, is not as high as the national average, and this is an area for improvement. Standards in art and design, design and technology and ICT are above the levels normally expected from eleven-year-olds. Pupils' attainment is well above average in music.

For children under six in the foundation stage, levels of attainment are above average. Children enter the school with levels of attainment below those normally expected. Through good teaching, they make very good progress and the majority are ready to start the National Curriculum before they leave the reception class.

By the age of seven, standards are broadly in line with the national averages in reading and writing, showing an improvement since the last national test results were published in 2000. Inspectors found standards in mathematics and science to be similar to the last set of published national test results which are broadly average. Pupils at age seven reach the national averages in all other subjects, exceeding them in music, art and design and in ICT.

Overall, progress throughout the school is good. This is especially true in English, and improvements in progress are now more in evidence for science. Progress over time is currently satisfactory in mathematics, with some evidence of better progress being made more recently, but unlikely to influence the test results at age eleven this year.

The school has set realistic improvement targets for pupils in English and mathematics as part of its procedures for monitoring progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils like coming to school, and they work hard and show enthusiasm and interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good and a substantial improvement since the previous inspection report. There was one temporary exclusion last year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good and a strength in promoting positive learning throughout the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory and in line with national averages. Pupils arrive on time for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good throughout the school and this is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. During the inspection, two per cent was judged to be outstanding, thirteen per cent judged as very good, seventy-one per cent judged as good and fifteen per cent judged as satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen.

Teaching is good in the foundation stage, where children benefit from staff with good knowledge and understanding, and who provide an interesting and stimulating learning environment in which to work and play. This ensures a good start to children's education, especially in learning the basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy, as well as personal development. In the rest of the school, the good teaching continues to enable most pupils to progress well in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching which identifies and supports their needs appropriately. They make good progress towards their individual targets. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes given routine extension work in lessons which, while consolidating their learning, does not always extend knowledge and understanding sufficiently. Generally, teachers have good knowledge of subjects of the National Curriculum, they structure their lessons to allow for plenty of independent learning through investigation or research, for example, and they use available resources well. Homework builds well on classroom learning throughout the school. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is of a good standard, with imaginative work linking in to other areas such as science, ICT, history and geography.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good and fully meeting statutory requirements. The curriculum is being developed in an imaginative way to help inspire pupils to learn more effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, with appropriate support for learning and managing behavioural problems.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	No special provision required as these pupils have fluency and as good understanding of English as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good and providing a very effective backcloth for learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; pupils are looked after well in a secure environment.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good; parents are kept appropriately informed of progress and events within the school. Parents find the school approachable and are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good; this is a significant improvement, ensuring clear vision, shared commitment and positive educational direction for the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good; governors are well-informed, professional and supportive of the school; they ensure that all financial considerations are reviewed to ensure best value for money is achieved. A number of statutory requirements are not met in the school prospectus or governors' annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good, with rigorous and sustained monitoring and evaluation taking place on a regular basis as the school strives to improve its results and overall provision.
The strategic use of resources	Good in all areas. The school has acted to ensure that all subjects are well provided for, and that resources are shared equitably.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The clear leadership and good management by the headteacher, who has made great strides in the past two years.• Pupils like the school and enjoy lessons.• They are able to approach the headteacher or staff with problems, suggestions or when difficulties arise.• The school expects children to work hard and achieve well.• Behaviour has improved recently.• The school helps pupils become mature and sensible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of homework, especially in Year 6.• Higher attaining pupils being challenged more effectively.

Inspectors endorse the positive views of parents. Inspectors found the levels of homework and type of tasks throughout the school to be appropriate, especially in Year 6, where there was adequate preparation for transfer to the high school. Inspectors agreed with parents that there could be more challenging work set for higher attaining pupils across the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Inspectors found standards currently throughout the school to be in line with national averages in mathematics and above in science. These are an improvement on the latest set of national test results in those subjects. In English, inspectors found standards to be close to national averages at age seven and above national averages at age eleven. This is an improvement for seven-year-olds, but a decline for pupils aged eleven since the national results were published last year. There were no judgements made in the previous inspection report of inspectors' findings in 1999. Inspectors found little significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
2. National test results for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed below average standards in reading and writing, and average standards in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science reported results close to the national picture. Comparisons made to pupils in similar schools show average results in reading and writing and well above average results in mathematics. For eleven-year-olds, the Year 2000 results in English were well above average, but well below average in mathematics and science. The similar schools comparison shows well above results in English and below average results in mathematics and science.
3. Overall, the school is not happy with its most recent results and is now in the process of focusing its efforts in lifting standards. As inspectors confirmed, standards are rising overall, with the most significant improvements being in reading and writing for seven-year-olds, and in mathematics and science for eleven-year-olds. Standards for foundation stage children in the reception class are below average when they enter the school at age four, and above expected levels when they start the National Curriculum at the end of the reception year. These are similar findings to the previous inspection.
4. Results recently have been adversely affected by two significant factors:
 - The previous inspection report identified an unacceptable level of unsatisfactory and poor teaching. As a result, there have been major changes in the staffing and improvements in the way in which pupils are taught. The huge turnover of staff, coupled with two staff currently on temporary maternity leave, has meant a considerable disruption in the continuity of teaching, which has affected pupils' learning adversely. This particularly affected the older pupils in the school, some of whom had temporary teachers for two thirds of the time in the previous year.
 - Also, in the infants' section of the school, a large influx of new pupils took place at the end of Year 1 following the previous inspection. Many of these pupils, thirty-five per cent of the year, were analysed as having special educational needs, some with emotional and behavioural problems. The school made great efforts to accommodate these pupils successfully, and using the support services of the LEA was very competent in its approach. But nevertheless, such a high percentage of lower attaining pupils had an adverse effect on the subsequent national test results. During the past two years, there has been increased and relatively high pupil mobility. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving at times other than the normal entry and leaving times averages out at over ten per cent.
5. Overall, inspectors found that standards in speaking and listening were above average towards the end of Year 2, and standards of writing and reading were close to the national averages. Progress in speaking and listening is good, with most pupils learning to be attentive and to follow instructions well. Speech is generally articulate and clear. Writing progresses satisfactorily, including punctuation and spelling. Subjects such as science play an important part in helping pupils to record their work logically, and to practise their writing skills. Most pupils progress satisfactorily in reading and reach the national average by age seven. At this age, reading is generally fluent and pupils read with expression.

6. In mathematics towards the end of Year 2, pupils' mental ability is close to the national expectation for seven-year-olds. Progress is satisfactory. Pupils learn to explain their strategies, and through good teaching, learn a range of new strategies for solving problems. Written calculations are in line with the national average, and pupils have developed satisfactory understanding of mathematical shapes and measurement. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress and reach average standards towards the end of Year 2. They learn to record their work, and how to undertake a good quality investigation, so that the findings reflect a fair cross-section of evidence.
7. By age eleven, speaking and listening, reading and writing have progressed well, and pupils exceed the national averages in Year 6. Progress across the junior stage is good, and accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Pupils explain their work enthusiastically and with interest and meaning. They talk very clearly in class and to adults. Words are well pronounced and pupils learn to use a wide range of appropriate vocabulary, above average for their age. Writing develops well and reflects the interest pupils show in their work. Written work is very neatly presented, dated and ruled off. Good attention is paid to spelling and appropriate punctuation. Technical language is used frequently, being emphasised well in other subjects such as geography, history and science. Pupils' reading also progresses well, and reaches standards above average, with many reaching well above standards. All pupils read independently by age eleven, and a significant number reach this stage in Year 5. Text is read with fluency, expressions and feeling. Pupils have a good understanding of the plot in fiction, they describe major characters well, and predict possible outcomes from stories.
8. Progress is satisfactory in mathematics, again with more accelerated learning taking place in Years 5 and 6. Mental agility speeds up and reaches an appropriate level by age eleven. Pupils grasp basic number patterns appropriately, know and understand the properties of shapes and they have developed a good understanding of graphs. This latter is reinforced by good work undertaken in ICT and science. Science is well taught from Year 3 onwards and pupils make consistently good progress in all classes. By age eleven, they have reached above average standards. Unfortunately, due to the disruption caused by severe staffing changes, earlier work has not always been effectively consolidated and there are some gaps. This is having some adverse effects on overall standards and staff are concerned that it might affect test results. Standards observed in learning in classrooms, however, show above average standards for Years 5 and 6.
9. The greatest gains have been made in two subjects, ICT and music, both of which are now significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in ICT are above average throughout the school, including in the foundation stage. Progress is good. Pupils quickly learn the basic functions of machines and how to access programs, which they employ to enhance their work across a range of subjects. They learn their way around the keyboard, acquiring the basic skills of saving and printing their work. Control of the mouse develops well, and older pupils become proficient in designing their own control programs, which are used to make models move to a set pattern. In music, standards are above average by age seven and well above average by age eleven. In music, pupils learn the basic skills of singing well, and their performance in assemblies and during hymn practices is above average. Towards the end of Year 6, pupils have acquired a very good level of understanding in music. They recognise the intentions of great composers, and choosing their own instruments, imitate their style very well when composing. Knowledge of families of the orchestra and the instruments that make up each family is well above average. They use technical language well when describing music.
10. Progress is satisfactory up to the age of seven in geography, history and physical education. Progress is good for this age group in art and design, and in design and technology. This good progress continues up to the age of eleven in these subjects, and remains satisfactory in geography, history and physical education.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their literacy targets. Supported in some lessons by classroom assistants, and in others with suitably modified work or tasks from the class teacher, pupils acquire basic skills well, and show gains in their reading, writing and the way in which they speak. A similar rate of progress is sustained in mathematics

and science, where learning of basic skills and subject specific language is generally good. Pupils who have behaviour targets are also well supported, with additional help from the local education authority (LEA) and pupils make good progress. From an early age, they learn improved social skills, learn not to shout out and to take turns. Support assistants play an important role in measuring and supporting their good progress, so that they learn effectively and do not disrupt the learning of others. The very few pupils identified from ethnic minority backgrounds with English as an additional language have as good English language skills as others in the class. They make similar progress to their peers. The school has not yet adopted a uniformly consistent approach to ensuring that higher attaining pupils, including those who are gifted or talented, make the progress of which they are capable. In some classes, there is insufficiently challenging work to stretch their imagination and understanding, and these pupils make satisfactory progress as opposed to better progress. The latest set of national test results at age seven and age eleven reflect this. In other classes, however, teachers are now beginning to plan work that challenges their thinking and logic, and takes them on to a higher level of learning. Progress in these lessons, which occur in some lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6 in English, science and music, for example, is good and provides a positive model for other staff to use.

