

INSPECTION REPORT

S. MARY'S R C PRIMARY SCHOOL

Denton

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106252

Headteacher: Mr G Brierley

Reporting inspector: Mrs Heather Evans
(OFSTED No: 21374)

Dates of inspection: 27-30 November 2000

Inspection number: 224161

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kynder Street Denton Tameside
Postcode:	M34 2AR
Telephone number:	0161 366 3322
Fax number:	0161 320 5187
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Fr, V. Cavey
Date of previous inspection:	10/12/1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Heather Evans (OFSTED No: 21374)	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Information and communication technology	How high are standards? a) The schools results and achievements
		Equal opportunities	How well are pupils or students taught?
		Special educational needs	
		English as an additional language	
Sarah Drake (OFSTED No: 9843)	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gordon Longton (OFSTED No: 21910)	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	
Kathleen Rollisson (OFSTED No: 7418)	Team inspector	Art	
		History	
		Foundation stage	
Morag Thorpe (OFSTED No: 15236)	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well is the school led and managed?
		Geography	
		Music	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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Inspection Quality Division
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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

S. Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School is a larger than average school in the centre of the town of Denton in Tameside. It is a popular school and pupils are drawn from homes near to the school and from two other parishes. At the time of the inspection there were 306 pupils on roll. There are a further 44 children attending the nursery, all on a part-time basis. On entry to the nursery, attainment varies but it is average overall and by the time pupils enter the infant department attainment is at or just above the national average for pupils at the age of five. Almost all of the pupils are from predominantly white families although there are a small number of children in the school from traveller families. All of the pupils speak English as their first language at home although a few children are bilingual.

The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is overall below the national average at 12 per cent but in some classes it is higher than this. For the majority the identified need is one of specific reading difficulties but there have been small groups of boys in a few classes identified as having persistent behavioural difficulties that cause them to be disaffected with learning. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is, at 7.8 per cent, lower than average and much lower than in other local schools and some families choose not to take up their entitlement. The maximum number of pupils admitted each year is 48 and this means that there are mixed age classes across the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school where pupils are now achieving standards overall at the end of both key stages that match or exceed national expectations, although too few pupils as yet attain higher levels in any subject. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school because teaching is predominantly good and lessons are interesting. Pupils enjoy school, learn well and retain the knowledge they gain in one lesson to use in subsequent work. The school curriculum meets the needs of groups and individuals and there are many varied opportunities for pupils to engage in practical learning experiences. Pupils are cared for with affection but some policy documents are new and have not been shared with all members of staff. The school provides useful information for parents about planned work and the progress that pupils make. Parents are encouraged to share in the work of the school and to support their children's learning at home. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory improvement and has structured plans intended to raise standards further and to remedy the outstanding areas still needing development. The Christian aims of the school are at the heart of all its work and all pupils benefit from the supportive environment. The school is led and managed in an effective manner and from the low level of funding overall provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading are above average throughout the school.
- The standard of writing at Key Stage 1 is well above the national average.
- Teaching is predominantly good and is frequently very good.
- Overall the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- The reflection of the aims of the school in all its work is very good.
- The provision for children in the foundation stage is good.
- Pupils' behaviour, relationships with adults and one another and their attitudes to work are very good.
- The school's implementation of the new strategies for literacy and numeracy has been very effective.
- Attendance is above the national average and there is almost no unauthorised absence.

What could be improved

- The commitment to increase the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in statutory tests.
- The role of the co-ordinator as monitor and evaluator of work needs to be reviewed and strengthened.
- The provision for time allocated for monitoring teaching and the curriculum in the classroom should be increased.
- The overview of the curriculum by all governors needs to be strengthened.
- The new formalised strategies for child protection and health and safety require full implementation.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Following the last inspection in 1996, the school addressed all of the identified key issues with considerable but not total success. The management team was strengthened by the appointment of a Key Stage 1 co-ordinator and the role of all subject co-ordinators was reviewed but the planned changes are not yet fully in place. The preparation and implementation of the school development plan was improved and this now forms a useful document where priorities are listed and progress towards completion is tracked successfully. The analysis of the benefits of spending against standards attained is now undertaken rigorously by the finance committee but some new governors are insufficiently aware of the full implications of this work. The review and revision of almost all curriculum policies and schemes of work has been completed effectively and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented very successfully. Strategies for assessment and evaluation have been adopted that meet requirements. Whilst the level of care is generally good the newly adopted formalised procedures for child protection and health and safety are not understood by all of the staff. After the last inspection, standards declined at the end of Key Stage 2, because, although most pupils attained level 4, the expected level, some of the most able pupils were insufficiently challenged and too few attained the higher levels. In 2000, following an analysis of the results and important changes in the management of subjects and some areas of the curriculum, the decline was reversed and standards have begun to improve. The improvement is as a result of setting in English groups at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and good teaching across the school. Where key stage and subject co-ordinators have been diligent in the analysis of results and have monitored the areas of concern effectively, in most subjects attainment has either risen in the past year or has been maintained at a level that meets national expectations. With continued monitoring and vigilance the school is well set to maintain the improvements of the past year, as has been witnessed in the work in lessons during the inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	B	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	D	C	E	
Science	C	E	D	E	

Standards as shown in the statutory tests in 2000 show an improvement from those in 1999, which were well below average. In English, standards were above the national average but when compared with

similar schools standards were still only in line. In mathematics, whilst overall standards were broadly in line with the national average they were well below those in similar schools as were standards in science where overall they remained below the national average. Attainment in information and communication technology is broadly in line with national expectations, as are standards in most other subjects for pupils at the end of the juniors and attainment in physical education is above average. The overall trend for standards for pupils at the age of eleven has been below the national average for the past four years but is now improving. Standards for pupils at the age of seven, as shown in tests, are above the national average in reading, well above in writing and are broadly average in mathematics. Teacher assessment places them as broadly in line with the national average in science. Attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations and in all other subjects, attainment is in line with expectations except in physical education where it is above that found for most seven-year-olds nationally. Children in the Foundation Stage attain the expected levels described in the Early Learning Goals by the time they are five.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	For the vast majority of pupils, attitudes to school and to learning are very good across the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	All of the behaviour observed in lessons and around the school was very good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. For these reasons the development of pupils in school is very good.
Attendance	Attendance is good and is above the national average and there is virtually no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is predominantly good in the Foundation Stage for children under five and in classes throughout the school. The teaching of English, mathematics and science and the way in which teachers instil in all pupils the basic facts and skills in literacy and numeracy, as observed during the inspection, is also good. All of the teaching seen was at least satisfactory, 88 per cent was at least good within that 39 per cent was very good or better and five lessons, 7 per cent, were judged to be excellent. The best aspects of the successful teaching, which is an improvement since the last inspection, is the imaginative preparation of content which enthuses and motivates pupils of all ages and abilities. Teachers and pupils regularly engage in stimulating and thought provoking discussions. All teachers have high expectations for behaviour, presentation and the quality of work set for pupils. There were few weaknesses in teaching observed in the lessons seen during the inspection but occasionally the time allowed for the completion of written tasks was too short in some classes. Pupils of all ages and abilities learn effectively because they behave well and readily follow the teachers' clear instructions often working independently or collaboratively with friends.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school provides pupils with the full range of subjects and skills and provides a wide range of additional stimulating learning opportunities. The overall provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, any difficulties are identified early and care is taken to match work to the needs and abilities of individual pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision overall is very good especially in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development but there is scope for the school to do more to increase pupils' cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good care on a day-to-day basis but the formal procedures relating to child protection and health and safety need to be fully shared with all staff.

