

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARGARET'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Oldham.

LEA area: Oldham.

Unique reference number: 105705

Headteacher: Mr M.P. Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr J.P. Sudworth [2461]

Dates of inspection: October 8th – 11th, 2001

Inspection number: 218258

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: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hive Street,
Oldham.

Postcode: OL8 4QS

Telephone number: 0161 681 2414

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: The Rev. J. McGrath

Date of previous inspection: November 4th, 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 2461 | Mr J.P. Sudworth | Registered inspector | Mathematics; Physical education. | How high are results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 9895 | Mr R. Williams | Lay inspector | | How good are attitudes, values and personal development? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 30834 | Mrs A. Lowson | Team inspector | English, Art and design; Special educational needs; English as an additional language. | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 11510 | Mr K. Oglesby | Team inspector | Science; Information and Communication Technology; Design and Technology; Equal opportunities. | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| 30827 | Mrs S. Withnall | Team inspector | Foundation Stage; History; Geography; Music. | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This voluntary aided Church of England school has 269 boys and girls on roll aged 4-11 and a nursery with 18 children attending full-time and 19 attending part-time. The school is situated in an area of high unemployment with pockets of social deprivation. An above average 32 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; 52 per cent are in receipt of clothing allowance. There is a lot of movement of families into and out of the area and 42 pupils came into the school at other than normal times last year. Some 14 per cent are from ethnic minorities, which is above average, and of these 20 have English as an additional language. 107 pupils (37 per cent) are on the special educational needs register and this is also above average. Of these, 22 are on the later stages, most of whom have specific learning difficulties, but none has a statement of special educational needs. When children start school many have below average attainment and some have levels of skill that are well below average. Because the numbers in each age group are just too high for one class, the school has to have classes with mixed age groups.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Standards by the age of eleven are close to the national average in English, mathematics and science. This reflects good achievement from the below average attainment on entry during the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and satisfactory progress in both Years 1-2 (Infants) and Years 3-6 (Juniors). The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage. The school benefits from strong leadership, which has been a significant factor in the school's marked improvement over the last two years. The strong emphasis on improvement found in English, mathematics and science is not matched across the curriculum and there is not a consistent quality of work in some other subjects. There is a positive atmosphere, which contributes to pupils' good personal development and helps all children to feel valued members of the school. Both pupils and parents feel well supported. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils achieve well in writing.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear vision of ways for improving the school.
- The encouraging and supportive approach of the staff helps pupils to develop self-confidence, good relationships, and respect for the feelings, beliefs and values of others.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are not high enough in Years 3-6.
- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of the full range of attainment and maturity in the class.
- Not all subjects have a clear programme of what pupils are to learn as they move through the school.
- Sometimes teachers use worksheets which are too easy and so miss opportunities to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, number and investigation across the different subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in November 1999, it was found to have serious weaknesses in behaviour and attitudes, in teaching, and in standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 3-6. Since then there has been a significant improvement and these weaknesses have been remedied. Behaviour is now satisfactory overall and sometimes good, though occasionally a small group of inattentive pupils delay progress in a lesson. The school is calm and well ordered. Pupils show more interest in their work. The quality of teaching is much improved. There has been a very marked improvement in test results for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science and the standards now show sound achievement. Progress is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1-6. Information from assessment is now used more effectively, but teachers do not always take account of the full range of ages and attainment levels when planning work in some subjects. The number and quality of library books has been improved. The governors are more involved in monitoring the quality of education and the quality of management is now good.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|--|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 | |
| English | E* | E | E | D | well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E in the lowest 5% E* |
| mathematics | E* | D | D | C | |
| science | E* | E | E | E | |

In 2001 there was a significant improvement in English overall, but while writing standards were average, reading was well below average. This was a change from previous years. The school has taken steps to remedy the weakness in reading and standards in the current Year 6 are average. The improvement in the quality of pupils' writing over the last two years is particularly marked; pupils are now achieving well. The school met the targets agreed with the Local Education Authority for English and mathematics. There has been a very marked improvement in results and in the quality of work in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection and progress is now satisfactory during Years 3-6. Work from the previous year shows that the current Year 6 pupils made good progress when they were in Year 5 and they are well placed to continue the improvement in results. However, too few pupils are working at the higher Level 5 in science, and this depresses the overall result. Current standards in Year 6 are near the expected level for the majority of pupils in all subjects, apart from information and communication technology, where they are below average. Religious education was inspected separately by the diocese.

The 2001 reading results for seven-year-olds were well below average, though in previous years reading results have been good. The school has taken action to boost reading levels and the current Year 2 are reaching average standards. Writing results were average and well above those in similar schools. Results were well below average in mathematics and average in science but the work seen during the inspection reflects continuing improvement. Overall progress during Years 1-2 is satisfactory and standards are close to average in all subjects. Attainment on entry is below average, with some well below average. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and by the end of Reception standards are just below average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory overall. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is satisfactory. While most pupils behave well, a small minority find it difficult to concentrate and to work co-operatively. |
| Personal development and relationships | The school's encouraging approach helps pupils to develop self-esteem, good relationships, and respect for the feelings, beliefs and values of others. |
| Attendance | Attendance is close to the local average and is satisfactory overall, although it is still just below the national average. |

The movement of pupils into and out of the school at other than normal times has an unsettling effect in some classes and is sometimes a factor in the occasional incidents of poor behaviour.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is much improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory overall; it is good in the Foundation Stage. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection, though there were shortcomings in parts of some other lessons. In a third of the lessons the quality of teaching was good and two very good lessons were observed.

In the best lessons teachers have clear targets for groups of pupils. They use questions well to extend pupils' thinking and their speaking and listening skills. There is a brisk pace, which keeps pupils involved and helps them to make good progress. Teachers explain information clearly and use good illustrations to help pupils to understand ideas. A positive atmosphere and good relationships encourage pupils to do their best.

In lessons with some shortcomings teachers work hard to keep all pupils involved but their planning does not always take sufficient account of the full range of attainment and maturity in the class. There is not a sharp enough focus on what the children are to learn. In some lessons the pace slackens for a time because the teacher becomes over-concerned with disciplining pupils or uses a worksheet that is too easy.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established in the school and teachers are confident in these after intensive training in teaching approaches in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching in English and in mathematics is satisfactory, and occasionally good. Writing skills are taught well. Teachers are less proficient at taking opportunities in other subjects to extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

The quality of learning is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school. After a good start, the progress of all pupils across the school is mainly steady. Pupils make most progress in learning when they have a clear understanding of what they need to do next to improve or when their interest is captured and they persevere until they are satisfied that they have done their best work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The school provides a satisfactory curriculum which meets National Curriculum requirements. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Provision for these pupils is satisfactory overall. Good use is made of classroom assistants to support them. However, there is not enough specialist help for those who have more severe learning or behaviour needs. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | These pupils are well integrated into the school, provided with specialist support, and make satisfactory progress. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development | The school promotes moral and social development well through emphasis on taking responsibilities, correct choices and helping others and also through fostering pupils' self-esteem. Good use is made of formal occasions to promote spiritual and cultural development but these aspects are less well developed in lessons and overall provision is satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The personal care and guidance of pupils are often good. The procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. |

The school works well with parents. They are made welcome and find it easy to discuss any concerns. Children feel secure and are confident that members of staff will help them with any problems. There is an agreed detailed approach to English, mathematics and science. Not all other subjects have a clear programme for what pupils are to learn and how they will build on previous work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides strong leadership. His clear sense of purpose and focused approach has made a significant contribution to the improvements made. He is well supported by his deputy. The English, mathematics and science co-ordinators have worked very effectively to raise standards. Some other co-ordinators do not have a clear view of progress in their subjects. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors provide committed support. They have a good knowledge of the work of the school, set targets and monitor progress towards them. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school monitors its performance very effectively, analyses weaknesses and uses the information well to set targets and to provide support for improvement. |
| The strategic use of resources | Financial and strategic planning has been used very effectively to identify areas for development in the current year and to ensure that the necessary resources are acquired. Longer-term planning is less well considered. |

The number of teachers is average for the size of school. The school has invested in a high number of classroom assistants and this has helped with the improvements in pupil management and support for groups of pupils. The accommodation is adequate overall but the junior toilets are unsatisfactory. The quality and quantity of learning resources are satisfactory overall, though the provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. Key strengths in the leadership and management have been the commitment to improvement, the willingness to take difficult decisions and the effective use of staff training and development. The school uses its resources efficiently and applies the principles of best value well in its spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All parents feel that their children like school.• Parents are made welcome and find it easy to discuss any concerns.• Children are expected to work hard.• Their children are helped to become mature.• The school is well led and managed. | <p>There were very few negative comments. A small minority expressed slight concerns about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• behaviour;• information about children's progress;• the amount of homework. |

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. There are a few pupils who have difficulty in concentrating and in working with others but the school works well to manage them and to effect improvements in their behaviour. The school gives an appropriate amount of information about children's progress but the use of computers in writing reports gives them an impersonal feel. The amount of homework is usually appropriate for the different age groups.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The 2001 National Curriculum test results at the ages of 7 and 11 and the work seen during the inspection reflect good progress during the Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress overall both in Years 1-2 and in Years 3-6. There has been a very marked improvement in test results for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science over the two years since the last inspection. The samples of work from the previous year, examined during the inspection show that the current Year 6 pupils made good progress in English, mathematics and science when they were in Year 5 and they are well placed to continue the improvement in results. The school has analysed carefully where improvements were required, raised the expectations of staff and pupils and introduced specific learning projects to raise attainment. The standards and quality of work observed during the inspection in Years 3-6 reflect this. The serious weaknesses in standards have been overcome and pupils' achievement is now satisfactory.

2. The majority of children enter the Foundation Stage with below average skills for their age and a significant number have low standards in language and social skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. All children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress in all the areas of learning. By the end of Reception, most children are attaining standards, which are just below those expected for the age group in all areas of learning.

3. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above was well above average in reading and well below average in writing. The 2001 results show a drop in reading to below average but a very significant improvement in writing to average overall and well above the average for similar schools. The percentage of eleven-year-olds reaching Level 4 or above in English in 2000 was well below the national average but in 2001 there was an improvement. The proportion attaining Level 4, although below the national average was typical of similar schools. This was largely due to the marked improvement in results in writing. Reading results fell slightly. The school met the target in English set for it by the Local Education Authority. Few pupils achieved a higher level than expected for the age group in any of the recent tests, which depresses the overall results. In Year 2 boys did less well than girls in reading. Year 6 boys did equally as well as girls in writing, unlike the national pattern.

4. Results in reading have been good in recent years but the 2001 tests indicated that the children's ability to read for meaning was not as good as in previous years. Immediate action was taken to address the weaknesses in reading skills and to review the reading material for boys. Inspection findings indicate that the present Year 2 children are making sound progress and reaching the expected standard. They use a range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and talk confidently about books. There was a similar pattern in results of reading tests for eleven-year-olds and again the school has taken swift action by providing extra guided reading lessons and more group reading activities. Reading standards observed with older pupils during the inspection were in line with those expected. Most pupils in Year 6 read with confidence and expression and are able to discuss their favourite authors.

