

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST ANDREWS C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bath

LEA area: Bath & North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109257

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Dixon

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess  
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224123

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant & Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Northampton Street Bath
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr L J Coombs
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

## Information about the inspection team

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		Music	Teaching & learning
		Physical Education	Leadership & management
		Information Technology	School improvement
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			Adequacy of resources
			Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
			Personal welfare & care
Denise Franklin 24342	Team inspector	English	Attitudes, values & personal development
		Art : Design Technology	Assessment & academic monitoring
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Andrews C of E Primary School is in a socially and culturally diverse urban area with a mobile population. It serves a wide spectrum of families of mainly British heritage but with nearly a fifth coming from a range of ethnic backgrounds. An above average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals & many come from lone parent families. The number on roll is currently around the national average but this is expected to rise with improvements to the buildings. Nearly a third of pupils in the main school are on the special needs register, of whom two have statements of special need. Overall attainment on entry to the nursery is a little below that found in most schools and, by the time they start school, most of these children are achieving average standards

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

This is an effective school, well led, where sound teaching is producing satisfactory standards when compared with similar schools. With its mixed intake, mobile population and average funding, it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Good teaching in the nursery, reception class and in years four and five, with much very good, is helping pupils in these classes to achieve well especially in reading and writing
- Boys and girls develop very good attitudes to learning in the nursery which they carry through into the main school
- The school sees pupils' social development as important. Most boys and girls behave and relate well and are growing into mature, responsible citizens
- Pupil's safety and welfare have the highest priority
- It has effective links with parents and encourages them to make a good contribution to their children's learning
- Good leadership has seen the school through a challenging period & the school is well managed

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

- Many pupils who find learning or conforming difficult are not achieving well enough
- Progress in science is uneven through the school and standards remain low when pupils leave in year six
- In the absence of agreed arrangements, pupils are not taught a planned programme of personal, social and health education

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since its last inspection in September 1996, St Andrews Primary School has made considerable improvements in all the areas identified as issues for action. The senior management team plays an important role in leadership and management. Much improved procedures for monitoring classroom practice and standards help in putting together the clear and effective school development plan. Years of tenacious effort have been rewarded by the final resolution of long term problems with the accommodation. Though last years results were down, the overall pattern of the school's recent results in English and mathematics have matched the national picture. This year, improvements in planning and teaching are seeing the beginning of an improving trend in Key Stage 2. Overall improvement is satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

Though the trend in results for 11 year olds has been upwards, standards achieved in any one year have been very dependent on the nature of, and the amount of movement into and out of, the year group concerned. This year's leaver group was much affected by changes and results were down especially in writing. Good reading standards were maintained but the trend in well below average standards in science continued. Seven-year-olds improved in all their tests this year and overall results in reading, writing and mathematics match those of schools in a similar situation with the number of pupils achieving higher grades well above average. Eleven-year-olds are now showing a distinct improvement in writing with some in mathematics, but standards are otherwise similar to last year in both key stages. There are, however, good signs of a real improvement in years four and five. Pupils achievements in other subjects are generally appropriate for their ages but with considerable variations between classes. Boys and girls make good progress in the nursery. New arrangements for supporting lower attaining pupils are not yet effective in helping them to achieve as much as they should.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls enjoy their time in school and in the nursery and most are wholehearted in their approach to their work and play. They respond animatedly to discussions and activities, join in with everything that is offered and are willing to contribute their own ideas and suggestions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' good behaviour around the school helps to make it a happy, positive experience. Behaviour in class is usually good, often very good but sometimes poor behaviour by the few wastes time for the rest. Behaviour overall is good.
Personal development and relationships	All relationships in this culturally diverse school are very good which helps make it a sociable and largely trouble free environment. The nursery is very effective in helping its very young children to look after themselves and understand how to work and play in school. Most pupils act in mature and sensible ways and older pupils are very happy to take on responsibilities when they are offered but younger pupils have fewer opportunities. Pupils' personal development is good.
Attendance	Absence rates and punctuality are satisfactory

Pupils make a good contribution to their own education through their positive attitudes to work and good behaviour. Very good relationships fostered in the nursery and continued in the older classes are a feature of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Almost all lessons are at least satisfactory with nearly a quarter good and a similar amount very good and excellent. This is, however, unevenly spread through the school with most better teaching concentrated in the foundation classes and years four and five. Notable features of this teaching are the high quality of relationships and the consistently good way children and activities are managed and controlled. Boys and girls are expected to be sensible, sensitive and polite and teachers can concentrate on promoting thought and effort. This is exploited in the best lessons by providing pupils with engaging and challenging tasks and well thought out support so that the pace and depth of learning are sustained at a high level. The basics, especially reading, are usually well taught but there is scope for extending higher achievers in numeracy. Where teaching is less successful, time and pace is lost when activities are not challenging enough or while the teacher deals with misbehaviour. Classroom assistants attached to classes make a good contribution to learning but recently introduced out-of-class support for lower attaining pupils is less effective

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils are given a sound range of planned learning experiences covering all the required elements with good attention to literacy and numeracy. The curriculum in the nursery is good. Provision for promoting pupils understanding of themselves and matters of health and welfare is less effective being largely dependent on the interest or expertise of the individual teacher. Older pupils have many opportunities to enhance their learning outside normal lessons and staff make good use of the skills and talents of parents and the local community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Through no fault of its own, the school has had to create a temporary arrangement for dealing with pupils who find learning difficult. The acting special needs coordinators are to be congratulated for ensuring that procedures for identifying need, setting targets and monitoring progress are in place and working. However, current short-term provision is not likely to be sufficient to help pupils reach their targets & some pupils are missing out in other areas while they receive support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Curricular provision for pupils to study and appreciate the arts, their own cultural heritage and to celebrate the cultural diversity of others is good with equally good attention given to the development of social skills and attitudes. Staff make satisfactory provision for promoting pupils' moral awareness and helping them to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers and other staff know the children well and take very good care of their safety and well-being. Sound assessment procedures are being used increasingly to keep an eye on academic progress and guide planning but personal development is less well monitored.

St Andrews School's links with parents are good. They have a growing confidence in the school and appreciate its many qualities. It provides good, user-friendly, general information and keeps them well informed about how well their children are doing. Parents' make a good contribution to what the school can offer in very practical ways.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership & management by the headteacher & other key staff	The school has had a difficult twelve months with staffing and accommodation problems that have been well managed by the senior management team. Overall leadership and management are good but while some curriculum leaders have done a good deal to improve provision in their subjects, lack of leadership by others has resulted in lower standards or weaker provision in their areas of responsibility
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are to be congratulated for the resilience they have shown in ensuring that the school's long-term accommodation problems have been resolved. They are a very active and involved group with several providing regular practical help and support in school. All statutory responsibilities are fulfilled through a well-structured system of full and committee meetings and communications with parents are very good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's involvement with Investors in People has provided it with the necessary structures, training and expertise to significantly improve the way it monitors and evaluates what it is doing. Increasing use is being made of the results of various testing to give a focus for planning. The resulting school development plan is a clear and effective document. Professional development based on this process has assumed a higher profile.
The strategic use of resources	With a very experienced staff, the school has very little room for manoeuvre with its budget but spends carefully and resources are adequate throughout the school. Money raised as the school's contribution towards the new building has made a significant difference to the working conditions in the school and the accommodation is being well used. Permanent staff are well deployed but thought needs to be given to making the best use of support staff recently appointed to cover gaps in special needs provision.

After a difficult year, the school is in a good position to move forward and make the most of its much improved accommodation. However, several aspects which the school has identified as areas for improvement have suffered from lack of leadership.

