

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LITTLE HEATON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rhodes, Middleton

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105812

Headteacher: Mrs K Yarnall

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Gough  
22361

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th April 2002

Inspection number: 221043

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Boardman Lane Rhodes Middleton Manchester
Postcode:	M24 4PU
Telephone number:	0161 643 4882
Fax number:	0161 643 5880
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend A Broxton
Date of previous inspection:	January 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Music Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught What could the school do to improve further
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
7983	Mr I Johnston	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Special educational needs	
13827	Mrs A Waters	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Religious education Design and technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
10638	Mr M Newell	Team inspector	English Physical education	How well is the school led and managed

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England Primary School, and is situated in the village of Rhodes, close to the town of Middleton. There are one hundred and eighty-one pupils on roll, between the ages of four and eleven. Nearly all pupils are of white ethnicity, and no pupil has English as an additional language. Fifty-three pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This represents 29% of the school population and is above average. Forty-one pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This represents 23% of the school population and is average. Four pupils have statements of special educational needs. Pupil mobility is high with twenty-five pupils having joined the school other than at the usual point of entry and twenty-two pupils having left the school other than at the usual point of transfer. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average overall.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school that provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. By the time pupils leave school at the age of eleven, they attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching is very good in the Reception class, and is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. There are significant strengths in the teaching in the upper part of Key Stage 2, but there are also weaknesses in some classes and subjects, which adversely affect pupils' progress. The headteacher provides effective leadership for the school, and her management skills are good. The Governing Body fulfils its statutory duties, and is very supportive of the school and its work. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The provision for the Reception children is very good and is a strength of the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception class, and in the upper part of Key Stage 2 is good with very good features.
- Standards in history at the end of Key Stage 2 are good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and to work.
- Effective procedures are in place for promoting good behaviour.
- The school has very good procedures in place for ensuring pupils' welfare.
- The school has a good partnership with parents.
- The headteacher provides effective leadership for the school, and her management skills are good.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in geography at the end of Key Stage 2, and standards in information and communication technology and music at the end of both key stages.
- The quality of the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils.
- Assessment procedures and the use made of assessment information.
- The role of key staff and co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the school's work.
- Weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning in some classes and subjects.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 2000, when it was found to have serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching, and in the progress and attainment of Key Stage 1 pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, the provision for the children in the Reception class was found to be unsatisfactory, standards in information and communication technology were below the expected level at the end of both key stages, standards in writing were well below average at the end of Key Stage 2, and the headteacher and governors were deemed to be ineffective in raising standards. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection, and no longer has serious weaknesses. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to address the weaknesses in teaching described in the last inspection, and the overall quality of teaching has improved significantly across the school. Pupils' progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 is now satisfactory, but in mathematics and science, although progress is satisfactory in Year 1, there is a dip in pupils' progress in Year 2. The progress in improving the provision for pupils in the Reception class has been excellent, and this aspect of the school's work is now one of its strengths. Standards in information and communication technology continue to be unsatisfactory at the end of both key stages, although good progress has been made in developing the subject over the last two years. Good progress has been made in developing the role of the headteacher and Governing Body in promoting high standards, and the school has a clear commitment to raising standards. However, weaknesses in teaching are delaying some of the school's plans for improvement. There is a good team spirit amongst staff, and most demonstrate a commitment to continuing to move the school forwards.

## 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	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	E	C	A	
Science	D	E	D	C	

The table shows that on the basis of the end of Key Stage 2 national test results for 2001, pupils' attainment is below the national average in English and science and in line with the national average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. It is difficult to draw trends over time in terms of pupils' attainment, because of factors such as special educational needs and pupil mobility, which affect the results from year to year. The 2001 results in particular were adversely affected by a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, and demonstrate a continued pattern of improvement in English and science over the last few years. The school sets appropriate targets for English and mathematics.



Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology and physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall in these subjects. Pupils make good progress in history, and their attainment is above national expectations. In geography, music and information and communication technology, pupils do not make enough progress, and their attainment is below national expectations. In geography and music this is because of weaknesses in the curriculum, and in information and communication technology, this is because until very recently the school did not have enough good quality computers and software to support pupils' learning, and staff had not received appropriate training. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2.

The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 test results for reading and mathematics show that the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average and above average in comparison with similar schools. The test results for writing show that pupils' attainment is well above the national average and well above average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection findings, based on the current group of Key Stage 1 pupils, indicate that standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils make steady progress and the results are affected by a higher than usual proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. In science and mathematics, pupils make unsatisfactory progress, and their attainment at the end of the key stage could and should be higher. Standards have improved from the time of the last inspection when they were well below average.

The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history is in line with national expectations, and their attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. However, in information and communication technology and music, pupils' attainment is below the nationally expected level, and could be higher. No judgements can be made about pupils' attainment in physical education as no lessons were being taught during the course of the inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, with the exception of music and information and communication technology, where their progress is inconsistent and unsatisfactory.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children in the Reception class attain the Early Learning Goals in terms of their creative and physical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They attain beyond the expected level in the area of personal, social and emotional development. Despite making very good progress, most children do not attain the Early Learning Goals in the area of learning of communication, language and literacy, or in terms of their mathematical development.

Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates, and benefit from good levels of additional classroom support that enable them to make good progress towards their individual targets. The school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to school and to work, and show good levels of enthusiasm. Pupils respond well in class and are keen to take part in discussions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. There are many examples of good behaviour in class, but a small number of pupils have problems in managing their behaviour, and sometimes disrupt the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Pupils generally co-operate well with one another, and relationships amongst pupils are mostly good. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop independent learning skills.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Despite good efforts by the school, attendance is below the national average. This is mainly the result of extended holidays.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very 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 and learning in the Reception class is very good, and has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. The children make good progress across all areas of learning, and are highly motivated by the many exciting activities the teacher prepares for them. There is a very good combination of teacher led activities and those that the children choose for themselves. Early skills of reading, writing and mathematics are very well taught, and very good emphasis is placed on developing the children's personal, social and emotional skills.

Although the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, some aspects of teaching in Year 2 are unsatisfactory and this leads to pupils making insufficient progress in some subjects, especially mathematics and science. The teaching of English is satisfactory throughout the key stage, although there are more opportunities for pupils to develop and practise skills of literacy in Year 1 than in Year 2. The teaching of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1. Some good teaching was seen during the inspection in Key Stage 1, and in these lessons pupils were well motivated, fully involved and appropriately challenged. Conversely, where the teaching has weaknesses, expectations of what the pupils can and should achieve are too low, and teaching does not take sufficient account of what the pupils already know. Teachers' planning is not always sufficiently detailed, and lessons sometimes lack pace.

In Key Stage 2, although the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, there is a very mixed picture across the key stage. In Year 4, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in all subjects. Expectations of what the pupils can achieve are too low, tasks are insufficiently challenging, and lessons sometimes lack a clear sense of purpose. In the other Key Stage 2 classes, the teaching is at least satisfactory, and in the upper part of the key stage, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good,

with very good features. In all Key Stage 2 classes, there are pupils who have challenging behaviour, and teaching is most successful when teachers manage these pupils skilfully, sensitively and with a warm sense of humour. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall, with good examples seen in most Key Stage 2 classes. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, and there are some good opportunities in the upper part of the key stage. The promotion of information and communication technology across the curriculum is an ongoing area of development in the school and is satisfactory overall.

There are weaknesses in the teaching of music in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and in information and communication technology in Key Stage 1, because teachers lack confidence in these subjects. The teaching of history in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Across the school, there are strengths in the relationships between pupils and teachers, and pupils respond especially well when the level of challenge is high, and in practical activities where they are keen to find things out for themselves.

Good use is made of support staff to work alongside pupils who have special educational needs, and this additional support helps them to overcome their difficulties and to achieve their individual targets. The school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the Reception children is very good. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is satisfactory overall, although not enough time is given to some subjects. There is no comprehensive whole-school overview of what is being taught in each subject and class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school has made a good start in the implementation of the new Code of Practice.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school's procedures for child protection are very good, and there are very good systems and procedures for ensuring the pupils' health, safety and well-being. Good progress has been made in developing assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science, but there is more work to be done in other subjects.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. The school has a good partnership with parents that is based on mutual trust and respect. Parents receive good levels of information from the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides effective leadership for the school, and her management skills are good. Co-ordinators are in place for all subjects but their role in evaluating and monitoring standards, teaching and learning in their areas has not yet been developed because of staff changes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body fulfils its statutory duties and gives good support to the headteacher and to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and key co-ordinators have carried out lesson observations, and have thoroughly analysed the end of key stage test results to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance. However, not enough is being done in terms of sharing good practice within the school.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes effective use of its resources, and is aware of the principles of best values when purchasing goods and services.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Satisfactory overall. The accommodation is adequate but cramped in parts. There are enough well qualified teaching and support staff. The range, quality and quantity of learning resources are satisfactory with the exception of music, where there are not enough good quality instruments, and in the Foundation Stage, where there are insufficient outdoor toys for the Reception children.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The level of information they receive from the school.</li> <li>That the school has a very effective 'open-door' policy and that the headteacher and staff are very approachable and helpful.</li> <li>The standard of behaviour in the school. Parents agree that bullying is not tolerated and believe that the school deals with occasional incidents very well.</li> <li>The good levels of support and guidance provided for their children.</li> <li>The support for pupils with special educational needs.</li> <li>That the school promotes very good values and attitudes.</li> <li>The quality of teaching, and the leadership and management of the school by the headteacher.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few parents are not happy with the range and frequency of homework.</li> <li>Some parents would like more extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>A small number of parents are concerned about the standard of behaviour in one class.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings support the parents' views of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The pupils' attainment when they start school in the Reception class is below the expected level for their age. The Reception children benefit from very good teaching, and from taking part in the very stimulating range of activities that is provided for them. Basic language and number skills are promoted on a daily basis, both through formal teacher led activities, and free-choice activities, such as in the sand and water areas, where adults work alongside the children developing the children's vocabularies, and their understanding of key mathematical concepts. Although overall the children do not attain the Early Learning Goals in the area of learning of communication, language and literacy, or in terms of their mathematical development, they make very good progress from a low starting point. Very good emphasis is placed on developing the children's personal, social and emotional skills, and by the time they transfer to Year 1, the children attain beyond the expected level in this area of their learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain the Early Learning Goals in terms of their creative and physical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their learning in these areas is enhanced by daily 'finding-out' activities which provide very good opportunities for the children to learn through experimentation and first-hand practical experience. Educational visits very effectively support the children's learning about the world in which they live, and provide very good stimuli for some of their creative activities.
2. The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 test results for reading and mathematics show that the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average and above average in comparison with similar schools. The test results for writing show that pupils' attainment is well above the national average and well above average in comparison with similar schools. These results show a marked improvement on previous years. The inspection findings indicate that standards are below average by the end of Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science. The difference between the test results for 2001 and the inspection findings is because the current Year 2 group has a higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs.
3. Key Stage 1 pupils make steady progress across all elements of the English curriculum. They make satisfactory progress in reading, but few pupils attain the higher levels in this aspect of their work, and their overall attainment is below national expectations. The standard of pupils' writing is unsatisfactory. Although pupils often make a good start to their writing, most are not able to sustain their ideas, and they use only a very limited vocabulary. Although in Year 1, there are some good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills across the curriculum, Year 2 pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop this aspect of their English work through other subjects. In speaking activities, most pupils are disadvantaged by their lack of vocabulary which makes it difficult for them to clearly explain their ideas. In science and mathematics, pupils make unsatisfactory progress, and their attainment at the end of the key stage could and should be higher. In mathematics pupils have too few opportunities to consolidate their learning through practical activities. In Year 2, too much emphasis is placed on pupils recording their work in commercially produced workbooks, and this prevents pupils from learning how to set out their own work. Pupils have only a weak grasp of most aspects of measure, and there are particular weaknesses in their ability to measure and estimate weight and capacity. In science, despite a good start in Year 1, pupils make unsatisfactory progress in developing

investigative skills in Year 2, and this is a particularly weak area of their learning by the end of the key stage. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of living things and materials and their properties by the end of Key Stage 1, but their knowledge of physical processes is unsatisfactory.

4. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history is in line with national expectations, and their attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. However, in information and communication technology and music, pupils' attainment is below the nationally expected level, and could be higher. No judgements can be made about pupils' attainment in physical education as no lessons were being taught during the course of the inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, with the exception of music and information and communication technology, where their progress is inconsistent and unsatisfactory because of weaknesses in teaching.
5. On the basis of the end of Key Stage 2 national test results for 2001, pupils' attainment is below the national average in English and science and in line with the national average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. It is difficult to draw trends over time in terms of pupils' attainment, because of factors such as special educational needs and pupil mobility which have affected the results from year to year. The 2001 results in particular were adversely affected by a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The school sets appropriate targets for English and mathematics.
6. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, and demonstrate a continued pattern of improvement in English and science over the last few years. Although standards in these subjects are at a satisfactory level at the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment is adversely affected by the dip in progress in Year 4, which occurs in all subjects because of unsatisfactory teaching. This means that the Year 5 and Year 6 teachers have to work hard to address the gaps in pupils' learning, rather than moving them on from the point at which they should be at the end of Year 4. As a result, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in their work is lower than it could be.
7. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attain the expected level in all aspects of their English work. They read to a satisfactory level, although sometimes their reading lacks expression, and few pupils have the higher order skills of skimming and scanning. Speaking and listening skills are at the expected level, and most pupils show good levels of interest in the contributions of their classmates, and observe the social conventions of conversation. Pupils' writing is satisfactory overall, but although they often make a good start to their writing, most pupils have difficulty in sustaining their ideas when writing lengthy pieces. In mathematics, there are strengths in pupils' understanding and knowledge of number, and pupils show interest in solving number problems. Their understanding of other elements of the mathematics curriculum is satisfactory, but they have too few opportunities to carry out practical work, and as a result have difficulty with tasks such as estimating length and weight. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain national expectations in all aspects of the science curriculum, and there are strengths in the pupils' ability to carry out investigations and experiments. Although pupils have a satisfactory knowledge overall of physical processes, they are less secure in this aspect of their work, especially in terms of their understanding of the earth and beyond.

8. Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology and physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall in these subjects, despite the dip that occurs in Year 4. Pupils' attainment in history is above national expectations, and this is largely because of the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject which motivates the pupils in their learning. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and they have a particularly secure grasp of aspects of Christianity. In geography, music and information and communication technology, pupils do not make enough progress, and their attainment is below national expectations by the time they leave school. In geography and music this is because of weaknesses in the curriculum, and in information and communication technology, this is because until very recently the school did not have enough good quality computers and software to support pupils' learning, and staff had not received appropriate training.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates, and benefit from good levels of additional classroom support that enable them to make good progress towards their individual targets. The school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.
10. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement in the pupils' attainment since the last inspection, although there has not been enough improvement in Year 2 and Year 4 where some aspects of teaching are unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, in other parts of the school, improvements in the quality of teaching and learning have led to pupils in both key stages making better progress. A particular achievement has been the excellent improvement in the provision for Foundation Stage children in the Reception class. These children now make very good progress across all areas of their learning. In addition, the school now has the necessary resources to raise standards further in information and communication technology, and a good start has already been made in this subject. The school has responded well to the issues raised in the last report relating to raising standards, and there is a shared commitment from most staff to continuing to raise standards.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils of all ages have good and positive attitudes to school and to their work, and enjoy coming to school. In the Foundation Stage, Reception children take a very active part in all activities, and are enthused by their teacher. They are keen to tackle new learning, and show high levels of perseverance and concentration for their age. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, most pupils show a willingness to work hard in lessons and to please their teachers. They are keen to talk about their work, and work co-operatively and productively with one another on joint tasks. Where teachers provide stimulating activities that give scope to the pupils' imagination, and in practical activities, such as science and art and design, the vast majority of pupils respond particularly well. Most classes contain a small number of pupils who are more difficult to motivate. In those classes where the teaching is good, these pupils follow the lead of the rest of the pupils and respond positively to their teachers' enthusiasm. However, where there are weaknesses in teaching, these pupils sometimes become restless and disruptive.
12. Overall, behaviour in and around the school is satisfactory, with most pupils playing and working well together. This was the picture at the time of the last inspection. The

behaviour of the Reception children is good, and they show a good awareness of the teacher's expectations, and are beginning to gain a good understanding of how their actions affect the well-being of others. The majority of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils behave well at work and at play, and get on well with one another. There were many examples during the inspection of pupils helping one another with their work, and most pupils are generous when sharing equipment and ideas. Relationships amongst pupils are generally good. However, a minority of pupils are not naturally well-behaved, and lack self-discipline. Where teachers successfully and unobtrusively apply the agreed behaviour management strategies, these pupils generally respond well. However, where teachers are less effective in managing the pupils, those who have challenging behaviour sometimes disregard their teachers' requests, and are a disruptive influence in class.

13. Most parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in school. Parents and pupils agree that bullying is not tolerated, and believe that the school deals with occasional incidents very well. Recent exclusions have been the result of a very small number of pupils demonstrating threatening and violent behaviour towards teachers and pupils. These exclusions have been the culmination of strictly observed procedures which have involved parents and outside agencies in attempts to modify the behaviour of those pupils concerned.
14. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. In the Reception class, the children make very good progress in developing independent learning skills, and show good levels of independence as they select materials and activities. These children are confident learners. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, there are only limited opportunities in some classes for pupils to continue to develop independent learning skills, and in most classes, pupils rely heavily on adult support when making decisions about their learning. In the upper part of Key Stage 2, there are some good opportunities for pupils to carry out extended tasks at home, such as projects, and these activities help the pupils to develop research skills. Whilst there are some good opportunities in the upper part of Key Stage 2 for pupils to organise aspects of their own learning, such as during the inspection when Year 5 pupils carried out a science investigation, these opportunities are not consistently provided in all classes. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, the lack of challenge in lessons, and the overuse of undemanding worksheets, constrain the pupils' personal development.
15. The rate of whole-school attendance is below the national average and is therefore unsatisfactory. The rate of unauthorised absence in the past year was more than double the national average. This is largely the result of families taking extended holidays. In addition, the school was not notified when some pupils left the school to move to a different area, and was obliged to keep them on the register until official notification was received. Registration is carried out effectively at the start of each session. A significant number of pupils regularly arrive late in the mornings. Their arrival sometimes disrupts the learning of those who have already started work, and the school is working hard to address this issue.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

16. During the inspection thirty nine lessons were seen. In these lessons, the quality of teaching was excellent in 3% of lessons, very good in 28%, good in 28%, satisfactory in 36% and unsatisfactory in 5%. This shows a marked improvement since the last inspection when teaching was described as having serious weaknesses.



17. The overall quality of teaching is very good in the Reception class, and satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, the picture is much more complex than the overview suggests. In Key Stage 1, the teaching is satisfactory in Year 1, but in Year 2, there are unsatisfactory features which lead to dips in the pupils' progress, especially in mathematics and science. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in Year 3, unsatisfactory in Year 4, and is good with very good features in Year 5 and Year 6.
18. The teaching of the Reception children is very good and is a strength of the school. Activities are exciting, challenging and well matched to the levels of ability and maturity of the children. There is a very good combination of activities that are directed by the teacher and which lead the children stage by stage through aspects of their learning, and those which the children choose themselves, and which involve them in making their own choices and decisions. Good use is made of the classroom assistant who often makes ongoing assessments of what the children achieve, or who notes the children's contributions to class discussions and activities, for example. Very good emphasis is placed on developing the children's language, mathematical, and personal and social skills when they join the Reception class, as these are areas of weakness for many children. Independent learning is encouraged, and the children quickly respond to the classroom routines and to the high expectations of the teacher. The classroom environment is attractive, lively, well organised and stimulating, and children are encouraged to access learning resources themselves and to tidy up after an activity. The Reception children enjoy a very good start to their school career, and are very well prepared for their transfer to Year 1.
19. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall, with unsatisfactory features in Year 2 and Year 4 and very good features in Year 5 and Year 6. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented throughout the school and provides good support for all teachers. The most effective teachers pace their lessons well, and use the end of session discussions effectively to help the pupils to evaluate the extent of their learning. Where the teaching has unsatisfactory elements, expectations are too low, introductory sessions are sometimes too long, and tasks are insufficiently demanding for some groups of pupils. In mathematics and science, the teaching is unsatisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 because of weaknesses in the teaching of Year 2 pupils which lead to them making unsatisfactory progress. Expectations of what the pupils can and should be able to do are too low, and there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to carry out independent investigations and to solve problems. An over-reliance on undemanding worksheets as a means of recording means that pupils have too few opportunities to present their work in different ways and to practise and extend their literacy skills. In Key Stage 2, with the exception of Year 4 where the teaching of mathematics and science is unsatisfactory, teachers make effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy as a framework for their teaching, and ensure that pupils have additional opportunities to extend their learning through investigations and open-ended problems. In Year 5 and Year 6 the teaching of science in particular has many very good features, and pupils are encouraged to find things out for themselves.
20. The teaching of religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography and physical education is satisfactory in both key stages. The teaching of music is unsatisfactory in both key stages because teachers lack the necessary expertise. In history, the teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, and good overall in Key Stage 2. In information and communication technology, the teaching of Key Stage 1 pupils is unsatisfactory overall, and the teaching of Key Stage 2 pupils is satisfactory overall. Where unsatisfactory teaching occurs in these subjects in Year 4 and Year 2,

this is mostly because of low expectations and insecure subject knowledge. Because the school has justifiably placed a great deal of emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy over the last two years, there has been little in the way of staff training for art and design, design and technology, history, geography, physical education, religious education and music. The school is aware that there is a need for further professional development for some staff to ensure that they have the necessary expertise to deliver these subjects with confidence and enthusiasm.

21. Throughout the school, a strength of teaching is the effective way in which most teachers monitor and manage pupils' behaviour, largely through positive reinforcement. The regular use of praise serves to raise pupils' self-esteem, and to promote confidence, and pupils respond very positively when their achievements and efforts are recognised and celebrated. Where behaviour is inappropriate, most teachers are sensitive but firm, and use agreed sanctions very effectively to indicate to pupils that the action was not acceptable. The most experienced and skilled teachers are gradually reducing the use of rewards and sanctions where possible, so that pupils become more accustomed to taking responsibility for their own actions, and so that they develop self-discipline. Where the teaching is weakest, the poor management of pupils' behaviour is a significant factor. Relationships between teachers and pupils are mostly good, and in some classes very good. This means that pupils are often keen to respond and to take an active and full part in lessons.
22. In most classes, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils at the start. This is effective in setting the scene and in ensuring that pupils know what is expected of them. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Introductory sessions are often used well to question the pupils about what they already know and can do. Teachers often use questions well to clarify the pupils' thinking, to probe their understanding, and to extend their learning. For example, in a Year 6 design and technology lesson seen during the inspection, incisive questioning led the pupils to consider carefully the link between the suitability of the materials and the intended purpose of the finished product. Most teachers give clear explanations to the pupils, but there are times when teachers give too much direction and this constrains pupils' creativity and makes them too reliant on adults. This is most evident in the upper part of Key Stage 1 where the pupils have too few opportunities to make independent choices and decisions about their learning.
23. Pupils with special educational needs are often well supported in class by their teachers and classroom assistants, and this additional support enables them to progress at a similar rate to their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into all activities and support is given unobtrusively. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson seen during the inspection, pupils with special educational needs successfully investigated the way in which sound could be insulated, and once they had understood the purpose of the task, were able to work independently, needing further help from the classroom assistant only for the recording part of the activity. Teachers are aware of the different needs of pupils in their class, and follow targets in individual education plans when planning work in English and mathematics. The school has no pupils with English as an additional language.
24. A weakness in teaching throughout the school is the quality of marking which is too variable. Where the teaching is weakest, some work is not marked at all, and in other classes, important mistakes are not identified. Teachers sometimes give pupils pointers for improvement, but too often comments relate to the presentation of pupils' work and not the content. In some cases praise is given for work that has been copied.

Where the best marking occurs, good use is made of house points to reward pupils for particular achievements, and this serves to motivate the pupils.

25. The quality of pupils' learning is very much linked to the quality of teaching, and is at its best where the teaching is good. Where the teaching is less effective, pupils often lose interest and concentration because of the low level of some of the activities and the lack of pace in lessons. Most pupils are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy taking part in discussions and are keen to express their views. Most pupils listen well to explanations and instructions and follow them well. Pupils of all ages and abilities generally work well together, sharing resources and ideas, and helping one another. Very high levels of co-operation are seen in Year 5 and Year 6 where pupils enjoy working on group and paired tasks. There are currently too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their classmates in most classes, with the exception of literacy, where the end of session discussions allow for the sharing of work. Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through independent study are limited, although there are some examples of pupils having completed projects involving independent research in the upper part of Key Stage 2. Most pupils work hard in lessons, and concentrate well, and when pupils lose concentration and become restless, this is almost always because of weaknesses in teaching.
26. The school provides effective support for Year 6 pupils in preparation for the end of key stage national tests in the form of 'booster' classes. The teachers involved in these classes provide good levels of additional support for the pupils, and help to raise their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils' learning in English and mathematics is satisfactorily extended by homework, although the level, amount and frequency vary from class to class. However, not enough use is made of homework in other subjects to extend the pupils' learning, and there are missed opportunities for developing pupils' independent learning skills.
27. Although there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, there is still more to be done. The teaching of the Reception children has improved to such an extent that it is now a strength of the school. However, despite the school's efforts, there continue to be weaknesses in the teaching of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils.

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

28. The quality of the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is satisfactory overall, and the curriculum for the Reception children is very good. However, although all subjects of the National Curriculum, and religious education, are taught over the course of a year, and statutory requirements are met, there are some weaknesses in the quality and range of learning opportunities provided for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. In recent years, the school has justifiably devoted a great deal of time to raising standards in English and mathematics. As a result, insufficient time is given to subjects such as art and design, music and geography. This means that some aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study are not be covered in enough depth. Furthermore, some subjects, for example, geography are taught in blocks of time at various stages throughout the year. Consequently, there are long periods when pupils do not receive any teaching in the subject, and this leads to pupils forgetting their previous learning.

29. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and prepares them well for starting the National Curriculum in Year 1. The curriculum enables the children to make very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals in each of the areas of learning, which are personal social and emotional development, language, communication and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. Reception children follow a structured timetable where groups of children of similar attainment work with a teacher or independently on focused tasks and at other times children choose from a good variety of structured play opportunities. Activities are suitably practically based and include the appropriate elements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, enabling children to learn well. There is a very good balance between teacher direction and the freedom for the children to develop independence and to learn through play.
30. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been fully implemented and are having a positive effect upon raising standards. However, long-term planning for most of the foundation subjects is insecure, and does not provide enough support for the least effective teachers. Since the last inspection, satisfactory improvements in the curriculum provision have been made with regard to design and technology and physical education. The history curriculum at Key Stage 2 is very effective in promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, the music curriculum for pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory, and the geography curriculum for Key Stage 2 pupils lacks depth and is not developed sequentially. The range of learning opportunities in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall, and the school has planned further improvements. Plans for the teaching of religious education based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus are in place but these plans are not put into practice in all classes.
31. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities which includes sports training, music and computer clubs. Last year, Year 5 pupils took part in a residential adventure weekend which included horse riding and rafting, but there are no similar activities planned for the current year. Although some parents would like more extra-curricular activities, the range is judged to be satisfactory.
32. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. Satisfactory progress has been made in developing a programme for personal, social and health education since the time of the last inspection, and the appointment of a co-ordinator for this aspect of the school's work has helped to raise its status in the school. 'Circle Time' has been introduced in all classes, and these sessions provide good opportunities for the pupils to talk about a range of issues. For example, pupils have recently been considering the school's behaviour management strategies, and have gained an understanding of the need for society to have agreed rules. The school has adopted a commercially produced programme of work for Key Stage 1, which is effective in supporting teachers with their planning, but does not have a similar scheme for Key Stage 2, with the result that the current activities do not always build on what has gone before.
33. Parents were involved in drawing up the school's sex education policy, and sex education is taught at an appropriate level in all classes, mainly through ongoing science topics, with additional input for older Key Stage 2 pupils. Pupils throughout the school are made aware of the dangers of misusing drugs, and each year they take part in study modules delivered by the teaching staff from the 'Life Education Centre', a mobile resource unit. Modules also include topics such as self esteem, nutrition and personal safety. Older pupils have received training from the Year 6 pupils of a

neighbouring school in the 'Playground Pals' scheme. This initiative of 'The Children's Society' encourages pupils to sort out any problems that arise in the playground by themselves, and to act as 'buddies' to other pupils who have no friends to play with. The school plans to build on the success of this venture, and to put 'Playground Pals' in place who have the specific remit of helping new Year 3 pupils when they transfer to the junior playground.