5. Standards in speaking and listening are similar to those found in most schools by the ages of seven and eleven. This represents sound achievement. Most pupils listen carefully to the teacher's explanations or to the contributions of others. They participate readily in class

discussions and in the better lessons the teachers' good questioning techniques encourage them to think carefully about their answers and improve the quality of their responses.

6. Standards in writing have improved significantly over the last two years. Attainment in writing is now similar to that found in most schools and pupils are achieving well in relation to their previous attainment. Teachers offer pupils many opportunities to write in a range of styles and for different purposes. A strength of the writing development is the way pupils are challenged to use interesting words and phrases and pay attention to the setting, characters and atmosphere. Standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are developed soundly through the school.

7. In the 2000 mathematics tests for seven-year-olds the results were below the national average but average for similar schools. In 2001 a similar percentage achieved the expected level and there was an increase in the proportion achieving the higher Level 3. In 2001 the results for eleven-year-olds showed continued improvement. Although the proportion attaining the expected level was below the national average it was above average compared with similar schools. The percentage attaining the higher Level 5 also improved. There were no significant differences between boys and girls. The school met the target set by the Local Education Authority.

8. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of seven, children have made sound progress in mathematics and standards are average for the age group. Most pupils have confident number skills. They achieve soundly across a wide range of mathematical topics, including money, measurement and shape. Year 6 pupils are also attaining average standards in mathematics, which reflect satisfactory progress. Standards have risen significantly since the last inspection. Most show a sound understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and can apply their knowledge when solving problems related to real situations. They know the properties of shapes and can measure angles accurately. They gather and interpret data and can present their findings using the correct type of graph and an appropriate scale.

9. In 2000 the percentage of seven-year-olds reaching the expected standard in science was above average but very few reached the higher Level 3. In 2001 the assessments showed an average number at the expected level. In 2000 the percentage of eleven-year-olds reaching Level 4 or above in the national science tests was well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. In the 2001 tests the results fell to well below average. There was little difference between boys' and girls' results.

10. Standards in science for children in Years 1-2 have been maintained since the last inspection; attainment by the age of seven remains broadly in line with expectations for their age, though few reach the higher Level 3. The work seen during the inspection in Years 3-6 shows an improvement from the latest test results. The current Year 6 are building on the foundation of the good progress they made last year. Overall, standards are now close to those expected nationally and much better than at the time of the last inspection. However, too few pupils are working at the higher Level 5, and this depresses the school's results compared to other schools. The school develops pupils' scientific knowledge systematically but the quality of investigative work is inconsistent. Pupils can carry out simple tests well, but they are less confident when they have to devise their own tests and justify the results, because in some classes they have become too dependent on the teacher designing and directing investigations.

11. During Years 1-2 most children make satisfactory progress in information and communication technology. By the end of Year 2, standards are close to those expected for this age. In Years 3-6 pupils have too few opportunities to work with computers and standards are below average. Although pupils are introduced to all the required skills, they have too few opportunities to practise them and they lack confidence and many remain dependent on adult help. Attainment in the juniors has not kept pace since the last inspection with the improvement seen in other schools and has fallen behind the expected level.

12. There are occasional good examples of literacy and numeracy skills being developed well across the curriculum and this provides valuable extension of key skills. In some other classes over-reliance on worksheets means that opportunities are missed to develop pupils' independent learning skills and to extend their competence in reading, writing and number across the subjects of the curriculum. The good standards in writing in the English books are not always carried over into other subject areas, resulting in writing that is still printed and not presented well enough. Information and communication technology is not used well enough to support other subjects in Years 3-6 and this contributes to the unsatisfactory standards in the subject.

13. Religious education was inspected separately by a diocesan representative.

14. Overall standards in all other subjects at the ages of seven and eleven are broadly in line with those found in most schools and most pupils make satisfactory progress during Years 1-2 and Years 3-6.

15. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in skills, knowledge and understanding, so that by the age of seven and eleven they achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their age and ability in most subjects. A few pupils have more severe learning or behaviour problems. These are not always given the specialist support they need and this means that their progress is sometimes unsatisfactory and on occasions they disturb the progress of others. Those with English as an additional language are well integrated. They are given specialist support and make satisfactory progress. No pupils are identified as 'gifted'. In the better lessons extension work is provided for more able pupils to allow them to progress at their own rate. In some classes, however, there is insufficient challenge for the more able. There was no significant difference during the inspection between the achievement and progress of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes to the school are better than at the time of the last inspection and are now satisfactory. The serious weaknesses in the attitudes of a significant minority have been rectified. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' attitudes. This has been achieved by positive reinforcement in lessons, public recognition of good work, extra effort and consideration for others through awards, such as *'Star of the Week'*. The school has used attitude surveys to obtain pupils' views and gain information on their personal development and progress. The school is currently participating in a social inclusion project with Manchester University. Most pupils now like coming to school and show enthusiasm and interest in lessons, though a few find it difficult to work co-operatively or to maintain concentration if they are asked to sit and listen for too long. Pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes soon settle in and enjoy the opportunities for learning that the school provides.

17. Behaviour is satisfactory. The school has worked very hard to improve the weaknesses in pupils' behaviour since the last inspection, and has achieved a great deal. Although behaviour has improved considerably, there are still a few pupils in most classes who find it difficult to fit in with the needs of others. The school is aware of this and uses a variety of whole-school strategies to continue to improve behaviour; and have managed to do this without excluding any pupils. Behaviour around the school is usually good, and very few instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen. When they did occur, they were dealt with swiftly and fairly by supervisory staff, in accordance with the positive behaviour policy.

18. There is little sign of any racism or bullying at the school. All the pupils mix well and they know that a high standard of behaviour is expected of them. They also know that the school will not tolerate bullying. Playground supervision is good; the need for good behaviour is continually reinforced by supervisory staff. Year 6 boys and girls use the all-weather sports facilities at lunch-time for football, and this gives younger pupils more space, and improves safety. The Year 6 volunteer mediators make a valuable contribution by resolving any minor disputes in a responsible manner.

19. Pupils' relationships with each other, and with adults, are good. These have improved since the last inspection as a result of the attention given to this in, personal, social and health education and as a result of the focus on a positive approach in behaviour management training. Most pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and respect others' feelings, values and beliefs well. There is very little litter, and no signs of wilful damage to school equipment, fixtures or fittings, or any graffiti. Pupils hold open doors for others and are polite. During the inspection, many instances of pupils working well together in lessons were seen. For example, in a science lesson in Year 2, when they were examining the properties of various materials, pupils showed considerable patience and co-operation as they concentrated on their experiments.

20. Pupils show a good level of initiative and personal responsibility, and this, too, has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are expected to take on responsibilities. These responsibilities are mainly confined to their own class for infants; but expectations and opportunities expand and become more demanding in the juniors. There is a School Council, with boy and girl representatives, pupils answer the telephone and help to clear away after lunch, and Year 6 pupils help younger children with their reading and act as mediators. Opportunities to show initiative within lessons and independence in learning are less common.

21. Attendance is satisfactory. It is around the average for the area and has improved since last year, although it is still just below the national average. There is some lateness, which is closely monitored by the school, but it does not disrupt lessons. The school makes considerable efforts to improve attendance. There is a relatively high rate of pupil mobility at the school, and analysis of the levels of attendance of these pupils, over the past year, shows that a quarter of the worst attendees did not complete a full year at the school. This affects the school's attendance statistics adversely.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage. It is much improved since the previous inspection. Considerable effort has been put into training teachers in behaviour management and in teaching methods over the last two years and there has been an intensive programme of lesson monitoring and support. As a result, the serious weaknesses in Years 3-6 have been successfully overcome. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection, though there were shortcomings in parts of some other lessons. In a third of the lessons the quality of teaching was good and two very good lessons were observed.

23. The quality of learning is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall in both Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. Pupils make most progress in learning when they have a clear understanding of what they need to do next to improve or when their interest is captured and they persevere until they are satisfied that they have done their best work. Learning is least successful when the pace of the lesson slows, causing some pupils to lose concentration and then disturb others.

24. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. Lessons are carefully planned with specific learning objectives for groups of children. These targets are based on good knowledge of young children's learning and on frequent assessments and reveal that teachers have high expectations for each child's progress. Activities are usually well considered for the age group, stimulating and carefully prepared and organized. However, the few five-year-olds in the mixed Year 1 and Reception class are not always treated as Foundation Stage children. Lessons proceed at a good pace and the sequence and timing of activities take account of young children's concentration span.

25. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching seen in both Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. Teachers have a good grasp of the National Literacy Strategy. The teaching of writing is a strength, particularly in the range of purposes pupils are given for writing and the way they are shown how to organize their ideas. Sometimes the pace of a lesson slackens and this causes pupils to become inattentive. In mathematics the quality of teaching is satisfactory in both Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. Lessons are soundly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. In the better lessons teachers involve pupils in finding practical examples of how mathematics relates to real life or challenge them to explain their thinking. At times all pupils are kept at the same level when some are ready to move on.

26. The quality of teaching in science lessons is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Strengths include clear explanations and probing questions. There is not enough consistency in opportunities for pupils to practise their enquiry skills. In information and communication technology the small amount of class teaching seen was satisfactory. In small group and individual work teachers sometimes have too limited expectations of what pupils might achieve. Teaching is satisfactory overall in all other subjects.

27. The quality of teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory. Lesson planning in English and mathematics is individualised so that pupils are provided with activities that are matched to their particular needs, although this planning is structured better in some classes than in others. All pupils are taught within the classroom, either by the teacher or in small groups supported by a learning support assistant. In lessons where the learning support assistant is present, pupils benefit from sensitive support. The support staff know pupils well, maintain good relationships with them and focus on not only developing their skills and knowledge within subjects, but also on aspects of personal and social behaviour.

28. In the best lessons teachers have clear targets for groups of pupils. In oral work they use different levels of questions to test the range of understanding and to challenge all pupils and then set specific tasks, such as asking one group to work with a plan of the whole school while others are given a simple section of the plan to help them to focus on a particular point. In some other lessons teachers work hard to keep all pupils involved but their planning does not always take sufficient account of the full range of attainment and maturity in the class. For example, all children in a group will be expected to count on using fingers or unifix when a few can already do the addition mentally. In such lessons there is not a sharp enough focus on what the different groups of children are to learn, how their progress may differ and on how their increased knowledge, skills and understanding will be assessed.

29. The school has worked hard to introduce a consistent policy for managing pupils' behaviour in lessons. This usually works well. In the best lessons there is a brisk pace, which keeps pupils involved in their work and also helps them to make good progress. In less successful lessons the teacher becomes over-concerned with disciplining pupils. The lesson flow is disrupted as the teacher issues warnings and, as the pace slackens, more pupils begin to lose concentration. This contrasts with most lessons, which have a positive atmosphere and where praise is used effectively to reinforce good behaviour and learning strategies. This leads to good relationships and encourages pupils to do their best.