12. The school has begun to track and monitor individual pupils' progress appropriately, and this has resulted in appropriate targets being set for improved performance in English, mathematics and science, based on good quality assessment information. This good practice has yet to be confirmed in all lesson planning with work which is matched appropriately to the needs of all pupils in each class. However, the school is making good progress in recognising this as the next step in its development process, and reflects this in its future improvement planning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The pupils have a very positive attitude to school life. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection. They enjoy school, which is a point confirmed overwhelmingly by parents. Once in class, the pupils settle down quickly and are eager to learn. They listen very well, follow instructions first time and work hard often showing a real keenness to do their best. Their work is neat and they are proud to show it to staff and visitors. The good teaching is often reflected in the pupils' sheer enthusiasm for a subject. For instance during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were fascinated by learning about micro-organisms in science. In that week at least, science was their favourite subject – and a major talking point.
14. Children in the foundation stage in the reception class make a good start in their early development. They have good attitudes to learning, and settle down quickly to work. They learn to co-operate well when painting or using the computer, and they behave very well in all sessions, taking turns and readily helping one another. They learn to listen well and to follow instructions. Through a good focus on independent learning, they soon begin to make choices and work appropriately unaided.
15. Behaviour in the school is very good and shows a marked improvement since the previous inspection. In lessons most pupils are very well behaved. This is now a strength of the school, with only one exclusion recently of a short fixed period. The school rules are simple and well understood. High standards are expected and achieved without a strict regime. Movement around the school is very orderly. In assembly, behaviour is exemplary with pupils very attentive and showing a correct respect during prayers. Dining is a civilised occasion, again a point criticised in the previous inspection. Table manners are good and noise levels are low allowing easy conversation. Playgrounds have a very friendly atmosphere with no signs of oppressive behaviour. Pupils report that bullying is not a worry, but if an incident occurs they know who to tell and express confidence in the staff's ability to sort out any problems.
16. Relationships in the school are very good and a strength. This again is an improvement from the previous inspection. Pupils get on well with each other and their teachers. The close rapport that often exists in the classroom, particularly during question and answer sessions in numeracy and literacy lessons, ensures that the learning is both enjoyable and effective. When working in

groups, pupils collaborate very well. They are keen to share and happy to listen to each other's point of view.

17. As pupils move up through the school they develop their independent learning skills well, for instance doing research regularly for homework, and making good use of the library and Internet at school. Older pupils show enthusiasm in taking on extra responsibilities ranging from preparing the hall for assemblies to helping the infant teachers during lunch-time. The School Council has become an effective forum for airing and discussing pupils' views. Most pupils, by the time they are in Year 6 are maturing into sensible, responsible and interesting individuals and developing opinions of their own. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
18. The pupils' enthusiasm, behaviour and relationships are having a major positive impact on their learning.
19. Attendance figures for the school are satisfactory. The rate is similar to the national average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality at the school is very good. Registration is prompt and efficient. Lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and this is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. A significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching was recorded two years ago; this has now been completely eradicated, and as a result, learning in all lessons is never less than satisfactory, and in eighty-five per cent of lessons, learning is good or better. The effects of this improved learning have not yet been seen in national tests. Due to the fact that much of this improvement is very recent, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not had the benefit of better teaching over a longer period of time, and there are still some gaps in their learning. During the inspection, two per cent of lessons were judged to be outstanding, thirteen per cent judged as very good, seventy-one per cent judged as good and fifteen per cent judged as satisfactory. Teaching is a strength of the school.
21. Teaching in the foundation stage in the reception class is good. Children benefit from staff with good knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage curriculum, and who provide an interesting, challenging and stimulating learning environment in which to work and play. This ensures a good start to children's education, especially in learning the basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy, as well as personal development and computer skills. The teacher and nursery nurse both have good clear understanding of how younger children learn, and they use this knowledge well in planning lessons. Children are given a wide range of choices on a daily basis and they are taught to work unaided and independently. Challenges are high, especially in numeracy and literacy, as children learn the basic skills of letter writing, sentence formation and number. The early identification of problems by staff ensures that all children are given appropriate support, help and guidance, and this ensures equality of opportunity and access to the work in their early years.
22. In the rest of the school, the good teaching continues to enable most pupils to progress well in their learning. The characteristics of good teaching are:
 - good lesson structure, which includes a good balance between teacher talk and practical sessions;
 - keeping pupils on task by ensuring lessons have sufficiently good subject content, and that resources are readily to hand so no time is wasted;
 - good links between subjects, so that learning in one subject is reinforced appropriately in another, thereby consolidating new learning effectively; and
 - ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties, or those with behavioural problems are supported and catered for effectively, and are thereby fully included in all activities.

23. In English and mathematics, the national strategies have been successfully introduced, and progress in learning communication skills, reading, writing for different purposes, numeracy and using mathematical information in a variety of settings is good. Teachers focus well in lessons in subjects such as science, geography, history and music on the learning of subject specific technical language. Teachers also ensure that writing is developed wherever possible. This occurs well, for instance, when recording experiments in science, writing about life in Ancient Greece in history, or explaining cliff erosion in geography.
24. In the best lessons, where pupils make very good progress in their learning, teachers match the work to the varying needs of all groups of pupils in the class effectively. This is now happening in many Year 5 and Year 6 lessons in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. The teachers have produced either differently styled worksheets, which demand different degrees of detail in the answers, or they have produced tasks resulting in different levels of learning. In this way in Year 6 English, for example, lower attaining pupils have challenges appropriate to their levels, and cope well with tasks such as learning alternative words of conjunction while expanding their vocabulary appropriately. Higher attaining pupils in the same lesson began to learn the difference between different clauses, using them effectively when describing the erosion of cliffs. In Year 5 science, lower attaining pupils reinforced their understanding of the non-returnable valve by experimenting further with a different design; average attaining pupils began to examine the effects of exercise on health, while the higher attainers moved on to examine the complex structure of the heart in more detail. These very good lessons also have a very good investigative, research or practical approach, which enables pupils to learn by doing, experiment or looking up in books or from computer programs. This additional and sustained responsibility on the part of the pupils to learn for themselves is a strong motivating force in the acquisition of knowledge for those pupils who come to school eager to learn in the first place. Lessons in design and technology for junior pupils contain very good examples of independent work, and good evaluation. Teachers plan very well to ensure that personal development is incorporated well into the learning process.
25. Good lessons contain effective challenges and a good balance between practical and other activities. Time is used effectively, as in music in Year 4, for example, when pupils had ample opportunities to listen, discuss and then perform. In Year 1 mathematics, there is a good balance kept between mental recall at the start, purposeful questioning around doubling numbers in a sequence, and practical problem solving exercises later on. What distinguishes the good lesson from the satisfactory one is usually the degree of challenge for all pupils, and in particular, the higher attaining pupils. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes given routine extension work in lessons which, while consolidating their learning, does not always extend knowledge and understanding sufficiently. Satisfactory teaching is often aimed at the average level, and pupils move on at their own pace without specific guidance; in better lessons, specific work is directed at particular groups of pupils, who then follow a lead, and make better progress. In general, there is some inconsistency in the way in which higher attaining pupils are given challenging work in many subjects and in some classes. Years 5 and 6 are usually exceptions, and this is where inspectors found the greatest consistency in overall learning taking place.
26. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching which identifies and supports their needs appropriately. They make good progress towards their individual targets. Individual education plans, as well as behaviour targets, are used regularly and effectively in lessons. Support staff have clearly defined supportive roles and they work well alongside the class teacher in this capacity. The school has made extensive use of the LEA services to ensure that all pupils learn to the best of their abilities, and has enhanced provision for special educational needs support from its own budget.
27. Generally, teachers have good knowledge of subjects of the National Curriculum, they structure their lessons to allow for plenty of independent learning through investigation or research, for example, and they use available resources well. Homework makes a good enhancement to classroom learning throughout the school. It is used especially well in Year 6, where there is good preparation for transfer to the high school. Marking is of a consistently good standard throughout the school, and a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Work is marked regularly and thoroughly. Comments are positive where they deserve to be; they are constructively critical in

other cases, so pupils know clearly what they need to do in order to improve. This consistency is true across teachers and subjects throughout the school. Marking is now a considerable strength of the school in helping pupils to make better progress.