### 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>• Their children enjoy going to school</li> <li>• Teaching is good and their children are making good progress</li> <li>• Pupils are expected to work hard and do their best</li> <li>• The school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good</li> <li>• They are kept well informed about their children's progress</li> <li>• The staff are very approachable and it is easy to resolve any concerns</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> </ul>	

Inspectors generally agree with all parents' positive judgements.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. National assessment results in English, mathematics and science for eleven-year-olds were said to be 'in line with national expectations' at the time of the last inspection in 1996. However, subsequent analysis showed that standards were in fact below average in mathematics and well below in English and science. Until this year, the school had shown an improving trend in English and mathematics partly due to the impact of the literacy strategy, so that in 1999, results matched those of most schools. Standards in science continued to be poor. The school is in a socially and culturally diverse area and the nature of each intake is very variable. In addition, the level of movement of children into and out of the school is much higher than most schools. This renders year on year comparisons very difficult.

2. The group of pupils who left in year six this year is a case in point. Of the 24 pupils, nine joined the school in Key Stage 2 replacing 10 who left, two speak another language at home and one has a statement of special need. All of the 10 who left achieved Level 2 in writing in 1996 but only three of the nine newcomers achieved the national average in writing this year. When compared with all other schools, the results of last year's national tests were below average in mathematics and well below in English, especially writing, and science. Standards in mathematics, which exceeded the targets agreed for 2000, matched those of similar schools.

3. Standards observed during the inspection in year six show an improvement in mathematics and writing with better reading standards maintained so that overall English and mathematics standards are now better but still below average. Lower and higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well as the rest especially in mathematics, and standards in science remain low. Challenging targets for 2001 are not likely to be met. However, pupils of all abilities are achieving much more in all areas of the curriculum in years four and five and the schools results for school leavers in subsequent years are likely to be substantially better.

4. The nursery provides a good grounding for those three and four year olds who attend it. Though children come with a huge range of backgrounds and abilities, they all make good progress and are well prepared for joining the main school when they are four. Most then make sufficient progress to move on to the main school curriculum by the end of their first year in school. Pupils are making sound progress in year two and are currently achieving average standards to match those in last year's statutory tests in reading, writing and mathematics. However, it is unlikely this year that the same high percentage of pupils will achieve above average standards as in summer 2000. Seven-year-olds are achieving average standards in science. Progress is slower in year one and pupils are currently achieving less in all subjects.

5. Pupils' achievements in other subjects largely reflect those noted above in the core subjects and are generally appropriate for the ages of the pupils concerned. However, standards and progress in each of these subjects vary according to the expertise and interest of individual teachers with examples of high standards, as in art in year five, and low, as in physical education in year one. Achievement in information technology is improving through the school but the attainment of older pupils is limited by their lack of experience in previous years. In 1996, 'inspectors noted variations in the rate of progress in different classes' and this is still the case.

6. New arrangements have had to be made to support pupils on the school's special needs register who find learning difficult. Currently, many of these pupils in the older classes are not making sufficient progress particularly in writing and mathematics. Several have joined the school recently and the school's procedures for identifying gaps in learning among this group of pupils, and children making slow progress in the younger classes, should take place earlier to ensure that the boys and girls concerned do not fall behind in their learning.

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

7. Most pupils are keen and interested in their work, and eager to come to school. This is having a positive impact on their learning. Their involvement in the range of activities provided by the school is good. Pupils respond well to challenges set by the teachers and to question and answer sessions. Behaviour in and around the school is good overall and pupils are polite and courteous, showing respect for adults. Parents fully support these views and are pleased that behaviour is good. Boys and girls concentrate well, both independently and in groups, and provide good mutual encouragement. However, where a small minority of pupils misbehave in the classroom, this affects the learning of the rest of the class. Relationships are very good and no incidents of oppressive behaviour were observed during the inspection. Pupils value each other's ideas and respect each other's points of view as when pupils in year five listen carefully to each other's poems and sensitively offer suggestions on how they can be improved.

8. The initiative and personal responsibilities pupils take are good. They enjoy being chosen as the "special person" for the day with all the classroom duties that entails, and older pupils undertake tasks such as looking after the younger pupils at lunchtime in both the dining room and the playground. They prepare the hall for acts of collective worship and supervise other children coming in and out of school at playtimes and lunchtime. Older pupils also take their responsibilities for sharing books with younger pupils very seriously. They help by listening to them read, talking about the pictures and text and keeping a record of their books in their reading diaries. The younger pupils really enjoy these sessions and they are able to build very good relationships with older pupils in the school. Many are fully involved in fundraising activities throughout the year such as raising money for the children's hospital in Bristol and preparing Christmas parcels to send to children in eastern Europe. Attendance rates are satisfactory and any pupils arriving late are appropriately dealt with.

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

9. Ninety five per cent of teaching throughout the school is at least satisfactory with nearly a quarter of lessons good and the same number very good or excellent. This is similar to the last report but, whereas the quality of teaching 'varied from very good to unsatisfactory in both key stages' then, teaching in the foundation stage and in Key Stage 2 is now better than in Key Stage 1. There are no particular strengths in any subjects and better teaching is largely associated with individual teachers. An important factor where learning is strongest is the contribution made by pupils to their own learning through good behaviour and enthusiasm for what they are doing. They learn from and help each other, and complete tasks in good time.

10. The nursery gives children a good start to their school careers and is very important in ensuring that, when they enter the main school, their attainments in all the areas of learning are at least in line with those found nationally. Many do even better. With the skilled help of the nursery nurse, the nursery teacher has created an ordered and secure environment in which children from very diverse backgrounds work happily together and gain in confidence and capacity. The nursery is well organised into clearly defined work areas and when not working with an adult, boys and girls know exactly what to do and what is expected of them. While the teacher and the nursery nurse involve children in practical mathematical and creative tasks based on a theme of colour, the rest of the class move sensibly and constructively around other activities with minimal need for adult help or control. Teaching is very good in the nursery.

11. Over a third of teaching in the reception class is at least good with a half of this very good. Very good teaching in a physical education lesson made good use of the spacious hall. Firm expectations of behaviour and well-established work habits made it possible for the teacher to plan well thought out stimulating activities. The lesson required pupils to become aware of space and to think as well as move. Ever increasing challenge, clear instructions, a brisk pace and enthusiastic adults encourage young children to try their very best. They were equally well behaved and involved in a less successful classroom lesson where the activities lacked the same level of challenge, learning objectives were unclear and little new was learned.

12. Most teaching in years one and two is satisfactory with one good and two unsatisfactory lessons. The good lesson made very good use of two owls brought in by a school governor as a

stimulus for consolidating what pupils have learned about living things. A good preparatory discussion using pet photographs brought in by children and their own thoughtful and sensible questions made this a 'magic moment' for the whole class. In both the unsatisfactory lessons, time was wasted and the pace of learning slowed by the teacher having to spend much of her time settling the class and dealing with misbehaviour. Some of this is as a result of inappropriate planning as in the choice of music to illustrate high and low sounds or in giving pupils worksheets they could not read.

13. The overall profile of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good with none unsatisfactory and more than 60 per cent at least good of which 22 per cent is very good and 9 per cent excellent. All the better teaching occurs in years four and five. The best teaching engages the pupils in well-planned and prepared activities enhanced by very well established routines and work habits. Thoughtful and challenging questioning, such as when year five pupils were asked to suggest ways of improving a classmate's already good poem, helps to challenge pupils' thinking. All pupils' contributions are accepted and taken seriously which encourages them to be confident and creative in their responses. This was well shown in a lesson where year four pupils discussing their response to some Indian music had so much to contribute that they ran out of time. In many lessons, a very positive atmosphere is conducive to good learning and real intellectual effort with minimal need for the teacher to do anything but encourage and prompt. Mathematicians in year four feel very safe and confident in offering rules about odd and even numbers. All have very mature attitudes to the task, working quietly and sensibly well able to reflect on and improve their own work. Artists in year five benefit greatly from the expertise of a regular visitor who is a school governor in their work related to their 'Ancient Greeks' topic. Very good organisation and preparation by the class teacher makes it possible for pupils to experience a wide range of techniques and the skilled support of both adults helps pupils to achieve very commendable results.