The information for parents meets statutory requirements and the school involves parents effectively in work in school and at home with their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is supportive and effective. His skills are complemented efficiently by the deputy headteacher and members of the senior management team. The leadership role of the subject co-ordinators is still being developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There is now an effective committee structure that enables governors to work successfully towards meeting their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Governors have evaluated the performance of the school very thoroughly. With the headteacher they recognise strengths as well as areas for further improvement. Together they have the will and ability to meet all the identified challenges.
The strategic use of resources	All of the available resources are used in a very structured and purposeful way for the benefit of pupils.

There is a sufficient number of trained teachers and support staff with a range of experience and qualifications that match the needs of pupils. The accommodation has areas that need to be renovated. The temporary classrooms in the playground detract from the learning environment. The playground is very small and the field cannot be used for most of the winter months. Whilst not generous, resources for learning are at least adequate and the new computer suite has enhanced the overall provision. Now that the governing body has reviewed its role and addressed all of its responsibilities any identified weaknesses are in the process of being rectified. Some new governors appointed only this term are still awaiting training but they are willing to meet their new responsibilities. The leadership of the school is effective. The school is now successful in applying the principles of best value in all its management of finance and personnel.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children are expected to work hard. • Children make good progress. • The teaching is good. • The majority values the information provided. • Parents consider the staff to be approachable. • They consider the management of the school to be effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority would like better information about how their children are making progress. • The amount of homework set concerns a number of parents; some would like more and others less. • Some parents would welcome closer links between the school and pupils' homes. • A minority would like more extra-curricular activities.

There was a higher than average percentage of responses to the questionnaire for parents. The inspection team agrees with the predominantly positive views about the school expressed by the great majority of parents. The team considers that the information provided for parents is informative and accurate and, on balance, the amount of homework set is in line with that recommended for children at the different ages and of differing interests and abilities. The team thinks that the amount and range of extra-curricular activities provided are better than in many schools, although the addition of a regular choir would add to the cultural development of pupils both as participants and observers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis in the term following their third birthday and start school in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. This is now called the Foundation Stage of education. Children under five in nursery and the reception classes work in the six areas of learning recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. Children are now working towards the early learning goals as described by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). On entry there is a spread of attainment but assessment indicates that the majority of children have average attainment on entry. Teachers in all classes take care to provide a suitable range of experiences in all the areas of learning and almost all children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals before they are five. Almost all children have good linguistic and numeracy skills and most develop good personal and social skills as they play and work with their classmates. There are suitable activities provided for children to develop skills in creativity such as painting and listening to and creating music. Children develop well physically and show skill when making models with construction toys and enjoy work on the computers.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, when pupils are seven, standards in English, as shown in the national tests in 2000 were above the national averages in reading and standards in writing were well above the national average. The numbers of pupils attaining higher levels was well above the average nationally in reading and was close to the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, the results were similar in reading and above in writing. Inspection evidence supports the good results in English. Standards in reading, writing and in speaking and listening are above those found in most schools nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that the structured work in matched ability groups in reading and writing is proving to be a positive and successful way forward. For the last four years, overall standards have varied slightly with the different groups, depending on the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The trend over time is that standards have remained at or above the national average.
3. Pupils in classes at Key Stage 2 develop the skills established in the infant department. The results of the tests in 2000, indicate that standards overall in English are above the average for pupils nationally and are in line with those for pupils in similar schools. The results in English in 2000 showed a higher percentage of pupils attaining higher levels, which was a great improvement on the previous year. When pupils leave school, when they are eleven, most are already working comfortably at level 4, the expected level, and an increasing number are attaining level 5, a level above national expectations. These results are above the expected standard for eleven-year-old pupils. Strategies to encourage pupils to develop independence in learning, develop their own ideas, extend work undertaken with the class group and to accept the challenge to attain high standards are being promoted successfully as part of the school's aims. The need to challenge higher ability pupils was identified at the time of the last inspection and again when the governors reviewed results in 1998 and 1999, since then all teachers have responded positively to this challenge.
4. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, in the tests in 2000, the numbers of pupils attaining the expected level, level 2 was in line with the national average but was below that found in similar schools. Inspection evidence gleaned by lesson observation, scrutiny of books and examination of the results of school based tests, indicates that work undertaken in class is close to national expectations. Pupils know and can manipulate numbers up to and beyond 100. They can calculate mentally the change one needs when undertaking shopping tasks by using addition and subtraction quickly and accurately, recording their work clearly and neatly.
5. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of tests indicated that standards in mathematics were in line with those in most schools nationally but were well below those in similar schools. All members of staff are disappointed that the comparative grade is low when more pupils attained

the expected level. The standards attained over the past three years have been below the national average although the majority of pupils have achieved the nationally expected level. The low comparative grade is because over time and in 2000 a lower than average number of pupils attained the higher levels. The school has set challenging targets for the present year in order to enable more pupils to attain the higher level, level 5. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in classes throughout Key Stage 2 are working at a level overall that is close to that expected for pupils of the same age nationally. By the end of the key stage standards overall are in line with national expectations and for about one quarter of the pupils they are above. Those pupils in the set for pupils capable of attaining higher levels are working well and expect to meet the challenge to reach the higher level.