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

28. The school curriculum is good and a relative strength of the school. The previous report had some major criticisms of the school curriculum, all of which have been addressed and there have been significant improvements.
29. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is good. It covers all the areas of learning, and fully meets the requirements of the new foundation stage, with appropriate links into the National Curriculum at the end of the reception year. Planning is good, and while currently a variety of planning methods are being trialled, coverage of all areas is balanced, to ensure that children make the best possible progress in reaching the recommended early learning goals.
30. Overall curriculum planning is good. There are good quality schemes of work in all subjects. Strong links are beginning to be made between subjects, in particular ICT with history, geography and English. The school implemented the nationally recommended schemes of work for all subjects last September and at the present time these are being evaluated across the whole school. At the end of the current year, the teachers plan to alter the curriculum slightly so that it includes areas that have been successful in the past or are of special interest to the school or individual teachers. This will give opportunity for curriculum leaders to take full control and ownership of their subject areas. At the present time the headteacher, deputy head and infant teacher with a co-ordinating role undertake most curriculum monitoring. When reviewing the curriculum, teachers ensure that the in-built progression in the scheme is being retained, as they regard this as a particularly valuable tool for raising standards. All statutory requirements are met including a collective act of worship for all pupils each day. No pupils are withdrawn from assemblies. Curriculum strengths are English, science, art and design, ICT and music, and no subject is judged to be unsatisfactory.
31. The school has devised a policy and curriculum for personal, social and moral education including citizenship. The provision for sex education and teaching about the dangers of misusing drugs is part of this area of the curriculum, and human resources such as the school nurse and a local community policewoman are included in the planning. The school belongs to the LEAs 'Healthy School' scheme. During the inspection, for example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were studying a carefully planned series of lessons on the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Through careful planning, all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. By use of questioning in class, teachers ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to answer questions and contribute fully in debate.
32. The curriculum is enriched by outside school visits for every class during the year and by visitors into the school. Most visits support particular areas of the curriculum such as the recent visit to Chester to study the Roman way of life and its influence on today's society. After-school activities are mainly centred on games, and the school football team plays matches with local schools on a neighbouring secondary school's full size pitch. Visitors into the school include grandparents who make history come alive for the pupils.
33. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. There is good support for learning and behaviour modification, used well in classrooms. There are insufficient opportunities provided in some lessons to extend the learning of the highest attaining pupils. Often the work provided does not extend learning, but merely repeats what is already learnt.
34. Overall the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good and this is a strength of the school. The provision for spiritual development is good. The local parish vicar visits regularly and his musical talents enrich the curriculum in addition to his spiritual and religious input. Clergy from other churches also contribute to whole school assemblies and bring a spiritual dimension. Music in the school and the influence of the church plays a large part in helping to develop a spiritual awareness in the pupils. Of particular value are visits to the local church, singing in the school choir and listening to music at the beginning of assemblies. Some classes

have a quiet moment for a prayer at the end of the day and this gives pupils opportunity to think deeply and reflect on the day.

35. The pupils' moral development is very good, and this shows a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and try hard always to do the right thing. They clearly understand the right course of action in any school situation. Messages given through Bible stories or sharing assemblies are understood and acted upon. Pupils support charities such as the shoe-box Romanian appeal and help to raise funds for the church and school through two annual fetes. They look after their own and other people's property and no evidence of carelessness in this was seen during the inspection.
36. Social development is also very good. The pupils are open and friendly and their behaviour reflects the requirements of the school rules. The school staff promote this in a variety of ways including portraying an open friendly attitude towards each pupil and encouraging good manners in the classroom, in the dining hall and when playing outside. This is particularly apparent in classrooms where pupils are unfailingly considerate to each other and show a mature tolerance. In lessons, pupils work both independently and in a variety of groupings and this develops their social skills. The school ensures it is socially inclusive by making sure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum and after school activities.
37. Pupils are very secure in their own culture with its church foundation and their cultural awareness is good. They live life to the full both at home and in school and are beginning to express mature opinions about their lifestyles. The school endeavours to broaden their knowledge of other cultures through the school curriculum, which includes the study of African art, music from many other cultures and knowledge of the Greek legends. Work in geography includes an examination of the tropical rainforests, and many of the big books used in literacy have a multicultural flavour. Some visits take place to places of cultural interest, although these are not yet developed to the full in art and design, for example.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school's procedures ensure that good care is taken of the pupils. They are well looked after and well supervised at all times. The Christian ethos of care and consideration for others permeates the school. The headteacher and the staff know the pupils well, value them as individuals and treat them with respect. The school is a welcoming, happy, and secure environment.
39. The procedures for child protection are good. The responsible person has been trained and staff are familiar with the school's procedures. Health and safety procedures are very good and reflect the personal involvement of a governor with great experience in this field. Safety is stressed in lessons, for instance the pupils in a Year 6 science lesson were given excellent advice before handling micro-organisms.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good overall. The school takes attendance very seriously. Procedures for parents are very clear, particularly regarding holidays in term time. All absences without reason are rigorously followed up. Registers are very well kept and the data is easily accessible. Attendance is regularly monitored.
41. Procedures for the management of behaviour within the school are good and effective. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Behaviour is no longer an issue in the school. The policy is applied consistently, good behaviour is positively recognised and pupils understand clearly what is expected of them. The procedures introduced after the previous inspection, have proved very effective, so much so that the rewards system has recently been simplified to reflect the far better standards of behaviour that are now normal within the school. Satisfactory records are kept of any inappropriate behaviour and parents are informed and involved when necessary. Bullying and racism are not tolerated. However if an incident occurs, assemblies

and class discussions are used positively to drive home the school's total disapproval of any actions that reflect oppressive or racial behaviour.

42. Procedures for monitoring personal development are informal but satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and give good support when it is needed. Sections in the pupils' annual reports concerning personal qualities and development are of good quality.
43. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. In the foundation stage, after a thorough assessment of pupils when they arrive at the school, teachers monitor on a regular basis what pupils can do and the progress they are making. In Years 1 and 2, there is a formal assessment in English, mathematics and science every term with National Curriculum levels established at the end of every year. In the juniors, very good procedures ensure that in addition to regular class tests, pupils take formal reading tests and optional or statutory assessment tests every year. Individual tracking sheets are used to set future targets for each pupil in Years 5 and 6 and performance is continually monitored against actual results in tests and through class work. At present parents are not informed of these targets although the school has plans to incorporate them into the pupils' annual reports. Marking, criticised in the previous report, is now of a consistently high quality and usually gives pupils a clear indication of what they need to do to improve.
44. The use of assessment in curricular planning is satisfactory overall, although the school is aware that a more detailed analysis of test results will provide information to guide future planning and help standards to be increased further. This is particularly so for higher attaining pupils. At present these pupils are being insufficiently challenged in too many lessons, and test results show underachievement historically for these pupils. The school has plans, once staffing is stable, to use its assessment information more effectively in the planning of work in all subjects across the whole school, so that all classes might benefit from the very good practice now adopted in Years 5 and 6.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. There is a good partnership between the parents and the school with parents very supportive of what the school is trying to do. Parents speak highly of the links with the church and particularly of the involvement of the vicar in the life of the school. Parents report that they are impressed with the leadership and management of the headteacher, they find the staff approachable, they think that the teachers have high expectations of their children – and expect them to work hard. Parents also think that the standard of behaviour has improved and that the school helps their children to become mature and sensible. The inspection team agrees completely with the parents' positive views. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting, inspectors were left in no doubt that parents think the school has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
46. Some parents had concerns about the amount of homework being set. The inspectors found that the levels of homework and the types of task involved to be appropriate throughout the school, especially in Year 6 where there is adequate preparation for transfer to secondary education.
47. A few parents thought that the school was not doing enough for more able children. Inspectors agree. Higher attaining pupils across the school are not being sufficiently challenged.
48. The quality of information supplied to parents is satisfactory overall. The welcome booklet for new parents is of good quality and there is a very helpful leaflet for parents on homework. However the governors' annual report and the prospectus do not meet statutory requirements due to minor omissions, of which the school is aware. These are: in the prospectus there is no mention of the name of the headteacher or chair of governors, no reference to the right of withdrawal from religious education; no indication of the numbers of pupils on roll, and no attendance statistics. In the governors' annual report to parents, missing information includes the address of the chair of governors, the name and address of the clerk and governors' expenses.

49. Parents receive only limited information on their children's future work. Opportunities for parents to meet formally their child's teacher are satisfactory. The majority of pupils' annual reports are of good quality. Progress is usually clearly stated together with pupils' strengths and weaknesses. However targets for improvement are often lost in the text rather than clearly spelt out. The school has plans to state targets more specifically and to inform parents of recent test results. The school hopes this will make the reports more useful for parents wanting to be involved in their child's learning.
50. The school works hard at involving parents and this has a positive impact on the life of the school. Governors have used questionnaires effectively to ascertain parents' views on aspects of the school and acted on points raised. Parents are encouraged to help in the school, and a core of regular helpers make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The association 'Friends of St Anne's' is active and successfully combines fund-raising with social events to the benefit of the whole school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. Leadership and management of the school is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. This improvement in leadership and management has been largely responsible for ensuring that improvements in other areas have taken place, and that the school has moved forward in a very positive direction over the past two years. This was noticed and recorded by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) on a monitoring visit some eight months ago, and current inspectors found such improvements to have continued unabated since then. The main strengths in the leadership and management of the schools are:
 - clarity of vision by the headteacher, shared by her staff and governors;
 - clear aims for the work of the school, fully reflected in subject policies and longer term planning documents;
 - very good procedures and practice in monitoring the curriculum and teaching; and
 - a clear focus on raising standards with appropriate targets for future improvement.
52. The headteacher, newly appointed at the previous inspection, has now had sufficient time to make a positive impact. Tackling the key issues, and especially the unsatisfactory teaching practices highlighted in the previous report became an immediate priority. In a plan shared by staff and governors, and with full support from the LEA, the head has successfully removed the poorer teaching, while improving the overall quality. Raising standards and improving provision have also been part of the vision, laid down in a good quality improvement plan, and latterly in an extended plan for future development. Central to these improvements was the bid for nursery provision, with success in that field being a recent addition to the other successes already achieved. The planning and management of the foundation stage children are good. Now that provisional agreement has been reached over nursery provision, the school has put on hold any future foundation stage planning so that the nursery may be incorporated into such plans.
53. Staff now have delegated powers and have had sufficient training to undertake monitoring activities in their own areas of responsibility. Progress in this field has been good, but the school is still in an interim position. The very large turnover of staff has resulted in new appointments, and not all staff have yet been in a position to accept full subject responsibility, for example, the newly qualified teacher in her first year of teaching. There are currently two other temporary appointments covering maternity leave, and they too, while sharing a major part in the work and development of the school, do not have subject responsibility. This has put a lot of pressure on the senior management team, composed of the headteacher, her deputy and the infant co-ordinator, who have too much responsibility in the longer term. The headteacher, mindful of this, has plans to delegate more widely once the staffing situation is more stable.
54. Policies are in place in all subjects areas and for other aspects of the work of the school. The general quality of these is good, and they are useful documents in guiding the work of the school. Policies have been approved by governors and show appropriate areas for future development in many cases. The current policies reflect fully the school's longer term plans, which give good

priority to those aspects of the school identified as weaknesses in the previous inspection report, or those identified as having been satisfactorily addressed on the interim monitoring visit by HMI more recently.