34. The school has established good links with the local playgroup, and regular exchange visits help to ensure that the children are confident about starting in the Reception class. The school feeds a number of secondary schools, and makes effective links to support the Year 6 pupils when they transfer at the end of the summer term. In addition, the school welcomes pupils from the local secondary schools who are undertaking work experience placements. There are particularly good liaison arrangements with the technical college to which most pupils transfer: Year 5 pupils are invited to 'taster' days, and an induction day is held for Year 6 pupils. The Year 6 teacher liaises with the pastoral care teacher from the technical college to provide additional support for pupils, and bridging units in literacy and numeracy provide pupils with a platform of academic security during their transition from primary to secondary education.
35. The school has satisfactory links with the parish community that it serves. Pupils make regular visits to the church to celebrate the major Christian festivals, and the church is the venue for other important occasions, such as the Leavers' Service, Ash Wednesday service, and special school assemblies. Teachers make good use of the church as a teaching resource for religious education and art and design, by studying the furnishings, layout and services. The Vicar is a regular visitor to school, and his input in lessons and assemblies enhances the pupils' learning experiences. The school, welcomes the support and advice of external agencies such as the local emergency services and the school nurse.
36. As at the time of the last inspection, the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, although the provision is satisfactory, it could be even better. Currently most aspects of the provision rely on individual teachers' intuition and experience, and opportunities for fostering pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are not formally identified in teachers' planning. This unplanned approach means that the pupils' progress is not always consistent as they move through the school.
37. Pupils' spiritual provision is promoted mainly through daily assemblies where pupils are encouraged to reflect upon aspects of their learning, the world in which they live, and on the impact of their actions on others. In class, teachers often share personal experiences with their pupils, and older Key Stage 2 pupils are learning to enjoy the thrill of discovery associated with new learning. Good relationships between teachers and pupils provide a good context for learning, as pupils are not afraid of discussing their feelings or sharing their opinions.
38. Pupils' moral development is successfully promoted through the daily life of the school. Pupils know that there is a need for considering the needs of others, and for following the school rules. They have a clear perception of right and wrong, and opportunities for them to explain their actions, help them to understand the impact and possible outcomes of not conforming to the agreed Code of Conduct. Older pupils have successfully discussed the moral conditions that give rise to art works such as 'an allegory of the vanities of human life', and have a good understanding of the conflicts that moral decisions generate.

39. The provision for pupils' social development is particularly good in the Reception class, where great emphasis is placed on the children learning how to get on with their classmates. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the provision is satisfactory in almost all classes, although in those classes where teaching has weaknesses, there are too few opportunities for pupils to work together collaboratively on joint tasks. Conversely, where teaching is most effective, pupils are encouraged to share ideas, listen to the views and suggestions of others, and to reach compromises. In games lessons, pupils learn the need for participating as a team member, and learn to observe the social conventions of celebrating the success of the winning team.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but could be further extended. Good use is made of the local area as a resource to support topics in geography, history and religious education. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are familiar with European art and music, but because of weaknesses in curriculum planning, have very little knowledge of the art forms of other cultures. Studies of the religions of the world are undertaken in religious education, but pupils have not had the experience of visiting non-Christian places of worship, nor have representatives of non-Christian religions visited the school to talk to pupils to provide them with a greater insight into the way they live their lives.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. The school makes very good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. The deputy headteacher has been nominated to deal with any concerns relating to child protection and is supported in this role by the headteacher. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher have received training, and have shared the agreed procedures with the rest of the staff. The headteacher monitors and addresses the needs of those pupils who are looked after by the local authority, and their needs are fully met.
42. The headteacher has the devolved responsibility for health and safety. Safety checks are carried out termly by the LEA and these are augmented by the headteacher's annual risk assessment for presentation to the governing body. The full report is of excellent quality and provides a clear and precise status report on all appropriate health and safety matters. Potential hazards are reviewed by the headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body and appropriate and swift action is taken to remedy any shortcomings.
43. The school administrator is a qualified first-aider and she cares for those pupils who are unwell or have had an accident until their parents or carers can be contacted. She ensures that parents are informed of any head bumps, and manages and administers the nebulisers belonging to pupils who suffer from breathing difficulties. In lessons, teachers pay good attention to matters of health and safety, reminding pupils of the need to be careful when handling potentially dangerous equipment or materials.
44. Teachers and other staff are vigilant and aware of the needs of the pupils in their care, providing them with very good levels of emotional and practical support. Good procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' attendance, and for following up any lengthy or unexpected absence. Where necessary, absences are referred to the Education Welfare Officer for further investigation. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher visit the homes of pupils to follow up concerns regarding attendance, and the headteacher does her utmost to support parents who have difficulty in getting their children to school on time and on a regular basis.

45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good, and are known to the pupils and their parents. Staff have received training in behaviour management, and most staff consistently apply the agreed strategies. There have been no reported incidents of racism and older pupils are encouraged to discuss issues such as discrimination through personal, social and health education and in lessons such as literacy and religious education. Lunchtime supervisors keep records of inappropriate behaviour, and these records are monitored by the deputy headteacher and followed up, if appropriate. When pupils' behaviour gives cause for concern, teachers take time to discuss the issues with the perpetrators so that they understand how their actions affect others.
46. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support from their teachers and classroom assistants, and are fully integrated into the life and work of the school. The individual education plans which are devised for these pupils are of good quality and are relevant to their specific needs. Each plan contains a manageable number of targets and clearly defined success criteria, and pupils' progress towards the agreed targets is reviewed regularly. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has a generous amount of non-teaching time to manage the administration of the provision, and she uses the time profitably to monitor pupils' progress and to evaluate the support and guidance these pupils receive. Parents and the older pupils have the opportunity to add their own comments to the plans, and this ensures a shared commitment and strengthens the partnership between home and school. Currently the school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
47. Although the school's procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' personal development are satisfactory, they are not as effective as they might be. Systems are in place, but they are not used consistently in all classes. The school is beginning to assemble appropriate portfolios as a record of pupils' personal achievement, and where these are in place pupils view them with pride.
48. Arrangements for the formal assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and good progress has been made in this aspect of the school's work since the last inspection. The headteacher and some staff have started to make careful analysis of the results of national tests and optional assessment procedures, and this initiative highlights strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. The school is in the early stages of using assessment information in English, mathematics and science to track and monitor pupils' progress, and to predict likely outcomes for Year 6 pupils in their end of key stage national tests. However, not enough yet is being done to modify the curriculum in the light of the identified areas of need.
49. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, pupils' progress and attainment are monitored informally by classteachers, but there are no formal whole-school systems that would enable more accurate tracking of pupils' progress, or that would allow teachers to identify pupils who may have particular gifts and talents in these subjects. An appropriate baseline assessment is made when pupils join the Reception class and the school has well established procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs.
50. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement overall in terms of the levels of support and guidance provided for pupils of all ages and abilities, and good progress in the development of assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science, although there is still more work to be done.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

51. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has successfully extended and strengthened its links with parents, most of whom have positive views of the school. Almost all parents responding to the inspection survey were very supportive of the school and its work. Parents find the headteacher and staff to be very approachable, and feel that the school works closely with them in the education of their children. Most parents are pleased with the quality of teaching, and they agree that the leadership and management of the school by the headteacher is good. A few parents are not happy with the range and frequency of homework, and the inspection findings confirm that a broader range of homework could be set on a more regular basis in most classes. Although a few parents would like more extra-curricular activities, the development of this area of its work has not been a priority for the school in recent years, and the range currently offered is satisfactory. A small number of parents are concerned about the standard of behaviour in one class, and the inspection findings confirm that some teachers are more effective in the way in which they manage behaviour than others, and this is an area the headteacher is addressing.
52. The school has good links with parents, and by providing them with good quality information about their children's progress and forthcoming events, keeps them well informed about the life of the school. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the level of information they receive from the school, and most attend the consultation evenings which are held each term, generally at times to suit parents and carers. The school has produced a number of booklets to help explain to parents how the behaviour policy works, and which explain the school's policy and philosophy. Where possible the school consults parents on important issues, such as the drawing up of the sex education policy, and parents are encouraged to share their ideas with the school. Reports to parents are of satisfactory quality overall, and some are of good quality, giving plenty of information to parents about strengths and relative weaknesses in the pupils' learning.
53. The school enjoys the support of an active 'Parent Teacher and Friends Association' which raises substantial funds to help provide the school with additional resources. This group supports the headteacher by acting as a liaison body through which parents may raise concerns of a general nature. Many parents support their children by attending the monthly Good Work assemblies, and most parents attend the Christmas performances and end-of-year performances. A few parents regularly help in lessons or with sports training, and their help is valued and greatly appreciated by the school. Some parent helpers have developed their interest in school by becoming classroom support assistants. Although a number of parents support their children by helping them with homework, or listening to them read on a regular basis, a few parents do not support the school or their children in this way, despite encouragement from the school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. The quality of leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall, with the headteacher providing good levels of management and effective leadership. In the previous inspection the school was identified as having serious weaknesses in teaching and in the standards achieved by Key Stage 1 pupils in some subjects. The headteacher has played a significant and pivotal role in moving the school forward and in tackling these weaknesses. She set a clear and accurate agenda for school



improvement and addressed the weaknesses in a determined manner. The headteacher shows a quiet and steely determination to continue to improve standards and the quality of education that the school provides, whilst at the same time maintaining the very good levels of pastoral care that are a real strength of the school.

55. The headteacher is supported in her work by a committed deputy headteacher who provides a good role model for effective teaching and learning. However, he currently has no non-contact time to enable him to develop his management role further, mainly because of difficulties in recruiting good quality supply staff to cover his class. Senior management meetings are held on a regular basis where issues pertinent to school development and improvement are discussed in detail before further discussion at staff meetings. This process helps to ensure that all staff are fully involved in the decision making process before decisions are agreed and become embedded in school practice.
56. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, the Local Education Authority adviser and some key co-ordinators, have carried out numerous lesson observations in literacy and numeracy. The outcomes of these observations are formally recorded and feedback is given to classteachers. Identified areas for improvement then form the focus of the next observation. However, currently the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not rigorous or effective enough in other areas of the curriculum. In addition co-ordinators do not always play an active enough role in monitoring standards through the scrutiny of work or through the regular monitoring of teaching and learning. This results in co-ordinators not always having a clear grasp of the standards and quality of teaching and provision in the subjects for which they are responsible.
57. The school sets appropriately challenging targets in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher recognises the importance of analysing test and assessment data obtained from National Curriculum tests and other standardised tests. The results are shared with staff and governors. The headteacher recognises that there is now a need to refine this process further. At the present time the information gained from these tests and assessments is not being used effectively enough to inform curriculum planning, to set challenging targets for individuals, groups of pupils or year groups, or to more closely track the progress of individual pupils. In addition the headteacher has identified the need to ensure that co-ordinators play a more active role in the process of data analysis to give them a greater insight into the strengths and areas of weakness in their own subjects.
58. The school development plan is of good quality. The document contains an accurate assessment of the issues that the school needs to address in order to improve standards, and the overall quality of education further. All issues have appropriate time scales, costings and criteria against which the progress towards stated targets can be measured. Staff and governors are provided with opportunities to contribute to the process of school development and improvement. This helps to ensure that all staff and governors share the responsibility for achieving the stated targets.
59. The Governing Body is very supportive and plays an active and effective role in the management of the school, and fulfils its statutory duties in an appropriate manner. This presents an improved picture from the time of the last inspection. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and all policies are discussed in great detail before they become embedded in school practice. Governors regularly attend training courses and meet regularly, both as a full body and in committees. The Chair of Governors visits the school on a regular basis to meet with the headteacher. Other governors also visit the school and a small number have observed lessons in

subjects such as literacy and numeracy. Before every governors' meeting samples of pupils' books are put out for governors to scrutinise. This provides governors with a practical and effective insight into the work that pupils are covering and with guidance from the headteacher this activity is helping them to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the school. Governors are actively involved in school development planning and the target setting process with every governors' meeting including an item on standards and pupils' achievements. The headteacher provides good quality information to the Governing Body about all aspects of the life and work of the school. The school has begun to link individual governors with subject co-ordinators to give governors a better flavour of standards, and the quality of teaching and learning, but this initiative is in the very early stages of development.

60. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection in 2000 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses in teaching and in the standards that pupils were achieving in some subjects in Key Stage 1. Under the effective leadership and management of the headteacher, the school has put a great deal of time and effort into addressing these serious weaknesses, and into developing other areas of the school's work that were in need of improvement. As a result there have been improvements in both teaching and standards with the school rightly recognising that there is still room for further improvements, particularly in Year 4 and Year 2. The overall quality of teaching has improved significantly, and there has been good progress in terms of the provision for information and communication technology. One of the great successes of the school since the last inspection has been the improvement in the provision for Reception children. As a result of the excellent improvements that have been made, this is now a significant strength of the school's work.
61. The time and effort that have been devoted to addressing the issues identified at the last inspection however, mean that other areas of the curriculum and school have not developed as rapidly as the school had hoped. The school recognises, for example, that it needs to improve whole school curriculum planning, the use it makes of test and assessment data, and the strategies it uses for monitoring teaching and learning. The headteacher and most staff are determined to continue to improve standards and the quality of education that the school provides. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is appropriately placed to continue its process of improvement and development.
62. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is very experienced and has a good overview of the provision which the school makes for these pupils. The provision is good and follows the recently published New Code of Practice. The co-ordinator is well aware of the difficulties posed by the high levels of pupil mobility and the increasing number of pupils with behaviour and emotional difficulties. There are good links with other agencies and special needs provision has a high profile in the school. The co-ordinator encourages teachers to have a strong input into the development of individual education plans, and ensures that the targets are well understood by teachers, support staff, parents and pupils. Comprehensive records are kept and pupils' files are topical and current. The school has a generous number of suitably qualified and experienced classroom assistants, but their deployment is not always as equitable as it should be, and some classes have high levels of support and other classes with similar need could do with more.
63. The school has responded in an appropriate manner to the national initiatives for performance management. Teaching and non-teaching staff attend in-service training courses on a regular basis and these courses are well matched to the needs of the

school and to the individual. Attendance at such courses has led to improvements in teachers' knowledge and understanding in areas such as information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage, which in turn have impacted positively on the quality of teaching and learning. The school has recognised that there is now a need for training in subjects such as music, so that standards can be raised. At the present time the school does not have satisfactory procedures in place for supporting newly qualified teachers or teachers new to the school. Support staff are not always targeted to where the need is greatest and there are occasions when less experienced teachers would benefit from greater levels of support, particularly where there are pupils who present challenging patterns of behaviour.