14. Learning support assistants make a sound contribution in the area of special needs. However, current temporary arrangements mean that much of their work takes place away from the classroom, often involves pupils from several years not making the necessary progress towards their individual targets and several are missing out in other areas. In some classes, although most of their targets on individual education plans show clearly what they need to do to improve, when no ancillary support is available, work is either not sufficiently matched to the needs of individual pupils or the teacher does not provide the support or extra explanations they need. Satisfactory support is given to the pupil who has a statement of special needs.

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

15. The nursery provides three and four year olds with a rich and varied range of learning experiences very relevant to their needs and interests. It is well planned taking good account of the foundation curriculum and the stepping stones to the early learning goals. In the reception class the quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory, with a broadly based and suitably balanced range of subjects taught. However, planning does not always take sufficient account of previous learning and the requirements of the foundation curriculum. There is scope for the nursery and reception class to plan a programme of work together, which will ensure that children work towards the early learning goals systematically and are challenged by a wide range of activities.

16. In the rest of the school the National Curriculum and religious education are suitably covered with literacy and numeracy well represented. The school is working to improve its curricular planning. All national curriculum subjects now have policies in place and the school has recently adopted national schemes of work in science and most of the foundation subjects. These have yet to have a significant impact on pupils' overall attainment but it is likely that when they are fully implemented, they will have a beneficial effect on standards and pupil progress. Although some teachers plan lessons where children sit round quietly and discuss issues, there is no programme in place to ensure that personal, social and health education is covered systematically. Consequently, the progressive development of pupils in these areas is not secure.

Most pupils have equal access to the curriculum but there is a need to review the planning for the withdrawal of pupils who find learning difficult to ensure that they do not keep missing other lessons such as art or science.

17. It was noted in the last inspection report that the school had good links with its local community. These have been maintained over the last few years, largely because of the growing community involvement in the fundraising for the school's building programme. This was well publicised in the local press, and parents and governors worked hard to enlist the support of local businesses and other institutions, many of whom supplied materials or funds. Contributors ranged from the local pub, which staged a series of fundraising events, to grants of £5000 from two local churches, and the builders themselves bought and erected a playhouse for the youngest children. St Andrews School has always worked closely with the parish church, as they share the same building, and members of the congregation have chosen to become involved as individuals, offering help where they can. The school has satisfactory links with other educational institutions, although the structure of secondary education in Bath militates against the development of close ties with any one secondary school. In recent years the school has begun to work more closely with the city's other church primary schools. There are well-developed sporting and social links, and the schools involved are now beginning to develop curriculum working groups. The school participates in a large number of cultural and sporting events in the city and makes good use of sports facilities to compensate for its lack of outside space.

18. The number of extracurricular activities held after school and at lunchtime has improved since the last inspection and is now good with four recorder groups meeting at different times, as well as clubs for French, art, football and handball. A Spanish club will start after Christmas. In addition, the school holds 'special weeks' with a theme (such as art), children are taken on visits out and expert visitors come in to visit them. The school is currently canvassing parents to gauge the level of support for a pre-school 'Breakfast Club'. Pupils are encouraged to make use of the city's excellent range of sporting and artistic facilities: information on any new clubs or activities is circulated to children. In addition, the school sometimes arranges for pupils to take part in church-organised activities at weekends, such as 'Pentecost in the Park'. The school makes good use of local facilities to enrich the academic curriculum, a fact appreciated by parents.

19. Provision for the development of pupils' cultural development has markedly improved since the last inspection, and is now good. The school now makes good use of Bath's rich cultural resources to assist learning. A recent example of this was the involvement of the Museum of Costume with a project to design waistcoats: the children visited the museum to be shown examples from the past before working with a designer on making their own waistcoats. These were then put on display in the museum. The school makes use of Bath Industrial Heritage Centre to teach the children about the social and economic history of their local area, and Bath's Roman past is a wonderful resource for history. In addition, the children study natural history through walks by the canal; have visited Bath's Victoria Art Gallery, the Abbey and other churches and the local cinema, and have studied some of the Georgian buildings of Bath. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the Bath Festival. The school encourages children to share their skills in drama and a wide range of music through a termly talent show. Awareness of the multicultural nature of British society is variable. Some pupils come from non-British ethnic backgrounds, and teachers encourage them to talk about aspects of their culture when it is relevant to a classroom topic: a Chinese pupil in year five described visiting a mountain in China during a geography lesson. Year four was studying India at the time of the inspection, and the class teacher made very good use of this subject as a starting-point for class assembly and circle time through discussion of Hindu beliefs and the plight of endangered animals.

20. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. Every day one child in each class has a 'Special Day' when they wear a badge, have a number of small privileges, and act as their class teacher's helper. Younger pupils help to clear away tables and chairs after lunch and older pupils set out the hall for assembly. The 'paired reading scheme', whereby an older and a younger child read together, works well and is enjoyed by the children concerned. Year six pupils plan and lead a Key Stage 2 assembly each week. Children are encouraged to work together cooperatively: in some cases, as in a year four English lesson, they are specifically encouraged

to reflect on how they may best help the others in their group progress. The school strongly encourages older children to take some responsibility for younger ones, and to make sure that they are not frightened or lonely at playtime. A year four Downs Syndrome child from a local special school clearly enjoys watching and listening to the children, who for their part are friendly and supportive towards him on his weekly visit. The school also encourages children to see themselves as members of the wider community through fundraising activities, for instance by donating a book to a charity that distributes them to children overseas. Pupils visit local homes for elderly and sing to the residents at Christmas and other appropriate occasions.

21. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' moral and spiritual development, although the absence of a scheme of work for personal, social and health education means that there is no planned progression from one year to the next. The school's hall is the local church, and the rector, his curate or lay members of the congregation take assembly at least once a week. Whole school assemblies are held three times a week and class or key stage assemblies on other days. The collective worship policy states that 'children can create and participate in shared experiences of celebration, praise, reflection and thanksgiving to God', but in practice the quality of the assemblies seen during the inspection varied widely. They ranged from a disorganised assembly presented by older pupils, to two good class assemblies which offered ample opportunity for children to consider and present their own reflections and spiritual insights. In general, however, in the assemblies observed opportunities for reflection were restricted. The use of music was limited. The music chosen was rarely identified and sometimes inappropriate to the subject of the assembly and singing varied in quality and enthusiasm. Some children miss acts of collective worship, through withdrawal to take part in a reading group or special needs activity. This is contrary to statutory requirements.

22. Little of a spiritual or reflective nature was seen in most classes, although where it did occur, the experience of pupils was of high quality. Nursery pupils were fascinated when presented with a range of bulbs and seeds, and their imaginations were clearly seized by the idea of plants developing from objects of so many different shapes and sizes. Equally, year two children were amazed and awed by the discoveries they made during a science class involving some visiting owls.

23. The school teaches children the principles which separate right from wrong. In some classes children are encouraged to debate moral issues, for instance the discussion in year five of the importance of standing up for what you believe is right, with the career of Nelson Mandela as an example. Pupils are made well aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour but the school's current behaviour policy in practice has more emphasis on sanctions than on support and positive reinforcement. The assemblies seen offered few opportunities for pupils to think about their own moral perspectives or to consider difficult issues at their own levels.

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

24. At the time of the last inspection provision for child protection and welfare was satisfactory: it is now very good. The head is the designated child protection officer. She briefs all staff, teaching and non-teaching, and all staff contribute to a record of any incidents involving children who are giving cause for concern. The school has very close liaison with outside agencies such as the educational welfare office and the social services and very good procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of all members of the school community. Once a year the school carries out the full-scale risk assessment procedure recommended by the local authority. At present, the school has only two qualified first aiders, both of whom have only completed the one-day training but staff are on the waiting list for first aid training by the local authority. There are two well-stocked first aid boxes. Pupils are well supervised in and out of the classroom, and proper attention is paid to safety when children play sport or use tools.