55. Governors are active, knowledgeable and supportive. They show a keen interest in the work of the school and fulfil their statutory duties to a large extent. A few minor points are currently omitted from the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. Governors share the headteacher's vision fully. Many have been very active and successful in securing funding for the proposed nursery, which will put the school on a par with most others in the immediate area.
56. Governors have a good understanding of the finances of the school, and through appropriate committees, ensure that the best value for money is obtained when making spending decisions and when implementing those decisions. This extends to an examination of some of the benefits, measurable mainly of a qualitative nature, of such spending. A good example of this is keeping an eye on the performance of pupils following the considerable spending on ICT facilities and resources. The strategic financial planning of the school is good. The governing body and finance committee plan very carefully with the headteacher to ensure there is clear vision of the school's current needs and has planned appropriately for the future. Specific grants are used appropriately and are effective throughout the school. The finance committee and headteacher monitor expenditure twice a term as part of their responsibilities within school. The use of ITC in the administration of financial matters by the school's secretary allows the headteacher, senior staff and governors to concentrate on other priorities in school.
57. There are appropriate linked governors to curricular and other areas. Regular contact is kept, which is especially important in the case of pupils with special educational needs. Current provision meets the requirements of the Code of Practice in full. Two years ago, the school experienced a larger than normal influx of pupils with special educational needs, especially in Year 1, and made additional arrangements with the LEA to ensure these pupils received the education they needed. Many had emotional and behavioural difficulties, but with good LEA support and good internal management, these pupils, now in Year 3, are now fully integrated into the educational process and fully included and supported well in all activities.
58. There has been a big turnover of teaching staff since the previous inspection. There are now five permanent teachers, a teacher who is in her first year of teaching and two temporary teachers replacing teachers on maternity leave. The newly qualified teacher is well supported by the deputy head whose classroom adjoins hers and this is an improvement on the previous inspection when there were no induction procedures in place. The headteacher and deputy have good procedures for monitoring teaching, and there is a very good self-appraisal check sheet for teachers. A nursery nurse supports the foundation stage full time, and there are two other classroom assistants. There is an efficient and effective school secretary and good lunchtime supervisory staff. Overall the school staffing provision is satisfactory.
59. The school accommodation, including the building, playground and field is good and excellently cared for and maintained by a committed and capable caretaker who is always eager to help the school by taking on extra work such as painting. Teaching resources overall are good. There is now a well-equipped computer suite for the teaching of ICT and resources to meet the Quality Curriculum Authority's requirements are good for the majority of subjects.
60. Given the very good progress since the last inspection, the good progress pupils make coupled with improving standards, good teaching and a good curriculum set against relatively low costs per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further, and to improve the overall quality of provision, the school should now:

- (1) ensure that higher attaining pupils are set work that extends their current knowledge and understanding, and enables them to achieve higher levels at age seven and age eleven (paragraphs 11, 25, 69, 75, 76, 81, 83, 88, 106, 111); and
- (2) ensure that assessment knowledge of pupils is used effectively and consistently throughout the school to set work that is matched to meet the needs of all its pupils (paragraphs 44, 76, 81, 83, 88).

Raising standards in all subjects through greater challenges and matching work more appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils is part of the current school improvement plan.

In addition to the key issues above, the governors should consider the following minor point for inclusion in its action plan:

- ensure that the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents include all the required statutory information (paragraph 48, 55).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	13	71	15	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	198
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	43

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	10	12
	Girls	10	12	12
	Total	22	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	85 (93)	92 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	24	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	85 (96)	92 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	16	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	12
	Girls	9	5	9
	Total	22	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (58)	65 (68)	81 (71)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	20	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (68)	69 (77)	77 (87)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	197
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	77

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	319,526
Total expenditure	305,495
Expenditure per pupil	1,498
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,407
Balance carried forward to next year	35,438

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	198
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	37	2	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	33	14	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	58	15	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	50	13	6	0
The teaching is good.	50	38	4	2	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	52	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	23	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	27	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	48	42	8	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	25	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	33	6	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	43	12	2	4

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

61. Children enter the reception class following their fourth birthdays. On entry to the school, attainment is generally below average. Year on year, initial assessments show about half the entry to be below average, with very few children above average, and in some years, no children in this category. The reception class has one teacher and one full-time nursery nurse. Together, they provide a good and secure foundation for future learning. Teaching by both staff is consistently good and similar to the previous inspection. Both staff have good understanding of how young children learn, and of the methods best suited to achieve this. They quickly establish a good rapport with the children and build on this progressively throughout the year. Early analysis of the children enables those with problems to be identified quickly, and the staff ensure that the ten per cent identified as having special educational needs are well supported. The good standards and provision recorded in the previous inspection have been sustained.
62. Progress is good for all children. In the case of personal and social skills, progress is very good. Appropriate behaviour is insisted upon from the start. Most children enter the class with some pre-school experience, although their communication, personal and social development is below average. Children settle down well at the start of lessons and show interest and enjoyment as they learn. Staff work hard to encourage development in these areas, and are successful in enabling children to make significant strides in their development. The reception class is well resourced with a wide range of appropriate material and equipment. These are used well in lessons to enable children to benefit from a wide range of experiences, which sustain good progress throughout. By the end of the year, all children are ready to start the National Curriculum, and a significant minority has already exceeded the requirements by reaching the targets of the learning goals.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Teaching of these skills is good in all areas of learning. Staff ensure that children are given plenty of opportunities for independent learning in order to enhance these skills, which are generally below average on entry. Children learn the skills of not shouting out, and of waiting their turn when answering questions. They learn to take turns when sharing equipment such as paint or the computer. Progress is good. The good relationships between staff and children enable good communication to be sustained. Children gain in confidence and are eager to share their work with staff and visitors. Children also enjoy the presence of additional adults in the classroom, and most will approach them and talk to them in a curious yet polite way. During the inspection, there were no emotional outbursts from the children, who approached the staff if they had a problem or were experiencing difficulties. This confidence and growth of self-esteem is a major factor in ensuring good progress. By the end of the year in the reception class, personal, social and emotional skills are appropriately fostered and all children reach the required level of development.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Teaching and progress in the development of communication, language and literacy are good. Through carefully planned question and answer sessions at various points during the day, staff focus very well on developing the appropriate language for the age of the children. They are asked to repeat words which present difficulties, and they are encouraged to trace with their fingers in the air the shapes of numbers or letters. This enhances their early writing skills appropriately. Children follow the text well in the big book at the start of a literacy session. They respond very well by showing keen interest and by sustaining their concentration well. Many are eager to answer questions, and the few who are reticent are invited to respond by the teacher. This element of inclusion ensures that all children have equal opportunities of succeeding and of learning. Teaching is good and there is a very good focus on the development of vocabulary, which is subsequently reinforced during the rest of the day. Children acquire a good range of language as a result, using

words such as 'cross' as an alternative to angry, and 'driver', bump' and 'smelled' when following a bear story. Children read well and follow the script appropriately when sitting around the big book. Teachers ensure that whole sentences are read back, so that there is good emphasis placed on structure, both in speaking and in writing. Staff also concentrate well at every opportunity on punctuation, so children learn quickly to start a sentence with a capital letter and end with a full stop. A particularly effective strategy is the corner devoted to 'shy bear', where children write letters to him, post them and receive replies. Children are fascinated by this process and it acts as a great aid to motivation and aid to literacy development. By the end of the reception year, all pupils are ready to start the National Curriculum, and many have reached this point earlier.

Mathematical development

65. Teaching and progress in numeracy development is good. Sessions in numeracy are well structured and involve a wide range of activities focusing on numeracy development, including dice, number-based jig-saws and a computer program. Staff place appropriate emphasis on the children developing an understanding of numbers, rather than on merely repeating numbers in a sequence. Through carefully structured questioning, and using a good range of resources, children learn which number is which and where it fits in a sequence. Using a number line, and by tracing the shapes of numbers in the air, children then copy numbers correctly into their booklets, without reversing numbers. Their pencil control is developing well and numbers are generally clear, well-formed and obvious to the reader. Most children count up to thirty with the teacher, and they reinforce their understanding by writing numbers when they appear after shaking the dice. All children had met the required targets of the early learning goals by the time of the inspection.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Teaching and progress are good in this area of learning, and in the case of the acquisition of ICT skills, very good. Children have average knowledge generally, and know and understand something of the world around them. They learn the difference between animals and humans. They learn to use programs on the computer with relative ease, and the highest attaining pupils show good mouse control, and they soon learn how to print out their work unaided. Children work well unaided on machines, and add features such as paws, eyes and ears to their bears, using a range of icons from the program's menu. This work is above average for their age. They begin to understand the use of space and how things are laid out as they follow a bear hunt, or when using space well in physical exercise. Children learn well through play in water. They learn which objects sink and which float. They begin to understand the properties of some materials when modelling with play dough, which they shape into numbers appropriately. By the end of the reception class, children are ready to start the science and ICT National Curriculum, and many have exceeded expectations in the latter.