6. Both the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented very successfully into the work of the school. The shared planning and evaluation of teaching and learning has been instrumental in raising staff awareness for planning in all classes. The school exceeded the targets agreed with the advisers from the local education authority in 2000 and is well set to meet those agreed for 2001. The school is eager to improve standards overall and is working hard to meet the challenge.
7. Standards in science, as indicated by teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2000 are above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers are concentrating on work to improve the pupils' experiences and that opportunities for experimentation and investigation in the classroom and in the environment are proving to be beneficial in raising the standards. Pupils know about living things and life processes and they conduct experiments and investigations thoroughly, recording their findings in different ways. Work to investigate why there were faults in simple electrical circuits was conducted systematically and carefully with a full awareness of safety issues. Pupils question all things presented as facts and apply established knowledge to new learning in experiments. All practical investigational activities observed during the inspection were thorough and stimulating.
8. The test results in science in 2000, at the end of Key Stage 2, showed that standards were below the national average and well below those found in similar schools. This does not match the quality of work seen in the present classes at the end of the key stage. However over recent years the pattern of attainment in science has been less good than that in other subjects. A new scheme of work to support the curriculum has been adopted this year and all work seen was interesting and purposeful. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have good recall of work undertaken previously and are able to explain about solids, gases and liquids and explain how gases and liquids can change shape to fit any containers. Tests to discover the effect of liquids on different powders created much discussion about what was a fair test and how to investigate what happens, as some conditions were varied while others remained constant. Although the trend in national tests over the past four years has been below that in most schools nationally because too few pupils attained level 5 in the statutory tests, the school has analysed its position very carefully and has now implemented strategies that are enabling standards to improve.
9. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology are in line with those found in most schools nationally, as they are overall at the end of Key Stage 2. The old machines in the classrooms do not fully support the work that the older pupils are required to do but new facilities are now in use to remedy any shortfall. The new computer suite, which is not yet completed, was available to pupils for only two weeks before the inspection and it is already extending learning opportunities. Despite the tendency of the old computers to crash, pupils readily use their skills in information technology to support other subjects across the curriculum. Those pupils who are able to use personal computers at home are able to practise work done in school at other times. All pupils are able to access menus and load and retrieve their personal work from stored files or from work saved on disks. Pupils can access data stored from other enquiries, can manipulate spreadsheets and most can import pictures. The use of control technology, as pupils program robots on the screen, enables them to develop and display their skills, knowledge and understanding.
10. The work planned in religious education, which was subject to inspection by the diocese, is thorough and well organised and supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development. It is also linked to the programme of work for personal, social and health education. The amount, quality and range of work in all other subjects are similar to that described at the time of the previous

report. Attainment levels in physical education, at both key stages, are above those found in most schools nationally and attainment in art, design and technology, history, geography and music across the school meet national expectations. Attainments by some pupils in instrumental work in music are above the national average. In all subjects, pupils benefit from the shared expertise of the teaching and support staff who maintain a full rounded curriculum alongside the new national initiatives in literacy and numeracy.

11. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those capable of higher attainment learn effectively. They are supported well and learn effectively because of the overwhelmingly good teaching. In those lessons where the teaching is especially good, or where earlier work has prepared pupils very well, then, when new opportunities to extend knowledge are offered, learning is rapid. During the inspection no difference was observed overall in the learning, attainment or progress of boys and girls.
12. Teachers place great demands on themselves and on all pupils. Since the organisation of ability groups and setting almost all of the programmes of work have been reviewed. In the lessons observed, learning in all classes is purposeful and relevant to the needs of groups and individuals. The standards of literacy overall are above those nationally and standards in mathematics are improving. In turn these standards are now having a positive impact on all the work of the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, behave very well, form very good relationships with each other and staff, and during their time at S. Mary's, mature into pleasant young people who enjoy contributing to the community. These high standards of personal development have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection and make a positive contribution to the quality of learning throughout the school.
14. The great majority of parents agree that their children like school. From the youngest upwards, they arrive happily at the beginning of sessions, quickly settle to work and keep well on task for extensive periods of time. During the inspection pupils confirmed that they enjoy their lessons because they find them interesting. Their enthusiasm was plain to see when, for example, taking part in a netball match during which it was clear that, while playing to win, they were also playing for pleasure. Pupils readily become totally absorbed in the interesting lessons that teachers prepare for them, and this leads them to participate fully and make good strides in their learning. Year 4 pupils were enthralled by a lesson on data handling, shooting up a sea of hands in response to taxing questions. Year 6 pupils were similarly excited during a science lesson about food chains, while in a Year 5 lesson about the skeleton, pupils positively bubbled with enthusiasm. Pupils' high expectations of lessons can lead them to grow slightly restless in those where the pace flags, but this is due to their keenness to learn rather than any disinterest. This interest in what the world has to offer extends beyond school so that, for instance, many pupils receive certificates and awards for their participation in outside activities ranging from Rainbows to parasailing.
15. Almost all pupils behave very well throughout the school day. Despite the cramped nature of the playground, they try hard not to get in each other's way, and generally play amicably and safely. They respond well to teachers' directions and waste no time returning to their classroom for the next lesson. In assemblies they enter the hall quietly, settle well and pay good attention to the speaker or to other pupils who are performing for them. Pupils are polite and highly trustworthy, and they treat property and resources with respect. During the morning break most pupils enjoy a snack of crisps, but at the end of the period very few, if any, packets litter the playground, since most pupils spontaneously put their own into the bin, and if they do not then others will put them in for them. Almost all the behaviour observed in lessons was good or very good, with occasional excellent behaviour in those lessons where teachers really fired their pupils' interest and imagination. In the recent past it is reported that a group of pupils became bored in some lessons and that then their behaviour deteriorated. The staff took positive steps to inform parents and inaugurate an effective programme of behaviour modification for these pupils. Lessons observed during the inspection were interesting and no disruptive behaviour occurred. The school had to exclude one pupil for a brief period in the most recent academic year, for persistent

disruption. However, the norm is for pupils to behave well and, where there are small pockets of pupils who are not so self-disciplined, these pupils respond well to the way in which teachers manage them using the school's behaviour policy that is known and understood by all pupils.

16. The quality of relationships among pupils, and between pupils and staff is very good. Pupils trust their teachers to listen to their thoughts and concerns, and in return they treat staff members with respect. They wait patiently for others to speak and are quick to applaud those who produce particularly good work. They quickly showed their appreciation for the headteacher, when he played his trombone in one assembly! Pupils co-operate well, understanding the benefits that discussion and collaboration can bring to their work, and take care of each other, when, for example, someone falls over in the playground. They are generous of spirit, as demonstrated by the ever-increasing pile of filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child that grew in the corridor during the inspection week. Within the classroom, even the youngest children are very helpful about tidying up after themselves, while older pupils act very responsibly as corridor and telephone monitors, or when helping the caretaker to put out chairs for assembly. They use their initiative, for example, when considering the different ways in which newspaper reporting can 'colour' the way that a story is presented, or when tussling with a difficult task rather than disturbing the teacher who is concentrating on another group of pupils. Pupils at the school mature well into thoughtful members of the community.
17. Levels of attendance are above the national average, while the incidence of unauthorised absence is below that which occurs across the country as a whole. The great majority of pupils attend school regularly and punctually, with very little absence even caused by illness. However too many pupils, almost 10 per cent already in this academic year, are taken on holidays during term time which disrupts both their own and others' learning, since teachers have to repeat work that has already been covered.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall picture of teaching is good. Teaching was observed in 69 lessons or parts of lessons during the inspection. In all of the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In the lessons observed, 39 per cent were judged to be very good, 42 per cent were good and five lessons, (7 per cent) were judged to be excellent. Lessons at the Foundation Stage in the nursery and the reception classes for children under five were predominantly good. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection.
19. The school has introduced the strategies for literacy and numeracy very successfully and this has had a beneficial impact on the overall quality of teaching. The training in planning and evaluating work, undertaken in the preparation for the new initiatives, has had a positive impact on the planning and evaluation processes in other subjects. Very few weaknesses in teaching remain, although there were a few instances where teachers were over directive and inhibited independent learning. In other classes in some cases the time allowed for pupils to concentrate on individual work and complete work to a high standard within the time set was very short and pupils were unable to finish their work. This was seen in some classes during the first day of the inspection when the quality of teaching was then judged to be only satisfactory or was graded as good rather than very good. Pupils learn from the teachers in all lessons and as one child reported: " Learning is fun in this class and it's surprising what extra things we know when we talk to our cousins who go to other schools."
20. Teachers' secure subject knowledge forms the firm foundation for assisting pupils' learning. All teachers have a good understanding of literacy and numeracy and as a result they are able to help pupils to develop these skills effectively. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well structured in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant national strategies. Following the introductory session, pupils are taught in ability groups in most lessons. There are sets in mathematics in the junior classes and in reading/writing groups for pupils between five and seven to enable work to be matched to each pupil's individual needs. Teachers select suitable and varied methods to teach whole classes and groups in an interesting and challenging way. At both key stages basic skills are taught well. Pupils are regularly enthralled by the teacher's explanations as in a lesson about writing for different newspaper audiences in Year 4. Pupils and