25. Good attendance is valued and regularly promoted in the school newsletter as well as the prospectus. Registers are correctly completed and regularly monitored, but the school normally only follows up unexplained absences after three days. However, where a family has particular attendance problems, contact is attempted on the first day of absence. Procedures for monitoring

attendance are satisfactory, with the assistance of the educational welfare office being sought where necessary.

26. Provision for behaviour management is satisfactory. Relationships within the school are generally very good, and most teachers know their children well and respond to their needs positively. The nursery is very effective in helping children to look after themselves and understand how to work and play in school. The behaviour management policy is well publicised to pupils and parents and is administered consistently. However, its emphasis on sanctions rather than rewards, in particular the use of 'time out' in another class, sometimes has negative results for the pupil concerned and can be disruptive for the class used for 'time out' purposes. Examples of outstandingly good behaviour management strategies were seen in individual classes, but these sprang from teachers' knowledge of their pupils rather than from the administration of the policy. Bullying is quickly identified and consistently and fairly handled: parents felt confident that the school dealt with this problem very well.

27. Provision for personal, social and health education is unsatisfactory. The policy on the subject is due for revision, as too is the separate policy on sex education. The coordinator has been on long-term sick leave for some time, and there is no current scheme of work. As a result, practice in the school is inconsistent with no continuity from one class to another. Some aspects of health education are covered in science lessons, and some teachers have circle time in their timetables, while others do not. Topics for discussion during circle time are selected by individual teachers, and no procedures exist to ensure progression or to prevent repetition

28. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection, when this area was identified as an area for improvement. Each teacher has an assessment file where records are kept of a number of assessments now undertaken regularly by the school. The policy clearly sets out these procedures, which are beginning to have an impact on the planning of work to meet the needs of the majority of pupils in the school. Satisfactory records are kept of results from standardised test results and optional tests in Key Stage 2. This information together with teacher's own assessments helps them to set individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics. The assessment co-ordinator and Head Teacher have recently undertaken training on a computerised process to enable them to collate assessment information more effectively. Progress in literacy and numeracy is also satisfactorily recorded using the key objectives from the framework. The school has yet to develop a system for recording individual attainment in other areas of the curriculum, particularly in science. Samples of individual pupil's work with notes on National Curriculum levels of attainment are kept in English, mathematics and science. These are collated in their individual progress books and show clearly the progress made in these areas of the curriculum by each pupil. Teachers meet regularly to look at samples of work to agree on the National Curriculum level of that piece of work and to ensure a consistency of expectations

29. Staff are beginning to use Information gathered effectively to guide planning and help the teachers to meet the needs of most of the pupils in the school. It is also used satisfactorily to set targets and to identify the specific areas within the curriculum to be improved; for example, the school has highlighted the need to improve writing throughout the school. Marking is positive and satisfactory overall with some good examples of marking where pupils not only know how well they are doing but also what they have to do to improve their work. Reports are satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection. They give a clear indication of the progress made by each child, highlight particular strengths and sets targets for the child to achieve during the next year. Parents are happy about the reports and feel they are kept well informed about their child's progress.

30. The school makes satisfactory use of the range of its assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 2. Targets set to support their needs are reviewed appropriately and new targets are set. However, the school has only very recently formally identified some pupils who are finding learning difficult in Key Stage 1. Given the mobile nature of its intake, it would be helpful for the school to have procedures in place for assessing individual pupils as soon as they arrive from a different school to identify gaps in their learning.

The school receives good support from other agencies such as the educational psychology service and behaviour support team and meets the statutory requirements for pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

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

31. At the time of the last inspection, relations with parents were good and this is still very much the case. The school provides parents and carers with a wide range of information. Parents of children joining the reception class have specially written information sheets in addition to the informative school prospectus. Both the prospectus and the governors' report fulfil statutory requirements, are written in a clear and friendly style, and are enlivened by a governor's cartoons. Regular newsletters give parents news of forthcoming events as well as information on topics such as sun safety and sensible parking. Parents are also given brief details of the work to be undertaken in each class during the following half term, and some class teachers supplement this with more detailed information. Three parents' evenings are held during the year, and they are regularly invited to attend assemblies, concerts and similar events. Annual reports are informative and appreciated by parents. Class teachers are available for informal consultation at the start and end of the school day. Parents of children on the special needs register are satisfactorily involved in discussions about the provision the school is making for their children's education.

32. The mobility of a proportion of the parent population (they move in and out of the area when they are rehoused elsewhere in the city) makes it harder for the school to develop a close partnership in these cases. Nevertheless, most parents give the school good support. This was very apparent during the last two years when parents, both individually and by supporting the 'Friends' association, made a significant contribution to the landscaping of the playground, and the fundraising for the new classrooms. Contributions ranged from the parents who gave up their weekends to fill skip after skip with rubble, to the mother who had her hair shaved off to raise money, and the parent governor who taught the vice-chair of governors and the head herself to swim for which they were sponsored. The 'Friends of St Andrew's', which includes members of the parish church congregation and grandparents as well as parents, also organises well-attended social events. Some parents are able to help in class, or to offer their specialist skills: one artist mother painted a 'Noah's Ark' design across the nursery windows. Most parents support their children's learning at home by hearing them read, or making sure that they undertake whatever tasks have been set for them. The school has staged several curriculum evenings to give parents more information about the work that their children do, but these have been poorly attended.

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

33. The head continues to be a positive and effective leader who is giving the school its educational direction. An issue from the last report was the need to 'formally establish a management team' and to 'develop the management role of the deputy head'. Both these objectives have been fulfilled and the senior management team (SMT) now plays an important role in the school. Together they have managed a difficult period where disruption caused by staffing problems and the very welcome building alterations, have added to an already full programme. Well-established procedures, systems and policies noted at the last inspection, ensure that the school is well managed and that teachers work is supported unobtrusively and efficiently. Communications throughout the school are good and the head's open management style ensures that everyone feels a part of the process by which decisions are made.

34. Good use is made of the interest and expertise of most staff in their leadership roles. Responsibilities are clearly laid out and known but some coordinators are fairly new to the role and, with the full literacy/numeracy agenda of the last two years, their impact is yet to be felt. However, though in areas such as Literacy and the nursery the coordinators have been very effective, lack of leadership in other subjects or areas such as science and personal, social and health education, has led to weaknesses in provision and consequent lower standards. In the absence of the special needs coordinator, members of the SMT have taken temporary charge and have done a good job in ensuring that all the necessary paperwork is up to date, individual

plans have been reviewed and set up and temporary support provided for those who need it.

35. The very practical support of the governing body was evident during the inspection both in working with children and in the new classrooms which, through governors' persistence and hard work, have sorted out long term accommodation problems. Governors are frequent and welcome visitors to the school and know it well with many responsible for particular aspects. However, as at the time of the last inspection, more formal procedures to monitor the curriculum would help them to be better informed about such areas. The contribution and commitment of the chair over the years has been outstanding and the school is indebted to him for many major developments. Necessary business is conducted efficiently and all statutory responsibilities are being fulfilled. The special needs governor is fully involved in ensuring that the needs of pupils are met. An effective set of structures and procedures has been built up and the governing body has a good balance of experienced and new members. A very good feature of the work of the governing body is the quality of its communications with parents.

36. Involvement with Investors in People has given the school a good basis for monitoring and evaluating its work. A range of processes have been set up for this purpose and they are increasingly making an impact on school improvement. Classroom observations with appropriate feedback and professional development discussions are used to identify areas for development and training needs. Data from national and internal testing is used to help in setting targets for pupils and in identifying curriculum priorities such as writing in Key Stage 2 this year. This has resulted in a much more practical and useful school development plan based on consultation and need with an associated staff development budget plan. All the necessary elements are included and this ensures that the issue from the last inspection is fully met.