64. The quality of financial planning is satisfactory. The budget is closely linked to school development planning and reflects the educational needs of the pupils. The money that the school receives from additional grants, and for special educational needs, is used in an appropriate manner to raise standards. The finance committee meets on a regular basis and is provided with good levels of information from the headteacher to help it make informed decisions relating to school budget planning. The finance committee and the Governing Body are involved in setting and monitoring spending patterns over the course of the financial year. The day-to-day finances of the school, as well as the monitoring of spending, are effectively carried out by the headteacher and the school secretary. The secretary carries out her financial and administrative duties in a very efficient and pleasant manner. She plays an important role in helping the school to run smoothly and efficiently. All of the recommendations of the latest auditor's report have been implemented.
65. Due to a decrease in pupil numbers in particular year groups the school was in a position of almost having to set a deficit budget for the current financial year. Careful financial management and the bidding for additional grants meant that this was avoided. However the school is running on a restricted budget and the carry forward in budget reserves from one financial year to the next is much lower than the recommended 5%. The school consistently ensures that it applies the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services, including educational resources, building improvements or services that it buys into from the LEA. Satisfactory procedures are in place for longer term financial planning and the Governing Body and the headteacher are becoming increasingly effective in assessing the impact of major spending decisions, such as increasing the number of support staff or purchasing more computers, in terms of the standards attained and the quality of education that the school provides. Taking all factors into account the school is providing satisfactory value for money.
66. The school has enough suitably qualified teaching staff. The headteacher is currently evaluating the allocation of responsibilities in subject and aspect areas to ensure that there is a good match of expertise and knowledge so that the school can continue to move forward. There is a good number of support staff. Where they are used well and there are good levels of liaison with teaching staff, their contribution is significant and adds much to the progress that pupils make. However, there are times when teachers do not make enough use of classroom assistants, and when they are not clear about their roles. Ancillary staff, including cleaning and caretaking, midday and dinner staff, all make an important contribution to the smooth running of the school and to the life of the school as a community.
67. The accommodation is satisfactory. In addition to the classrooms the school has a number of shared work areas where pupils can be withdrawn for practical activities. The school has separate rooms for watching television and small group work. Outside

there are large grassed areas and suitable hard surfaced play areas, although there is no suitably enclosed play area for children in the Foundation Stage. There are however some deficiencies with the accommodation. There is one classroom that has very little natural light, and access to another classroom can only be gained by going through other classrooms. These factors do little to enhance the quality of the learning environment. Some classrooms are only separated by sliding screens and noise from other classes can be distracting at times and impact negatively on how well pupils listen and learn. Displays to celebrate pupils' work, and pictures and artefacts in classrooms and around the school provide a good quality learning resource as well as in some instances being aesthetically pleasing. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory overall although there are not enough large wheeled toys in the Foundation Stage and resources in music and geography are unsatisfactory both in terms of quantity and quality.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

**1) The headteacher, Governing Body and staff should raise standards in science and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 by:-**

- improving the quality of teaching where there are weaknesses;
- ensuring that teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what different groups of pupils, especially the higher attainers, can and should be able to achieve;
- increasing the opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities;
- reducing the use of worksheets as a means of recording.

*(paragraphs 3, 113, 114, 115, 116, 122, 123, 129, 131)*

**2) The headteacher, Governing Body and staff should raise standards in geography at the end of Key Stage 2 by:-**

- ensuring that enough time is given to the subject;
- ensuring that the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered in enough depth;
- ensuring that the planned curriculum is actually delivered in all classes;
- reducing the amount of time that elapses between topics.

*(paragraphs 28, 30, 143, 145)*

**3) The headteacher, Governing Body and staff should raise standards in music at the end of both key stages by:-**

- providing better support for non-specialist teachers through a comprehensive scheme of work;
- ensuring that the subject is taught for an appropriate amount of time;
- improving the range of musical instruments.

*(paragraphs 28, 30, 159, 163, 164)*

**4) The headteacher, Governing Body and staff should raise standards in information and communication technology at the end of both key stages by:-**

- continuing with the planned arrangements for staff development;
- increasing the opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects.

*(paragraphs 105, 120, 124, 154, 156, 157)*

**5) The staff and headteacher should improve the quality of the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils by:**

- ensuring that all subjects receive enough time to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study;
- ensuring that all teachers follow the agreed timetable, and that planned lessons are actually taught.

*(paragraphs 28, 137, 143, 145, 147, 159)*

- 6) **The headteacher and staff should improve assessment procedures in some subjects, and the use made of assessment information in all subjects, by continuing with the planned programme of development in this area of the school's work.**

*(paragraphs 48, 175)*

- 7) **The headteacher and Governing Body should develop the role of key staff and co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the school's work by:-**

- involving co-ordinators in monitoring standards in their subjects through the scrutiny of pupils' work and/or lesson observations;
- ensuring that co-ordinators have a better overview of what is being taught in their subjects, and that the planned timetable is actually being delivered.

*(paragraphs 111, 137, 142, 152, 164, 175)*

- 8) **The headteacher and Governing Body should improve the quality of teaching and learning in Year 4 by:-**

- continuing with the planned programme of support;
- carefully monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

*(paragraphs 6, 17, 19, 98, 106, 141)*

- 9) **The headteacher and Governing Body should ensure that the rate of pupils' progress in Year 2 is improved in some subjects by:-**

- carefully monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, especially in mathematics and science;
- ensuring that the teaching is supported by comprehensive schemes of work and/or curriculum guidance.

*(paragraph 98)*

#### **OTHER MINOR ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:-**

The school should:

- consider ways in which homework can be used to extend pupils' learning across all subjects;
- continue with its efforts to improve attendance;
- improve the quality of marking in most classes and subjects.

*(paragraphs 24, 104, 109, 119, 131, 141, 146, 151)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	11	14	2		
Percentage	3	28	28	36	5		

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	181
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	41

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

### Attendance

Authorised absence

%
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Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

School data	1.3
National comparative data	0.5

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



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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	15	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	20	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (74)	92 (78)	92 (81)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	20	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (81)	92 (93)	92 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	10	11	13
	Total	21	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (63)	83 (54)	90 (58)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	23	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (58)	87 (58)	87 (71)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	149
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*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	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	101.25

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	381673
Total expenditure	381850
Expenditure per pupil	2207
Balance brought forward from previous year	3166
Balance carried forward to next year	2989

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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	181
Number of questionnaires returned	24

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	34	0	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	42	12	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	38	20	4	0
The teaching is good.	46	46	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	42	8	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	20	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	25	0	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	50	8	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	42	54	4	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	46	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	38	34	8	4

## **PART D:**

### **THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

#### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

73. The provision for the children in the Reception class is very good overall, and this represents excellent improvement since the time of the last inspection. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. In the last inspection, the quality of planning and provision for the under-fives was judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then much work has been done to improve the curriculum. The programme of work is planned carefully to support the children's progress towards the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals. Activities are very well planned, and the teacher provides very good quality, interesting and practical learning experiences. Emphasis is placed not only on developing children's early language and mathematical skills, but also on developing their personal, social and emotional skills. The good teamwork between the teacher and the classroom assistant ensures a calm and productive learning environment, where children are fully involved and enjoying their activities.
74. At the time of the inspection, twenty seven children were attending the Reception class on a full-time basis. Approximately two thirds of these children have had experience in local nurseries or play groups prior to starting school. On entry to the Reception class, the children's attainment is below that expected for their age, particularly in language and communication and mathematical skills. Very good teaching, which takes account of the needs of individuals, enables children to make very good progress in all areas of their learning, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development.
75. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children in the Reception class attain the Early Learning Goals in terms of their creative and physical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They attain beyond the expected level in the area of personal, social and emotional development. Despite making very good progress, most children do not attain the Early Learning Goals in the area of learning of communication, language and literacy, or in terms of their mathematical development.
76. The children are taught in a bright spacious classroom with ample room for activities such as painting, and using and exploring the water and sand areas. The classroom is clean with vibrant and useful displays and resources are generally sufficient, well ordered and organised, and easily accessible. There is direct access to the outdoor play area, but this is used by all of the pupils at playtime and is not specifically designed for the Foundation Stage children. At present it is not used at times other than playtimes, and there is no large play equipment or wheeled toys to promote children's physical development.
77. Good procedures are in place for assessing children's progress in the different areas of learning, and assessment information is well used to plan appropriate activities for different groups of children. Any children who are causing concern are monitored closely and early identification of children with special educational needs is a priority.

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

78. Teaching and learning in this area are very good. By the time children leave the Reception class, most are achieving beyond the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. The teacher and classroom assistant are very caring and supportive, and their encouragement and enthusiasm promote very good attitudes and enhance the children's enjoyment of school. Adults provide excellent role models, and promote children's self esteem and confidence through listening with genuine interest to them and praising their efforts. Pupils are encouraged to develop independent learning skills, and the classroom is set up in a way that enables the children to select their own resources and materials, with all equipment being clearly labelled and easily accessible.
79. The children learn simple routines and rules for working and playing together, and examples of these are seen through a wide range of lively photographs, which show children sharing, listening, thinking, looking after things and being friends. Children are taught to share, to take turns and to walk sensibly as they move to different parts of the school. They develop skills of independence, including making choices about aspects of their work and tidying away. All lessons include specific opportunities for pupils to concentrate, to co-operate with one another, and to develop independence. In the introductory part of each lesson children listen carefully to the teacher and put up their hand to answer rather than call out, and they co-operate well with one another when engaged in activities.
80. The vast majority of children are developing positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is good. Social development is constantly promoted and children demonstrate an increasing ability to listen to their classmates with courtesy and respect. The children are ready to congratulate others when they have been successful, and they respond very well to the way in which the teacher encourages and corrects them in a sensitive manner. In the physical education sessions children demonstrate the ability to dress and undress independently although help is at hand if they should need it. Most children are competent at managing their own personal hygiene.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

81. Children's spoken language skills when they start school are generally below the expected level. High quality teaching and a wide range of stimulating and exciting learning experiences allow the children to make very good gains in their learning. Progress is also very good in reading and writing but, despite very good teaching and provision, few children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of the Foundation Stage. The teaching is based on an imaginatively planned range of activities, with many opportunities for children to listen and to talk about what they are doing. More formal language sessions are effectively balanced by daily free-choice language activities, and ongoing opportunities for the children to talk about their work.
82. Most Reception children have positive attitudes towards books and reading, and this aspect of learning is promoted with high levels of enthusiasm by the classteacher and assistant. Texts are relevant to the children's understanding of the world, and captivate their interest. The teacher reads expressively, showing the illustrations, pointing to the print and encouraging children to join in with repeating text and rhyming words. Very effective strategies are used to capture and hold the children's attention and to promote spoken language. Elements of the Literacy strategy are well used to promote learning.

Shared reading and writing sessions support the learning of letter sounds and sentence construction. Particularly good use is made of simple resources to make activities more interesting. For example, the children enjoy helping Marty the Monster to learn both the beginning and ending sounds of words.

83. There are good opportunities for the children to develop writing skills in all areas of learning. Children enjoy using whiteboards to write simple sentences and most children can write their first name without help. Higher attaining children write at length, and with high levels of confidence, but the lower attaining children still need a great deal of encouragement from their teacher. The children are encouraged to see themselves as writers and to put this skill to use around the classroom. For example, children write captions and notices for their hospital area and labels for displays. They have written their own books, including a class book entitled 'The Hungry Tadpole'. There are short daily sessions in which children practise the correct formation of letters, setting good standards in writing from the start.

### **Mathematical development**

84. Very good teaching and successful implementation of elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are enabling the Reception children to make significant gains in this area of their learning from a low starting point. However, few pupils attain and exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1. The children have many very good opportunities to consolidate their learning through taking part in exciting and well chosen practical activities, and see mathematics as a 'fun' activity.
85. A suitable emphasis is placed on number work, and every opportunity is taken to promote children's numerical awareness. The teacher uses very good strategies to interest the children and to practise counting. For example, she uses a swinging dinosaur to lead and control class counting activities. When the teacher suggests counting to thirty most children can do this with her support. Many children have a secure understanding of numbers to ten and instantly recognise these numerals. Very good emphasis is placed on the correct ordering of numbers and children are encouraged to work out where a certain number will be on the counting stick, by using existing information rather than always counting on. For example, during the inspection, the children were asked to decide which number would come in between eight and ten, or to find the number that would come before six. Practical work, where the children sort and partition cubes helps them to learn about addition and subtraction.
86. Well planned daily activities promote numeracy and mathematical skills well. For example, when working in the sand or water areas, the children compare quantities and are encouraged to develop mathematical vocabulary by describing containers as being 'full', 'empty' or 'heavier than/lighter than'. In comparing groups of objects, most children show a developing understanding of the mathematical concept of 'more than/less than, although some children are still struggling with this concept. Children match colours and shapes, and about half of the children can reliably recognise and correctly name the basic shapes such as square, circle and triangle. The classroom is very well organised with a wide variety of relevant and focused activities to challenge the children in their mathematical thinking and to provide them with choices. For instance, using Mrs Marple's washing line to peg out the washing consolidates the concept of repeating patterns. There are well planned opportunities to develop the children's mathematical skills, not only in the specific mathematics lesson but in other areas of their learning.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

87. Very good teaching enables children to develop a sound understanding of the world around them and extends their knowledge through interesting activities and trips to places of interest. The children make very good progress, and by the time they begin Year 1 most of the children are achieving the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.
88. Topics such as those linked to 'The Jungle' and 'Monsters Inc' are very well planned to include many areas of learning. For example, on the visit to 'Tropical World', the children observed the animals in their own environment. They become aware of time passing and changes taking place in a variety of ways. They learn about the life cycle of the butterfly through reading the 'Hungry Caterpillar' story and enjoy the Springtime display with the flowers and signs of new life. Most children understand that living things must receive care and attention if they are to flourish and survive.
89. Children make good progress in developing early scientific skills such as observing and describing. Good opportunities are provided for children to investigate and explore through first hand experiences, and effective use is made of questioning to encourage children to think about how things work and why they happen. All the activities are suitably practical, promoting understanding and helping the children to remember what they have learned. For instance, during a technology morning, children brought in their toys and found out which toys moved, made a noise and lit up, and they realised that most needed batteries to make them work. When working with small groups the teacher gives children every opportunity to make their own observations and takes time to discuss their findings.
90. Early skills in design and technology are evident in the models that children construct using reclaimed materials and commercially produced construction toys. Children learn how to select the resources and tools they need to make the models. Children have constant access to the computer and enjoy using it. They experience a range of programs and are gaining satisfactory skills in controlling the mouse to make things happen on the screen. The more able children know how to print out their work, and enjoy sharing their expertise with their less experienced classmates.
91. The Reception children are becoming aware of other cultures and thoroughly enjoyed listening to a member of staff talking about her friends who live in the Ukraine. They are becoming aware that people in other parts of the world such as India wear different clothes and have different customs. Statutory requirements are met in respect of religious education, which is taught regularly, and a small number of children recall some well-known Biblical characters.

### **Physical development**

92. Children make very good progress in their physical development, and by the end of the Reception year almost all of the children achieve the Early Learning Goals. Activities are well planned to promote physical development and the teaching is very good.
93. Whilst there is only limited opportunity for children to use large equipment or wheeled toys outdoors, the children have regular lessons in the hall to improve control and co-ordination. Weekly games, dance and gymnastics lessons are well structured and include an appropriate warm up activity before vigorous exercise. In a very good gymnastics lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher generated great enthusiasm when she asked the children to find different ways of stretching and curling, and this resulted in high standards. The children moved well and demonstrated good control



and co-ordination as they made high, tall shapes and small, tight, round shapes. The majority of children were able to hold a fixed position for a considerable time. They showed imagination and negotiated space successfully when running, jumping and hopping. The children responded to the teacher's high expectations as they travelled around, under and over the equipment and held their position in response to a signal.

94. In the classroom, a range of thoughtfully planned activities promotes effective development of the children's fine physical skills. They handle small equipment such as pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and glue, beads and pegs with increasing dexterity. They also show good co-ordination when using the computer mouse. The children move easily around the various areas of the classroom with a good sense of awareness of space of themselves and of others.