the teacher engaged in detailed discussion and conversation with questioning on both sides that extended pupils' thinking and their learning. Teachers select resources that are well matched to the requirements of the planned work to support pupils' learning.

21. Across the school, in almost all lessons, teachers' personal enthusiasm and increasingly high expectations are challenging pupils to learn well and develop their skills across a range of subjects especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teaching is predominantly good in all subjects. This is an improvement since the time when some teachers considered that it was only the role of teachers at the end of the key stages to prepare pupils for the National Curriculum tests. The drive for higher levels of attainment is now part of every lesson. Throughout the school teachers are now sure of the purpose of all planned activities and explain them well pupils. In the lessons observed, the teachers' knowledge, planning, control, organisation and management of pupils were good. Teachers' expectations were sufficiently high in these lessons and work was suitably challenging for pupils of all abilities. In most lessons at the Foundation Stage and in subjects across the curriculum at both key stages all teachers now have higher expectations. This has been less than easy to achieve in some classes as until the last two years the emphasis was on class teaching and ensuring that all pupils attained the nationally expected level. Because of the consistently interesting and good teaching most pupils are now on course to reach higher standards across the curriculum by the end of this academic year.
22. Teachers in classes across the school make clear exactly what they expect pupils to learn. In most lessons the objectives for the lesson were discussed with pupils and prominently displayed. During the lesson most teachers asked pupils to review the objectives and together they read them again and at the end they checked whether they had all been accomplished. This focused pupils' thinking and attention on what they were doing and why. Pupils of all ages and abilities benefited from reflecting on the purpose of the lesson and this review enabled them to be sure of what they had learned and how it fitted into the pattern of their work in other lessons.
23. Improved planning for shared learning objectives is a part of the best lesson preparation for all teachers. Where there are mixed age classes, planning together is an important feature to make effective provision for equality of access for all pupils. The working together in preparation for teaching of new and familiar work is essential in those classes where there are mixed age groups and it is done effectively. Planning is particularly effective in English, mathematics and science but is also seen in all other subjects, where it is becoming increasingly thorough. Over the past eighteen months, teachers have developed and have begun to implement good procedures for assessing the gains in progress that pupils make. The information gathered is used on a day-to-day basis to help them to organise and develop the next stage of the learning programme. All written work is marked and the newly introduced scheme for marking is proving to be a useful way of monitoring work and assessing pupils' progress. Where teachers use the marking process best, as for example in English, in classes for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the marking and commentary about pupils' work is exemplary. The marking of work in the classes for younger children is equally thorough but the commentary is frequently oral rather than written as work is marked alongside pupils.
24. The lack of challenge for the most able was identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection and this problem was supported by the schools' own analysis of test results and monitored work. This weakness has been addressed throughout the school; teachers now provide pupils with challenging work and are successful in meeting the learning needs of different groups of pupils. The increasingly high expectations are having a strong impact on pupils' learning in lessons at both key stages.
25. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The majority of pupils on the special needs register have difficulties in literacy although an increasing number each year are at first presenting difficulties in behaviour and the development of their social skills. Where pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups for literacy and numeracy the rate at which they learn the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding matches that of the rest of the class because they have additional adult support. Where the teacher plans activities that refer to specific pupils' difficulties and targets, as described in the individual education plans and taking

into account the recommended programmes, the pupils make good progress. The written targets in the individual education plans are direct and precise and in all cases there are additional notes in the teachers' record books listing achievable objectives. During the inspection the work prepared matched the pupils' needs very well. The impact of support for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is positive. The support staff have good relationships with the pupils and use this to encourage and guide them. The school implements the Code of Practice in all respects and provides carefully and sensitively for the academic and social needs of identified pupils. At the time of the inspection, no pupils were learning English as an additional language although some of the children from traveller families are bilingual.

26. The pattern for setting homework is working well in the great majority of classes although there is some variation to the generally agreed pattern. Homework is recorded in pupils' homework diaries and usually sufficient time is allowed for its completion. Work completed is marked carefully if it is written work or else it is used in lessons at the start of the next week if it is a finding out task or a research activity. At the Foundation Stage and in classes at Key Stage 1 pupils also learn words and number bonds. All pupils are encouraged to take home reading and library books and parents and teachers comment on the quality and quantity of reading covered. Older pupils in classes five and six increasingly maintain their own reading diaries and comment on how they liked the book or which characters most appealed to them. Some parents and all teachers check these diaries each week.

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

27. The school's curricular provision is good. It is broadly based, and includes all the statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects and religious education according to Salford Diocesan Guidelines. An appropriate allocation of time has been given to all subjects, including additional time to English and mathematics to meet the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school has effective policies for teaching about health issues. There is a policy and scheme of work on drug awareness, though this is in draft form and has not yet been put into practice. The school provides for sex education, using a commercial scheme throughout the school, which has been approved by parents and governors.
28. The previous inspection identified the need to provide policies and schemes of work for all subjects. This has now been accomplished and more formal links have been established between budget planning and the needs of the curriculum. The role of the co-ordinators has been strengthened but the school recognises that further development is needed to allow all co-ordinators sufficient time to monitor pupils' work and the standard of teaching in lessons. All subjects of the curriculum now meet statutory requirements.
29. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided and many pupils take part. Sporting activities are very well represented. Boys and girls take part in rugby, football and netball. Badminton, cross-country running and swimming are also available. There is specialised coaching in soccer and basketball by Stockport County Football Club and Manchester Giants. The range of activities would be further enhanced with the provision of a school choir and recorder group.
30. Links with the community and partner institutions are satisfactory. There are very close links with the church. Visits are arranged to places of interest, linked to work in geography and history. Visitors come into the school and add interest to lessons. Pupils are made aware of the needs of others. During the inspection, pupils were bringing their "Christmas Shoebox" gifts to send to children in need in other European countries.

31. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to develop spiritual awareness within the curriculum and through collective worship. Class prayers are said at times throughout the day and these enhance the spiritual awareness for all pupils. Pupils are made aware of the work of famous artists and musicians and this adds to their sense of spirituality.
32. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. and the school fosters this well. The staff encourage positive approaches to behaviour and the school's aims reflect this. Pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong and to see the consequences of their actions on others and themselves. There is a strong emphasis on good behaviour throughout the school. Staff aim to create an orderly environment and help pupils to become responsible members of the community. All adults in the school set a good example to pupils and encourage good relationships. Prayer times make a valuable contribution to pupils' moral development. Lunchtime supervisors promote good moral values and attitudes.
33. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Social skills are developed successfully during lessons, break and lunchtimes. The staff have worked hard to build up the school as a community, where each member is valued and works for the common good. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for classroom equipment, which they do very well. Pupils in all age groups are encouraged to undertake special responsibilities. For example Year 6 librarians are proud of the new library area and enjoy keeping it tidy as well as helping younger children in a variety of ways. A residential visit to Kingswood Residential Activity Centre is arranged when pupils take part in a variety of physical activities and this has a positive effect on the pupils' social development.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There is some evidence of cultural appreciation being offered to pupils. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate their own culture through art and listening to and appreciating music. The literacy hour is successfully introducing pupils to a range of authors, which, over a period of time, will enrich pupils' knowledge of literature. Through history and visits to the theatre, museums, the Millennium Dome, Speke Hall and a Tudor workshop, pupils appreciate how life has changed. Opportunities for discovering the diversity and richness of other cultures, while satisfactory, are less well developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. All staff work together very effectively to create a welcoming, predictable environment in which pupils are treated as individuals and encouraged to grow in confidence and maturity. This good support for pupils has been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. Since that time, the quality of assessment procedures, highlighted as a key issue, has been improved, as has the storage of hazardous substances and the procedures relating to first aid.
36. One of the features that parents particularly like about the school is the care that staff show towards their children. Pupils state that they would feel comfortable approaching staff should they have any problems or concerns. Staff have a very good knowledge of pupils' family circumstances and take time to ask for instance about new babies or older siblings. Teachers are observant of pupils' mood and general personal development, and offer them good support, which helps pupils to feel that they matter and are valued for themselves. This self-assurance means that they feel comfortable at school and can concentrate well on their learning.
37. Midday assistants supervise pupils in a caring and effective manner, and any accidents are meticulously noted, although staff do not always record what treatment has been given to pupils. Staff have been given appropriate training about, for instance, what to do if a pupil suffers from anaphylactic shock, but the whole school record of pupils' individual medical needs is not systematically reviewed or kept up-to-date. The newly developed policy and guidelines for staff about child protection are not sufficiently known and understood although all staff know who the named responsible person is, and records are kept in a suitably secure and confidential manner. Members of the governors' health and safety committee regularly check the site in order to identify any hazards, and the caretaker is vigilant about, for instance, removing broken glass from the play areas. The school has a suitable health and safety policy, but risk assessment

procedures relating to, for instance, the movement of pupils around the site are not carried out regularly. The records of fire alarm and physical education apparatus checks are maintained but the process employed is not sufficiently rigorous. Concerns about an access gate, raised by parents were responded to immediately when brought to the attention of the headteacher by the inspection team. Overall, the school's day-to-day care of pupils is good, but the newly developed formal procedures relating to this aspect of school life need to be implemented fully and maintained rigorously.

38. In line with the school's positive ethos of care for pupils, there are very effective procedures to ensure good discipline and an orderly environment. All members of staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and act consistently to ensure that the school operates as a happy community in which pupils feel safe. They nip potential problems in the bud, usually only needing a quiet word with an individual in order to bring them back in line. The school involves parents appropriately and monitors any persistent poor behaviour, in most cases with the desired effect. The good relationships that abound in the school mean that pupils want to please their teachers and, therefore, there is very little need for teachers overtly to impose discipline. The procedures to encourage good attendance are very successful. The school keeps good track of its traveller pupils, and any others who leave to go elsewhere, and regularly points out to parents the disadvantages of taking their children on holiday during term time.
39. Pupils of all abilities are assessed and monitored effectively by the teachers to measure their attainment and record their progress. There is now careful analysis of the results of assessment and individual records and the teachers and the management team make good use of them to plan future work and make any improvements to the curriculum that they find to be necessary. Records are comprehensive, including those of individuals and groups. The monitoring by gender and age is now an important part of whole school assessment process. The annual reports to parents are detailed and informative and make suitable provision for parents and pupils to add their comments.
40. The review meetings for pupils with special educational needs who have statements are organised effectively. All parents whose children have individual education plans are kept well informed of the targets set for improvement and are encouraged to contribute to the planning for improvement. Older children sometimes become involved in agreeing ways to improve their individual behaviour and performance.
41. Teaching in ability groups within year bands and setting for specific work at both key stages is organised to match the needs of individual pupils and matched ability groups so that all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Individual targets are regularly reviewed and accurate records are maintained. The school's policies on all aspects of behaviour, including bullying, are well balanced but rarely have to be applied due to the very good levels of behaviour seen both in and out of the classroom. Lunchtime supervision is good and the supervisors and other non-teaching staff are valued as an essential part of school life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents regard the school positively and support it well. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy attending school, make good progress and behave well. All those spoken with during the inspection expressed their contentment with the school, even those who had the occasional gripe about, for instance, the late exit of some pupils at the end of the day. Parents consider that they are kept well informed about school events and their children's progress, and they are confident that they would be contacted should there be any problems. They find staff readily approachable, and feel that their concerns will be listened to and, generally, acted on.
43. The school issues parents with an adequate amount of information about events, and the prospectus and governors' annual report comply with statutory requirements. However, the entries about the results of statutory tests are presented in a way that are not wholly informative. This means that, for instance, many parents were unaware that the standards in these tests are not as high as in many similar schools. The parent teacher association (PTA) newsletter, 'Chatterbox', is lively and very encouraging of parents' participation. At the beginning of each

year, teachers meet the parents of pupils in their new class and give them helpful information about what their children will be studying in the coming term. The quality of information given in pupils' end of year progress reports varies according to teacher but, on the whole, is better than that found in many other schools. Information in the reports includes levels achieved by pupils in non-statutory tests and gives parents a good indication of how well their children are performing in relation to national expectations. They also give subject specific information about pupils' progress in different subjects and, in some cases, what they need to do in order to improve.