37. The head teacher and governors manage the budget efficiently and staff and governors are involved in the creation of a strategic plan in which areas for development are carefully identified and appropriately costed, with sources of funding identified. Good use of information technology is made by the school administrator in raising orders, paying accounts and keeping suitable checks on day to day transactions. The head teacher and the governing body are aware of the principles of best value and make cost comparisons before purchasing supplies and services. Over the past few years a priority for funding has been extending the cramped accommodation. The governing body, parents and staff have worked and fought very hard to raise money and secure whatever funding they could to make a major extension possible. The building programme, which has only just finished, has made a very big difference to the school and represents very good value for money.

38. A sufficient number of qualified teaching and support staff are employed to cover the curriculum and meet the needs of the pupils. All staff have clear job descriptions. The long-term absence of two members of staff has created problems for the school in that work in their areas of responsibility has had to be covered by colleagues or awaits their return. Support staff and teachers generally work well together but there is a need to review the way in which support staff are used for the withdrawal of pupils who find learning difficult.

39. The accommodation has been much improved through the recent building programme and all classes are now housed in spacious, attractive areas. A well-resourced outdoor play area is available for the nursery class but the facilities for games and physical education for the rest of the school have their limitations. The school hall is also the church and at the end of the week all equipment and dining furniture must be moved out to allow church services to take place over the weekend. With no green space for games, the school either must bus children to playing fields or take them to a nearby park, which involves crossing a very busy road. However, the school makes the best of the facilities available and outside areas, although small, are attractive and interesting. Sufficient resources are available for the curriculum to be taught effectively with computers available in all classrooms. The reorganised library has benefited from the recent purchase of a good range of new books. Resources are generally suitably stored and easily accessible.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

40. To make the most of its much improved accommodation and fully exploit the potential of its pupils and staff, the governors, head and staff of St Andrews School and Nursery should:

- (1) ensure that pupils who find learning or conforming difficult achieve as well as they are able and become confident learners by:
  - making it possible for pupils to access the equivalent curriculum to the rest of the class at their own level by:
    - organising the timing of support to coincide with the teaching of the subject in the classroom
    - incorporating the planning for pupils with special needs into daily lesson planning both when supported or when working independently in class
    - only working outside the classroom when it is in the best interests of the child (Paragraphs 6, 14, 34, 38 & 60)
  - identifying any need for extra attention as early as possible:
    - in the nursery and reception class to make early intervention possible
    - among pupils who come to the school later in their school careers to make good any gaps in learning (Paragraphs 6 & 30)
  
- (2) seek to improve standards in science throughout the school by:
  - establishing clearly what the school will expect of all its pupils for each year group in skills, understanding and knowledge in order to meet the schools targets
  - using this to gather information to monitor the progress of individual pupils, overall standards and the effectiveness of the curriculum
  - use this to plan work with explicit challenging learning objectives which is matched to the needs of all pupils and is progressively more challenging (Paragraphs 2, 16, 28, 34, 68 & 69)
  
- (3) give all pupils the chance to learn about, experience and discuss at their own level, the full range of issues and topics involved in personal, social & health education (PSHE) by:
  - developing an agreed approach to PSHE that integrates all current relevant policies, good practice within the school and the National Curriculum guidelines
  - drawing up a progressive programme of work in the area which identifies what will be covered in each year group
  - providing professional development opportunities for those members of staff with less confidence or expertise (Paragraphs 16, 21, 23, 27 & 34)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Older pupils have limited experience in information technology (Paragraphs 5 & 82)
- Progress in the foundation subjects varies according to the expertise and interest of individual teachers (Paragraph 5)
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils sometimes affects the learning of the rest of the class (Paragraphs 7 & 59)
- The quality of assemblies varies widely (Paragraph 21)
- The use of 'time out' for misbehaviour sometimes has a negative effect on the pupil involved and can be disruptive for the class to which they are sent (Paragraph 26)
- Work in mathematics group sessions is not well enough matched to pupils' capabilities and higher attainers are not being stretched. (Paragraphs 62 & 66)
- With few planned class music lessons, progression in skills and understanding cannot be built up from year to year (Paragraphs 84 & 85)

## **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

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

Number of lessons observed

50
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

23
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### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	20	24	45	6		

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	185
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	47

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	57

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

<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	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.9

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	15	29

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11
	Girls	14	14
	Total	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (79)	86 (75)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	23	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (75)	86 (83)	86 (79)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	9	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	10
	Girls	6	5	7
	Total	13	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (68)	71 (74)	71 (79)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	8	6	7
	Total	18	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (68)	67 (74)	75 (79)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	3
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	135
Any other minority ethnic group	16

*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		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6**

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	26.4

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	79

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	390245
Total expenditure	391838
Expenditure per pupil	1858
Balance brought forward from previous year	8100
Balance carried forward to next year	6507

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	39

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	18	3		
My child is making good progress in school.	62	28			10
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	46	3		8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	40	9		9
The teaching is good.	63	29			8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	28	13		5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	18		5	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	16	5		5
The school works closely with parents.	56	33	3	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	62	23		3	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	31		3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	39	8	8	16

## **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**

41. Children in the foundation stage of their learning are in the nursery and the reception class. They attend the nursery part-time entering at the beginning of the academic year in which they are four and enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Currently there are 41 three and four year olds attending the nursery and out of twenty-seven children in the reception class, twenty are still four. Attainment on entry to the nursery is variable, but overall judged to be a little below that expected of most three-year-olds. Good and often very good progress in the nursery ensures that children enter the reception class having achieved many of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Steady progress in the reception class ensures that children enter Key Stage 1 having achieved the targets set nationally for five-year-olds.

42. Nursery and reception children are well taught by enthusiastic, caring, hardworking teachers and their assistants who have excellent relationships with the boys and girls. The school has good links with playgroups and other pre school providers and while most children in the reception class have attended the nursery there are a few who have not had this experience. A well-established induction programme ensures that positive relationships are forged quickly and effectively with children, parents and carers. These relationships are successfully sustained through regular meetings and informal contacts.

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

43. Nearly all children enter the nursery with immature skills in this area of learning. The nursery team work very hard on personal, social and emotional development and very good teaching in this area quickly leads to children achieving a good understanding of the conventions and routines associated with school. They sit still and listen carefully when adults are talking to them, take responsibility for finding equipment, putting on aprons and taking care of their belongings. All show consideration for others and wait patiently to have their turn at, for example, riding a favourite outdoor toy or sharing their ideas with others.

44. The very good start that the nursery class provides in this area is well sustained in the reception class where children are settled, happy and eager to learn. However, these children could be given more opportunity to take initiative and make more choices and decisions in their work and play. Children's achievements in this area are valued and encouraged by all the adults in both classes who provide good role models of courtesy and kindness for the children.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

45. In both the reception class and the nursery, children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books. Many opportunities are provided for children to express themselves and listen to others. Adults value their efforts and are encouraging and supportive. In both classes children regularly sit with their teacher to share a story from a large class book. Children in the nursery sharing a large edition of a favourite story 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' were clearly learning about how books work as the teacher demonstrated turning pages and following the text from left to right. In the reception class many children continue to achieve well with their reading skills recognising and reading some familiar words confidently and enthusiastically. They know many letters by name and sound and a number will exceed the early learning goals in reading by the time they enter Key Stage 1.

46. Nursery children are encouraged to recognise their name by the daily routine of finding their name card at the start of the day and posting it in a post box. Some are able to make good attempts at tracing their name and at inventing writing in their play and the writing area. All attempts are valued and encouraged by the nursery staff and children make good attempts at communicating in this way. Children in the reception class are given good opportunities to write

in a purposeful way and practising and developing writing skills, such as the office area. However, these good opportunities need further development by, for example, introducing purposes for writing in the role play area, making labels for their models and inventing their own stories. Occasionally progress in lessons where writing is the focus is slowed for some children, by the lack of challenge and explicit learning outcomes for the lesson.