### **Creative development**

95. Very good teaching and a wide range of well focused activities enables children to make very good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. An extensive range of opportunities is provided for children to develop their creative skills. The adults support and enhance children's learning by taking a full part in their play activities, developing children's imaginative skills alongside their learning in many other areas.
96. The children are encouraged to explore colour, texture, shape and form, and by pulling, twisting, coiling and rolling play dough, produce animals and gingerbread men. There are also good opportunities for free painting and for using the art program on the computer to experiment with colour. The imaginative aspect of play is well developed through regular changes in the use of the home corner which, at the time of the inspection, was a hospital. In music activities children move rhythmically and perform actions to a range of songs and rhymes. They know the words and tunes to many songs and sing them tunefully and with enthusiasm. They are finding out about the different sounds that can be produced by musical instruments and are quickly learning the names of some of the more usual percussion instruments, such as drum, triangle, tambourine and cymbal. They are keen to use these instruments and are learning how to control them playing them loudly and quietly.

### **ENGLISH**

97. By the end of Year 2, the results of the 2001 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests show pupils' attainment to be well above the national average in writing and average in reading. When pupils' performance is compared to similar schools attainment is well above average in writing and above average in reading. The end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2001 show pupils' attainment to be below the national average, and average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and speaking is below average and average in listening. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is at an average level in all aspects of the subject. The difference between the test results and inspection findings can be explained by the differing natural ability of the groups of pupils. The present Year 2 group of pupils has a large percentage of pupils with special educational needs. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
98. The progress made by pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. However, although the progress made by pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory, and satisfactory teaching ensures that the pupils acquire the necessary skills and knowledge at a steady rate, in Key Stage 2 the progress is very

uneven. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3, but in Year 4, their progress is unsatisfactory because of the unsatisfactory quality of teaching. Teachers in Year 5 and Year 6 provide consistently good and at times very good teaching that really pushes the pupils on and ensures that they make good progress. However, because of the weaknesses in Year 4, the upper Key Stage 2 teachers often have to fill gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge rather than extending and enhancing the pupils' learning, which would enable more pupils to achieve at a even higher level.

99. The school has clearly identified in its School Development Plan the need to improve standards further by ensuring that pupils make consistent progress as they move through school. Despite the weaknesses in teaching and learning in Year 4 the school has made satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved and there is now more good and very good teaching. The school recognises the need to tackle the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make by implementing more rigorous procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
100. By the end of Year 2, standards in listening are at an average level while standards in speaking are below average. The pupils enjoy stories, and listen and follow instructions and explanations in a satisfactory manner. Most pupils are keen to take part in question and answer sessions, and to make contributions to small and large group discussions. A weakness of pupils' learning is their limited vocabulary, and some pupils have difficulty in framing their views and opinions in an articulate manner. Key Stage 1 pupils currently have too few opportunities to take part in role play and drama activities, or organised speaking activities, such as choral speaking, which would help them in their articulation of sounds, and which would enhance their confidence.
101. By the end of Year 6 standards in speaking and listening are currently at an average level. The older pupils in the school listen to the views and opinions of others and take these comments on board before making their own responses. The way in which pupils get on with their work after a whole class introduction to a lesson shows that they have taken on board what is required of them. The teachers of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 encourage pupils to extend their speaking skills by discussing a wide range of issues such as pollution, different rules in society or simply analysing text within a literacy lesson. The pupils respond well to these opportunities even when their vocabulary lacks sparkle or vibrancy. Some of the younger pupils, particularly in Year 4, do not listen attentively and are reluctant to follow the normal conventions of discussions and shout out or do not pay enough respect to the views and opinions of their classmates.
102. Standards in reading are currently below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Key Stage 1 pupils are taught an appropriate range of strategies to help them tackle unfamiliar words and phrases, but not all pupils use these to good effect to help them with their reading. Year 2 pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and whilst many are able to read with varying degrees of fluency and accuracy few read with good levels of expression. Teachers introduce pupils to the work of differing authors but few pupils have a good recall of authors or their works. The pupils do not have a natural love of literature and rely heavily on the school to introduce them to different types and styles of literature. Although some Key Stage 1 pupils benefit from good support from home, which enhances their learning, the only reading experience for some pupils is that which the school provides.
103. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are reading at a level that is appropriate for their age and ability. They read with a reasonable level of accuracy and understanding, and

recognise the importance of punctuation in helping text come to life. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and Dick King-Smith. The pupils use the contents and index pages to locate required information. The uneven progress that pupils make in the earlier part of Key Stage 2 means that the pupils are not adept in the higher order reading skills such as skimming and scanning, in reading beyond the literal level, or in teasing out hidden viewpoints or emotions in fiction and non-fiction text.

104. Standards in writing are presently below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. At Key Stage 1 pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. Most pupils recognise the importance of using capital letters and full stops, but few pupils consistently use speech, exclamation or question marks to enliven their writing. The pupils are being introduced to writing frames to help them structure their writing in a more effective manner. The weaknesses are that too few pupils are able to write an extended piece of writing and the text soon fizzles out. The vocabulary that pupils use is limited and only the higher attaining pupils are achieving at an appropriate spelling level. Standards of presentation are variable and this is not helped on occasions by the quality of teachers' marking. Although there are some good opportunities in Year 1 for the pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, such as making lists in science, there are too few opportunities in Year 2, where there is an over-emphasis on the use of worksheets as a means of recording.
105. Pupils in Year 3, Year 5 and Year 6 are provided with a good range of writing stimuli. This includes instructional writing tasks, narrative writing, autobiographical writing, book reviews, chronological reports as well as playscripts and creative pieces of writing. Teaching for these pupils concentrates on the development of specific skills and clearly outlines what specifically is needed to complete these different pieces of writing in an effective manner. Pupils rise to the challenge and produce writing of a satisfactory, and in some instances good standard that pays appropriate regard to spelling, presentation and grammar. The fact that teaching does not always have this high expectation or quality of direct teaching of the required skills in Year 4 means that fewer pupils than might be expected achieve the higher levels in writing by the end of Year 6. Whilst pupils have a secure grounding in writing they experience more difficulty in writing extended pieces of work which capture and hold the attention of the reader throughout. The pupils' writing typically has a lively and engaging opening, but the initial ideas are not well sustained or developed. There are some good examples of pupils' writing skills being extended in other areas of the curriculum in subjects such as history and religious education, but this good practice is not as consistent across the school as it should be. Not enough use is made of computers to enhance pupils' literacy skills through editing and drafting or through individual study and research.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 teaching and learning in Year 3 are satisfactory with some good features. Teaching and learning in Year 5 and Year 6 are consistently good and at times very good. Although the quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was just satisfactory in Year 4, the scrutiny of pupils' books shows that over time teaching in this class is unsatisfactory, and the pupils' rate of progress is unsatisfactory. This is because there is not a high enough level of expectation in terms of the quantity and quality of work pupils are expected to complete. The work set is not challenging enough to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities and not enough attention is paid to the systematic development of pupils' writing skills.

107. Planning overall in the school is of a satisfactory standard. Lesson objectives are often shared with pupils, and teaching is at its best when these objectives are visited at the end of the lesson to see if they have been met or exceeded. Where the best teaching occurs, teachers use this ongoing assessment information to guide and inform the next stage of their planning. The most effective teaching gives pupils the necessary skills to improve the quality of their writing. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Key Stage 2 were given clear instructions about how to write an instructional text and an autobiography. As a result of clear direction from their teachers, pupils have a good awareness of what is needed and this advances their learning. Teachers often read texts with good levels of animation that immediately captures the interest and attention of the pupils. This was evident in Year 5 where there were collective groans of disappointment when the teacher ceased reading.
108. Pupils of all ages and abilities are often involved in class and group discussions because teachers and support staff skilfully modify the phrasing of questions. Support staff are in the main valued and take a full and active part in all aspects of lessons and this makes an important contribution to how well pupils learn, especially the lower attainers who need this level of additional support. In most lessons teachers use praise effectively. It is not gushing and where appropriate it gently guides pupils as to how their contributions could be improved.
109. Although in most lessons pupils are managed well, when teaching is less effective it is usually linked to inappropriate management of pupils or teachers not gaining the full attention of pupils when making pertinent teaching points. This is not helped by the sliding screens which separate classes and which are poor sound barriers. There are also occasions when the work that is set is not challenging enough for the higher attaining pupils who finish their work quickly and with too much ease. Marking is a weakness of teaching throughout the school. There are occasions when work is not marked on a sufficiently regular basis and when pupils are not given enough guidance about how they can improve their work further.
110. The quality of learning directly reflects the quality of teaching. The older pupils at Key Stage 2 and pupils at Key Stage 1 are often enthusiastic in their work and are always ready to offer their views and opinions whilst at the same time valuing the differing views of their classmates. This is particularly the case for the pupils in Year 6 who show high levels of interest and are keen to do well. Pupils in Year 4 show less positive attitudes and do not always listen attentively in class. Because the teacher's expectations are too low, the pupils do not always give of their best. Some pupils in this class do not take great pride in their work and show less than satisfactory levels of productivity. Behaviour is generally good, and is at its best in the upper part of Key Stage 2 where pupils are well motivated and very keen to learn. There are sometimes incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour in both Year 3 and Year 4 which disrupt the learning of others. Satisfactory use is made of homework to enhance and extend the pupils' learning, but some of the tasks could be more stimulating and exciting for the oldest pupils in both key stages.
111. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner. The headteacher, the school's adviser and on occasions the co-ordinator have observed lessons and provided formal feedback and targets for improvement where necessary. The school has recognised the need for more regular scrutiny of pupils' work so that the co-ordinator can obtain a clearer picture of teaching and learning across the school and can tackle the inconsistencies in pupils' progress. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good, but there is now a need for the co-ordinator to take a more active role in analysing test and assessment data and improving target setting procedures so

that individual and group targets are set and reviewed on a more regular basis. Resources to support teaching and learning in the subject are satisfactory, although the library is not always used to its full potential in encouraging pupils to develop their personal study and research skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

112. The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average and above average in comparison with similar schools. The 2001 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average and well above average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations, but below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. The discrepancy between the inspection findings and the Key Stage 1 test results is because of natural differences in the ability of the groups of pupils. The current Year 2 group has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who do not attain the expected level in their work. Standards in mathematics have been variable for the past three years in both key stages, and have ranged from above average to well below average. However, standards are improving overall in Key Stage 2, and the current situation represents a significant improvement over that reported at the time of the previous inspection.
113. The progress made by pupils in mathematics as they move through the school is variable. This is due to the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. In Year 1 pupils make satisfactory progress, but in Year 2, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, make unsatisfactory progress because of weaknesses in the teaching. In Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3, but unsatisfactory progress in Year 4, where the teaching is unsatisfactory. The pupils are often insufficiently challenged by the set tasks, and their rate of productivity is low. In Year 5 and Year 6 the pupils make good, and at times very good progress, and the teachers successfully fill the gaps in pupils' learning that are the result of the unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs make the same rate of progress as their classmates. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.
114. By the end of Key Stage 1, there are weaknesses in the pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to real life situations, and in their ability to solve open-ended problems, and their attainment in this element of the mathematics curriculum is below national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2, although some pupils still need a great deal of adult support to solve investigative tasks, most pupils understand the role mathematics plays in the real world, and have an appreciation of the necessary operations and steps to be taken in order to solve open-ended problems. Their attainment is in line with national expectations in this aspect of their work. Where the best teaching occurs in each key stage, teachers constantly reinforce the pupils' mathematical vocabulary, and draw their attention to the range of different words that relate to the same mathematical operation.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in number is just in line with the national expectation. However, although most pupils have a satisfactory grasp of number, too few pupils attain the higher levels in their work because of low expectations in Year 2. Pupils in Year 1 make satisfactory progress in their knowledge of number, which is reinforced by counting games, where they count up to twenty in ones, and up to one hundred in tens. During the inspection, these activities, and those to find larger and

smaller numbers, and missing numbers between two others, were all practised in the form of a 'fun activity' which stimulated the pupils and maintained their interest. In Year 2, the pupils' rate of progress is not maintained, and they do not make sufficient advances in their learning. Although number activities are carried out on an almost daily basis, they often do not extend the higher attainers sufficiently. Mental mathematics activities at the start of lessons provide satisfactory reinforcement of number patterns, as the pupils count forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens, but some of the tasks do not challenge the pupils' thinking sufficiently, and do not provide enough opportunities for the pupils to explain their line of reasoning, or to find different approaches to the problem. By the end of the key stage, most pupils work confidently with small numbers when carrying out addition and subtraction 'sums', and recognise pattern in number such as odd and even. Higher attainers have an appreciation of the infinity of number, and count up to and beyond one thousand. For most pupils, their understanding of place value is secure, and they satisfactorily order numbers by size.

116. In shape, space and measure, most pupils do not achieve the expected level in their work by the end of Key Stage 1. This is because too little attention is given to this aspect of the mathematics curriculum, especially in Year 2, and there are too few opportunities generally throughout the key stage for pupils to take part in practical activities that would extend their conceptual understanding. Most pupils know the main metric measure of length, but are far less secure when talking about units of weight and capacity. Their ability to estimate is weak, and because of lack of practical opportunity, they often make quite unrealistic estimates of weight and length. Most pupils recognise and name a variety of two and three dimensional shape, but do not draw generalisations, such as 'all three sided shapes have three angles'.
117. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectation in all aspects of the mathematics curriculum, and there are strengths in pupils' attainment in number. Teachers often find lively and interesting ways of developing pupils' knowledge of number, and this serves to motivate the pupils in their learning, as well as extending their mathematical knowledge. For example, during the inspection, which coincided with the 'Budget', Year 6 pupils successfully explored ways of working out VAT on goods in shops, using calculators to check their findings. These pupils quickly realised the relationship between the numbers 10, 5, and 2.5, using this knowledge to calculate 17.5% more easily. Many pupils understand the link between fractions, decimals and percentages by the end of the key stage, and pupils are often very well extended in their understanding of this aspect of their learning by challenging tasks. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils put fractions on a number line using a limited number of digits, and matched them to the decimal equivalent. This activity promoted great excitement and the pupils expressed their disappointment when the lesson came to an end. Most Key Stage 2 teachers make good use of the mental mathematics starter session in most lessons, and pupils are encouraged to explain their reasoning, and to find different ways of approaching the same problem. For example, during the inspection, Year 3 pupils were challenged in their understanding of place value. The task was challenging and successfully advanced the pupils' learning.
118. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of shape, space and measure. They have a secure knowledge of different types of two dimensional shapes and their properties, and the higher attainers make generalisations about unknown shapes, such as those with eleven equal sides, based on what they already know. Although pupils have a satisfactory grasp of measure, and know the main metric units of weight, length and capacity, their ability to estimate is limited, especially when discussing weight and capacity. Most pupils know commonly used imperial measures such as pints, stones and pounds, but not all can translate these

measures into approximate metric amounts. As at Key Stage 1, there are too few practical opportunities which would consolidate and extend the pupils' learning.