Physical development

67. Children make good progress in physical development through good structured teaching. Following the bear hunt theme, pupils use space very creatively outdoors and in the hall to practise body movement and control. They learn to crawl through a tunnel, to jump over obstacles with adequate control, and to stop when instructed to do so. Children keep a good space between each other when hopping or skipping. Body co-ordination is good for over twenty per cent of the children, as they move and add actions with their hands. They can stretch their legs and relax by following instructions, and they show good poise and sense of balance in exercises. Children are fully involved in the laying out and packing up of equipment in the hall and playground, and they do this with a minimum of fuss. Physical development meets expected levels as children reach the end of the reception class.

Creative development

68. Children are given many opportunities to develop their creativity in lessons. Staff plan carefully to encourage a great deal of independence in learning. Teaching and progress are good. Pupils settle

down quickly and well when painting or playing in sand. They show good control of paint brushes and crayons. Some are able to keep well within the boundary lines of the drawing when colouring in, and use shading for emphasis. Children's singing is average, and they learn the words of songs and melodies regularly. They keep in time to the music. Children share equitably and work well together. They help each other paint and crayon and enter into creative role-play wearing bear masks and acting out simple stories. Staff provide a good range of creative activities on a daily basis, and children have appropriate choice and rotate through each activity regularly. This ensures that all are fully involved in each activity, and that no area is neglected. Children learn to cut and shape, controlling scissors well. They learn to stick and paste and create simple designs. By the end of the reception class, children are ready to start the National Curriculum.

ENGLISH

69. Overall standards when pupils reach eleven years old are above national averages in all areas of the subject and this is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection in 1999. Particular strengths include:

- uniformly good teaching throughout the school and especially the good knowledge teachers have of individual pupils in their classes;
- consistently very good attitudes and behaviour from the pupils, their well developed listening skills and application to work;
- a well thought out curriculum with good book and picture resources;
- the use of English and the development of English skills across the curriculum particularly in history, geography and ICT;
- a committed and very knowledgeable subject co-ordinator and well thought out systems for assessment; and
- the teachers' knowledge of the learning requirements of pupils with special educational needs and the support given to these pupils.

Areas for improvement include:

- introduce a whole school system for the teaching of handwriting; and
- provide more suitable extension work for the higher attaining pupils in all classes.

70. The consistently good teaching is a the main reason why all pupils including those with special educational needs throughout the school make good progress year on year and attain standards which are above the national average. Many pupils at the age of eleven reach standards that are well above average. In part, this is a result of the very good teaching in Year 6 when progress is accelerated. All teachers prepare their lessons carefully using stories and materials that are attractive to the pupils. Pupils in infant classes become very involved in their lessons. Teachers use their enthusiasm to good effect by keeping pupils very busy during the main part of the lessons and then conducting a good plenary session at the end when pupils are encouraged to show their achievements and talk about their work. Speaking and listening skills develop quickly during these sessions and are generally above average by age seven. Another way the school encourages pupils to speak aloud confidently is by giving them opportunities to take part in a number of productions for parents each year including the annual Nativity play and a summer performance by older pupils. The school encourages links between English and other subjects. In Year 2, work on Florence Nightingale written by the pupils using a word processor shows valuable links with history. These links continue higher up the school, where pupils undertake long pieces of extended writing during their history and geography lessons and write up their science experiments. Individual reading books for the younger pupils are chosen by the teacher, although the pupils and their parents can choose books to take home and read from a special classroom box. Older pupils choose their own reading books from the school library and also read the set texts provided during their literacy lessons. In this way the pupils develop their own preferences and enthusiasms and read a large number of books. When they have finished a book the teachers often require the older pupils to write a review of it and this also extends their literacy skills. Pupils talk well about their preferences and why they choose certain books and teachers endeavour

through going to book-shops and libraries, as well as perusing catalogues to provide a wide selection of up-to-date suitable stories and non-fiction books. Collections from the school library loan service are used to support what is currently being taught in individual classrooms and this is a valuable resource. Pupils access informative computer programs to support their learning and more use could be made of this resource. An analysis of pupils' reading shows good progress being made throughout the school. Support from parents who listen to their children read at home and give them access to public libraries and computers greatly helps their progress. Most of the pupils especially those in the early stages are heard read by an adult at home every day.

71. The pupils work very hard and behave very well in class. Throughout the school they enjoy their English lessons and are proud of what they achieve. Their very good social skills are put to good effect when they work with concentration in a variety of settings for example in a whole class group, in smaller groups, pairs and individually. The pupils are friendly and helpful to each other and they generally show respect and affection towards the teachers. The very good behaviour enables every minute of teaching time to be used for extending pupils' learning. Lessons start on time and proceed at a good pace. This is helped by the good planning of the teachers with worksheets and books placed ready for use and the visual aids available at the beginning of each lesson. All work is marked and individual helpful comments written in the pupils' books. Individual targets are set for many pupils. The structure of lessons is good and according to the original literacy hour requirements.
72. The curriculum is good. The pupils are taught to spell simple words as soon as they enter school. By the time they are eleven years old most pupils spell well and know how to use dictionaries to help them use the correct spelling and find information. The pupils know how to use a spell check on the computer and in one excellent English lesson taking place in the computer room for Year 3 pupils, a large number were entering their stories directly on to the computer for later spelling correction. This teaching technique builds the pupils' confidence and enthusiasm by enabling them to write long pieces of prose quickly. During this lesson the pupils were totally engrossed and very reluctant to leave their work for one minute to answer a question. A similar situation was seen in a Year 6 writing lesson when the whole class was practising their writing skills working in total silence and with absolute concentration.
73. A good feature of the school is the constant review of the pupils' needs and this is helped by the thorough assessment systems in place, the monitoring of the subject by the headteacher and deputy head and the ongoing input of the good subject co-ordinator. Appropriate targets are set for all pupils, and these are based on recent and reliable assessment information. Pupils with special educational needs are enabled to make good progress since teachers know their pupils well and understand their needs. They use individual education plans well when planning the next stages of learning. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are effectively supported in many lessons.
74. There is no school system for teaching subject specific vocabulary and the associated spellings, although some individual teachers do this well. In one geography lesson on cliff erosion, for example, the teacher highlighted some potentially unknown words and made sure the pupils understood and could spell them. Generally, the use of English across the curriculum is promoted well in the school. In a wide range of subjects such as geography, history, music and science, specific technical language and its use is a central feature of teaching, and extended writing is developed well in many areas. Good links are forged with ICT, so that punctuation, spelling and sentence construction are developed appropriately.
75. Currently, insufficient challenging work is set consistently across the school for higher attaining pupils. Some thought is being given to the modification of some lessons to meet the needs of particular pupils. For example there is now more time allocated for older pupils to undertake, without interruption, long pieces of creative writing and poetry.

MATHEMATICS

76. Pupils' attainment by the age of seven and eleven is broadly in line with the national average, and corresponds with the findings of the previous inspection. Over the last three years, national test

results have been broadly in line with the national average, except in 2000, when results were well below average.

The reasons for this improvement and the relative strengths are:

- Successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school;
- Improved teaching, which overall is now of a good standard, and which is leading to better quality learning;
- Positive attitudes of pupils towards their learning;
- Good use of numeracy skills across the curriculum;
- Improved leadership of the subject, including tracking the progress of pupils in order to improve performance.

The areas for improvement are:

- To provide work which is matched more carefully to the needs of all pupils;
- To ensure that higher attaining pupils receive work which extends their knowledge and understanding.

77. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well into the school. This has resulted in a curriculum which is broad and balanced. Good attention is given to mental mathematics and its application in lessons. This has had a positive impact on pupils' rates of learning in lessons. Pupils in Year 1 count up and down in 10's up to a 100 and double numbers in a sequence to identify a pattern. Pupils in Year 2 can use a '100 square' and move a counter forwards or backwards to develop the skills of following instructions in their mathematical work. Pupils use mathematical language in their number work and are further developed when they use it for data collecting and using information and looking for symmetrical patterns. They measure in centimetres and know the difference between straight lines and curved lines. They sort and classify items and data from a graph, for example identifying favourite fruits in Year 1. Pupils in Year 3 use a number line to help in addition and subtraction of a number and use halves and quarters when deciding amounts. They also can describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes and use tally charts when data handling. Year 4 pupils use different strategies when finding the difference between four digit numbers. They can use and measure in centimetres and estimate a length and then measure it accurately. Pupils in Year 5 know how to recall and apply multiplication and division facts when solving number problems. Most pupils use the appropriate vocabulary with confidence when discussing oral number calculations. Pupils in Year 6 plot a graph and extract information using positive and negative numbers and can identify the properties of a variety of two-dimensional shapes such as a square, rectangle, trapezium and parallelogram. They also use their knowledge of place value to round up and round down when solving number problems. All pupils including those with special educational needs are making steady progress over time.