### **Mathematical Development**

47. Children's mathematical skills at entry to the nursery are very variable but with good and very good teaching they achieve well and are beginning to count and recognise some numbers. In the nursery class their mathematical development is well addressed through a range of activities. The current theme of 'Colours' is well used. They make a very simple graph of their favourite colours for clothes and play outdoors with coloured hoops and beanbags incorporating counting. Stories such as 'Elmer' and 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' are well exploited for their mathematical content relating to pattern, shape and number recognition. In the nursery and the reception class, as well as carefully planned lessons, daily routines, incidental situations and number rhymes and stories are well used to teach children the skills of number recognition, counting and other simple mathematical concepts. For example, in the reception class the concept of subtraction and more than and less than was suitably introduced through the song 'There were ten in a bed'. All children enjoy these number activities and most will achieve the early learning goals for this subject by the end of their reception year.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

48. Children enter the nursery with a limited understanding and knowledge of the world but through good teaching with adults supporting their investigations and encouraging them to find out for themselves, they quickly begin to understand more about the many things around them. For example, when they plant bulbs they talk about what plants need, in order to grow successfully, compare bulbs and seeds, and try to describe how they are different. Through their theme on colour, they experiment with vegetable dyes and commercial dyes and learn that people some time ago used only the colours from plants and vegetables to dye their clothes. They learn about their immediate environment through visits in small groups to the local shops, post office and other places near the school.

49. In the reception class, children continue to increase their knowledge and understanding steadily. A series of lessons about people in the community suitably develops their knowledge of the roles of people within the school such as the lollipop man and the dinner ladies. A visit from a parent with a barn owl to both the nursery and the reception class, provided a real, exciting focus for discussion about living creatures and their care. Boys and girls in the reception class have a good awareness of where they live; they know their addresses and can talk about some of the local features, such as the shops, park and their own homes. Children in both the nursery and the reception class are confident in using simple computer programmes and in selecting tools sensibly to construct, build and make objects.

### **Creative Development**

50. Boys and girls in the nursery class start from a fairly low level of skill but through the good provision made, they make good progress. They have ample opportunity to paint, often mixing their own colours and experimenting with different techniques such as hand and finger painting and marbling. With help, they create their own colours with natural pigments from vegetables and plants and dye their own cloth. Others print designs and make their own three dimensional sculptures with clay and dough. They play imaginatively with natural materials, bathing their dolls in the water tray, making imaginative environments for wild animals in the sand and creating underwater environments with sea creatures. In the reception class children continue to have ample opportunity for drawing, colouring and making models with clay and dough. However, the imaginative play rarely has a planned objective and sometimes lacks challenge. It is much more successful and purposeful when it is linked to the theme of the lesson as was the case when children played out the role of the dinner ladies in the role play area and designed and made a home for Goldilocks with the construction equipment.

## **Physical Development.**

51. The well-resourced outdoor play area makes a significant contribution to the good development of the physical skills of the nursery children. They regularly spend time outside, riding and controlling mobile toys such as bikes and trucks, climbing, running, jumping and balancing. Three year olds use the space well and share the equipment without fuss. The reception class does not have access to this space but very good teaching during regular sessions in the hall ensures that their physical skills are well developed. Reception children use the space in the hall very well, skilfully controlling difficult movements for children of this age such as hopping, skipping throwing, catching and negotiating small objects. They obviously enjoy these times and are very well behaved, showing a mature awareness of the needs of others in the space around them. Both the nursery and the reception class have many good opportunities to develop finer movements through regular activities such as drawing, tracing, manipulating construction equipment, cutting and sticking. Boys and girls achieve very well in the physical area of learning.

## **ENGLISH**

52. Standards in English are below the national average by the age of eleven and in line with the national average by the time they are seven years old. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards were very low when compared with similar school at age eleven and in line with similar school at seven. The school has identified the areas of weakness, particularly in punctuation, spelling and handwriting and has introduced a number of whole school strategies to raise standards. These, together with the literacy strategy and the Additional Literacy Strategy are having a positive impact on learning. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been maintained since the previous inspection and, although standards in Key Stage 2 are not so good, there is evidence from lesson observations and looking at samples of pupils' work that standards are rising in Key Stage 2 particularly in years four and five.

53. By the age of eleven pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening and can satisfactorily give opinions in a range of situations with most pupils in year six able to discuss the differences between a biography and an autobiography. However, many pupils in years four and five are achieving better standards. For example, year five pupils discuss the poems they have written very maturely and offer each other very sensible suggestions of how to improve them. They listen well with concentration and question each other's ideas and opinions. Pupils in year four look at newspaper articles and discuss whether they are fact or opinion.

54. Seven year olds' attainment in speaking and listening skills is as expected and they listen carefully to stories, answer questions sensibly and contribute satisfactorily to discussions. They explain their ideas clearly with an increasing vocabulary. Most pupils in year two retell the story of "The Three Little Pigs" confidently from looking at the pictures and some higher attaining pupils can explain the difference between retelling and reading the text.

55. By the age of eleven pupils' attainment in reading is in line with the national average. Most pupils read fluently and accurately in a range of situations. They use information books satisfactorily to prepare a timeline of the life of Florence Nightingale and give opinions about a variety of authors. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to read with expression but are less confident than their peers. They do not fully appreciate the enjoyment of reading for a range of purposes. Pupils in years four and five express a keen interest in reading and talk confidently about a wide range of books and authors. In a lesson in year four pupils extract information from newspapers and know the importance of headlines. They match headlines with opening sentences accurately and, as a result, some pupils say that they are now more confident to read newspapers. In year three most pupils understand the format of a non-fiction book and know how to use the index and contents pages.

56. Seven-year-old pupils attain standards in line with the national average. Most read simple text accurately using a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words as when pupils in year one use rhyming words to read the last word in each line of a poem. In year two, they use picture clues to predict what will happen to the wolf in the story of "The Three Little Pigs". Higher attaining

pupils read a wide variety of books and can name several authors. They make good use of the local library to enable them to access a wider range of books. Other pupils read the school scheme books with confidence but can offer little information about other books that they might read. The arrangement for younger pupils to share books with older pupils is having a positive impact on both reading and enjoying text.

57. Standards in writing are below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2, although there is evidence that pupils in years four and five are achieving standards at least in line with the national average and often above. By the end of the key stage, most pupils can use information from extracts from diaries and biographies to answer questions satisfactorily but these are not always in complete sentences and lack accurate spellings and basic punctuation. Most understand the different formats used in writing for a range of purposes but few are willing to write in depth. They do not give the impression that they are confident to produce work, using vocabulary which is rich or arranged in a way that captures and holds the attention of the reader. Boys and girls with special educational needs can, with support, complete a set of sentences accurately filling in the missing words to ensure they have understood the extract from a biography of Harriet Tubman. Pupils in year five make interesting notes about animals in captivity in preparation for writing their poems. Through good support from the class teacher, all pupils are able to complete this task using interesting, adventurous vocabulary. This preparation work formed the basis for their poems based on an animal of their choice. Pupils are able to use a range of styles to write lively thoughtful descriptive poems. In year four, pupils write down information from newspapers and some continue to write a short paragraph using an opening sentence from a newspaper article. Pupils in year three answer questions about the format of non-fiction books.

58. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with the national average and most pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning. In year one, higher attaining pupils write a simple sentence for a speech bubble with help and others read and copy the correct phrase into a speech bubble to match the picture. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are able to write a story with more than one sentence appropriately sequenced. Pupils in year two use their story plans well to rewrite the second part of the story of "The Three Little Pigs". Above average pupils are using simple punctuation accurately and their writing shows imagination. Average and below average pupils are beginning to develop their ideas logically in more than one sentence with some accuracy of punctuation and spellings. All are developing handwriting skills satisfactorily and have letters accurately formed with consistent size.

59. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. The monitoring of the literacy hour by the coordinator and senior management team has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Lessons are well planned and objectives are clear. The coordinator has excellent subject knowledge and supports her colleagues well with planning. Most teachers are skilled at questioning and often questions are well targeted to meet the needs of the range of ability groups in the classroom. Explanations are clear and resources are satisfactorily organised to enable pupils to settle promptly to their tasks. This has a positive impact on their learning. However, activities set are not always at a level to enable those experiencing difficulties in learning to be successful or to achieve targets set on their individual education plans. In some lessons, the tasks lack challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Most pupils respond well and behaviour in the classroom is usually appropriately managed following the school's behaviour policy. However, where pupils are less well behaved this impacts on the learning of other pupils in the class.

60. Teachers have encouraged pupils to make posters to remind themselves of the range of strategies to use to enable them to spell unfamiliar words accurately and these are displayed around classrooms. This strategy has a positive impact on learning. Where teaching is very good or excellent teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils at the start of the lesson and make very good reference to them during the plenary session to assess whether the objectives have been met. They use praise very well to raise self-esteem and ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the lesson. All contributions are valued and often used effectively as teaching points. They have very high expectations of behaviour, attainment and presentation of work. This enables

pupils to make at least very good progress in learning. The use of support staff is inconsistent. Where they are used best, well-briefed staff give good support in the classroom or work outside the classroom at an appropriate time during the group session.

61. Assessment procedures have improved since the previous inspection and there is a whole school approach to assessing individual pupil's attainment in English. Assessments are used effectively to set individual and group targets and to highlight areas for development. This is having a positive impact on standards. Marking is inconsistent and does not always tell the pupils what they need to do in order to improve their work, although there is good practise in the middle of Key Stage 2. A satisfactory range of resources is used effectively and the school makes good use of visits to the theatre and visitors to support learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

62. Although the last report said that 'the attainment of pupils' was good, test results in 1996 were below the national average at the end of both key stages. Results have shown an improving trend to match what has happened nationally but have remained below average apart from in Key Stage 2 in 1999. Last year showed an improvement by seven-year-olds but a significant dip by a challenging group of eleven-year-olds. Current standards are improved in year six but still below average at the end of both key stages. More able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and are not achieving as much as they should.

63. Year two pupils are able to use a number square to show their knowledge of place value to 100 and find the difference by counting on. They identify odd and even numbers by looking at the unit number and subtract and add on 10 to two digit numbers. Many can use this knowledge to add 9 and 11 by adding 10 and then adding or subtracting one. They recognise and know the properties of simple 2D shapes and can tell the time in quarter of an hour intervals. Most year six pupils can work out calculations in their heads accurately and quickly but written work is less accurate which is not helped by untidy presentation. In discussion, pupils show they understand the relationship between fractions, proportion and percentages. With most work in both classes coming from commercial work sheets or text books, little evidence was seen of work involving pupils making use of learned skills to solve real life problems. Boys and girls achieve equally well throughout the school.

64. While all the lessons observed were at least satisfactory, the pace of learning varies greatly with a distinct acceleration in year four sustained into year five. The analysis of past work showed that work for pupils in these two classes is generally more challenging and is better matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities. Overall teaching is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.

65. In an excellent year four lesson on odd and even numbers, very well established work habits and excellent behaviour on the part of the pupils made it possible for the teacher to operate at a deceptively high pace. Confident and enthusiastic pupils hung on every word the teacher had to say and this generated an outstanding response and much thought from pupils of all abilities. Some confusion in the minds of a group of children gave the teacher the opportunity to give them good guidance to help them clarify their thinking and, at the same time, consolidate the learning of the majority. Year five pupils thoroughly enjoyed working out for themselves the probability involved in throwing pairs of dice and soon worked out that six, seven and eight are the best options and that one is impossible. The teacher made very good use of pupil's growing understanding to get them to predict the likelihood of certain events or nominate, for instance, what was very likely to happen.

66. The coordinator worked hard to introduce the numeracy strategy at a time when the school was disrupted by building work and staffing problems. All teachers are using the three-part lesson structure of the numeracy strategy and the mental mathematics and final summing up sessions are generally well conducted and successful. Good use of 'mini' white boards enables pupils to show an individual response. However, in several classes, work in the group sessions is not well enough matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities and higher attainers especially are

not being stretched. In these classes extension work when planned tends to be more of the same or harder numbers rather than involving more challenging mathematical thinking or its application to problems. Where this does happen, pupils are enthusiastic learners and achievement is evenly spread across the ability range. They tend to be more confident about using 'real' mathematical language and terminology to explain what they are doing and braver at suggesting reasons why things might happen.

67. Commercial schemes are used to supplement the numeracy framework and this provides the necessary structure and teaching materials for staff. However, discretion will need to be used to avoid less confident staff teaching to the scheme rather than matching teaching to current pupil's needs. Examples were seen of pupils using information technology in their work and, in some classes, pupils used their mathematics in other subjects. This is not, however, a consistent feature throughout the school. Current assessment procedures are adequate for the purpose of tracking progress and standards. Sufficient appropriate resources are available in the classrooms and good use was made of them during the inspection.

## **SCIENCE**

68. The results of the 2000 standardised tests for 11 year olds in science were well below average both when compared with all schools and with similar schools. Teacher assessments for seven-year-olds were slightly better but still below the average when compared both nationally and with similar schools. Current standards in science are still below average at Key Stage 1 and well below at Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress through the school is not consistent, with strengths in some classes and weaknesses in others, as shown by lessons taught and the limited amount of work in pupils' books.

69. Teaching in science and the standards achieved have suffered from the continued absence of the subject coordinator. The lack of a leader for the subject has meant that although the school has recently adopted a national scheme of work for science, there has been no support or help in implementing it. Consequently some teachers lack confidence in the subject and the systematic coverage of skills and knowledge is not always ensured. Assessment procedures are not well developed. The best quality work and achievement was seen in years four and five where achievement was very significant in lessons but previous knowledge patchy. Pupils in year four were embarking on work on solids from the programme of study relating to materials and their properties. An initial discussion at the beginning of the lesson revealed a wide variety of understanding of both the term solid and the concept of grouping materials. However, through good discussion, practical investigation and explanation, by the end of the lesson most pupils were able to group and classify collections of solids based on their properties and record their findings. In year five, pupils, through well planned experiments involving a variety of sound making equipment, explored the concept of vibration. They achieved well in the lesson but a number found it difficult to explain their conclusions in terms of scientific knowledge and understanding. Year two pupils learning about living things made good progress in a lesson which involved a parent bringing in two owls and giving a fascinating talk about them. The pupils remembered many of the things they had been told and were able to ask sensible questions about their care and characteristics.

70. Pupils in most lessons are well behaved and attentive. In the most successful lessons, they answer questions confidently and discuss their findings in a mature way. They work well together and are able to work on investigations as a team, negotiating the different tasks within the group and listening to the opinions of others. Occasionally the poor management of pupils and the unclear explanation of tasks results in restless behaviour and lack of interest.

71. The quality of teaching is variable, ranging from unsatisfactory to very good. Most teachers have sufficient knowledge of the area being taught but some feel that without a subject leader, they are unable to get the expert help they need in order to make best use of the recently adopted national scheme of work. In the best lessons, planning is meticulous with clearly identified

scientific learning objectives. Previous knowledge and understanding is assessed through skilful questioning and lessons specifically develop the scientific skills of prediction, evidence gathering through experiment and investigation and drawing conclusions. Teachers make good use of resources, such as the parent who brought in birds from the owl and hawk trust. Pupils' work is marked regularly but rarely includes constructive comment to help pupils know how to improve. The school is aware of the need to improve standards in science and the subject is on the school development plan as a curriculum focus for 2001/2.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

72. Standards in art and design technology are as expected by the time pupils leave the school at eleven years of age and are similar to those found in the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and develop skills of exploring ideas, investigating and making and evaluating their work appropriately.