119. The quality of teaching and learning is very variable but satisfactory overall. There are weaknesses in the teaching and learning of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils leading to unsatisfactory progress, and significant strengths in the teaching and learning of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented in all classes. Where the best teaching occurs, mental mathematics starter sessions are well paced, lively and demanding. Pupils respond with high levels of enthusiasm and there is healthy competition as they try to be the first with the answer. Where teaching is less effective, these sessions are too slow, and do not challenge the pupils sufficiently in their thinking. Coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1, where insufficient attention is given to aspects of shape, space and measure. The lack of opportunities for pupils to learn through practical experience is however, an area that could be improved across the school. Numeracy lessons are generally well organised in all classes, although in some classes, especially Year 4, too much time is taken in managing the behaviour of a small number of disruptive pupils. Although pupils sometimes are also difficult in Year 5 and Year 6, teachers are much more effective in managing their behaviour, and because the tasks are often very interesting, the pupils are generally interested and well behaved. The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs, and classroom assistants are often effective in helping the pupils participate fully in mathematics lessons. 'Booster' classes for Year 6 pupils, provide further additional support for the lower attaining pupils. The majority of pupils are confident and enjoy mathematics. However, they do not have much opportunity for working independently particularly in Year 2 and Year 4. Where pupils are given these opportunities they use them well, and by the end of the Key Stage 2 many are holding meaningful conversations and discussions using appropriate mathematical language to express their ideas. Homework is used well in the upper part of Key Stage 2 to extend the pupils' learning, but in other parts of the school, there is scope for further improvement in terms of the type of activities that are set. Marking is satisfactory overall, but could be even better if teachers consistently showed pupils ways in which they could improve their work further.
  
120. The subject is satisfactorily managed, although the co-ordinator is new to the post, and has not yet become sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observations or the scrutiny of test results and pupils' work. Little use is currently made of information and communication technology, and the school is aware of the need to develop this aspect of pupils' learning. Formal assessment procedures have been set up but they are not yet consistently applied throughout the school. There is a comprehensive analysis of the result of the national tests and optional tests and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Resources for the subject are adequate in range of quantity.

## SCIENCE

121. On the basis of the 2001 Key Stage 2 national test results, pupils' attainment in science is below the national average, and is average in comparison with similar schools. Standards have improved steadily over the past few years, and the inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. The 2001 teacher assessments for 2001 show that overall pupils' attainment is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. The inspection findings confirm this picture.
122. Pupils' progress in science is inconsistent throughout the school, and is directly linked to variations in the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils get off to a good start in Year 1, and make satisfactory progress overall, and good progress in developing their investigative skills. However, in Year 2, because of weaknesses in teaching, pupils' progress dips and is unsatisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in the early part of Key Stage 2, but in Year 4, because the teaching is unsatisfactory, the pupils' progress is very limited and is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers are very effective in the upper part of Key Stage 2, and pupils make rapid progress in Year 5 and Year 6, enabling to make up some of the ground they have lost in Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. They often achieve well in the practical elements of the subject, and benefit from good support from their teachers and classroom assistants. Higher attaining pupils are particularly well challenged in Year 5 and Year 6 where the tasks are open-ended and enable them to follow up their own lines of enquiry. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.
123. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' investigative skills are below the expected level, despite the good start they make in Year 1 in this aspect of their science work. In Year 2, pupils do not have enough opportunities to find things out for themselves, and there are times when they are asked to complete recording tasks before they have had practical experience of a new concept. The overuse of worksheets for recording means that pupils have few opportunities to practise and extend their literacy skills, and too few opportunities for devising their own methods of recording. By contrast in Year 1, pupils complete a good range of practical activities that successfully develop their powers of observation, and record their ideas in a variety of ways including pictures, charts, lists and short reports. At the end of Key Stage 1, only a small number of pupils have a clear understanding of the notion of prediction, and pupils are not at all secure in their understanding of fair-testing. Pupils of all abilities could do better in the investigative element of their science work.
124. By the end of Key Stage 2, the vast majority of pupils have good skills of investigation, largely due to the good teaching of the Year 5 and Year 6 teachers. As they move through the key stage, pupils take part in a wide range of different investigations and experiments which successfully reinforce their learning. They are encouraged to take responsibility for setting up their investigations, and to record their results in a variety of different ways. Pupils understand that science is about 'finding things out', and show good levels of curiosity and interest in their work. This was particularly evident in a lesson seen during the inspection when Year 5 pupils made sound boxes, and then investigated the materials that would make the most effective insulators of sound. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test, and most make sensible predictions based on their previous knowledge. The written work of higher attaining pupils shows that as they have gained in experience, they have become more creative in their ideas for solving problems, and that they are starting to productively use and apply their existing knowledge. This is not the case for



lower attaining pupils whose approach is less organised, and who have difficulty in making generalisations. Pupils currently do not make enough use of information and communication technology to support their learning in science, although there are occasions when sensing equipment is used in whole class lessons. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily promoted in most classes, and there are some good opportunities in the upper part of the key stage for pupils to read thermometers, record changes in temperature, and measure pulse rates for example.

125. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of living things. Searches of the school grounds give pupils the opportunity to learn about the habitats of minibeasts, and pupils have a secure recall of this work. Most pupils know how to classify living things according to their main characteristics, but few pupils at the end of the key stage are confident when explaining the difference between things that are living and things that have never been alive. Some good work in Year 1 helps pupils to learn about the five senses, and higher attaining pupils appreciate how different animals use some senses more than others. Year 2 pupils confidently describe the stages of human life, from baby to adult, but are less secure when asked to describe the life cycle of a frog or a plant.
126. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of living things, although some pupils have difficulty in recalling important facts they have learned when talking, for example, about the systems of the human body, the parts of plants, and the food chain. As they move through the key stage pupils continue to increase their knowledge of the differences and similarities between groups of living things, and most teachers encourage pupils to find things out for themselves. For example, Year 3 pupils have carried out their own research into the preferred food of an animal of their choice. By the end of the key stage pupils confidently explain the characteristics of living things, the needs of living things for healthy growth, and the life cycles of plants and animals. Good opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations and experiments into aspects of living things successfully consolidate the pupils' learning. For example, in Year 5 pupils measure their pulse rate when resting and after exercise, and in Year 3, pupils compare the features of four different plants and record their observations.
127. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties are below the expected level. Although pupils have a basic grasp of this aspect of science, because of low expectations in Year 2, most pupils are not being fully stretched in their learning, and are not reaching the levels of attainment of which they are capable. In Year 1 pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of the uses of different materials and their properties. This knowledge is not sufficiently built upon in Year 2, and few pupils know that materials can be changed by heating or cooling, or that some changes are permanent and some reversible.
128. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the properties of materials. In the upper part of the key stage, their understanding is enhanced by good opportunities for them to carry out practical tasks which help them to clarify their thinking. For example, Year 6 pupils have carried out a range of investigations and experiments to find ways of separating liquids from solids, and to find out how solids can be recaptured from solutions. This work has inspired many of the pupils, and they are keen to describe the various processes they have used, and to explain the outcomes. The pupils' ability to describe processes such as evaporation, condensation and saturation is sometimes weak, and does not fully reflect their evident understanding of these processes as demonstrated by the practical work they have carried out. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good understanding of the

differences between liquids, solids and gases, and give examples of liquids, such as water, that can be frozen into a solid state, and heated so that evaporation occurs, producing a gas. In the upper part of the key stage where the teaching is most effective, there are some good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge of materials to their work in other areas of science. For example, during the inspection Year 5 pupils used their knowledge well when choosing materials they thought would insulate sound.

129. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge of physical processes is unsatisfactory. This aspect of the science curriculum does not receive enough attention in Key Stage 1. Although in Year 1 pupils consider which materials will be attracted by a magnet, most Year 2 pupils have little recall of this learning, and are not able to make even simple generalisations about the properties of magnetic materials. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a basic knowledge of how to make a simple circuit, but their work is at a low level, and does not sufficiently challenge the highest attaining pupils. Pupils' knowledge of forces is unsatisfactory. Year 2 pupils have difficulty in describing forces in terms of pushes and pulls, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, weaknesses in teaching led to pupils becoming confused as they tried to describe twisting, stretching, bending and squashing movements in terms of pushes and pulls. Most pupils understand that light can come from natural and manmade sources, and have a limited understanding of how sound is produced, but the level of this work is insufficiently challenging for most pupils.
130. By the end of Key Stage 2, although most pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical processes are satisfactory overall, this is the weaker area of pupils' learning. The organisation of the science curriculum in Key Stage 2 means that there are sometimes long gaps before topics relating to physical processes are revisited, and this means that pupils have difficulty in recalling their previous learning. The aspect of the 'earth and beyond' is a particular weakness in pupils' learning. Year 6 pupils become confused when describing the rotation of the earth on its own axis, and are unsure about the length of time it takes for the earth to spin around the sun. Pupils are secure in setting up simple electrical circuits, which include a combination of switches, buzzers and bulbs, and through their practical work, most pupils know why some materials are better electrical conductors than others. Pupils' knowledge of forces and friction is satisfactory, although few pupils are confident when describing the effect of air resistance on a travelling object.
131. The quality of teaching and learning in science is very variable throughout the school. It is satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 3, unsatisfactory in Year 2 and Year 4, and good with very good features in Year 5 and Year 6. This mixed picture of teaching leads to inconsistency in the rate of pupils' progress. Teachers' subject knowledge varies, and this was evident in the lessons seen during the inspection. Where teachers have a good knowledge, they enthuse and motivate the pupils, effectively transmit information, lead the pupils step by step through new learning, and have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Conversely, where teachers' knowledge is insecure, pupils are given conflicting and confusing information, and expectations are too low, resulting in pupils not achieving the standards of which they are capable. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils learning through investigative work, and too much time is taken by pupils completing undemanding worksheets that do little to advance their learning. In most classes, there are pupils whose behaviour is challenging and demanding. Where teachers are most effective, they manage the pupils well by involving them in the activities, praising their achievements, and disciplining them in a sensitive and unobtrusive manner. In other classes, the management of behaviour is intrusive and interrupts the flow of the lesson. The quality

of learning reflects the quality of teaching. Where the learning is at its best, pupils are fully involved in the activities, highly motivated and keen to solve problems. They work well together in pairs and small groups, sharing information and ideas, and helping one another. They work purposefully and productively, and concentrate well. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils lose attention quickly and become frustrated. The quality of marking in science is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not pay enough attention to correcting factual inaccuracies, and there are times when praise is given for work that pupils have copied. Teachers currently do not make enough use of homework to support pupils' learning, although booster classes for Year 6 pupils help to consolidate their learning, and to increase their confidence and self-esteem.

132. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a good idea of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, and who has led the school forward in terms of increasing the opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations and experiments. The monitoring of lessons has led to weaknesses in teaching being identified, some of which the school is in the process of addressing. The school makes detailed analyses of the end of Key Stage 2 national test results, and uses this information well to highlight areas of strength and weakness in pupils' learning, and in terms of curriculum coverage. The school follows the national curriculum guidance, but does not have a whole-school overview showing which topics are to be covered in which terms. Although the co-ordinator collects termly plans from teachers, they do not give enough detail of the level of work to be covered, and this means that there are occasions when topics are revisited at the same level. For example, in Year 2 pupils look around the school grounds to find the habitats of minibeasts, and this same activity is carried out again in Year 4. There are satisfactory systems in place for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress, although in some classes, there is not enough ongoing assessment of pupils' learning with the result that activities do not always build on what has gone before. The school has enough resources for the subject.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

133. Pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including higher and lower attaining pupils, make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school, although their rate of progress is not consistent because of strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching. The school currently gives only a minimum amount of time to art and design, and in some classes, lessons are too short, and are not taught on a sufficiently regular basis. This means that although pupils have a good breadth of artistic experience, they do not always tackle topics in enough depth. The school celebrates pupils' achievements in art and design by creating colourful and attractive displays around the school. A good feature of the displays is the interactive labelling which informs observers about the work, and invites them to read accompanying notes or to consider particular aspects, such as the use of colour.
134. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have had experience of working with a range of media including chalk, pencil, crayon, pastels and paint, and use a variety of techniques in their work. However, the teaching of art and design in Key Stage 1 is often very directed, and this means that pupils' creativity is sometimes stifled. There are too few open-ended activities which would enable the more imaginative and talented pupils to demonstrate their individuality, and following whole-class activities, the finished pieces are often very similar. By the end of the key stage most pupils know how to mix primary colours to achieve secondary colours and how to add white and black to change the

tone of a colour, In Year 1, pupils have discussed why some colours are thought to be 'cold' and some 'warm', and have produced paintings and created 'scratch' pictures which demonstrate their understanding of this notion. Key Stage 1 pupils carry out a range of drawing tasks, and most pupils show good attention to detail and observe carefully when they are carrying out these activities. However, as they move through the key stage, there is not always enough challenge in the drawing tasks for the ablest pupils. Pupils have only limited opportunities to work in three dimensions, and this is a weaker area of their attainment. Pupils regularly create collages using paper and card but have too few opportunities to create large models, or to develop modelling skills through the use of clay and dough. Older Key Stage 1 pupils understand that some artists from the past and the present are famous, and through their work on Van Gogh, Lowry, and the local artist Helen Bradley, pupils have gained a basic knowledge of how the work of different artists is recognisable by their individual style.

135. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stage 2, and achieve the expected level in their work by the end of the key stage. However, although pupils have many opportunities to work in two dimensions, opportunities for them to work in three dimensions are limited. Pupils' drawing skills are at a satisfactory level by the end of the key stage, and the work of most pupils shows an increasing awareness of perspective. Pupils understand the merits of different drawing media such as pastels, crayons and pencils and know that shading techniques give depth to their drawings. Pupils have many opportunities to use paint, and produce paintings in the styles of different artists. The finished pictures are often colourful and detailed, and show that the pupils have picked out the essential characteristics of the artist's style. The current display in the hall reflects the recent focus on the work of well known artists, and covers the work of Monet, Picasso and Miro. This work has prompted the use of computers as pupils have carried out research into the style and work of the artist they have chosen to study, and the eye-catching display has caught the attention of all pupils in the school, thereby enhancing their learning. Year 5 pupils have had experience of painting on fabric when they made pictures to accompany their written work relating to the stories of other cultures, but pupils have not had experience of more advanced techniques such as batik, which would further extend the learning of the talented and more able pupils. Currently Key Stage 2 pupils do not have sketch books, and much of their preliminary work, such as practising mark-making techniques, or mixing colours, are not permanently recorded.
136. The overall quality of teaching and learning in art and design is satisfactory throughout the school. However, the expertise of individual teachers varies, and this is reflected in the quality and range of activities that are provided for the pupils. Where the teaching is most effective, teachers clearly explain the nature of the task, but encourage the pupils to interpret some aspects of the task in their own way. For example, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils were shown the technique of making exploding patterns. Having given the initial explanation the teacher then encouraged the pupils to be as imaginative as possible, and as a result some of the outcomes were of a high standard. By contrast, in a Year 2 lesson, the weaving task was very directed by the teacher, with the result that all of the finished products were very similar, and the more imaginative pupils were insufficiently challenged. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs have positive attitudes to the subject and work well together sharing ideas and resources. Pupils are keen to take part in introductory discussions, and work purposefully and productively in lessons. Pupils' behaviour is generally satisfactory, especially when they are fully engrossed by the activities in which they are involved.