78. The overall quality of teaching is good. This is a significant improvement on the judgements of the previous inspection, particularly for pupils in the junior section of the school. This improvement is characterised through:

- the good and secure subject knowledge and confidence to teach to the National Numeracy requirements shown by teachers. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, good use of oral strategies in Year 5 and effective differentiation of the main task in Year 6;
- teachers' having high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour and all lessons having good pace; this ensures no time is lost in the learning process, and that pupils have to exercise their thinking skills in mental sessions on a regular basis;
- planning being of a good quality and reflecting what the teacher wants the pupils to learn. For example in Year 2, teaching focuses on different techniques to solve number problems;
- all lessons including a good balance of mental skills and opportunities to consolidate and extend understanding through direct teaching and practical activities; for example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils recall multiplication division facts when problem solving;

- all pupils' learning being well reinforced during the last few minutes during a final mental session. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the pupils discuss the strategies they use to round up or round down, and this consolidates their learning through reinforcement, while teaching other pupils different ways of reaching the same answer;
 - there being good use of questioning to assess what pupils have learnt by all staff in all parts of the lesson, and staff being effective at providing support when necessary. This includes comments in work marked by teachers, which helps give pupils good guidance for improvement as well as encouragement in their work.
79. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes to their work in mathematical work. They enjoy the oral and mental parts of lessons and other activities planned for them by their teachers. All pupils work with enthusiasm and are able to sustain their interest and concentration for long periods, working well collaboratively or independently. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the pupils were totally focused in their work on finding the difference between four figure numbers and explain the strategy they used. All pupils respect each other's contribution in discussion in lessons; this was clearly demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson. They are all well behaved and respond positively to the learning opportunities offered to them. They are willing to draw upon their previous learning and attempt to extend their knowledge and understanding through full involvement in their lessons.
80. Pupils' mathematical knowledge and number skills are also well promoted in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils use their skills in producing graphs to support their learning in history and geography, and they use and apply these skills when using ICT to plot the rainfall in Athens. Speaking and listening skills are well-developed in lessons along with the use of mathematical vocabulary such as 'calculate' and 'difference' to develop literacy across the school. The school makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social and cultural development through the wide range of opportunities for pupils to work together.
81. There is a need for all staff to plan work that is sufficiently amended to meet the needs of all pupils in their classes, particularly the higher attaining pupils. This is already being undertaken in some classes but is not yet consistently applied across the school. The results in national tests for seven and eleven year olds show, for example, that not enough pupils are attaining the higher Levels 3 and 5, with proportions below the national average.
82. The current mathematics co-ordinator is on maternity leave and a teacher who has had previous experience of leading and managing mathematics in his previous school is 'care-taking' the subject on a temporary basis. An appropriate range of resources is available to support learning and current provision meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are well-established systems for recording and assessing pupils' achievement and progress and targets are set for individual pupils in each class on a termly basis. They are tracked as they move through a class individually or as a cohort. Targets set for the future are realistic and based on appropriate assessment information. The monitoring role of co-ordinator is becoming well developed and includes evaluating teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work.

SCIENCE

83. Standards in science are above national averages for pupils at age eleven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, and a considerable improvement on the last set of national test results for the year 2000. Strengths in science include:
- Good teaching with a strong focus on investigation and research;
 - A broad and balanced curriculum which allows for good links to be made with other subjects;
 - Good leadership of the subject.

The area for improvement:

- Ensure that the levels of work set in classes are more closely matched to the needs of all pupils, but especially the higher attainers.

84. Science is taught well throughout the school, and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Lessons are well planned with a strong focus on allowing pupils time and scope to investigate and undertake research work. This begins well for pupils in the infants, where they spend time gathering information on habitats and life forms by looking at a range of areas within the school grounds. Using specially prepared worksheets for appropriate recording and classification of information, the pupils eagerly move from grass verges to hard surfaces, expressing great delight as they discover wood-lice, beetles and ants. They are able to predict with some accuracy what sort of life-form might be found where, as well as the type of vegetation growing in particular spots. Over time, progress is satisfactory. Standards have improved throughout the school due to the better teaching and learning taking place.
85. Older pupils extend this knowledge and understanding through work on forces, using experiments to measure resistance and making predictions about distances and weights. In Years 5 and 6, there is a strong focus on other sorts of investigation. Pupils make significant gains in their knowledge and understanding of the work of the heart and blood circulation through using plastic bottles with card valves to illustrate non-returnable valve functions. In Year 6, pupils reinforce their understanding of a fair test effectively by nurturing yoghurt growth using a range of different milks, in order to measure the rate of growth of the different cultures. Such work enthused pupils no end, and to such an extent that it was the main topic of conversation in the dining room during the lunch hour prior to the lesson. Good quality learning takes place when pupils are so interested. They have a thirst for knowledge, listen to teachers and behave extremely well in lessons where there is a considerable amount of movement in order to experiment or research. Pupils learn to control their experiments so that they are fair, and they readily explain in straightforward terms what they are doing and why. About a third of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are currently working at levels that are above expectations for their ages. All pupils work is marked well, with expert guidance on how to improve. Staff use a wide range of imaginative resources in all classrooms, and have high expectations of both behaviour and results. Teachers ensure that pupils with behavioural difficulties are appropriately managed and that those with learning difficulties are effectively supported, thereby ensuring good progress over time and in lessons. As a result of this good quality teaching, standards are improving throughout the school and are above average by the age of eleven.
86. The curriculum in science has been adapted to make it broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' interests and needs generally. All areas of the syllabus are appropriately covered throughout the school. Teachers use every opportunity to make links with other subject areas in order to reinforce learning. There is thus a strong focus on developing and understanding technical language. In Year 6, for example, higher attaining pupils were expected to explain 'the reproduction of micro-organisms by binary fission', which a number began to do successfully. Lower down the school, pupils learn names such as 'flora' and 'fauna'; they begin to acquire an understanding of friction and magnetic fields. They know and use appropriate terminology when explaining how an electrical circuit functions. This aids the good work done in literacy by extending their vocabulary and use of English well. In Year 3, pupils learn the differences between 'opaque', 'transparent' and 'translucent'. Pupils use mathematical skills well to measure, to record data, and to turn this information into good quality graphs. Pupils working on habitats in Year 4 examine different world-wide locations include arctic scenery and desert landscapes, widening their appreciation of geographical knowledge. Work on the human body in Year 5 is successfully linked in to health education, by examining the harmful effects of smoking on the heart and circulation. As a result, learning is enhanced within science and prior learning in other subjects is consolidated to a high degree. Progress over time and in lessons is good.
87. The subject is well co-ordinated. Regular monitoring takes place to ensure that appropriate coverage is given to all aspects of science, and to ensure that there is a balance kept between different areas. Assessment is good and includes a range of standardised tests which give a clear indication of pupils' progress over time. Staff act on this information when setting targets and this helps to raise the standards pupils are reaching. This is especially true in Years 5 and 6, where work has been modified well to match the pupils' learning needs, identified through the assessment. Statutory requirements are met in full.

88. Although work is well matched to pupils' needs in Years 5 and 6, this is not always the case elsewhere. Often, worksheets are the same for all groups of pupils, and the only differences between the higher and lower attaining pupils is in the amount of work completed during a given period of time. In Years 5 and 6, extension work is just that – it broadens and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding of science and it ensures that higher attaining pupils in particular are making better progress and coming nearer to realising their potential. The school has so far not allowed all pupils to benefit from this good practice.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Standards in art and design are above average at ages seven and eleven and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Judgements have been made on a wide range of evidence as only one lesson in art and design was available for observation.

Particular strengths are:

- very good teaching for younger classes;
- the planning of lessons with a focus on developing effective links to other subjects; and
- the good contribution art makes to the pupils' spiritual and cultural education.

Areas for improvement include:

- More opportunities for the pupils to visit an art gallery during their time in the school and gain first-hand experience of working with professionals.

90. Teaching in the one lesson seen was very good. The teacher showed a thorough knowledge of the subject and this, together with her good rapport with the pupils and her enthusiasm enabled much learning to take place. The pupils marvelled at pictures sketched by the older pupils and the work of William Morris. They became totally absorbed when they attempted to draw a natural object such as a shell or stone and used magnifying glasses to achieve detail or when they concentrated on a particular pattern.

91. The school is aware that the pressures of other subjects means that art and design could become neglected, and to combat this and give the subject a high profile two days each year are devoted to whole school art activities. This year the art is linked to geography and results in a large mural on the flora and fauna of Madagascar now on display in the school hall. It is a very striking picture. A wide variety of materials and papers were used including tissue paper, cellophane, card, and sugar and drawing paper. An added touch is beetles with moving parts, a product of a design and technology lesson. Another valuable cross-curricular link was the making and decorating of containers using computer images and using the Internet for information. The classrooms and school as a whole are bright and cheerful and much of this is a result of pupils' work in art and design. A mosaic-topped table in the foyer was produced during a class study of the Roman way of life, and extravagant individually designed head-wear has been produced for school plays. Pupils are eager to talk about their achievements in art and do so very articulately. They enjoy the subject and use their computers at home to find ideas.

92. Work in art and design makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils gain some sense of awe as they examine great works of art, admiring the techniques used to produce impressive canvases. The older pupils in particular enjoy making sketches of inside the human body during science lessons and recall vividly when they observed insects in a vivarium and then drew them. They talk about the work of famous artists and show they have learnt a lot about artists from varying backgrounds by looking at prints by Van Gogh and Lowry and studying the work of artists such as Picasso and Monet.

93. There is currently insufficient opportunity provided by the school for pupils to experience art and design beyond the classroom. Visits to art galleries are rare, and pupils are denied the opportunity to view first-hand examples of a wide range of original work. Also, pupils have not been exposed to an artist in residence, which can also provide pupils with valuable additional first-hand experiences.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Standards in the subject are above average throughout the school and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

Particular strengths are:

- the good level of teaching with challenging tasks and good practical help given by parents;
- the interest and enthusiasm of the teachers, which helps develop moral and social skills effectively;
- pupils' good understanding of the work they are doing; and
- the good resources, and storage facilities, and the opportunities given by the accommodation for pupils to work in small groups on large models.