30. In the more successful lessons teachers explain information clearly and use good illustrations to help pupils to understand ideas. They use questions well to extend pupils' thinking and their speaking and listening skills and to probe their understanding. Some teachers are adept at setting challenges in the way that they introduce the lessons or in setting individual or group tasks. Questions, such as - '*Can anyone find out what happens when ...?*' or '*How could you explain your result?*' require pupils to think carefully and allow more able pupils to follow through the task to a higher level. Some other teachers use commercial worksheets uncritically. These worksheets are too frequently undemanding in parts and teachers tend to use all the worksheet instead of selecting what is of value. This can lead to unproductive activities, such as colouring in pictures, in geography or history, instead of encouraging pupils to move onto a new challenge. It is often the higher attainers who complete the main task first who are given these time-filling tasks. This over-reliance on worksheets means that opportunities are missed to develop pupils' independent learning skills and to extend their competence in reading, writing and number across the subjects of the curriculum.

31. All classes have a nursery nurse or a classroom support assistant. The teamwork between the teacher and the support staff is usually good and the assistants are well briefed on the targets for the day. It is a strength of the work in the Foundation Stage. This teamwork enables groups to be targeted for additional support and also helps with the behaviour management strategies. Occasionally, a classroom assistant will adhere too rigidly to a set learning process and not allow higher attainers to move on to the next step or intervene too readily in minor discipline issues and disturb the lesson flow. In the main, they are proving to be an asset to the school.

32. There is a whole-school marking policy but there are inconsistencies in its application. In some classes marking is used very effectively to explain what pupils need to do to improve and to set individual learning targets. Progress towards these targets is evaluated and more challenging targets set. Pupils of all ages find such marking a useful aid to learning. In some classes marking is no more than a tick against a piece of work, which does little to inform the pupil of what the next steps need to be.

33. Homework is set regularly and is usually targeted at reading, spelling and number work. It makes a sound contribution to pupils' progress. The tasks and the amount are usually appropriate for the different age groups. Most parents are satisfied with the range, regularity and quantity of homework.

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

34. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory overall throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage a good range of activities is provided in the Nursery and Reception class but the few five-year-olds in the mixed Year 1 and Reception class do not have all the opportunities enjoyed by the other Foundation Stage children. In Years 1-2 and in Years 3-6 the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils by providing a sound range of learning opportunities. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced and includes all the required areas of the National Curriculum and also religious education. There is a heavy emphasis on developing skills in English, mathematics and science; the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established and standards in these subjects are rising significantly. Personal, social and health education is also given more time than in many schools. Other subjects have below average time allocations. This limits what can be achieved within them, although there is just enough time to complete the National Curriculum programmes of study.

35. Overall, curricular planning is sound. There is a very clear whole-school approach to planning in English, mathematics and science. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects. However, the planning in music, history, geography and physical education does not ensure that pupils build up their knowledge, skills and understanding progressively in these subjects as they move through the school. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

36. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities over the course of the year. These include sporting, art and writing activities.

37. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The policy and planning for this aspect of the curriculum have recently been revised and are now comprehensive. The school places appropriate emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum and the curricular time devoted to personal, social and health education is used well. It has contributed to the improvement in behaviour and learning attitudes since the last inspection. The school makes effective use of visits and visitors to teach aspects of health and sex education; for example, the *Life Education* unit is used annually and involves all classes and parents in a week's focus on health and life education.

38. Since the school was last inspected, the satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs has been maintained. The school has a current policy, which reflects the everyday provision and complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. There are clear individual education plans for each pupil on the register of special educational needs. These targets are specific and are regularly reviewed by staff in consultation with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator and parents.

39. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are integrated well into the school community and included in all activities. Where pupils need it, they have the support of assigned bi-lingual workers. The school treats these pupils' cultures and religions with due respect, which helps the pupils to feel valued.

40. The school has satisfactory links with the community, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. There are good links with the church and parish. The church is used for celebrations and festivals and also to support art and design and history. Local shops have been used by pupils in Years 1-2 for surveys, as part of their studies. However, there are currently no active links with industry. The school participates in local and national competitions and initiatives, and pupils have entertained local senior citizens.

41. There are good, constructive links with other schools and colleges. There are practical links with a secondary school in physical education, science and information and communication technology, where pupils use the secondary school's facilities and staff expertise. Teachers have worked with a Rochdale primary school on improving pupils' attitudes. The school in turn offers placements to secondary school pupils and to student nursery nurses and trainee teachers. Pupils transfer to a variety of secondary schools, and the school ensures that the necessary information about pupils' personal and academic progress is passed to all the receiving schools.

42. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school creates a climate in which every individual is valued and there is a positive, caring ethos. This encouraging approach helps pupils to develop self-esteem, good relationships, and respect for the feelings, beliefs and values of others. Provision for pupils' personal development is somewhat better than at the time of the previous inspection. Improvements include the consistent application of the school's code of behaviour in all classes, more opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, better social development and increased attention to the multi-cultural aspect of the curriculum.

43. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted satisfactorily. The school has a clear Christian ethos and close links with the church. The parish priest regularly supports the main assembly of the week and pupils attend church for special services. The acts of collective worship were inspected separately by a diocesan representative. Prayers are said in classrooms at the end of morning and afternoon sessions but are sometimes rushed and become a routine rather than a time of reflection. While good use is made of these set occasions and of school displays to promote spiritual development, opportunities are missed in lessons to allow pupils to explore emotions, share in the wonder of discovery, delight in beauty or to think about their place in the world.

44. The school promotes moral development well. The principles which distinguish between right and wrong are taught consistently through the application of clear rules. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and the stress in the discipline policy is on pupils making the right choices and the consequences of their decisions. '*Are you making good choices?*' is often heard in lessons. Pupils are also encouraged to find ways of resolving problems and avoiding conflict. There is a School Council where elected representatives can put forward issues of concern. Four pupils from Year 6 volunteer to act as mediators for the week to help to diffuse minor playground disputes and to guide pupils to negotiated outcomes.

45. Provision for the development of pupils' social skills is good. Throughout the school, pupils learn to share and take turns when playing and working together. All adults working in the school provide good role models, encouraging pupils to be friendly, courteous and considerate. This has a positive impact on the development of good relationships evident in all classes. In lessons, pupils co-operate well, share resources and work effectively in small groups. Pupils in Year 6 act as telephone operators at lunchtime. They read to children in the infants and help the youngest children with lunchtime routines. Pupils raise money for charities each year, for example the scanner appeal, National Children's Homes and the Booth Centre for the homeless. These activities help to increase pupils' awareness of the needs of others and their appreciation that members of a community should support one other. Pupils are also prepared for citizenship through involvement in environmental projects.

46. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. They are given good opportunities to learn about their own culture. Pupils study the work of famous artists and listen to recorded music from their own and other cultures. Theatre groups and professional musicians perform in school from time to time. They celebrate traditional festivals and take part in performances, such as '*Rats*'. There are also sound opportunities to develop cultural awareness in English, history, and dance and through a limited range of educational visits.

47. Pupils' multi-cultural awareness has been less well developed. However, the school has responded very positively to recent racial disharmony in the area. There are striking displays of books and artefacts from a range of cultures. More music and art from non-western cultures are being introduced. Pupils are learning about non-Christian faiths and being taught to respect these and to show appropriate reverence for their sacred objects. Year 6 pupils visit a synagogue as part of their study of Judaism and visitors are invited into school to share the food, dress and art of minority cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. The school has a positive and encouraging atmosphere, which contributes to pupils' good personal development and helps all children to feel valued members of the school. It provides good support and guidance for individual pupils based on the good relationships that exist and pupils feel secure. The procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall.

49. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is generally good. The school has very good procedures for assessing and recording what pupils know and can do in English, mathematics and science. After the previous inspection, the school identified assessment as an important tool in raising standards. In these three subjects teachers use standardized and national tests to check and record pupils' progress. The results are then used to set targets for individual pupils. Pupils play a part in this process by agreeing their own writing targets each term. They like this and think that it helps them to improve. Teachers also use the tests, and their own assessments, to identify whether pupils need extra help and if they are making sufficient progress. These procedures have helped to raise standards in these subjects.

50. The subject leaders in these three subjects have used the information gained from analysing tests to improve the curriculum and the way that it is taught. However, not all teachers make good use of the test results to plan work that is challenging for the more able pupils. In some subjects there are no agreed systems for recording what pupils can do. In others, such as information and communication technology, co-ordinators have developed assessment schemes but they are being tried for the first time. However, the experience gained in English, mathematics and science provides a good basis for implementing these systems.

51. Teachers support pupils' academic progress well in lessons. They know their pupils and are quick to spot, and praise, a step forward. They make sure that everyone has a chance to answer, or to make a suggestion. Teachers' support for pupils' learning through marking is less consistent. In some classes there are lots of comments and stickers, which make the pupils feel that their work is valued. In other classes marking is less thorough. There is little to help the pupils to improve or to encourage further effort.

52. The school's provision for supporting personal development is good. Pupils and parents feel that the school cares about each pupil and that it responds quickly if things go wrong. There are good reward systems to celebrate successes, however small. The school works hard to raise the self-esteem of its pupils. For example there are photographs in the hall of '*Stars of the Week*'. Year 6 volunteers are trained well as mediators and take turns to be available in the playground for pupils who are upset.

53. All teachers and support staff have positive relationships with pupils with special educational needs and use these effectively to encourage, guide and support their academic and personal development. Most of these pupils make satisfactory progress. However, there is not enough specialist support for those pupils who have more severe learning or emotional needs and, while teachers and support staff give what support they can, such children are not always making the progress they should.

54. Child protection matters are dealt with satisfactorily. Staff are properly trained and the head teacher attends to child protection sensitively, ensuring that all school staff are kept up to date with developments and are properly informed. There are satisfactory links with other support agencies. The head teacher was responsible for initiating a before- and after-school care club, which has become very popular with pupils and parents, and provides a valuable welfare function for pupils.

55. The procedures for monitoring health and safety matters are unsatisfactory. Although the school has a health and safety policy, there is no system for formal written risk assessments or a regular review of risks.

56. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its monitoring of pupils' behaviour considerably. The promotion of good behaviour, monitoring of the quality of pupils' conduct and early response to problems as they arise are now all well managed. The school has invested substantial resources and time in its efforts to improve behaviour, and members of staff apply the positive behaviour policy consistently throughout the school. There is a range of rewards and punishments, which are all carefully recorded, and parents are kept informed and involved in the process. The school has good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. There are very few instances of bullying, but they are carefully logged and analysed by the school. Personal, social and health education lessons are used to discuss the issue of bullying, and all staff are vigilant. Pupils are aware of how to let staff know if they are bullied, and their good relationships with teachers and ancillary staff give them the confidence to speak out when bullying occurs.

57. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory overall. The school secretary and teachers monitor the computerised records, and parents are contacted to supply reasons for absence. The school awards certificates for full attendance to individual pupils, and the best attending class is presented with a cup each week. However, there is no award for improved attendance, and the school has not set itself a target figure for improving attendance. Parents are not expected to apply for permission to take holidays during term time. At the time of the inspection, there was no educational welfare officer allocated to the school to support the school's efforts to improve attendance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. Parents have very positive views of the school and are pleased with the strong partnership they have with the staff. Parental views are more supportive of the school than at the time of the previous inspection.

59. Links between parents and the school are good. The school has used surveys of parents' and pupils' views to good effect on issues such as school uniforms and the timing of open evenings. The very active Parents' and Teachers' Association organizes social functions, raises funds for the school, which pay for extra resources and equipment, and is a general source of support for the school.

60. A few parents help in classrooms, and supervise pupils on school visits or trips out of school, for example to the swimming baths. Many parents support school festivals, celebrations and other special events in the school calendar, and give generously to fund-raising activities and to the charities supported by pupils.

61. The information the school provides for parents is of good quality overall. There are two open meetings during the year for parents to discuss progress with teachers, with an extra meeting for Years 2 and 6. Parents are also welcomed for informal discussions, whenever they have concerns about their children's education. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about forthcoming events and curriculum matters. Annual reports on pupils' progress meet requirements, inform parents of progress and set targets. However, the computerised format, the language used and the presentation give the reports an impersonal feel.

62. The involvement of parents with pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They are invited to review meetings, kept informed of what is being done in school to help their child and, on occasions, have particular roles to play in supporting their children at home with special tasks and activities.

63. The school makes satisfactory efforts to involve parents in their children's learning. Home-school reading diaries are used, and parents are encouraged to support their children with reading, writing and spelling. There is a wide range in the levels of support that parents give their children in these aspects.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The overall quality of leadership and management is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. As a result of a focused action plan, clear leadership and considerable effort, the main areas of weakness identified at the last inspection have been successfully rectified.

65. Teachers' expectations of the standards that pupils can achieve have been raised. In-service training on teaching methods has helped to improve the quality of teaching and to increase the pace of lessons. Training on behaviour management has led to a cohesive policy and a calmer atmosphere for learning. A number of initiatives to involve pupils more in their learning have been introduced successfully and pupils now respond more positively and take more responsibility.

66. The clear set of values and of aims, which reflect the church foundation, provides a focus for the work of the school and leads to a shared sense of purpose. Pupils are valued as individuals, whatever their background, strengths or needs, and made to feel a part of the school community.

67. The headteacher provides strong leadership. His clear sense of purpose and focused approach have ensured that the school's action plan has been implemented and have made a significant contribution to the marked improvements achieved. He has a good appreciation of the school's current strengths and weaknesses and a clear vision of how he wants the school to develop. He fosters a sense of teamwork but has been prepared to take difficult decisions to ensure improvements to the quality of education. He is well supported by his deputy.

68. The governors provide committed support. They have a good knowledge of the work of the school, set targets and monitor progress towards them. Although they are very supportive of the staff, they provide an appropriate degree of critical scrutiny of what is happening in the school and of proposals put to them. The Governing Body has a clear and effective committee structure which has been revised during the past two years and which helps to ensure that statutory requirements are met. Clear decisions are taken and are followed through.

69. The school now monitors its performance very effectively. Lessons have been observed by senior staff, by the English, mathematics and science co-ordinators and by Local Education Authority advisers; pupils' work has been evaluated and teachers' planning and records are scrutinized. Results from National Curriculum end of key stage tests, from optional tests and from internal assessments have been analysed to assess the degree of value added by the school and to identify areas of weakness. This information has been used well to set targets and to provide support for improvement.

70. While the English, mathematics, science and Foundation Stage co-ordinators have worked very effectively to raise standards, some other co-ordinators do not have a clear view of standards or progress across the school in their subjects. As at the time of the previous inspection, they see their role as providing a framework and resources for the subject, together with informal advice, rather than the evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. In consequence, the development of knowledge, skills and understanding is inconsistent in these areas and pupils do not always build on previous work as they move through the school.

71. Since the last inspection, the special educational needs co-ordinator has continued to give a clear direction to the development of the provision. She liaises effectively with teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that all pupils receive a sound curriculum matched to their needs. The co-ordinator has led some staff training to improve the quality of individual education plans. The co-ordinator has very little opportunity to fulfil all the requirements of her role, however, as not enough time is allocated to enable her to assess and monitor the work of pupils with special educational needs, or to liaise with parents and other agencies.

72. The School Improvement Plan is an effective working document, which benefits from the action-planning approach. It is regularly reviewed at Governing Body meetings. When the latest National Curriculum test results revealed a weakness in reading, measures to improve the reading in Year 2 were added as an additional target. The current School Improvement Plan is well on target. Although some longer-term targets are identified, these are not outlined with sufficient detail or clarity for them to present a useful framework for the current year's priorities.

73. Financial and strategic planning has been used very effectively to identify areas for development in the current year and to ensure that the necessary resources are acquired. There is a clear link between budget-setting and governors' priorities for improvement. Specific grants, for example monies for special educational needs and staff training, have been targeted well and used efficiently. At just under three per cent the amount of money in balances is on the low side and the school has had to reduce some items of spending to maintain its staffing levels. The Local Education Authority audit team reporting in September 2001 found that 'financial planning and control are very good'. The school applies the principles of best value well in its spending decisions. Taking into account the below average attainment on entry, the above average income per pupil and the significant improvements made since the last inspection report, value for money is now sound, an improvement since the last inspection when it was regarded as unsatisfactory.

74. The number of teachers is average for the size of school and is adequate for the taught curriculum. The school has invested in a relatively large number of classroom assistants and this has helped with the improvements in pupil management and support for groups of pupils. The school has invested heavily in time for in-service training to help to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards. This provision of training has been well managed. There is appropriate support for newly qualified teachers. The school has made an effective start on performance management. The importance that the school attaches to professional development is reflected in the school's 'Investors in People' status.

75. The accommodation is adequate overall. Many classrooms and resource areas provide attractive and stimulating areas for learning because of the effective displays of pupils' work and bright, well selected material to support learning. The use of junior toilets as a thoroughfare is unsatisfactory. The school has access to an all-weather pitch for games lessons and this ensures that games can continue through the year. This also provides an area for lunch-time ball games and is a very useful extension to the main play areas. However, the lack of grassed areas limits some sports activities and there is little in the school site to support environmental education.

76. At the time of the last inspection the range of books in the library was found to be limited. There has been a significant investment in library books and the Local Education Authority library service has assisted in enhancing the library's role within the school. The quality and quantity of resources are now both at least satisfactory overall for all subjects, apart from the unsatisfactory provision for outdoor play equipment in the Foundation Stage.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. In order to continue the improvement in standards and in the quality of education the school should:

- a. raise standards in information and communication technology in Years 3-6 by:
- ◆ introducing a programme of specific and systematic teaching of basic skills through the school;
 - ◆ ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop and practise skills;
 - ◆ using information and communication technology more effectively across the curriculum;

(see paragraphs 11, 26, 143-150 and 154.)

b. ensure that teachers' planning always takes sufficient account of the full range of attainment and maturity in the class so that:

- ◆ the work is hard enough for the more able pupils;
- ◆ work for pupils with special needs takes account of the targets in their individual education plans;
- ◆ appropriate account is taken of the learning needs of the different age groups in mixed-age classes;

(see paragraphs 15, 24, 28, 34, 50, 116, 124, 141 and 147.)

c. ensure that all subjects have a clear programme for the development of knowledge, skills and understanding so that:

- ◆ pupils build on previous work as they move through the school;
- ◆ teachers can assess pupils' progress against clear targets;

(see paragraphs 35, 50, 135, 142, 146, 149, 150, 155 and 162.)

d. be much more selective in the use of worksheets so that:

- ◆ time in lessons is always used productively;
- ◆ pupils are given more opportunities to develop independent learning skills;
- ◆ reading, writing and number skills are practised more consistently in all subjects of the curriculum.

[see paragraphs 30, 116, 124 and 141.]

In addition, the governors and staff should:

- ◆ develop the role of co-ordinators in subjects other than English, mathematics and science;

(see paragraphs 70, 142, 156 and 162.)

- ◆ improve the provision of outdoor play equipment in the Foundation Stage.

(see paragraphs 76, 90 and 95.)

- ◆ improve systems for monitoring health and safety including risk assessment procedures

(see paragraphs 55, 75.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 61 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 85 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 0 | 2 | 22 | 36 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 0% | 3.3% | 36.1% | 59% | 1.6% | 0% | 0% |

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 28 | 259 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/a | 75 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 0 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 9 | 98 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 20 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 42 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 35 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|------|
| School data | 6.4% |
| National comparative data | 5.2% |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|------|
| School data | 0% |
| National comparative data | 0.5% |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2001 | 15 [19] | 20 [19] | 35 [38] |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 10 [17] | 14 [10] | 14 [16] |
| | Girls | 17 [19] | 18 [18] | 16 [17] |
| | Total | 27 [36] | 32 [28] | 30 [33] |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 77% [95%] | 91% [74%] | 86% [87%] |
| | National | N/a [83%] | N/a [84%] | N/a [90%] |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 [14] | 12 [17] | 15 [17] |
| | Girls | 17 [18] | 13 [19] | 16 [19] |
| | Total | 29 [32] | 25 [36] | 31 [36] |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 83% [84%] | 71% [95%] | 88% [95%] |
| | National | N/a [84%] | N/a [88%] | N/a [88%] |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2001 | 16 [17] | 14 [16] | 30 [33] |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 [9] | 11 [10] | 12 [14] |
| | Girls | 10 [10] | 10 [12] | 10 [12] |
| | Total | 20 [19] | 21 [22] | 22 [26] |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 67% [58%] | 70% [67%] | 73% [79%] |
| | National | 75% [75%] | 71% [72%] | 87% [85%] |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 [7] | 11 [8] | 13 [9] |
| | Girls | 9 [5] | 9 [6] | 9 [9] |
| | Total | 19 [12] | 20 [14] | 22 [18] |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 63% [36%] | 67% [42%] | 73% [55%] |
| | National | N/a [70%] | N/a [72%] | N/a [79%] |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 4 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 6 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 13 |
| Bangladeshi | 2 |
| Chinese | 6 |
| White | 193 |
| 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 | 0 | 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) | 12 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 23.5 |
| Average class size | 28.8 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 9 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 211 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 28 |
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 33 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 14 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2000/1 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 590,996 |
| Total expenditure | 582,157 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,963 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 8,393 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 17,232 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 2 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 287 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 48 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 73 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 56 | 33 | 6 | 0 | 4 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 46 | 46 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 52 | 33 | 12 | 0 | 2 |
| The teaching is good. | 65 | 25 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 42 | 44 | 8 | 2 | 4 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 58 | 31 | 6 | 0 | 4 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 71 | 25 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 40 | 48 | 8 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 42 | 54 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 54 | 41 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 50 | 29 | 4 | 0 | 17 |

Because of rounding, not all rows may add up to 100%.