137. The subject is satisfactorily led by the co-ordinator who provides good levels of advice and support for colleagues. Art and design has not been a recent focus for school improvement, and as a result, little staff training has taken place over the last few years. This is reflected in the level of staff expertise. The school is following the national scheme of work for art and design, but there is currently no mechanism in place to ensure that the subject is being taught regularly in all classes or at the appropriate level. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning through classrooms observation, but keeps a whole-school portfolio of observational drawings from each year group to monitor progress in this aspect of art work, and makes regular photographic records of classroom and corridor displays. The procedures and systems for tracking pupils' progress and attainment in art and design are too informal and are unsatisfactory. The school currently does not identify pupils who may be talented, and no additional provision is made for these pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

138. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in design and technology is broadly in line with national expectations although the designing and planning process is not as strong as other elements of the work. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the time of the last inspection. Pupils including those with special educational needs, benefit from the range of experiences provided for them and are making satisfactory progress in developing the skills of cutting, sticking, joining and making. Although the development of pupils' design and technology skills and understanding is patchy and does not develop progressively throughout the Key Stage 2, good progress is made in Year 5 and by the end of Year 6, the pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations.
139. At Key Stage 1, pupils take part in a satisfactory range of activities to develop their skills in making, and achieve a satisfactory standard in their work. They work with paper, card, fabric and clay. They have learned how to make joins and have used this knowledge to make puppets with moving parts. Year 1 pupils increased their understanding of modelling when they made candle holders out of clay. They thought about how to make the finished product attractive and decorated their work with colourful designs. Year 2 pupils designed a coat of many colours for Joseph and used a variety of media to achieve the desired effect. Pupils have satisfactory skills of marking, cutting and joining materials but have only limited opportunity to develop an understanding of the design process. Too often pupils follow very specific instructions and all produce a similar end product. Pupils throughout the key stage have too few opportunities to design and plan their own items, and there are few opportunities for them to evaluate their work against the initial plan, or to suggest ways in which their models might be altered to improve their quality.
140. At Key Stage 2, pupils are involved in a planned programme of activities to develop their designing and making skills, which build systematically on their developing knowledge and understanding. Although the progress pupils make varies from year to year, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 6 they demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the designing and making phases of the subject. Pupils are taught to consider the purpose and design of artefacts. They use materials such as paper and card and learn how to cut, join and form materials and they produce finished articles of reasonable quality. As pupils move through the school they refine their designing skills. They examine existing products to see how they are made. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils took apart some slippers to see how they were made and were very surprised to discover what was inside some of them. They were able to make some very perceptive comments about the suitability of

the materials used, and recognised the need to ensure that the finished product is suitable for the purpose for which it is intended.

141. The quality of teaching and learning in design and technology, although satisfactory overall, is variable. At best teaching, is good with some very good features. The teachers' planning gives suitable emphasis to the development of designing and making skills. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to make choices, discuss preferences and evaluate their work. In some classes, good links are established with other subjects. For example pupils in Year 5 used their numeracy skills well when designing and making a board game with an Ancient Egyptian theme. This activity also supported pupils' literacy work and involved them in writing instructions for playing the game. Year 6 pupils, as part of their study of the Victorians designed and made samplers using binca canvas and cross stitching. A suitable range of work is planned to cover all aspects of the subject including food technology, fabric work, construction, and modelling. On occasions, however, not enough attention is given to involving pupils in planning and making choices and then adapting their designs or evaluating the finished product. A suitable range of tools is available and teachers are diligent in ensuring that pupils are taught how to handle them correctly and stress the need for safe practice. Although the school has yet to make much use of information and control technology to support the work, the content overall meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The pupils are set appropriate challenges and the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment are taken into account so that all can take part fully and effectively in lessons. Weaknesses in teaching in Year 4 lead to weaknesses in learning and in pupils' progress in this class, and these have been identified by the school. Currently little use is made of homework in some classes as a means of extending the pupils' learning, and this is an aspect of teaching that could be further improved.
142. The co-ordinator for design and technology provides satisfactory leadership, and has a clear understanding of how the subject can be developed in the school. The subject has not been the focus for development and consequently there has been no monitoring of teaching or standards and as yet no assessment procedures have been formulated. However, a new scheme of work, based on the national guidelines has been produced and staff have been consulted and supported in the implementation of the scheme. This is beginning to have a positive effect on the development of pupils' skills but there is still some work to be done to ensure that there is consistency of provision across the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

143. Attainment in geography is broadly satisfactory by the end of Year 2, but falls below the expected level by the end of Year 6. Over the last two years the main emphasis in the school has been on raising standards in literacy, numeracy and science. This has resulted in geography being given a low priority with no satisfactory scheme of work to guide teachers' planning. Although geography has been taught in each year group, too little time and attention has been allocated and therefore the breadth of study has been restricted. In addition, geography is taught in blocks and this means that pupils receive no teaching in geography for extended periods of time. This together with inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in both key stages has inhibited progress. As a result the consistent development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in geography has been restricted. In Key Stage 1, pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress, but in Key Stage 2, progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, with suitable emphasis on providing them with

the necessary help to enable them to succeed in line with their peers. Although standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 since the time of the last inspection, standards in Key Stage 2 have declined.

144. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is broadly at the level expected for their age. This is due to the fact that in Year 1 pupils are given a sound introduction into looking at where they live and they gain a good foundation for local geographical study. Most pupils know their route to school and can give simple directions using manmade and natural landmarks. During the inspection, pupils achieved well when they looked at the photographs they had taken during a walk around the village. They discussed what they had seen and the teacher encouraged them to think about the need and purpose of the various features such as shops and churches as well as road signs and pelican crossings. The pupils were encouraged to express their views about the village and were able to comment on the cleanliness and tidiness. The teaching also effectively developed pupils' mapping skills by placing the photographs on the large outline map of the area. However, in Year 2 this good start is not systematically built upon and the teaching in this class does not have sufficient breadth. Pupils' mapping skills are not sufficiently extended. Although they draw simple plans of their classroom or bedroom, they do not make enough use of globes, maps and atlases of various scales. Through following 'Barnaby Bear' on his travels around the world, the pupils can name some other countries and places but their knowledge of where these places are in relation to one another is weak. Pupils have some understanding of environmental changes because they live close to the newly constructed motorway but only very limited understanding of how the environment may be sustained and improved.
145. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in geography is unsatisfactory. Pupils have some knowledge of environmental issues but their understanding of geographical themes is far too restricted and pupils do not have the skills of geographical enquiry. This is because too little time is given to teaching the subject and to building on previous learning. Teaching is very inconsistent and coverage of the subject is patchy. For example, in Year 3 pupils are making satisfactory progress because the teaching is appropriately planned to cover the various aspects of geographical knowledge and understanding. Pupils are given opportunities to describe what places are like, especially within their local area. They are learning about the weather and climate and changes to the environment. However, in Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6, very little teaching of geography has taken place this year. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of places and localities are limited and their understanding of how human and physical processes can change places and affect its inhabitants is weak. However, work undertaken recently by pupils in Year 6 has enabled them to make some progress in beginning to understand patterns and processes. During a very good lesson seen during the inspection about the river system, pupils made good gains in their knowledge of geographical terms such as tributary and meander. The teaching effectively focused on the effect of water on the landscape and promoted pupils' ability to ask questions and make comments.
146. Although overall the quality of teaching and learning of geography is now satisfactory at both key stages, and there are some strong features in some classes, there are some significant weaknesses. Over time teaching has not been as effective as it should be in securing pupils' progress, especially in Key Stage 2. Where the teaching is strongest, the work is carefully planned and resources are well chosen and prepared. When resources are used well, the pupils' interest is captured, helping to deepen their understanding and to sustain their concentration. For example, during the inspection, Year 1 pupils were eager to talk about the photographs of the village and enjoyed finding where to place them on the map. Where subject knowledge is secure, teachers

present information clearly and use correct geographical terminology and answer pupils' questions and use them to extend their understanding of the topic. This was particularly evident in the way the effects of erosion and deposition were explained and clarified during a Year 6 lesson about the river system. The weaker aspects of the teaching are evident when the work is based on the completion of worksheets and written work is very thin. Sometimes the work is based on a topic that covers both geography and history, as in Year 5 when pupils visit Liverpool. This topic is heavily weighted towards the historical content and does not adequately allow pupils to cover enough work in geography to adequately extend their knowledge and understanding. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to learning and respond well when teaching is stimulating and when they have opportunities to take part in practical activities. Occasionally the behaviour of some pupils presents problems, but mostly pupils' are well managed. Little use is made of homework to support pupils' learning, and this is a general weakness of teaching throughout the school.

147. There is no subject co-ordinator at the present time and the headteacher is temporarily overseeing the subject. Geography has not been a focus for development and therefore there has been no monitoring of the teaching or of standards in the subject. The school recognises that this is an area in need of development. The policy and scheme of work for geography have recently been revised and units of work based on the national guidance are planned to ensure that all pupils should cover adequate work to meet the National Curriculum requirements. However, this is too new to have yet had an impact on pupils' attainment and not enough time is allocated to enable the work to be covered in sufficient depth. Furthermore, teachers are not assessing pupils' work to find out exactly what pupils have learned and what they need to learn next and have not had any training in adapting this scheme to the needs of their pupils. Insufficient attention has been given to identifying how the subject can effectively make use of and promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. The school has a reasonable number of atlases and globes, but lacks a good range of maps, aerial photographs and reference books as well as computer software to support the different topics. This lack of resources is restricting pupils' learning and inhibiting their progress.

## **HISTORY**

148. The standards of attainment in history are in line with the national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress overall as they move through Key Stage 2. This shows a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
149. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have developed an appropriate interest in history and are beginning to understand significant differences between the present and times gone by. By Year 2, most pupils have a secure knowledge of some of the famous people who lived in Victorian times, and talk with authority about the life of Florence Nightingale showing high levels of interest and enthusiasm. A display on the classroom wall, with examples of the pupils' own work, shows the appropriate depth of their knowledge. Year 2 pupils also have a broad knowledge of other characters in history. They know about Samuel Pepys and his account of the Fire of London, and Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. In an information and communication technology lesson seen during the inspection, these pupils were observed making early attempts to interrogate the CD ROM and to compare their own knowledge of these characters with the information which was available from the disk. The pupils are becoming aware of other sources of



historical information, and know, for example, that although dinosaurs are dead, it is still possible to learn about them from fossils.

150. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed a good understanding of chronology and a knowledge of research skills which enable them to seek out information from a range of sources. The teaching of history is generally good at Key Stage 2, and the teachers enthuse the pupils and make them want to learn. Pupils have revisited their studies of the Victorian era using primary and secondary sources of information and have looked in detail at famous people of that time as well as the way of life, experiences in school and in the factories. The pupils' work on the Aztecs is of a particularly high standard, and the depth of their understanding is characterised by the imaginary writing as a child at a fire festival and at the building of the Tenochtitlan on the site now occupied by Mexico City. The pupils have analysed where this information can be found, mainly from glyphs written and drawn at the time, and there are some fine examples of persuasive writing as pupils reported on the difficulties between the Aztecs and the Spaniards. Independent research skills are not yet well developed, but older pupils are beginning to experience the tremendous store of information which is available through CD ROM and the Internet. There are some good opportunities for younger Key Stage 2 pupils to compare their own locality as it is now with how it was some years ago. During the inspection, this topic was started very effectively using the pupils' own experiences to develop historical awareness by comparing photographs of themselves at various stages of childhood.
151. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, and good overall in Key Stage 2, although there are some weaknesses in teaching in both key stages linked to low expectations of the pupils. Pupils are enthused when the quality of teaching is good and they learn quickly and accurately. Many teachers have a love for the subject that is effectively communicated to the pupils. Good emphasis is placed on pupils learning through enquiry in Key Stage 2, and in Year 5 and Year 6, there are good examples of co-operative and collaborative work amongst pupils. With the exception of Year 2 and Year 4 where teachers' expectations are too low, and where written tasks are often linked to the completion of undemanding worksheets, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Pupils cover a good range of historical topics as they move through the school, and develop an interest in the subject that is evident from their conversation. Pupils' learning is enhanced where they have the opportunity to find things out for themselves, and when teachers make effective use of resources to bring the lessons to life. Although there are some difficult pupils in most classes, effective behaviour management in most Key Stage 2 classes ensures that these pupils are able to take a full and active part in the lesson without disturbing the learning of others. The general weaknesses in teaching are linked to variable marking, and the lack of homework to support and enhance the pupils' learning.
152. The leadership and management of history is unsatisfactory. Although the school has introduced the national guidelines to ensure good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study, the co-ordinator does not have the time to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, the implementation of the agreed curriculum, or the standards pupils achieve. This results in some inconsistency within the key stages. In some classes there are strong links with other subjects such as literacy, numeracy, geography and information and communication technology, but these links are not consistently made in all classes. The school has not yet devised and implemented appropriate systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress as they move through the school, and this is a proposed area of development. Resources for the subject are adequate, and good use is made of the local area as a resource for learning.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

153. Although standards of attainment have improved significantly since the previous inspection, they are still below the nationally expected level at the end of both key stages. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2, but in Key Stage 1 their progress is too slow because of weaknesses in teaching. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in developing the provision for information and communication technology.
154. It is only very recently that the school has been able to set up a small computer suite and to replace aging classroom computers with up to date machines. Following the previous inspection, the school devised an appropriate action plan and has made a concerted effort to improve both provision and resources. Discussions with staff and pupils show that confidence has grown and standards have risen accordingly. There is still a long way to go and the school has further staff training and familiarisation sessions planned for later in the year. With appropriate advice the school has made prudent purchases and has used specific grants sensibly to provide a new computer for each classroom and a small computer suite in the library area. All of the computers are networked and as a result all classes now have appropriate access to the Internet. In addition the school has a projector which links with a computer to assist in class lessons when new keyboard skills are being introduced. There is also a digital camera and the school has borrowed programmable toys for pupils to learn the skills of controlling moving vehicles. The resources are sufficient to meet the immediate needs of the pupils and enable them to have regular access to computers. The majority of teachers make regular use of word-processing and other features to produce worksheets and captions for posters and items on display. This enhances the appearance of displays and sets off pupils' work to better advantage.
155. A good start has been made in Key Stage 1, especially with word processing skills, and pupils in Year 2 are already confident in using the computer to edit and improve first drafts of work whilst pupils in Year 1 have successfully drawn up their own simple instructions for using the computer and the tape recorder. Recently Year 2 pupils have had access to the CD ROM to support their work in history, and this has given them insight into the capacity of computers for storing information. In addition, pupils have also used computers to support their design and technology work, and have designed simple coloured representations of 'Joseph's Coat of Many Colours'. With help, pupils print and save their work, but only pupils who have their own computers at home have sufficient confidence to tackle these processes without adult help.
156. Although much of the work done by pupils is comparatively recent and standards are, as yet, still below expectations, pupils at the upper end of Key Stage 2 are making very good progress. In Year 5 pupils have been engaged on a topic about the forthcoming Commonwealth Games in Manchester. They have assembled a spectacular folder of work showing appropriately developed skills in drafting and editing, enhancing text by use of colour and a range of fonts and the addition and manipulation of clip art. The work also includes information that has been downloaded from CD ROM and Internet and pictures from the camera to create attractive posters and pages of information. In Year 6 pupils have produced some very attractive work about the Aztecs linking closely with an ongoing history topic. This involves the use of a good range of skills especially in word processing, drafting and editing and the pupils are clearly aware of the advantages of the use of computers to enhance the appearance of work as well as for collecting and sifting information. The school has not yet had sufficient time to develop

fully the control aspect of the curriculum, where pupils devise sequences of instruction which enable things to happen. Younger pupils have started to use computers to produce graphs showing their finding from tallies in mathematics and have made posters using clip art and images from the school's digital camera. The main weakness in information and communication technology is the lack of opportunity for pupils to use computers to support their work on a daily basis across the curriculum. Currently pupils tend to regard 'computers' as a subject, rather than as a tool for learning.

157. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, where teachers lack confidence in terms of their knowledge of the National Curriculum requirements, and in their own ability to use the technology. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with the exception of Year 4 where the teaching is unsatisfactory because of low expectations. There are plans for further training of all members of staff together which should lead to improvement in confidence. The school is well aware of the need to make great strides in this subject in a short time. Information and communication technology lessons are timetabled regularly in most classes, and teachers are beginning to teach skills in a progressive way, building on what the pupils already know and can do. However, teachers do not always make enough use of class-based computers on a daily basis. Pupils throughout the school enjoy working on the computers and respond very positively in lessons. They use the equipment sensibly and when the opportunities are given they work satisfactorily together in pairs discussing the action they should take to work through their programs.
158. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well-informed and provides satisfactory leadership for the subject. She has devised an appropriate action plan which should move the school forward rapidly. Along with the recent purchases of computer hardware, there has been a significant input of appropriate software with some programs specifically chosen for selected subject areas and to assist teachers in the preparation their own classroom materials. The effort put into enhancing the profile of this subject as a curriculum area in its own right and also supporting all other curriculum areas is already showing good results. The school has not yet devised and implemented assessment procedures to enable the tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress as they move through the school.

## **MUSIC**

159. Pupils' attainment in music is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including the higher attainers and those with special educational needs, do not make enough progress as they move through the school. The subject has not been given enough attention in recent years, and the school does not have enough good quality resources to support teaching and learning. Currently insufficient time is given to the subject with the result that most aspects of the music curriculum are not taught in enough depth. The school has no music specialists on the staff, and teachers do not have the support of a good quality scheme of work that would provide detailed guidance to help them in their planning.
160. The standard of singing is satisfactory throughout the school, although in whole-school activities, such as assemblies, some of the older Key Stage 2 pupils do not take an active part and lack enthusiasm. Pupils of all ages have regular opportunities for singing, but some of the activities are insufficiently challenging, such as in Key Stage 2 when pupils follow a taped programme and sing mostly in unison. There are too few

opportunities for pupils to sing songs from different cultures and traditions. The school has recently bought in the services of a specialist teacher who is leading an after-school singing group. This group has only recently started and only a small number of pupils currently attend.

161. Opportunities for pupils to compose are limited. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the sounds that percussion instruments make, and know that sounds are often made through banging, scraping or shaking. However, although a few older Key Stage 1 pupils consistently name and recognise the instruments with which they come into regular contact, a high percentage of pupils are not sufficiently familiar with the range of instruments, and can not reliably match them with the sounds they produce. In a lesson seen during the inspection, Year 2 pupils successfully took part in a short class composition, which was directed by the teacher, but had no opportunity to extend this learning by experimenting with instruments themselves and generating their own musical patterns. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress as they move through Key Stage 2 because there are too few opportunities for them to compose. Although pupils can maintain a steady pulse, and are able to repeat short rhythmic patterns, this is the extent of their composing experience, and most pupils could do better. In a lesson seen during the inspection, Year 6 pupils composed short question and answer compositions using untuned instruments, but the standard of their work was at a very low level for their age and ability. Key Stage 2 pupils do not understand techniques such as the pentatonic scale, a device to support pupils in composing melodic patterns, and do not know how to go about layering and ordering complementary rhythmic patterns to produce compositions.
162. There are some opportunities for pupils in both key stages to appraise and listen to the work of well-known composers when they enter and leave the hall for assembly. However, the pupils' recall is weak, and they have difficulty in describing the mood of the music or its style. There are occasions throughout the school when pupils listen to music as a stimulus for their work in other subjects, such as art and design, but most pupils do not recall its essential characteristics.
163. The quality of teaching and learning in music is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not have the necessary expertise to deliver the National Curriculum programmes of study without the support of a well constructed scheme of work, and the subject does not have enough status in the school. There is too much reliance on outdated taped programmes which do not sufficiently extend the pupils' learning, and which constrain their creativity. Teachers are inclined to over-direct lessons, and this means that there are not enough practical opportunities for pupils to experiment with instruments, or to create their own compositions. Insufficient use is made of strategies such as musical games at the start of lessons to capture the pupils' attention and interest, and to settle them down. As a result, in some lessons seen during the inspection, pupils were difficult to manage and became restless and over-excited. Pupils mostly have good attitudes to learning, but are often not sufficiently challenged by the activities they are given. Many pupils in both key stages struggle to recall their previous learning, and this is made more difficult because they do not have exercise books in which to record their work.
164. The headteacher has temporarily assumed the role of co-ordinator, but this is not satisfactory, as although she provides as much support as she can to colleagues, music is not one of her areas of expertise. The subject is not a current priority in the School Development Plan, and there has been no monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observation. The current scheme of work does not provide enough guidance to staff, and there is no whole-school mechanism in place to track what

pupils are being taught as they move through the school. As a result there are gaps in pupils' learning which need addressing if their progress is to improve. The school has only a small range of instruments, and some of them are in poor condition. There are too few tuned instruments to support the delivery of the programmes of study in Key Stage 2, and insufficient ethnic instruments. The school has not yet developed procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in music and does not identify pupils who may be talented.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

165. During the week of inspection no physical education activities were observed at Key Stage 1 in any aspect of the subject and so it is not possible to make judgements about the levels of attainment or the progress that pupils achieve in this key stage. Planning and discussions however clearly show that over the course of the year pupils experience a full range of activities in dance, gymnastics and games. Timetables show that pupils receive two lessons in physical education each week and that the time allocated for the subject is a little higher than found in most primary schools. Teachers plan appropriate tasks and seek to ensure that pupils' prior attainment and experience are built on and developed as they move through the key stage.
166. Work observed during the inspection at Key Stage 2 was limited to games, with evidence demonstrating that pupils are on track to achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. Planning indicates that over the course of the year pupils benefit from a well-balanced programme of dance, gymnastics and games. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 4 attend an intensive swimming programme where pupils go to the swimming pool every day for three weeks. Pupils make good progress during these lessons but not all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of this period of time. Although some pupils benefit from private tuition in swimming, the school is not able to assess how many pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Overall standards and provision in physical education have improved at an appropriate rate since the time of the last inspection with good improvements in the progress within games lessons where progress was judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection.
167. Pupils acquire games skills at a steady rate as they move through Years 3-6. The older pupils take part in a range of activities that are aimed at developing their skills and stamina. The pupils are expected to undertake a number of tasks that include shuttle runs, ball throwing and slalom runs. Through these activities pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies and the importance of warm-up and cool-down exercises. The higher attaining pupils recognise the importance of using all the upper body muscles when throwing a basket ball and in doing so project the ball a good distance. The teaching builds in a sense of personal challenge and achievement as pupils carry out the tasks in consecutive weeks and realise that refining their actions and greater practice leads to improvements in their personal performance. The younger pupils' ball skills are at an appropriate level and most send and receive the ball with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Higher attaining pupils show good levels of hand-eye co-ordination when controlling and bouncing the ball on a bat. Pupils show satisfactory levels of control when moving between cones with a football, although a small number have difficulty carrying out this task. Teaching does not always restrict the amount of area in which pupils have to work. This results in pupils moving all over the playground or field in their attempts to move with or control the ball, and does little to enhance their control skills.

168. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to the subject. Many pupils enjoy taking part in physical education lessons, although there are a small but significant minority that do not listen attentively to the teachers' instructions. These pupils are often active throughout the lesson but are not carrying out the requested tasks. Most pupils show a readiness to improve their level of performance and show good levels of concentration. Most, but not all pupils, work well together. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory overall. Whilst many pupils behave in an appropriate manner, following instructions and sharing resources well, there are again a small minority that are less reluctant to do so. This has an adverse impact on learning because it means that teachers have to spend a disproportionate amount of time on managing pupils' behaviour as opposed to the direct teaching and advancement of pupils' skills and learning.
169. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. Lessons begin with an appropriate warm-up activity and all teachers remind pupils of the importance of following safety rules when taking part in physical activity. Lesson planning is appropriate with clearly stated learning objectives. Where teaching is good pupils are managed well and high expectations are set in terms of their behaviour and the amount of physical exercise they are expected to complete in a short time. Teaching is good when specific skills are taught in a direct manner and pupils are then given time to practice, improve and evaluate their performance. Good links are made with science by demonstrating the impact that exercise has on the body and what happens to muscles if appropriate warm-up activities do not take place before strenuous exercise. This was demonstrated well through the use of warm and cold plasticine. Teaching is less effective when the management of pupils is not at a satisfactory level. Here pupils move freely around the playground and do not practise a required skill at an appropriate level. In these lessons very pertinent and relevant teaching and learning points are missed because the teacher does not gain the full attention of the pupils and as a result learning is hindered. When pupils listen and take note of these teaching points there is an immediate improvement in the level of their performance.
170. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only had responsibility for the subject for the last twelve months and works in the school on a part-time basis. She has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and provides much informal guidance and support for colleagues as well as monitoring teachers' planning. Documentation to support teaching and learning in the subject is satisfactory and resources have improved to a satisfactory level since the time of the last inspection when there were shortages identified. Although limited time has been provided for her to monitor teaching and learning across the school, time will be provided when the subject is an identified area for development on the School Development Plan. All staff have attended recent in-service training sessions run by the school adviser. Pupils benefit from visits from coaches from local football, cricket, and ice hockey clubs that help to bring a further dimension to pupils' learning. There are an appropriate number of extra-curricular sporting activities which include football and netball and the school is examining the possibilities of extending the range of activities further. Last year pupils in Year 5 attended a residential visit where they had opportunities to take part in a wide range of outdoor pursuits. This visit provided pupils with many opportunities to enhance their personal and social development as well as adding to their physical skills. The school is hoping to take part in further visits during the next two years.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

171. By the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education is broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, as it was at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils, including those with special educational needs make inconsistent progress because there are some variations in teachers' expectations and in the quality of learning opportunities and these factors have an impact on pupils' progress. Although religious education is seen as important in this church school, teachers do not all use the appropriate amount of time to enable them to fully cover the identified programmes of study in sufficient depth.
172. By the age of seven pupils know many Bible stories and distinguish between the Old and New Testaments. They talk about Biblical figures such as Moses and Abraham and explain that Noah was saved from the flood because 'he was a good friend of God'. They know that Jesus was born at Christmas and recount the important features of the story of the nativity. They know the significance of Easter when Jesus died and rose again and are beginning to recognise symbolism such as the cross to show the love of Jesus. They know that the Bible is an important book and that the Old Testament is about events that occurred before Jesus was born. The teaching successfully ensures that pupils are familiar with the basic features of Christianity. However, although pupils at this key stage know the names of some other world religions such as Judaism and Islam, they know very little detail about them. For example they do not know the names of the Holy Books, the places of worship or any of the central beliefs. This lack of knowledge has led to some misconceptions amongst Year 2 pupils which have not been picked up and addressed by the teacher.
173. By the end of Year 6 pupils have built on previous knowledge to strengthen their understanding of Christianity. They know the main events in the life of Christ and his teaching in broad terms. They can recall some of the parables that Jesus told and understand the central messages they give. They are beginning to appreciate that stories from the New Testament have important lessons for their everyday life. Pupils are learning about festivals and traditions of other religions. They are developing a sound knowledge of Islam and Sikhism. They know that world faiths differ and recognise there are some similarities. For example pupils in Year 6 recognise that different religions share similar features such as Holy Books, places of worship, special celebrations and symbols. Pupils also realise that religious belief involves people in worship. They are developing a sound understanding of the purpose of religious ceremonies and where they take place. They know that Christians go to church, Jews to the synagogue and Muslims to the mosque. The pupils' ability to draw generalisations about the different faiths is a relative weakness of their learning.
174. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but the range of experiences provided for pupils varies from class to class. Pupils' work over time shows a lack of consistency in teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation and quantity of work. The infrequency of written work in some classes restricts the pupils' ability to recall and record information about religion. Pupils make good progress and learn well in Year 1 but their rate of progress slows in Year 2. This uneven pattern continues in Key Stage 2. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 does not enable pupils to make consistent progress but in Years 5 and 6 the teaching accelerates pupils' learning. The teaching is good where teachers make lessons interesting and relevant to pupils. This promotes good attitudes and enjoyment of the subject. Teaching is particularly strong in helping pupils' understanding of Christianity and the development of their skills in expressing their views and linking religious and moral thoughts to modern life. Teachers provide a good role model and through their open and empathetic manner raise pupils' awareness and encourage positive respect for other faiths and cultures. Where teachers have a

secure subject knowledge, this leads to good discussion. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, when the teacher shared his personal experiences and objects that he values, useful discussion followed about what the pupils thought was important and precious in their own lives. As a result of skilful questioning pupils expressed the opinion that some things are precious and cannot be bought. High expectations also enhance teaching in some classes in Key Stage 2 when pupils are dealing with challenging concepts. This is evident in the way pupils interpreted St. Paul's teaching about the ministry of the church. They recognised that people are the building bricks of the church and likened faults in the bricks to flaws in people that could cause the breakdown for all. In some classes, teachers make effective links with literacy, reading stories and encouraging pupils to write independently. On other occasions, teachers' planning lacks a clear focus and the expectations of pupils in terms of the quality and quantity of work produced are too low.

175. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory overall. The recently appointed co-ordinator has drawn up a useful plan to move the school forward, and has a clear view about the action need to improve the provision for religious education and to raise standards. However, as yet she has not had the opportunity to implement the appropriate strategies to bring about the necessary developments. Resources are adequate. The policy for religious education is in need of review. At present there is a lack of clarity about what is to be taught and when it is to be taught. There is insufficient guidance for teachers to aid them in their planning and teachers are choosing to make use of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, the Manchester Diocesan Syllabus and national guidance. This results in a lack of consistency. There has been no monitoring of teaching and learning and these weaknesses have not been identified. The school currently has no assessment systems or procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning, and this is an identified area of development.