Area for improvement:

- increased use of ICT both to exchange ideas with others through the Internet and to design models.
95. Teaching in design and technology for pupils up to the age of seven is good and very good for pupils up to age eleven. Lessons are carefully planned and their preparation includes ensuring that all materials are readily available. Teachers spend a good deal of time preparing for the lessons and this is a big factor in contributing to the lessons' success. The pupils move quickly into planning their activities and then on to carrying them out. They are motivated to complete their tasks and show enjoyment and concentration throughout the lesson. This enables the teachers to control their class easily and to spend the whole lesson making suggestions and helping individual pupils. Teachers show a good knowledge of this subject and their enjoyment when teaching motivates the pupils well. Ambitious activities are undertaken with pupils up to age seven, and these are only made possible by the help received from parents. In one cleverly managed lesson, higher and lower attaining pupils were paired together to try out weaving techniques. Pupils engaged in paper weaving the body of a doll, plaiting paper or weaving strips of paper around long sticks. The success rate was high in this challenging activity and the pupils showed enthusiasm and joy at what they were able to achieve. No lessons were seen for Year 2 pupils, but the classroom displays show evidence of a good standard of attainment. During the inspection one boy received an award in a celebration assembly for the puppet he had designed and made. All the pupils made a glove or finger puppet and these together with their designs can be seen in the classroom. They make an impressive and good quality display.
96. By age eleven, pupils have acquired a good knowledge of the properties and functions of materials and this gives them knowledge to draw upon when designing working fairground models. During the lesson observed, pupils were making prototypes and trying them out. The pupils concentrated intensely and at times there was silence except for busy fingers rapidly drawing, amending and choosing materials for their model. A striking feature of lessons was the way in which models under construction by the higher attainers were used to help pupils with special educational needs. Pupils explain exactly what they have done and why and go on to predict what they think will or will not work. Pupils have a very good knowledge of their own abilities and are generous when helping others. As a result all pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs, who are fully involved and successful.
97. Pupils are eager to talk about their achievements. The Year 2 pupils explain chronologically how to make, decorate and fire a plaque depicting a butterfly. They show a justified pride in their puppets. They talk critically and kindly about each other's efforts and show highly developed moral and social skills. The oldest pupils use their planning books to illustrate what they hope to achieve. They stress the importance of original ideas and planning and the later evaluation of what they have done. They proudly show photos of completed work. Pupils explain appropriately how they intend to light up the model when it is completed by using a computer program.
98. Co-ordination of the subject is good. Resources are used effectively. A great deal of evaluation of finished pieces of work takes place both individually and as a whole class and this leads to further improvement. However as yet there is little formal assessment and insufficient use is made of computer design programs to enhance learning.

GEOGRAPHY

99. The majority of pupils reach the levels expected nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. Standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. Relative strengths in the subject include:

- good use of field-work to enhance learning;
- effective cross-curricular links, for example to literacy, numeracy and ICT; and
- good teaching which motivates pupils well and leads to good learning in lessons.

Area for improvement:

- the current lack of a permanent subject leader and co-ordinator.

100. By the age of seven, standards are at the expected levels for this age. Pupils have an increasing awareness of the physical and human features of the area around the school and parts of Sale. Pupils in Year 1 have identified areas in Sale which they think are attractive features such as the library, the vicarage and park; as opposed to noisy traffic on the roads, canal water and streets filled with litter. Pupils have also drawn simple sketch maps of their route from home to school to develop their mapping skills and an awareness of the immediate environment around school and home. They have also completed a traffic survey and produced a graph, which shows the volume of traffic at given times of the day, and the effects of parking restrictions outside the school through the yellow zigzag lines. Pupils in Year 2 have been comparing and contrasting Sale an urban area with the rural location of Struay in the Highlands of Scotland. Mapping skills are further developed in Year 2, when pupils draw and label sketch maps of Sale and the contrasting locality of Struay.

101. By the age of eleven, pupils have an appropriate knowledge of their own region, other countries and contrasting areas. Pupils in Year 3 have been learning about the different climates found around the world and how they are identified and classified on a world map or atlas. Pupils are also made aware of the environmental issues in their own locality and in areas of the country and in parts of the world. For example, in Year 5 pupils have been developing their understanding of the issues involved in building and redeveloping the second runway at Manchester Airport, and how this will affect the quality of the environment. This work has been supplemented by contrasting Sale with Llandudno in terms of its location, human activities and size of population. Pupils in Year 4 have been comparing and contrasting the different types of dwellings used by different people, and the importance of recycling of products to lessen the impact of pollution. The study of 'mountain environments' by Year 6 pupils develops their mapping skills by being able to identify physical features on a world map. Pupils in Year 6 have also been learning about the process of cliff erosion, and describe what happened when the Holbeck Hotel in Scarborough fell into the sea through the effects of coastal erosion. Mapping skills are developed as the pupils move through the key stage, for example pupils in Year 4 have been using scaled maps to work out distances, and pupils in Year 5 have drawn sketch maps of Wales to identify the main towns and cities. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in lessons and over time in the key subject knowledge, understanding and skills.

102. Opportunities are found to introduce literacy and numeracy and ICT skills in a challenging and imaginative way. This happens when Year 1 pupils produce pictograms using computers, Year 3 pupils use reference maps to help develop reading comprehension and Year 6 pupils use creative writing following research into Manchester Airport.

103. The pupils enjoy their work in geography and are well behaved and motivate in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 3 were keen to share their findings about what they had found out about different climates around the world to the rest of the class. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work in lessons are good, they listen carefully to their class teachers and work well in groups, for example, in Year 1 when compiling their traffic graphs. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral and social development through field trips and residential trips.

104. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. Lessons are well planned and carry appropriate challenging activities. This is mainly because:

- teachers have a lively approach to their work and lessons, which provides a good model for the pupils to follow. For example, in Year 6 good exposition and questioning about writing coastal erosion to help form an accurate report and view;
- lessons have a good pace to them and are well managed with appropriate intervention. In the Year 3 lesson, these attributes help pupils maintain concentration and interest;
- furthermore, teachers let pupils work confidently, and they use resources well, for example using atlases in Year 3 to develop mapping skills; and
- teachers have good subject knowledge and use different areas of the curriculum to support learning.

105. The subject is currently being led and managed by the deputy head teacher on a temporary basis. There is a sound policy and scheme of work, which reflects recent initiatives in the curriculum, and there are adequate resources to support learning in the subject. The co-ordinator monitors planning on a termly basis, and there are whole school systems of assessment to help plan for pupils' needs in geography as they move through the school. The school is hoping to appoint another member of staff to undertake the leadership of the subject in the near future.

HISTORY

106. Pupils achieve levels in line with national averages by the ages of seven and eleven. Standards have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection.

Strengths of the subject are:

- good teaching, with a strong focus on research and use of artefacts;
- appropriate learning leading to good historical knowledge at age seven and eleven; and
- positive attitudes of pupils which aids learning.

The area for development is:

- use assessment information more fully when planning extension work for higher attaining pupils.

107. The quality of teaching is good and better than when the school was previously inspected. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning and exposition well in lessons. They use a wide range of resources and artefacts to promote pupils' understanding in lessons. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the class teacher had given the pupils a wide range of research and give an interpretation of the voyages made during the Tudor period. Lessons are well planned and managed and have a positive impact in pupils' learning in lessons and progress over time. Teachers' marking is of a good quality and gives pupils positive guidance and support to help take their learning forward. The use of displays in most classrooms by teachers and time lines helps promote the subject throughout the school. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, acquire, use and extend their historical skills, knowledge and understanding at a satisfactory rate as they move through the school.

108. Learning in individual lessons is good. Progress over time is never less than satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils have a clear understanding of the past and are able to sequence important events, and the role of important people in history. For example, pupils in Year 2 have sketched the 'memorial cross' at their local church to commemorate those killed in both World Wars, and why special services are held in churches on 'Remembrance Sunday'. Pupils in Year 1 have been comparing and contrasting their own 'toys' with those from the past to develop their understanding of how the manufacture of toys has changed over time. This has been enhanced by a very effective and thoughtful display the 'Toy Museum' in the classroom, which is a useful reminder for the pupils to focus on during their lessons. Pupils in Year 2 have been studying how fashions at the seaside have change over the last century.

109. By the age of eleven, pupils have increased their understanding of chronology and are able to find and link information from a variety of sources. Year 6 pupils know that historical evidence is found from sources such as accounts, diaries and authentic documents such as a 'ration card'. They know that it is important to gather evidence from a range of sources in order to interpret it and come to a balanced view of the period. For example, pupils in Year 6 write accounts giving their viewpoints of the dropping of the 'Atomic Bomb' in 1945, as part of their study of Britain since 1930. Year 5 pupils study the Ancient Greeks and understand the importance in history of discovering ancient civilisation through written sources and archaeological finds. Higher attaining pupils in the class write autobiographical accounts of the life and works of Socrates and how he influenced Ancient Greek culture. Year 3 pupils study the Roman Invasion of Britain to help develop their understanding of time. They visited Deva Museum to gain further insights into how the Romans dressed and lived. In Year 4, pupils develop their factual knowledge and understanding of British history by studying the 'Tudor Period'. They give reasons for the lifestyle of Henry VIII, analyse the difficulties of divorcing Katherine of Aragon, and examine the differences of being poor and rich during this period.
110. Pupils are well behaved and motivated towards their work in history and this influences the quality of their learning positively. They are keen to find out what happened in the past and willingly concentrate on the tasks given. For example, in Year 2 pupils were willing to contribute to the oral discussion about the changing fashions of swim-wear from about 1900 to the present day. Pupils' behaviour and their relationships with all teaching staff and with each other are always of a high standard in lessons. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development. For example, visits to a museums and places of interest helps develop pupils' knowledge of their culture and that of people in the past. The subject makes a positive contribution to other areas of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy and ICT. For example, the development of vocabulary and pupils' extended writing helps with promoting literacy across the school; while the use of graphs to show how the number of people employed in the mining industry by Year 6 pupils helps develop numeracy across the curriculum.
111. Assessment in the subject is satisfactory. However, the higher attaining pupils, while being given extended tasks which allow them to write more detail, do not always extend their knowledge as well as they might across the whole school. Work already highlighted in Year 6 gives a good example of how this might be achieved, through the extended writing on Ancient Greeks, for example, but there are no major examples of this happening elsewhere.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Overall standards are above those expected nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. The school has made very good progress with improvement since the previous inspection in developing the provision and standards achieved.