73. Pupils in both key stages demonstrate sound standards in art. In year one pupils make shape faces using three-dimensional shapes in the style of Archimboldo. Other pupils use their observational drawings of fruit and vegetables to produce a picture based on "The Fruit and Vegetable Man" by the same artist. They use painting techniques well for their pictures of a stormy sea. Year five pupils use their knowledge of Greek artists to create their own sculpture of an athlete or Greek hero using clay on a wire frame. Other pupils make Greek style borders using their own three-dimensional geometric designs or decorate their helmets in repeated patterns of animal shapes.

74. In design technology, pupils in year four look closely at money containers to assess their durability, practicality and type of fastening used. Pupils in year six design, make and evaluate slippers made from card or material using different joins, such as glue, sewing and stapling. Pupils also designed and made the bat boxes which are hanging in the trees in the playground. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 design and make a healthy snack and pupils in year two design and make vehicles.

75. Skills acquired in both design technology lessons and art lessons were combined last year when pupils in year three were involved in a project with the costume museum. They designed and made waistcoats, using a range of materials and techniques, inspired by a collection of eighteenth century waistcoats. Pupils looked closely at a range of fabric designs, experimenting with their own patterns and making observational drawings of flowers.

76. No judgement can be made on the teaching of art or design technology as too few lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence from planning and photographs suggests that the curriculum is satisfactorily covered either in weekly lessons or in blocks of lessons. The school is beginning to ensure progression of knowledge skills and techniques through the recent trialing of the national schemes of work for each subject. Pupils benefit from the very good support of one of the governors, who is an artist, both in class and at the weekly art club which further support pupils' learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

77. Curriculum planning arrangements, which focus on either a history or geography topic each half term, meant that only one history lesson was observed, as most classes were currently studying an aspect of geography. From the lessons observed, teachers planning and scrutiny of work standards are generally appropriate in both subjects for the ages of pupils involved. Pupils' achievement varies from class to class but overall is satisfactory.

78. Pupils in year one link their geography work to other work on the sea and seaside. They make satisfactory progress when considering the features of this environment and looking at the landmarks they might encounter on a journey to the seaside. Most are starting to gain some understanding of the language of position, place and direction when drawing their own simple routes. In year two, the same topic has led to work in history and geography. Children recall

some facts about their work on the seaside in Victorian times and have created a lively class picture depicting a Victorian seaside scene. Postcards of holiday places visited by the children in the British Isles provides a suitable starting point for a geography lesson on significant places in the British Isles. With some help, pupils are able to put three major towns on a map of the British Isles, but in some cases their understanding of what maps or plans are, is confused.

79. Boys and girls in years four and five achieve very well in history and geography. In year four, last half-term, pupils studied the Ancient Egyptians and some very good work from this topic is displayed, which covers many aspects of Ancient Egyptian life and history and indicates that pupils have been expected to find out about aspects of the period from a range of sources. This half term they are studying India and in the introductory lesson to this topic pupils make very good progress in their initial understanding of the characteristics of the country. In year five the new geography topic for this half term is the study of a mountain environment. The pupils achieved well in the first lesson when they clarified their understanding of an environment and learned how mountains are indicated on maps. In the only history lesson observed, year six compared modern and Victorian school days, demonstrating a satisfactory understanding of some facts and features relating to Victorian times and Victorian life.

80. Most pupils enjoy their work in the humanities and in the best lessons they discuss what they already know confidently and make thoughtful and perceptive comments about aspects that are new to them. However in some lessons some pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult, find it hard to settle to tasks and are restless and inattentive. All teaching was at least satisfactory, with some good and some very good. In the best lessons clear objectives were well catered for and met. Teachers used questions well to assess pupils' current knowledge and understanding. An initial objective of a lesson on India was to pick up any misconceptions about the country and a skilful question and answer session clearly met this objective. In a lesson looking at mountains, pupils first explored the concept of an environment and after giving their ideas were encouraged to look up the meaning of environment in the dictionary. However, in less successful lessons, objectives are limited and imprecise.

81. The coordinator for humanities took on the role a year ago and has yet to fully develop his role as leader in the subject. Staff have recently adopted a national scheme of work that has all the necessary structures and skills frameworks. This needs to be fully implemented in order to have a significant impact on standards and to ensure pupils make consistent progress in the subjects. Resources are adequate and very good use is made of the Roman Baths, museums, historical sites and interesting local environment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

82. Although no formal teaching of information and communications technology (ICT) was seen during the inspection, pupils were observed making use of computers at various times in all classes with support sometimes being given by teachers or classroom assistants. From this and from discussions with older pupils and the evidence of a limited amount of work completed using word processing and database programmes, standards in the younger classes are appropriate for the ages of the pupils concerned, older pupils are making good progress with new equipment but standards in year six are low through of lack of experience. Standards are better in areas where training has been given, as in the use and interpretation of data, and where teachers are confident in their own abilities. Good use has been made of a technology 'bus' to give older pupils the opportunity to work on control mechanisms, an area in which the school is not well resourced and lacks expertise. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at the computer and they work conscientiously and well at the tasks set. Pairs of pupils work well together negotiating both who does what and how to move forward in what they are doing.

83. The profile of work with computers is currently high with the completion of the new classrooms, the purchase of much needed new equipment, especially in Key Stage 2, and the re-allocation of the leadership in the subject to a teacher who is in the position to concentrate on developing it without other responsibilities. Much credit for this goes to the previous coordinator, who despite all her other commitments, worked hard on the groundwork in preparation. ICT is the current development priority in the school and the ICT action plan gives the school a detailed and

challenging agenda for the next two years. Very specific quantified targets have been set and a considerable amount of time and money has been budgeted for with these in mind. Provision and standards in the subject are set for significant improvement especially in the older classes as expertise and knowledge builds up among pupils.

## **MUSIC**

84. Very little class music was planned during the inspection and judgements are based on whole key stage singing sessions, music in assemblies, recorder clubs and instrumental tuition provided by outside teachers. Pupils enjoy making music and respond well to the opportunities they are given. The recorder players especially benefit from the work they do with the music coordinator and the classroom assistant in recorder clubs. Their accurate and tuneful playing in assemblies was probably the best aspect of music observed during the inspection.

85. In both key stage singing sessions observed and in assemblies, pupils joined in enthusiastically and mostly tunefully, showing that they had learned a good range of appropriate songs and hymns. The school is very active musically. Good use is made of outside agencies, visiting performers and volunteers to supplement what the school provides and the pupils perform regularly both to entertain and as part of the local music festival. However, in the apparent absence of planned class music lessons for each year group, it is difficult to see how progression in skills and understanding can be built up from year to year.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

86. The inspection of physical education (PE) was severely affected by some of the worst weather for many years. This re-emphasised the limitations of the school when it comes to providing outdoor activities with no grassed area and a far from adequate paved area to work on. Planned games activities for older pupils making use of the expertise of a local rugby coach had to be made to fit the area and the surface available which limited the scope and the time available for pupils to be active. Swimming had to be cancelled because the pool had flooded and the football club had to take place on the playground because of the risk of cutting up the lawn in front of the Crescent which the school uses.

87. Some indoor PE was observed however, and this was largely satisfactory with well-structured work and appropriate attention to warm-ups, safety and cool-downs. Younger pupils have the opportunity to use apparatus to perform balances and sequences of movements which they do with sufficient levels of control. Several pupils are given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills but little use is made of this to show how pupils could improve their work. Older pupils practise the skills of passing and receiving which they do with an appropriate level of skill and good coordination. Many obviously have good ball sense and operate at a level below their potential. The teacher makes good use of demonstrations to make teaching points and actively coaches groups who find the skills difficult. In a less successful dance lesson, considerable time was lost by the teacher having to constantly deal with pupils' inattention or misbehaviour. Although the planned activity had the potential to stimulate and involve pupils in interpreting music, unclear instructions and too low expectations for behaviour meant that the opportunity was missed.

88. On site resources for PE are adequate with a good sized, well-maintained and equipped hall and a good supply of small apparatus. The school does what it can to provide pupils with the full range of the curriculum and the recently adopted national scheme is providing a good structure for medium-term planning with a framework of skills.