44. As at the time of the previous inspection, parents are positively involved in their children's learning. Many help in school, for example hearing readers, voluntarily providing brass tuition in music, decorating and putting up fencing. They make good use of the home school reading records, particularly for younger children, and support them with their homework. Through the PTA they raise funds which augment the school's resources, for example, providing better quality furniture, and they attend in large numbers meetings to discuss their children's progress or to discover more about, for instance statutory National Curriculum tests and the literacy and numeracy strategies. Pupils can see that staff and parents act as a team, working together in their best interests, and this provides them with a strong basis for learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher and most governors know their school very well and are sensitive to its standing in the community. The school benefits from the good leadership of the headteacher and the complementary skills of the deputy headteacher. With the governing body they have successfully addressed most of the key issues from the previous inspection, especially those concerning the, most policies and schemes of work and ensure that assessment procedures are used to guide teachers' planning and improve learning. The governing body has strengthened the senior management team although, while it ensures good lines of communication between teachers, there are some aspects of co-ordination that have not been fully met. The procedures concerning health and safety are satisfactory overall and the practice on a day-to day basis is much better than the formalised procedures indicate. All members of staff generally understand the procedures for child protection issues and additional details have been included.
46. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together. They have clearly defined roles and use their skills to motivate pupils and strive for higher standards. The governors work well together and provide clear educational direction for the school. The school development plan, drawn up in consultation with staff and governors, clearly defines a programme for sustained improvement. Shrewd financial management supports all of the listed educational priorities, for example a planned overspend, in order to equip the computer suite. All financial grants and specifically allocated funding have now been received and the governing body now has a balance as a contingency fund that is within the recommended limits. The very recently established computer suite has already been used effectively by the co-ordinator and other staff and pupils from classes in the junior department.
47. The headteacher and governing body are aware of the high level of expenditure incurred on teachers' salaries and are extremely prudent in the effective use of the amount that is remaining.
48. The school is successful in meeting its aims. There is an extremely positive caring atmosphere for learning that promotes very high standards of personal development and behaviour. Pupils of all abilities are happy in school and share its values, especially its spiritual, moral and social values, and these are aspects which are at the forefront of the school's mission statement, and also the areas with which parents are very pleased. The school has a total commitment to all pupils being fully included in all its activities. As a result in its drive to raise the standards for all to the nationally expected levels some pupils capable of higher attainment were not being sufficiently challenged in the subjects where statutory testing takes place. As a result the position of the school declined both nationally and when set against similar schools. The school began to address the need to improve academic standards following the results in 1998 and 1999 and implemented potentially effective changes. The co-ordinators and teachers now monitor the results of the statutory and non-statutory tests administered by the school very effectively at Key Stage 1. Results at Key Stage 2 are similarly analysed by an external agency. The management

of the school is now sure that the strategy of review conducted by teachers, within the school, brought about quicker and more direct benefits in terms of improvements in standards than did the process of external monitoring and analysis. In response to the programme of detailed analysis of results, the governors and teachers agreed realistic targets for all pupils, which were met in 2000. Even more challenging targets have been set and the school expects to meet these in 2001 in the next round of tests. The governors and headteacher have effectively delegated management responsibilities to all members of staff and, in the majority but not all cases, the work of the co-ordinators has been successful. The need for shared training about monitoring and the role of the co-ordinator is identified in the school development plan.

49. The high quality of curriculum planning is an improvement when compared with the findings of the previous inspection and reflects the parents' views that there is better overall provision. The headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators have accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and standards, and have used their findings to guide organisation. This has been particularly successful in raising the standard of writing by the time pupils are seven in the infant classes and the setting in mathematics for all pupils in the junior department has improved standards. This is reflected in the lessons observed and in the analysis of pupils' work. Where teachers have worked together with knowledgeable co-ordinators the process of collaboration has helped to improve planning both on a day-to-day basis and for longer-term changes.
50. The governing body provides good support. It is now meeting its statutory requirements and has an effective committee structure and these committees meet regularly. The governors identified the need to re-introduce the Curriculum Committee in view of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the introduction of Curriculum 2000. The majority of governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and understand the issues concerning target setting and their responsibilities in these aspects. The governors are committed to school improvement. There are named governors who play active roles in supporting pupils with special educational needs and monitor procedures for literacy and numeracy. All of these governors have attended appropriate training with the co-ordinators. Some governors are new and a shared programme of training for co-ordinators and governors is planned.
51. The headteacher and governors have made good initial preparation for the introduction of appraisal and performance management, the headteacher having attended the required amount of additional training for this aspect. Governors set targets for the headteacher in terms of improving attainment in the Year 2000 National Tests, which were met and additional targets will be set for the next academic year. Appropriate plans are in place for the introduction of this aspect through the school. Priorities for development are determined through consultation with the headteacher, governors and staff. However, a weakness at present is that monitoring and evaluation of work in the classroom are very infrequent and too informal to determine precisely where improvement is most needed. The headteacher undertakes some monitoring of teaching and completed work and has given guidance where this was found to be necessary. Apart from the deputy headteacher, who is the literacy co-ordinator, the senior management team and subject co-ordinators for the other core subjects have had too little time allocated to observe teaching and do not monitor pupils' work with sufficient regularity. In fact, some of the teaching staff are uncomfortable with the process of monitoring and need additional training. In the coming term a numeracy strategy co-ordinator from the local education authority will spend some time in school monitoring and advising teachers in lessons. The school has taken effective steps to implement a comprehensive programme for the monitoring of mathematics after the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the review of the 1999 standards, which were too low. The analysis of test results and the information revealed is used well to identify groups and individual pupils who need support for their learning and also those who need more challenge. This aspect has been managed most effectively in spite of an initial element of resistance from some teachers. The school uses assessment information effectively to set targets for future performance. The targets for pupils' performance in the statutory tests in the current year are challenging yet achievable, provided that pupils are given strategic guidance and preparation for the process involved in taking these tests.
52. The school is taking effective action to meet the targets set for pupils by setting for mathematics at Key Stage 2 and also for story and writing at Key Stage 1. The action plan for the academic

year 2000 to 2001 is highly relevant to curricular and organisational needs, especially in literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology. Importantly the mathematics action plan effectively relates to previously identified underachievement and has already begun to address this successfully.