Strengths in the subject and the rise in standards have come about because:

- the quality and confidence in teaching the subject has improved significantly, particularly direct teaching in the computer suite;
- a computer suite with appropriate hardware and software has been set up to meet curricular demands since the previous inspection;
- ICT is used across the curriculum; and
- there is good subject leadership, which includes the setting of realistic targets for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven, and exemplars are used to help teachers realise them.

113. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This enables good progress to be made by pupils of all ages, and for standards of attainment to be above national expectations throughout the school overall. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection, and the main strengths are:

- confident and secure knowledge and understanding of all the staff. For instance, in Year 1 the teacher explains how to use the different functions on the computer before the pupils begin to operate their computers;
 - effective planning which provides a clear way in terms of building skills and knowledge and understanding progressively across the curriculum;
 - teachers manage and motivate the pupils well to achieve a high standard of attainment, including behaviour, which is reflected in the way the pupils handle and respect the equipment in the suite; and
 - the display of ICT work in classrooms helps promote the subject and keep it profiled throughout the school.
114. By the age of seven, pupils use the mouse and direction keys and they select from menus confidently. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson when pupils accessed a database to gain further information about 'mini-beasts' as part of their work in science. Most pupils word process successfully, they type text using the keyboard and add or delete letters and words using the space bar appropriately. Pupils in Year 2 have written and composed a story 'The Magic Pencil'. All pupils know and understand that a picture can be created on the computer and they select the appropriate tools for the job. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils knew that the information they had collected from their traffic survey could be presented in a pictorial form on the computer. They save their work carefully and accurately.
115. By the age of eleven, pupils use the computer confidently to access the Internet to search for a virtual reality tour of Christian buildings, such as Canterbury and Exeter Cathedrals as part of their work in religious education. They know how to use a password and keyword to access the Internet, and have competent keyboard and mouse skills when investigating a particular piece of information. Pupils are also confident at writing a program and procedure to control a Lego model and make it move and light a bulb. Pupils in Year 4 know how they need a 'user name' when accessing Super Logo programme. They know how to double click and highlight and use a function they need to use to create a series of movements and save it in a file after use for the next lesson. Pupils in Year 5 have used spreadsheets to calculate and explore information related to their work on Flapjacks. Pupils save their work confidently to hard and floppy disks. This level of work is above average for their age.
116. When pupils are in the computer suite they are confident users of the equipment and programs. They are willing to talk about their work and demonstrate their competence. The vast majority of pupils are generous in the way they collaborate and help each other. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson when pupils discussed with each other the information they were gathering and how valid it was to their research.
117. The extent to which the equipment is used to support learning in all areas of the curriculum is a strength. For example, in Year 2 pupils know that they can select text from a word bank to create a story which helps with their literacy development across the school, in Year 5 pupils can use the 'Dazzle' programme to create pictures in the style of Picasso, support learning in art;
118. The headteacher is currently in charge of leading and managing the subject whilst the permanent co-ordinator is away on maternity leave. She monitors planning in the subject and performs a work scrutiny in school. There are whole school assessment procedures in place, which consist of daily logging of a pupil's attainment and progress in a particular lesson, which is built up into a termly record and provides a good record as pupils move through the school. There is a policy and scheme of work, which reflects current initiatives in the curriculum and the resources for teaching the subject are of a good quality. Leadership since the previous inspection has improved significantly and is now of a good quality, and has benefited from the considerable support from different members of the governing body.

MUSIC

119. Standards in music are well above average by Year 6, and above average throughout the rest of the school. This is a significant improvement since the school was previously inspected. Strengths in the subject are:

- good teaching, with staff having good and sometimes very good subject knowledge which they use very effectively to raise standards;
- good use of resources in lessons; and
- positive attitudes and very good behaviour from pupils who make good and sometimes very good progress in their learning.

The area for improvement is:

- to ensure that more focus is placed on improving the quality of singing in the whole school infant singing sessions.

120. Teaching of music is good throughout the school and better than when the school was previously inspected. In the upper junior classes, it is very good. This enables all pupils to make good progress over time in their learning, and in the last two years at the school, to make more rapid progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use technical language very well in lessons, focusing on words such as tempo, beat, pulse and dynamics frequently, so that there is a strong link to literacy development. Teachers ensure they keep a good balance between explanation, practical activities, and performance. Teachers have also developed the syllabus in an imaginative way to encourage learning and standards of performance. In Year 6, for example, pupils listen attentively to music by Dimitri Shostakovich, interpret the mood of the music, then describe the feelings they think the composer intended to convey. The teacher then gave the class time to compose similar music to reflect this, and the results were of a very high standard. Different groups use their creativity well, and produce exciting rhythms and complex harmonies, at a standard well above the expected level for eleven-year-olds. Similarly, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils learnt about racial discrimination by following the words of a Tracy Chapman song, which reinforced their understanding of prejudice in work done on the life of Martin Luther King in other lessons. Expectations of staff are high in all lessons, and pupils respond well and in a creative and imaginative way.

121. The school has a very good range of resources which are used well to enhance learning. The local vicar is an accomplished pianist, and he supports the development of music through assemblies and hymn practices very well. A strong choir, composed of over fifteen per cent of the school, give regular concerts within and outside the school, with the vicar using his other singing talents to good effect in promoting high standards of performance from the pupils. There is a very good range of instruments for use in lessons, and these are well deployed. Pupils have many opportunities to acquire and develop basic skills by learning how to keep in time during singing practices as they accompany the singing, and they learn to create new sounds and rhythms when composing in class.

122. Pupils like their music lessons. They listen well and are eager to learn. They work together very well when in smaller groups. Younger pupils listen well and follow the rhythm and beat well when accompanying singing. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy their music lessons. They take a full and active part, co-operate well with their peers and make as good progress as the rest of the class. Many pupils put actions to the words as they rehearse together in the hall, helping to reinforce and develop successfully their skills of co-ordination. When singing together during assemblies or during hymn practice, pupils control their voices well, and follow instructions appropriately. There is clarity of tone and a good level of sweetness in the hymns. Timing is good.

123. In the infant classes, all pupils sing together on a regular basis. While the overall standard is satisfactory, there is insufficient emphasis placed on improvement in performance during the session. Staff did not, for example, insist that pupils sat up straight, or practised their breathing as they rehearsed the songs, so that there was no appreciable improvement in performance over the half hour.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. Satisfactory standards are being achieved throughout the school, and this is the same finding as the previous inspection. Strengths of the subject include:

- good teaching leading to good development of skills;
- the enthusiasm of the pupils especially those who attend after-school clubs; and
- good resources, including the use of a local grammar school playing field.

Areas for improvement:

- the time slippage when young pupils, especially those with special educational needs are changing clothes for a lesson where there is no classroom help.

125. Lessons are well thought out and lesson plans and structure are good. Teachers use the first part of the lesson to talk about how exercise affects the body and the safe procedures to be followed. During the lessons teachers ensure that all pupils are behaving properly before an activity takes place and this means that sometimes time is lost. Generally lessons move at a good pace with a satisfactory mix of strenuous and mild activity. Teachers make sure there is a warming up activity before the main part of the lesson takes place. Infant pupils are beginning to throw and catch balls well and when engaged in a whole class activity show that they know how to use space properly and carefully avoid touching each other. The lessons are timed appropriately, giving some opportunity for extension activities. The younger pupils show pleasure and work hard at following the teachers' instructions. They are very orderly when walking the short distance to the school field. In one Year 4 lesson, the pupils showed enthusiasm and a will to succeed. The pupils worked very hard at developing their own running technique and using an appropriate style for what they were trying to achieve. They work well in teams showing highly developed social skills, urge each other on in an enthusiastic and pleasant way and show a great tolerance for their less successful colleagues. The good presentation of the teachers, the pace maintained and the efforts of the pupils result in successful lessons.

126. Generally pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and try hard. They follow the teachers' instructions well showing highly developed listening skills and a wish to please. They enjoy timing their activities and try hard to improve on their previous times. They co-operate well both with the teachers and each other. They follow safe practices and are sensible. Many pupils attend after-school clubs run by both school staff and special coaches paid for by the parents. These include football, pop, lacrosse, athletics and netball. During the winter months Year 1 to Year 3 pupils follow commercially available programmes and use the large apparatus in the school hall. The apparatus undergoes a regular maintenance check and is overhauled when ensuring its safety. Pupils reach the recommended levels of swimming by age eleven.

127. The school's resources are good. Football matches are played against local schools on a nearby football pitch, part of the local grammar school. This is a useful link. The co-ordinator attended specialised training recently and through this acquired a good deal of small equipment, which is now being filtered into the school stock. At lunchtimes there is a separate supply of small equipment for pupils to practise their skills.

128. There is a general lack of support in lessons for younger pupils, which adversely affects progress. These pupils take a long time to get changed and as a result, lose a considerable amount of teaching time.