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

78. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery class which is housed in a purpose-built unit and two Reception classes, which are housed in the main school. At the time of the inspection there were 94 children in the Foundation Stage; 55 were in the Nursery, 29 were in a Reception class and ten were in a mixed Year 1 and Reception class. The Foundation Stage teachers liaise well so that they can plan a broad and interesting programme of learning that gives a good start to children's education.

79. The majority of children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment which is below that normally seen at this age and a significant number have standards well below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world. All children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress in all the areas of learning. By the end of Reception, most children are attaining standards which are just below those expected for the age group in all areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and develop positive attitudes to learning. They work and play with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They use resources carefully and begin to develop independent skills. Children learn to share and take turns and they begin to work co-operatively. Most listen carefully and often levels of concentration are good. Children persevere for lengthy periods to complete a task. They respond well to teachers and other adults and they are keen and confident to share their ideas, often despite poorly developed speech and language skills. Behaviour is good, children are well mannered and take care of each other, their environment and the resources provided for them. In class, they collect the equipment they need for a task and they promptly clear away the equipment they have been using. They understand familiar routines and recognize that they need to carry these out sensibly.

81. The quality of teaching in personal, social and emotional development is good. Teachers are skilled in capturing children's attention through interesting activities, expressive voices and actions, and in switching strategies to maintain participation and concentration. Good use of praise helps to create a very positive climate for learning. From the time they start Nursery children are encouraged to become self-reliant and are taught to work co-operatively.

Communication, language and literacy

82. Skills in language and literacy are developed systematically through many activities. Speaking and listening skills are fostered successfully through purposeful and imaginative play, rhymes, and through opportunities for children to take part in role play and talk in front of the class. In circle time (discussion session), children wait their turn to speak and listen respectfully and with interest to their friends. Many of the youngest children know that print is different from pictures, that it carries meaning and that it is read from left to right. They recognise their name and some letters of the alphabet. In the Reception class they are introduced to the school's reading scheme and almost all children are reading with growing confidence by the end of the year. The literacy hour helps to reinforce their reading skills and develop their understanding of books. Big books are used effectively. As the children read the text with their teacher, they look for patterns in words and learn how to read expressively. They know what a title page is and look for cues to help them make sensible predictions about what might happen next.

83. Children steadily acquire writing skills. Children in the Nursery write the first letter of their names independently, some can write their full name, others can write their names with some support by the end of the year. By the end of Reception children confidently attempt their own spelling of three-letter words and some children write phrases and simple sentences without help. For example, *'I go in a tent and I writ pos crds'* or *'Rosie went for a walk the fox folod'*.

84. The quality of teaching in this area is good. All of the teaching areas are set up to promote literacy skills. Labels, captions, posters, books and displays bombard children with words, rhymes, questions and suggestions. They are colourful, striking and encourage children to browse longer, or to settle down with a book. Teachers provide many good opportunities to help children develop useful literacy skills. In the Nursery an *'Author's Board'* displays children's early mark-making and writing and a large suspended pencil invites children to, *'Come and Write'*. Speaking and listening skills are carefully taught and children listen to instructions, stories and each other. They are taught the conventions of turn taking in conversations and that questions are followed by answers.

Mathematical development

85. A good range of activities is used to introduce mathematical concepts and to help children to gain confidence with numbers. The youngest children can form a human number line and count up to 10 and back supported by songs, such as *'Ten Little Men In A Flying Saucer'* and *'Ten Fat Sausages'*. The oldest children work with numbers to 20 and while using a hundred square, children counted to 40. This was disappointing to one boy who shouted, *'Lets do it again; I want to get to 100'*. Children develop simple ideas of size and weight and use associated vocabulary, such as 'long', 'longer', 'longest', 'heavy' and 'full'. They have a secure knowledge of colours and two-dimensional shapes and children in the Reception classes can name a small range of three-dimensional shapes. Children record their work in a variety of interesting ways, such as making a little book about nine entitled, *'This Is 9 By Me'*. Some children form numerals well, while others make poor representation, because of their poor pencil control. Children use computer programs confidently to support their learning in mathematics.

86. The quality of mathematics teaching is good. Every opportunity is seized in daily routines to develop children's number concepts and skills. Children are taught number rhymes, they play number games and use actions to reinforce mathematical concepts. Mental mathematics sessions are lively and move at a brisk pace. Teachers use well considered strategies to hold children's attention and to make them think, such as gradually drawing a shape from a bag and challenging children to anticipate from the features of the part already exposed what shapes it could possibly be.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world through a variety of practical experiences. In the Nursery children make a good start in learning about change when they make a milk shake for their snack. They practise their manipulative skills as they put sugar, strawberries and milk carefully into a blender and there is great excitement as the mixture froths and changes colour. They are intrigued to realize that the smell has changed too. They gain a sound understanding of life cycles when they keep caterpillars through the chrysalis stage and observe them change into butterflies.

88. All children use a computer regularly and are able to use the mouse to click and drag. Some are confident in this while others need support to operate a program. In the Reception class children explore early control technology skills successfully when they play with *'Pixie'*.

The children are enthralled and wait patiently for their turn. Good use is made of the local area and children use photographs taken during a walk to identify familiar buildings. They develop good early mapping skills through plotting pictorial routes. This topic also helps them to learn about the use of buildings and people's jobs.

89. A feature of the good teaching in this area is the teachers' imaginative use of practical experiences to introduce children to new concepts. A further strength is skilful questioning, which prompts children to think about new concepts and to develop new ideas. For example, careful questioning heightened children's curiosity to find out how many clicks it takes to ensure that '*Pixie*' moves over a grid to reach each object in turn.

Physical development

90. Children make good progress in physical development. They manipulate small tools, such as pencils, brushes, glue spreaders and scissors, very well and they squeeze, squash, roll and manipulate malleable materials. They show increasing dexterity as they complete jigsaws and use a range of construction materials. Indoors, children in the Reception class make good strides in confidence as they enjoy climbing, balancing, jumping and moving safely on equipment in the hall, but some show more enthusiasm than control. Outdoors, the lack of good quality, fixed climbing apparatus means that challenging opportunities to develop children's muscle control and balance are not readily available, particularly to children in Nursery. Children begin to develop control and physical co-ordination when running and stopping during games of '*What time is it, Mr Wolf?*'

91. Teaching in this area is satisfactory overall. Teachers provide a good range of activities to promote physical development and children's control over hand movements is enhanced well. In physical education lessons not enough attention is given to encouraging children to control their movements and to be aware of others.

Creative development

92. Children make good progress in this area as they experience and enjoy a wide range of creative activities, including art, dance, music and imaginative play. They draw, print, paint, model and use collage to create colourful pieces of work. They develop their art techniques well as they work in the style of famous artists, such as Kandinsky, painting patterns of bright circles. They apply these skills well to support their work in other subjects and to create bright, striking displays, which enhance their learning environment. Children are given a good introduction to music. They sing tunefully and with pleasure. They enjoy frequent opportunities to listen to the music of well-known composers, for example, when entering and leaving the hall at assembly time. Their appreciation of sound and rhythm is fostered well when they experiment with percussion instruments, including those they have made themselves.

93. The good quality of teaching is seen in the variety of interesting ways that children extend their learning by exploring colour, texture, shape and sound. Effective teacher support enables them to respond to what they see, hear, touch and smell and to express their own ideas confidently.

94. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well. Teachers plan in detail to specific learning objectives relating to the Early Learning Goals. A baseline assessment of children's attainment is made in the first weeks of school. This provides the teachers with an initial indication of each child's strengths and weaknesses. Day-to-day assessments are made and are used to inform the next stage of planning for each child's work. The teachers have high expectations for each child's progress. Each day is well structured, lessons proceed at a good pace and changes in activities take account of young children's concentration span. Activities are well considered for the age group, stimulating and carefully prepared and organised. Teaching and support staff work extremely well together, which enables support staff to make a very positive impact on the quality of education provided. All staff know individual children very well and are knowledgeable about the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. There is a good balance between direct teaching and independent activities. Teachers know the value of structured play in early learning and make good provision for it.

95. The classroom areas are spacious, organised imaginatively and in such a way that they promote the children's development in each of the areas of learning very well. Resources are carefully selected and very well organised, ensuring that children are well supported in particular lines of development. The quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory overall but there is insufficient equipment for outdoor play. A concern is that the few children of Reception age in the mixed Year 1 and Reception class do not always share the same learning opportunities as the rest of their year group. They are treated as Year 1 children for some activities. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has recognised this and has made this a priority for review. Since the previous inspection standards in all areas remain the same. Teachers have worked together to ensure that their planning relates to specific learning objectives and this in turn is related to the good progress made by the children.

ENGLISH

96. Standards in English have improved significantly since the school was last inspected in 1999. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, real improvements in standards are evident, particularly in writing. Inspection findings indicate that these improved standards are being maintained. Standards are close to average in both the current Year 2 and Year 6 age groups. The school reached the target for increasing the proportion of eleven-year-olds reaching the expected Level 4 that it set for 2001 and the current Year 6 pupils are well on track to achieve the challenging targets for 2002.

97. Very good leadership from the subject co-ordinator, who has examined the results of tests rigorously and taken decisive action, the monitoring of English lessons and in-service training and support for teachers have all had a positive effect on the standards now being achieved. As a result, all pupils throughout Years 1-6, including those pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the high numbers who enter and leave the school other than at normal times have an effect on the overall test results achieved, but pupils' achievement from when they first enter Year 1 is sound.

98. Over the last two years there has been some differences in the attainment of boys and girls in reading and writing at the age of seven. In 2001, boys did less well in their reading tests than the girls. At the age of eleven, the differences in the standards in reading and writing reflect the pattern found nationally, except that in writing boys in this school have done equally as well as girls and exceeded the national average for boys, while the girls fell below the national average. This inspection found no significant difference in attainment, attitudes or behaviour between boys and girls in the present Year 2 or Year 6.

99. Standards in reading have shown a mixed picture over the last two years, particularly in Year 2. The latest test results indicated that the children's ability to read for meaning was not as good as in previous years. After careful scrutiny of the test results revealed this weakness, immediate action was taken to address it. Small groups were targeted for additional support, and these groups are regularly assessed. The range of books for boys was also reviewed. These measures have already begun to have an impact on reading standards. Inspection findings indicate that the present Year 2 children are making sound progress and reaching average standards. When reading independently, more able pupils talk about the type of books they prefer to read, use a range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and understand how to locate the contents and index pages in non-fiction books. Children of all abilities are able to talk about their favourite parts of a story and make a plausible prediction about what may be going to happen next in a story.