53. New staff are welcomed into school and the mentor is a welcoming person with good teaching skills who provides a good example for newly qualified and newly appointed teachers and students. The school has appropriate systems in place for contributing towards the training of students and, at the request of teachers, a handbook is being produced.
54. The school's arrangements for financial management and control are good. The secretary and headteacher work well together to ensure that the budget is tightly controlled so that the requirements of the governing body are met and that money is available for the improvements detailed in the school's plan for development. The school manages with great skill the small amount available for planned expenditure and for improvement having paid the mandatory salaries and allowances. The governing body monitors expenditure from the detailed statements provided by the secretary. The grants the school receives for supporting pupils with special educational needs and for travellers' children are used well to provide extra help for these pupils and this is well organised. The school has a policy of inclusion for all pupils and the funding allocated for the provision for children with special educational needs is supplemented from the main budget and is effectively used. Plans to provide the same good quality of care for those pupils capable of higher attainment have been considered since 1999 and strategies to support these pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment are now in place.
55. The finance committee's considerable experience ensures that the school seeks and secures best value. Competitive quotations are sought when expenditure is involved. The chair of finance and members of the finance committee are particularly well-informed and fully understand the financial implications of school management and have detailed understanding of the principles of 'best value'. This understanding is not only applied to quotations from suppliers but also to teaching and standards and, during the inspection they discussed the benefits of spending decisions on the improving standards now being achieved by the pupils, with a high level of understanding.
56. The school's financial procedures are efficient and effective. There are systems that readily provide accurate financial information to guide the governors in making their expenditure decisions. The most recent auditor's report for the school contains some minor recommendations, all of which have been addressed successfully.
57. The administrative staff manage the day-to-day financial procedures of the school very efficiently and effectively. In addition, well-organised systems ensure that the school runs smoothly and money is handled securely. There are very good procedures for monthly checks on expenditure and for secure cash processing with good internal controls. A separate account is kept for private funds and this is audited annually by an appropriately qualified person. Other day-to-day administrative procedures are very effective and both the part-time secretaries work in an efficient, calm, professional and supportive manner. This allows classroom teaching and learning to be uninterrupted. New technology is well used for the recording of financial matters and registration. The school is very well placed to use the additional new technology now that the computer suite has been installed.
58. There is a high percentage of long-serving staff and consequently a smaller number of recently appointed and recently qualified teachers. Teachers provide a suitable range of experience to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious knowledge. The teaching staff in the Foundation Stage are supported effectively by the nursery nurses. Together they form a strong team who are all involved in the planning so that aims and methods are agreed. There are fewer support staff in the infant and junior classes although there are more than at the time of the last inspection. However, the school is well supported by parents and experienced voluntary helpers from the community.
59. Overall, the school has sufficient accommodation for its purposes, with good accommodation for

pupils in the Foundation Stage. However, the old temporary buildings are not as pleasant as classrooms in the main building and detract from the overall good atmosphere for learning. These classrooms are used well because of the management skills of the teachers using them and the consistently high standards of pupils' behaviour. The effective financial management and commitment from the headteacher, subject co-ordinator and the governors, have enabled a well-equipped and attractive computer suite to be created and brought into use during the present academic year. The library is small but is clean, bright and attractive and is used well. The accommodation is well maintained and enhanced by high quality work, which is displayed very well.

60. The outside accommodation is satisfactory although the separate enclosed play space is restricted to children in the nursery. The large field is attractive but is not available for general play in the winter months. The hard playground is then particularly small for the numbers of pupils and, although the school organises different times for play for the older and younger pupils it is sometimes very cramped. However, because of the pupils' very good behaviour and the high quality of supervision, there are very few even minor accidents.
61. Learning resources are satisfactory. They are good in classes at the Foundation Stage and for literacy, physical education and information and communication technology. There are insufficient tuned percussion instruments for music. In most subjects, resources are carefully catalogued and regularly checked. Whilst adequate for the majority of subjects there are some additional resources required to fully meet the needs of the recently introduced Curriculum 2000. The school development plan identifies when these will be bought, as and when the individual subjects have priority status. Some staff, especially the geography co-ordinator, have meticulously identified the resources that will be needed to successfully meet the needs of the planned curriculum. Resources to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs are good.
62. Considering pupils' improving levels of attainment observed during the inspection, the overwhelmingly good quality of teaching and pupils' learning, the very good behaviour and attitudes, and the low level of income per pupil which is well below the national average, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to maintain and improve the existing standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) increase the effort to extend the curricular provision for higher attaining pupils in all classes in order to help a greater percentage attain higher than merely expected standards at the end of both key stages;
(Paragraphs: 5, 21, 88, 90, 92, 101)
- (2) extend the management role of all co-ordinators by:-
 - (a) providing more time for supporting and monitoring the work of colleagues in and out of the classroom;
 - (b) undertaking whole school training in order to clarify the role and responsibilities of all subject co-ordinators;
(Paragraphs 28, 48, 51, 87, 100, 106)
- (3) increase the knowledge and awareness of all members of the governing body of the need for the analysis of results and processes for raising standards by:-
 - (a) sharing in governor and staff training in order to extend the knowledge of the most experienced governors to all new members;
 - (b) involving all governors in the work undertaken in the analysis of results and the monitoring of the benefits of all spending set against improving standards;
(Paragraphs 28, 37, 50)
- (4) enable all personnel to be fully aware of the procedures set out in the policies and documentation for the support of health and safety issues and for child protection.
(Paragraphs 37, 45)

Other minor issues that the governors may wish to include in their action plan: -

- liaise with the local education authority and officers of the diocese in order to improve the classroom provision for those pupils using the temporary classrooms;
- explore all possible ways of improving facilities for outside play for pupils in all classes.

(Paragraphs 15, 59, 60)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	39	42	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	22	306
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	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	1	29

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	21	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	18
	Girls	20	21	20
	Total	38	40	38
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	95	100	95
	National	84	85	90

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	28	38	40
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	95	95	100
	National	84	88	88

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

Results are for the year 2000 taken from figures published in October 2000

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	25	23	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	19	23
	Girls	20	18	19
	Total	41	37	42
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	86	77	88
	National	75	72	85

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	18	19
	Girls	18	16	18
	Total	37	34	37
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	77	71	77
	National	70	72	80

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

Results from those published in October 2000

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	328
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6
Average class size	27.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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*Other children will join in January 2001
FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	509659
Total expenditure	498262
Expenditure per pupil	1492
Balance brought forward from previous year	7580
Balance carried forward to next year	18977

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	258
Number of questionnaires returned	147

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	23	3	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	47	43	5	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	44	3	4	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	40	14	7	6
The teaching is good.	53	34	4	1	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	38	18	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	29	7	3	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	32	7	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	42	34	12	8	4
The school is well led and managed.	49	31	7	3	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	42	5	2	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	35	12	11	18