100. Results in the 2001 National Curriculum reading tests for eleven-year-olds were also lower than in previous years. The school has taken swift action to remedy this. Separate guided reading lessons are now provided, there are small group reading activities with extra support for the lower attaining pupils and new reading comprehension materials have been purchased. Standards of reading during the inspection were satisfactory and similar to those found in most schools. When reading independently, pupils in Year 6 are able to discuss their favourite authors, but are less sure when asked to talk about different genres. Few pupils are members of a library, but they use the school library effectively. Year 6 pupils use their library skills confidently to research work in other subjects.

101. The reading records kept by teachers are presently little more than a list of the books read with a short evaluative comment and, in their present form, do little to raise standards. While regular assessments are made to determine how well pupils read, not enough use is presently made of these assessments to set further individual targets. Consequently, while progress is now satisfactory overall, it could be better.

102. Standards in writing have improved significantly over the last two years. Attainment in writing in the present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils is now similar to that found in most schools. Within literacy lessons and extended writing lessons teachers offer pupils many opportunities to write in a range of styles and for different purposes. Since the last inspection, standards of handwriting have improved and the majority of pupils by the age of seven can write in a legible joined script. Pupils in Year 6 have a fluent style and present their final drafts of work well. In some instances however, the good standards in writing do not carry over into other subject areas, resulting in writing that is still printed and not presented well enough.

103. In Year 2, pupils' spelling is developing soundly, with common words, such as, 'have', 'first', and 'market' all correct. More able pupils make good, if not always successful, attempts at more difficult words. Year 6 pupils of average and below average attainment make many spelling errors, but in class they are now taught to check their work with dictionaries during the final draft stage of writing and this is improving their confidence with words. Punctuation is generally sound, with many younger pupils making good attempts at organizing their work into paragraphs. When writing independently, pupils are challenged to use interesting words and phrases to engage the reader. Story openings are interesting, with the setting, main characters and atmosphere of the story carefully written. Teachers give pupils sound strategies to plan and organize their work and in discussion, pupils in a mixed Years 5 and 6 class said that they found such strategies helpful in organizing their thoughts during the initial drafting stage.

104. Standards in speaking and listening are similar to those found in most schools at the ages of seven and eleven. This represents sound achievement. Throughout the school, teachers use whole-class teaching effectively to engage pupils in discussion and they constantly seek to extend pupils' vocabulary and quality of response. In a Year 2 class the teacher used a video of *The Gruffalo* to extend and develop the children's range of descriptive words and phrases. From this initial exercise an imaginative shared story was developed orally. The fun the children had with this increased their positive attitude to storytelling.

105. Older pupils in a mixed Years 4 and 5 class thought carefully about their responses to the teacher's questioning about the class storybook. The teacher used correct vocabulary well in this lesson, not only to extend and develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of verbs, but also to encourage them to think carefully about their answers about the main character of the story. Pupils listened with rapt attention to the story and their attentiveness was reflected in the quality of their answers. Those with special educational needs are given appropriate support, particularly in their ability to respond to the teacher's questions. Pupils who have English as an additional language are given bilingual support to extend and develop their communication skills and as a result, the progress made by these pupils in their speaking and listening is sound.

106. At present, the school does not use computers enough to support learning in English. Few pupils use a computer to write, edit and re-write. While the development of literacy skills across all subject areas of the curriculum is satisfactory overall, it is inconsistent in subjects such as history, geography and science.

107. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good teaching seen in both Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. A strength of the teaching is the many and varied opportunities given for pupils of all ages to write interesting stories, reports and accounts. This is done well, particularly in the way pupils are taught how to organise their writing and plan initial drafts thoroughly. Good use is also made of questioning in the better lessons to challenge pupils to clarify their thinking or to use more imaginative language. All teachers use a wide range of behaviour management strategies and this results in the majority of English lessons being taught in a calm atmosphere, but sometimes an over-concern with disciplining pupils disrupts the flow of the lesson and the pace slows. Support assistants are used well to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs, or who have English as an additional language, are fully included in all parts of the lesson.

108. The quality of marking is inconsistent through the school. In the best examples, it is used as an effective teaching tool; individual learning targets are given, regularly updated and then more challenging targets set. Pupils of all ages find this useful in enabling them to '*get better at their work*'. In some cases marking consists of no more than a tick against a piece of work, which does little to inform the pupil of what the next steps need to be.

109. The leadership and management of the subject have undergone a change, and the present post holder has only recently taken on the role. The previous subject leader has had a very positive effect on raising standards, particularly in writing, throughout the school. The quality of monitoring, both of teaching and of pupils' learning, has been impressive, and has contributed significantly to the rapid improvement in standards. The school is now used to rigorous analysis of test results, regular scrutiny of pupils' work from all year groups and the monitoring of teaching and is therefore well placed to continue to make the improvements to standards in English throughout the school. The quantity and quality of resources are both satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

110. There has been a very marked improvement in the standards in Years 3-6 since the school was last inspected in 1999. Over the past two years the proportion of eleven-year-olds achieving the expected standard in mathematics in National Curriculum tests has almost doubled. The work in the current Year 6 indicates that these improved standards are being maintained.

111. The marked improvement in standards by the age of eleven is a result of considerable efforts. There has been a significant investment in in-service training, which has increased teachers' knowledge and confidence. Test results have been analysed and samples of work have been scrutinized to identify areas of weakness. Lessons have been monitored across the school and there has been a detailed survey of pupils' strategies in mental mathematics. The information gained from these evaluations has been used effectively to draw an action plan which has been implemented thoroughly. As part of the in-school training teachers have examined examples of work together and discussed the strengths and weaknesses and the levels they demonstrate. This has helped to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils might achieve. The school now has a firm foundation for further improvements in the subject.

112. By the age of seven, children have made sound progress in mathematics and standards are average for the age group. Most pupils have confident number skills. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a good grasp of number facts to 20. They have satisfactory mental skills and add one- and two-digit numbers. Their mathematical vocabulary is developed well. Pupils achieve soundly across a wide range of mathematical topics, including money, measurement and the attributes of shapes. More able pupils have begun work on hundreds, tens and units and can give change from £5.

113. Pupils in the current Year 6 are attaining average standards in mathematics, reflecting satisfactory progress. Most show a sound understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and can apply their knowledge when solving problems related to real situations. They know the properties of shapes and can measure angles and the areas of plain shapes accurately. They gather and interpret data and can present their findings using the correct type of graph and an appropriate scale. In mental sessions they show a sound grasp of number bonds and have a satisfactory range of strategies for tackling problems. They have an appropriate understanding of probability and how it is represented. When given the opportunity, they can apply their mathematics confidently in a practical situation, such as costing out a holiday or a meal.

114. Most pupils enjoy their work in mathematics. A group of Year 6 pupils were enthused by the challenge of making all the numbers to 100 by just using the number 4 and mathematical signs, and they used free time at school and at home to try to complete the chart. There are limited opportunities for pupils to work independently on problems such as this, to discuss mathematical strategies or to respond to questions without a set answer such as '*What if ... ?*' or '*How many different ways ... ?*' and so develop their creative thinking in mathematics. Most pupils participate well in discussions and apply themselves sensibly to individual or group tasks. Occasionally, however, when a number of pupils with short concentration spans or behaviour problems become restless, the progress of the lesson is disturbed.

115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but ranges from good to unsatisfactory. In the best lessons skilful questioning challenges all pupils to respond at their own level and a good pace keeps pupils' interest and involvement. Pupils' mistakes are received very positively and turned into teaching points, leaving the pupils feeling encouraged to respond again. Account is taken of the full range of attainment through different tasks and extension material is readily available for any who finish quickly. Where the mathematical skills are linked to

practical everyday applications, pupils gain both from good insights into the mathematical concepts and from increased motivation.

116. There are sometimes shortcomings in one activity within an otherwise satisfactory lesson. Mental mathematics sessions do not always have a sharp enough focus or sufficient pace. On occasions undemanding commercial worksheets are used indiscriminately. After one group had inserted digits to complete a number pattern, which gave them appropriate quick practice in number sequence and formation, the next task was to colour in the pattern. This, as well as being an inappropriate use of mathematics time, meant that the teacher could not then see how the numbers had been formed. Class management is usually sound and often good. However, at times teachers become over-concerned with discipline and this disrupts the lesson flow and leads to more pupils losing concentration. Although there is often good use of group work to allow for different levels of attainment, there is not always enough challenge for the more able. Sometimes a teacher or classroom assistant insists that all children continue to use the same basic methods when the more able are ready to move onto the next step. Several of these points have been identified by the school as issues for further development.

117. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to raise standards and has led the successful implementation of a detailed action plan. She has also given good leadership, oversight and support to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Her monitoring of the subject through the examination of planning and pupils' work and through lesson observation has given her a clear overview of the subject. Her work with colleagues on assessment and targets has helped to raise expectations. Good use is made of optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, to monitor the progress of pupils and to inform strategic planning in the subject. The quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory. However, in Years 3-6 information and communication technology is not used often enough to support and to develop mathematical skills. Although there are some good applications of mathematics in science and geography for example, not enough opportunities are currently taken to practise and extend pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

118. Standards of attainment in science for pupils in Years 3 to 6 have improved significantly since the last inspection. By the age of eleven pupils of all abilities have a much better grasp of scientific facts and are more confident when they carry out investigations. Overall, standards are now close to those expected nationally. However, too few pupils are working at the higher Level 5, and this depresses the school's results compared to other schools. For children in Years 1-2 standards have been maintained. This is due to good teaching and very good relationships. Children's attainment by the age of seven remains broadly in line with expectations for their age, although again the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is well below the national average.

119. This improvement is due to a number of things that the school has done well. There is a new scheme of work, which ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum are taught and that skills and knowledge are developed progressively. Pupils in mixed-age classes do not miss or repeat work. Teachers keep good records of what pupils know and can do, although this is not always used in planning work for all abilities. The results of tests are analysed carefully. This information is used well to inform teaching and to set targets for pupils. The school has increased the amount of practical work in lessons, and this has improved pupils' interest and understanding. The co-ordinator examines work from all classes and reports on strengths and weaknesses. This is effective in showing teachers where changes need to be made. Behaviour in lessons has also improved, particularly in Years 3-6, and pupils work harder. This is due to better teaching and more interesting lessons.

120. By the end of Year 2, children can say whether a test is fair, for example when they test types of paper to see which is strongest. They predict what might happen and write down the results using good sentences and figures. They know how animals and plants stay healthy and have a sound understanding of the importance of a well balanced diet for themselves. They sort common materials confidently, with many pupils able to make lists of up to 40 items made of metal. Children recognize that materials can be changed in different ways, such as bending, freezing or heating. They have a satisfactory knowledge for their age of the effects of forces, such as pushing, pulling or gravity.

121. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently group animals and plants, using set criteria. They have a sound knowledge of the names and functions of many body parts and of how to stay healthy. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of physical ideas, such as gravity and friction. They can test the effects of these, for example on slopes with different surfaces or elevations. In these tests they can identify the factors that affect the results, and know which must be kept constant. Pupils can record their experiments and knowledge well when they are asked to do so. They use graphs and know when continuous or bar graphs are more appropriate. Pupils understand when changes in materials are reversible and they know some ways to do this, such as filtration and evaporation.

122. The quality of teaching in science lessons is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. This has helped to improve standards. There are some strengths to the teaching. Lessons begin promptly, teachers explain ideas clearly and usually ask probing questions. As a result, pupils listen carefully and remember what is said. When teachers show enthusiasm and good subject knowledge, pupils concentrate for long periods and think about their investigations. This was seen, for example, in the Year 6 lesson on nutrition and the Years 1 and 2 work on forces. Children in this class can talk confidently about the ways that toys in the park are pushed or pulled. They explain their ideas to others and apply their knowledge to objects in the classroom. Another positive feature is that teachers in all parts of the school make sure that pupils learn and remember scientific facts. This helps them to improve their performance in tests. Teachers revise and extend this knowledge thoroughly in Year 6. Consequently, most pupils leave the school with a sound knowledge of physical processes, living things, and materials and their properties.

123. Teachers are less consistent in planning opportunities for pupils to practise their enquiry skills. Some teachers are good at setting challenges in the way that they introduce the lessons. When Year 2 children are carrying out experiments on materials, the teacher does not provide answers but asks questions like *'What do you think will happen if...'* Pupils respond by making careful observations, drawing conclusions and writing down their results well. In other lessons, facts are presented and written about, but teachers miss opportunities to collect data and evaluate evidence. The school is aware of these inconsistencies and has worked hard to increase the quality and quantity of investigative work. As a result, pupils in Year 6 can carry out simple tests well and consider whether the results are valid. They predict what might happen and explain what they have discovered. More able pupils can look critically at their results and spot mismatches, for example when using forcemeters to compare the pull needed for different loads. However, pupils are less confident when they have to devise their own tests and justify the results. This is because they have insufficient experience; most tests are suggested, and directed, by the teacher. When given this challenge they respond well, as when Year 5 pupils set up their own experiment to decide what factors might affect the speed of evaporation.

124. There are also differences between classes in the quality of pupils' recording and the way that it is marked. Marking is good in Years 1 to 4. Teachers in these classes add lots of encouraging comments or try to extend pupils' thinking. For example '*What do you think you should do next?*' or '*I wonder what will happen?*' A good feature is that these comments are usually about the science, not the neatness. Teachers leave space for evaluation, for example '*Tell me what you have learned about...*'. Teachers in these classes help pupils to explain what they find out in their own words. Such writing is often good, and helps pupils to learn. This good preparation is not always extended in some older classes. Teachers use some undemanding worksheets. On one of these, for example, pupils only have to draw two arrows to explain opposing forces. Marking in these classes is less supportive. There are ticks, or a brief comment, such as '*good work*', but little to inspire pupils to think further or work harder.

125. Leadership in the subject is good and this has contributed to improved standards. However, further improvement is still required. Teachers' daily and weekly planning is unhelpful. There is not enough detail to help the teacher manage the lesson. There is also nothing to show what pupils of different abilities will do. The very good assessment information available is rarely used for this. Pupils with special educational needs or lower attaining pupils are generally supported well. More able pupils are not challenged often enough. When these pupils are given more responsibility for planning and organising experiments they learn well. An example of this is when Year 5 pupils measure the speed of dissolving at different temperatures. They identify the variables and design their own tests successfully. This ability is not developed when they merely follow the test provided for the whole class. Classroom support assistants are used well, and make a good contribution to the learning of different abilities. They often work with small groups, talking about the experiment and helping pupils to record. Teachers do not use information and communication technology often enough to enhance science lessons or to match work to ability. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 lesson on micro-organisms, pupils asked some questions, about metals and plastics, which could not be solved by an experiment. This would have been a good opportunity for them to seek information on the Internet.

126. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The priorities for improvement are appropriate. These are to develop the teaching of investigative work and to match work more closely to the different abilities of pupils. Much has been achieved since the last inspection. The school is well placed to build on this success.

ART AND DESIGN

127. Standards in art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. Standards have improved in the juniors since the last inspection, when standards by the age of eleven were below those found in most schools and the pupils' progress during Years 3-6 was unsatisfactory. Pupils now study the work of famous artists throughout the school and all pupils experience the opportunity to work with a variety of materials and experiment in a range of styles.

128. Children in Years 1-2 experiment with a variety of materials to represent their work in history and mathematics, and this provides good cross-curricular links. For example, a Years 1 and 2 class explored the qualities of shape through designing geometric patterns. In Year 2 observational skills were developed well as children studied artefacts at a local museum, and this experience provided a good background to exploring the techniques of drawing in charcoal. Older pupils develop the techniques of drawing and painting further, introducing perspective into their work, which is of sound quality. A visit to the Lowry Centre provides the opportunity for a detailed study of a local artist, and pupils then reflect their knowledge of Lowry's work as they experiment with the effects given by charcoal and pastel.

129. Pupils enjoy their art and design activities and the majority of pupils behave satisfactorily and are attentive in lessons. Teachers ensure that the work of all pupils is displayed well and this not only has the result of making the school look bright and attractive, but also promotes the self-esteem of pupils by recognising and respecting the work they produce.

130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, with some good teaching evident when the teacher gives a clear demonstration of the art and design skills to be developed during the lesson. For example, in one lesson with a class of Years 4 and 5 pupils, the teacher gave a demonstration of cutting and designing skills to reflect the work of the Japanese style of Kirigami. As a result of this, pupils watched intently, asked appropriate questions and were confident to explore their own skills in this medium. The teacher encouraged her pupils to experiment, ensuring that resources were on hand so pupils could get on with their work without looking for extra paper as mistakes were made and then rectified. In this lesson, the learning support assistant was used effectively to support the work of all groups, ensuring that all the activities ran smoothly. In some lessons there is not a clear enough focus on teaching specific skills and opportunities are missed to discuss with pupils the use of particular techniques.

131. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She monitors teachers' plans for art and design throughout the school to ensure that knowledge and skills are built upon, but presently does not have the opportunity to undertake any direct observation of teaching and this lessens the effectiveness of her role. The co-ordinator has begun to collect examples of pupils' work from each class to monitor the quality of learning, but this is still at an early stage of development. Resources for the subject are generally satisfactory, although in one class, a small group of left-handed pupils experienced frustration as there were no left-handed scissors. Some use is made of computer painting programs in Years 1-2 but pupils have too little experience of using information and communication technology to support art and design in Years 3-6.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards in design and technology are broadly in line with those in other schools by the ages of seven and eleven. The standards seen in the previous inspection have been maintained. One improvement is the greater emphasis given to designing for children in Years 1-2. Teachers now guide pupils to develop their own ideas using diagrams and sketches. For example, children in Year 1 use a design sheet for their kites. When they reach Year 2, children can put down their own ideas. They use these to make attractive individual masks. Year 6 pupils consider the needs of the user before making their board game for younger pupils. They test the product, change the design, and then make the game durable and attractive. In their detailed evaluations they show how much they have learned about the design and making process.

133. In Years 1-2 children make steady progress in learning to plan and construct. By Year 3 they can consider in some detail what has worked well and what might have been changed, for example in their '*cat's way home*'. In some classes learning slows. Pupils make some attractive objects, such as a jack-in-the-box and a pop-up book, but these follow closely the teachers' ideas. Pupils do not extend their knowledge of designing. Progress increases again in Years 5 and 6, when pupils contribute more of their own ideas to the process of designing and making.

134. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, in the Years 1 and 2 class. Teaching in this was good. The teacher's knowledge and confidence meant that pupils of all abilities listened well and understood the main ideas. There were good links with information and communication technology in the use of a programmable toy. The teacher organized the equipment and groups effectively, and consequently children were involved throughout and all achieved a step forward in learning. Evidence from the quality of previous work from all classes and from teachers' planning indicates that teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy their lessons and want to improve. Many can remember things they made in previous classes.

135. The subject has not been an area for development for some time. The co-ordinator has supported teachers well during this period and has made sure that pupils have a good range of experiences in designing and making. The school has introduced a scheme of work based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines. This has helped teachers to plan work which builds on pupils' previous knowledge and experience. However, progress is not consistent. There is as yet no agreed whole-school system for recording what pupils know and can do. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan work at the right level. The school has identified planning and assessment as priorities for development.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

136. In Years 1-2 geography and history are planned and taught as part of topics. These topics often include aspects of both subjects as well as other areas such as science, but sometimes concentrate primarily on either history or geography. In Years 3-6 geography and history are taught separately, but each topic is taught across all classes on a four-year cycle. By the ages of seven and eleven attainment in both history and geography is broadly in line with that expected for their ages, as it was at the time of the last inspection.

137. In geography children in Years 1-2 use the local environment well to develop a sound understanding of physical features and human geography. As they talk about where they live, they begin to develop sound insights into the local area and to appreciate why communities need different features, such as a school, play areas and shops as well as different types of houses. Children gain a suitable early understanding of maps by producing a photographic record of the route they took on their walk in the vicinity of the school. Children in Year 2 carry out comparative studies between Hollinwood and Fresno, considering features, such as land, weather, houses and currency. Their ability to recognize similarities, differences and relationships between places is typical for their age.

138. In Years 3-6 pupils acquire an appropriate knowledge of their own region and of contrasting areas in this and other countries. In a mixed Years 5 and 6 geography lesson pupils examined pictures and texts about Cairo and Oldham which helped them to gain a sound understanding of how humans can affect the environment and in turn how they are affected by it. The local knowledge of the classroom support assistant was used well as she used photographs to point out changes from the Oldham she knew as a child, and enabled pupils to recognize how and why places change. Years 4 and 5 pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of the topic of rivers and become aware of the technical vocabulary. On a field trip they test river water and are able to come to conclusions about the environmental effects of pollution. They are able to draw on their satisfactory knowledge of the topic to discuss the possible causes of recent flooding in Britain and to produce a collaborative article about the effects.

139. In history Year 2 children make comparisons between their own classroom and a Victorian one. This topic captures their interest, because it is well supported by a visit to Saddleworth Museum. Artefacts borrowed from the museum service and video recordings provide very good support for this topic. Children are enabled to gain a good understanding of what life was like then by dressing up, using and comparing artefacts and this gives them the insights to express their own views and opinions. For example, they use slates and markers in their lesson to simulate a handwriting lesson in Victorian times. Pupils display an appropriate ability to identify artefacts, describe their use and say whether or not they are in use today. They are able to offer sensible suggestions about why changes have been made. They gain a satisfactory knowledge about a few famous people, such as Louis Braille, and appreciate the importance of their work on people's lives then and how people still benefit from it today.

140. In Years 3-6 pupils gain a sound understanding of several periods of both British history and other civilizations. They gain a satisfactory knowledge about their local history. They draw well on both primary and secondary sources using pictures, text and artefacts and information from the school's old logbook and from census returns to support their historical enquiry. They develop a satisfactory understanding about how we can find out about the past and some appreciation of how the quality and reliability of evidence can differ. Occasional visits provide valuable enrichment to their learning.

141. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at both key stages but it varies from good in some classes to barely satisfactory in others. In consequence, while pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, it is more rapid in some classes than in others. In the best lessons teachers demonstrate high expectations by setting tasks which challenge pupils' thinking or give them first-hand experiences. The practical work in Year 2 based on the Victorians and investigations into rivers in Years 4 and 5 led to good learning as pupils were actively involved in the work and able to appreciate more readily the points made by the teachers. The evident pride that pupils took in this work is shown by the high standard of presentation. In Year 6 a historical topic formed a good stimulus for work in literacy; pupils practised and improved their literacy skills as they gave their own accounts, drew comparisons and argued their case. At other times teachers rely heavily on commercial worksheets. These are often undemanding and do not always provide the necessary range of work for the attainment levels in the class. This restricts the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils.

142. The co-ordinator responsible for the development of both subjects has been influential in the development of curriculum planning for Years 3-6 but teachers in Years 1-2 produce their own plans and schemes of work, related to their topics. The co-ordinator has no opportunities to observe teaching or to monitor pupils' work regularly, and so it is difficult for her to develop a clear overview of progress, attainment or continuity in these subjects or whether knowledge, skills and understanding are developed systematically as pupils move from year to year. This concern was also mentioned at the time of the previous inspection. Resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the National Curriculum requirements. Recent useful additions have included CD ROMS but information and communication technology is not used often enough to support these subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

143. Standards in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6 are below average. This is because pupils have too few opportunities to learn and practise new skills. Pupils' attainment has not kept pace since the last inspection with the improvement seen in other schools and has fallen behind the expected level.

144. The school has invested in training for teachers and in new computers. However, pupils do not yet have enough regular lessons to improve their knowledge or confidence. The limited use made of computers in classrooms is not enough to develop pupils' skills in more advanced work. For example, pupils in Year 5 remember learning about spreadsheets and e-mails but have not revised or used them since. Consequently, only a minority can use these without adult help. Standards are better in Years 1-2 and here progress is satisfactory. This is because teachers for these age groups make better use of the computers available in each classroom. For example, in Year 2, every child has typed and saved an unfinished story which they return to, and improve, regularly. Nevertheless, staff time is used more effectively when larger groups of children are taught the basic skills together, using the portable machines. By the end of Year 2, attainment is close to that expected for this age group.

145. By Year 2 children can choose pictures and patterns from a collection and add these to their own documents. They use a painting program to create and then save their own pictures. More able pupils can do this with a minimum of adult help, others need support. Many are confident in opening a word processing document and naming it, and in saving and retrieving their work. Some need help to do this. They type stories from a few lines to two pages. However, keyboard skills are generally weak, most children use one finger and have to search for letters. They can change the appearance of their work and delete, but they do not use the spellchecker or insert words. They send a hopeful e-mail to Santa and can open the reply. With some help, children know how to control a screen robot and a programmable toy.

146. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have improved their word processing skills, but not enough. Keyboard techniques are still slow and inefficient. Most pupils can use the spellchecker but very few remember how to cut and paste or undo. More able pupils know how to complete a spreadsheet and to present the information in different ways. However, their limited experience means that they have to be reminded at every stage. Pupils of all abilities know how to find information on the Internet, but they do not know how to narrow the options for a search engine. They know how to use instructions to control devices on the screen and apply this well in useful visits to an industrial control company in Years 5 and 6. Pupils can talk about the uses of information and communication technology but their experience is too narrow and as a result they do not make connections. The main gap is not knowing how to combine and apply some of the skills they have. For example, they are not confident in using graphic and drawing programs or Internet sources to enhance their documents.

147. The teaching of information and communication technology is usually done with individuals or very small groups. Only one class lesson was seen during the inspection. Here the teaching was satisfactory. The teacher organized the equipment well, had clear lesson objectives and made the best use of the short time available. As a result, pupils made satisfactory progress. In the small group work, teachers and assistants sometimes have limited expectations of what pupils can achieve. This slows progress. For example, some Year 5 pupils still delete whole paragraphs instead of inserting or pasting. Some of the activities chosen are not effective in raising standards, for example when pupils copy long stories without the necessary word processing or keyboard skills.

148. Teachers do not make enough links with other subjects, such as music, science, mathematics or English. As a result, pupils do not see the possibilities for improving their learning by using technology or how links can enhance learning in both subjects. In Year 6, for example, pupils work on the origins of their names and then turn to an Internet search engine to fill the gaps. Pupils are keen to improve and they help each other when they can. Some teachers use this well; for example, a Year 6 boy with expertise in digital photography is training others to use this around the school.

149. The main obstacle in raising standards is the lack of specific and systematic teaching of basic skills through the school. Even when teachers have good subject knowledge and teach skills well to small groups of pupils, their efforts are not effective. This is because the pupils may not return to a task for several days, and so forget what they have done.

150. There is no agreed whole-school system in place to keep records of what pupils know and can do. This means that pupils may not be challenged, or may be struggling with a task without the necessary skills. The school is aware of these problems and the subject leader has appropriate plans for development. These have been held back by other school priorities. However, the use of portable machines for teaching larger groups has begun, and this is already beginning to improve pupils' skills and confidence. The school plans to add more of these to make a portable suite.

MUSIC

151. Pupils' attainment in music is broadly in line with what is expected for their ages by the ages of seven and eleven. Year 2 children can talk confidently about the sounds made by different instruments. Year 6 pupils know how a broad range of instruments can be divided into four main groups. They appraise music with appropriate understanding and are able to discuss the characteristic tones of instruments. They transfer their knowledge of musical rhythm and beat to improve the quality of the poems they are writing. Most pupils sing with pleasure and with an appropriate awareness of the musical elements of pitch, dynamics and tempo. They are keen to sing and demonstrate actions to others. Pupils' knowledge and skills in composition, however, are weak and this strand is not developed as well as other aspects of the subject.

152. For those pupils who are taught to play a brass instrument in the juniors standards of attainment are good. Pupils read notation confidently, play difficult rhythms, understand a wide range of technical vocabulary and produce a good quality of sound. There is a high level of enjoyment and focused concentration in these sessions, which are well led by a teacher from Oldham Metropolitan Borough Music Services.

153. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in both Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. Lessons are interesting and teachers lead them confidently and introduce technical vocabulary well. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher introduced a collection of instruments from other cultures and encouraged children to predict the sort of sound each instrument might make. This provided a very good stimulus for discussion about sounds. As children experimented with the instruments and then described what they heard, they developed well both their understanding of the range of musical tones and their vocabulary for explaining them. They enjoyed suggesting where the sounds could be used to good effect. One child commented: *'It sounds like a chair breaking, we could use it for a special effect when telling a story.'* In a Year 6 lesson the teacher used excerpts of music from *'Peter And The Wolf'* well to allow pupils to compare the suitability of the characteristics of each instrument to the personalities in the story. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language take part in all aspects of the music curriculum, supported where necessary by classroom assistants.

154. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is well supported by the headteacher, who has personal expertise in music. The policy recognizes the opportunities music affords to the development of spirituality, when listening to music or singing hymns, and to the development of cultural and multi-cultural understanding. The *'Music Of The Week'* is used to set the scene in acts of collective worship. Resources to support music are good and have been enhanced by the provision of instruments from other cultures and a set of belleplates (similar to hand bells). The school has a good tradition of musical performances for parents. A school choir

and band enrich the provision. The good links with the local secondary school are strengthened by their pupils coming to play in school.

155. Several of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report remain. Composition skills and the use of information and communication technology to support music remain weak. Systematic plans to ensure that skills and knowledge are developed progressively as pupils move through the school are not yet in place. The role of the coordinator is unclear and there are no opportunities for her to monitor the quality and range of music teaching across the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education throughout the school. By the ages of seven and eleven attainment levels are in line with the expectations for the age groups. The standards found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

157. Some children in Years 1 and 2 display good imagination in their individual ideas for patterns of movement and they can sequence a series of body shapes, but the overall quality of control, agility, balance and expression is typical of the age group. They are beginning to develop sound throwing and catching skills. Achievement during Years 1-2 is sound overall. A few children are beginning to appreciate what makes a sequence of movements effective but most have too few opportunities to point out good features in a performance.

158. By the age of eleven pupils have appropriate gymnastic, dance and games skills for their age. Most are confident on apparatus and in floor work. Older pupils perform rolls, headstands and vaults. While most are still refining these, some have gained gymnastic awards. They can plan and perform an expressive and controlled sequence of movements on a given theme and fit this well to music. Pupils become increasingly more adept in ball skills, displaying sound sending and receiving skills. Some of those who take advantage of the after-school clubs in team sports are developing good levels of skills.

159. Pupils have swimming lessons in Year 4. They make satisfactory progress for their age and by the end of that year about a third can swim 25 metres. The school does not keep any records of pupils' achievements in swimming made outside school during Years 5 and 6 and so is unaware of how many of the pupils reach the expected standard by the time they leave the school. There are no opportunities for non-swimmers or weak swimmers to have additional lessons to bring them up to the expected level by the time they leave.

160. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes in physical education lessons and work with enthusiasm. They perform sensibly on their own and collaborate well in pair or group activities. Pupils make good use of the time available to practise, modify and improve their physical skills. They respond well to instructions and suggestions from their teachers. When they are asked to comment on the performance of others, they do so sensitively.

161. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned and usually include a well-balanced sequence of activities. Appropriate account is taken of safety. Good use is made of routines to ensure that lesson organization runs smoothly. Explanations and directions are clear and pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers use praise well to reinforce good effort and practice. This creates a supportive and encouraging working atmosphere and helps to develop pupils' confidence. In the best lessons there is a brisk pace, which keeps pupils active and involved, but sometimes the pace slackens. Occasionally, groups in a games lesson are too large and pupils are inactive for too long as they wait for their turn.

162. All teachers make use of pupil demonstrations but there is some variation in how effectively they do this. In the best examples, teachers involve pupils in the evaluations and help them to focus on the techniques that have made the performances successful. In many lessons observed all the evaluation was carried out by the teacher and occasionally the emphasis was placed on how sensibly pupils had behaved rather than on the planning, skills and control.

163. Pupils have access to a broad and balanced range of activities. Teachers draw on various schemes which suggest activities but there is no coherent whole-school plan which ensures that skills are build up progressively as pupils move through the school. The co-ordinator, who has specialist skills in this area, does not monitor planning or lessons and does not have a clear view of the standards in the subject across the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities to which staff give generously of their time. The school hall and the large all-weather sports pitch provide good facilities for physical education but the lack of a grassed surface restricts activities in some sports. The quantity and quality of equipment are both good.