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

64. The good provision for children in the Foundation Stage reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained, and in some important aspects, the provision has improved. There is now very good liaison between staff in the nursery and the reception classes, which is both informal, incorporating good relationships, and also has a structured professional element. Since the last inspection a new early years co-ordinator has been appointed and planning systems have been improved and developed. Working parties have been formed and meet regularly to incorporate the Early Learning Goals into a sound policy for the Foundation Stage. The stepping stones from the curriculum guidance document for the Foundation Stage produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) are now being used effectively to meet children's learning needs. Assessment and record keeping systems have been improved and there are now well-established procedures designed to check the progression and continuity of work for pupils throughout the Foundation Stage. Staff in the two reception classes effectively build on the firm foundations established in the nursery. An appropriate system of assessment on entry is used to inform planning in the nursery. In the reception class information derived from baseline assessment, which is completed over the first half term, is used to plan work in the medium and short-term. On entry to the nursery attainment varies but it is similar to that of children of the same age nationally. The programme of work taught by the staff is effective and means that by the time of their fifth birthday almost all of the children have attained the desired Early Learning Goals.
65. The limited size of the outdoor play area continues to present some problems, but effective organisation ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to practise and develop physical skills in the open air. All members of staff are vigilant in ensuring that the area is thoroughly checked for fouling by animals and other litter before children use it. Time is now allocated in the school hall for children in the nursery and reception classes and good use is made of the facility by staff of all these classes so that children's healthy physical development is assured. Children in the reception classes currently share the school playground with older classes and although the children are well supervised, this is not such good provision as that available for children in the nursery. A small fenced area adjacent to the reception classes is currently being converted into a play area by a group of parents. When this is completed it will add considerably to the permanent amenities for children under five. The last inspection reported on the difference in the size of the two reception classes, which led to inequality of provision. Some difficulties remain and the younger reception class has a smaller carpeted area for story and class group sessions. However, close co-operation, team teaching and the establishment of joint role-play areas have largely overcome the problem. Teachers make sensible use of all the available space, which is used co-operatively to ensure that provision is equal for all children.
66. All children in the nursery attend part-time for either a morning or afternoon session before transferring to one of the reception classes to start full-time attendance at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were 26 children in the morning session, of whom 4 children were already four. The afternoon group is smaller until January and, of the group of 16 children, 12 were still three. In the next term 10 more children will be admitted. Most children in the reception classes have attended the school's nursery. Currently there are two reception classes. One class contains 13 children who are five and 11 who are still 4. In the other class only one child is already five.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. When pupils enter the nursery, their skills in personal and social development are average. By the time they enter the reception class many children are achieving the Early Learning Goals in this area and on entry to Key Stage 1 they are exceeding this goal. This reflects skilful teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. At the time of the inspection, children in the nursery performed a Christmas tableau for an audience of Key Stage 1 pupils, when their growing independence and confidence were apparent.
68. In all classes teaching is good. Staff encourage children to share equipment, which is easily accessible, and to take turns. When children selected items from a bag by touch alone in work

with circles in the nursery, they were able to wait patiently and give time for the responses of others. In the reception classes, during discussion, teachers provide good role models always treating children with respect and valuing their contributions. For example, during enthusiastic interruptions when learning about animal homes, the teacher said, 'Will you hold on to that interesting idea; we'll talk about it later?' In the nursery and reception classes, good teaching ensures that children are learning to work and learn independently. They are helped to develop confidence and to understand the feelings of others when acting as part of a group for example, during circle time, when pupils take turns holding a special object and explaining about special thoughts and feelings. Children learn how to respond to directions as individuals and in a group in physical education.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children make good progress in the development of communication, language and literacy. In the nursery and reception classes, emphasis is placed on good communication through discussion and story. Children enjoy books, stories, songs and rhymes. In the nursery, staff engage children in conversation using open-ended questioning. For example in the story of 'The Gorilla', children were asked if they could remember why the girl was excited. Children's answers reflected their close attention to detail and good listening skills. Concentration and behaviour are good considering that children have been in school for less than one term. In the nursery café, children used menus and pads to write out orders. A range of cutlery, crockery, table linen and cooking implements and an environment rich in relevant vocabulary encouraged children to use simple grammatical structures in their play. Staff constantly interacted with children in discussion to help children explore the sounds and meanings of new words. In the reception classes, teachers continue to develop spoken language through role-play. Very good provision in a woodland role-play area, which contained animal costumes, sounds and atmospheric music; visual effects such as hollow trees, and a carpet of autumn leaves enabled children's play to help them learn by doing. Language derived from children's experiences and spoken words were displayed to provide a written record of familiar vocabulary and make an important link between the written and the spoken word. Most children in the reception classes have made a start with reading. They are able to recognise key words on sight and many can hear and say initial and final sounds in words. Some children can blend letters into words and are able to write their name and other words. The quality of teaching for this area of learning is good. It reflects staff's knowledge and skill in understanding how children develop important communication, language and literacy skills.

Mathematical development

70. This area of learning is well taught and by the end of their time in the reception classes, children will have reached and possibly exceeded the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. Children in the reception classes can count in ones to ten and some can count beyond ten. In one lesson, children held up the correct number of fingers, could supply a missing number, or the number before or after. Many children recognise number words up to ten using a teddy bear clothesline. Children's concept of shape is reinforced in the nursery by good teaching which involves them in recognising similarities and difference and distinguishing the properties of two-dimensional shapes. For example identifying shapes hidden in a bag by touch alone, and making circle shapes using play dough mixed by the children. Work on shape progressed in the reception class when children talked about the difference and similarity between a hexagon and a circle. The assessment of children's understanding of shape was managed very effectively by a nursery assistant when using a sorting activity and through finger painting.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children enter the nursery with a basic knowledge of the world around them. Good provision and skilled teaching in the nursery ensures that this is developed and extended through purposeful play activities, which are well structured by skilful teachers. Good progress takes place in this important area because adults support children well in investigating their surroundings and encourage them to find out things for themselves. For example, nursery children could recognise different birds on the bird table and had used binoculars to identify some of the visiting species. Discussion at snack time reinforced this growing awareness. In the outdoor play area, children use hard hats and building tools to explore adult roles and are prompted by staff to think things

through, for example, 'What does it do?' and 'What would happen if?' Children used computer programs well to enjoy story and rhyme. Some have good keyboard skills and use a mouse to access the different menus. Effective resources for sand play incorporated a range of materials linked with work on circles, including concentric circles of shells, pebbles, cones and acorns which led children to reflect on their own experiences and knowledge and to practise new vocabulary.

72. In the reception classes the pattern of good teaching matched carefully to clear learning objectives helps children to learn about animals and their homes through conversation and play in the woodland area. They know the names of animal homes such as 'nest', 'burrow' and 'den' and are encouraged to talk about their own pets and also to draw and write about what they have learned. They have enjoyed work on the human body and the skeleton and have delighted in handling animal bones. Children readily use new vocabulary such as 'skull' and 'ribs' and know how they provide protection for softer parts of the body. In all classes, children select resources and use tools safely to construct and build. They know how things are used, for example utensils in the café and how to attach things and cut and join materials together when making animal homes.

Physical development

73. All of the teachers are aware of the need for young children to learn through play and all of the teaching seen for physical development was good. Children make effective progress in the development of their physical skills. Outdoor play in the nursery takes place in a relatively small space. Opportunities for physical development are not restricted, however, because all of the nursery staff ensure that the use of the area is well organised for quality play with groups of children. Appropriate large and small equipment helps children to develop control of their bodies, for example, changing direction to avoid obstacles. Outdoor play is more restricted for reception children by the absence of a specially enclosed outdoor play area and they share the playground with pupils from other infant classes. For indoor play and exercise the school hall is used well for movement lessons by all of the children. Children enjoy moving to music. For example, they respond well to high and low sounds of untuned percussion instruments by creeping, crouching, stretching and reaching for the stars. Children are on course to reach or exceed the Early Learning Goals for physical development at the end of the reception year.

Creative development

74. Children make good progress in this area of development. All teaching and provision are good and all members of staff provide a wide range of interesting activities to develop creativity. Children enjoy and express themselves well through singing, drawing, painting, collage and model making. They are taught how to use tools and equipment such as scissors, glue, brushes and mark-making materials and feel safe enough to take risks and make mistakes as they grow in confidence. They increase their knowledge of the variety of uses of these materials and delight in showing off the completed work. Children in the nursery use their imagination in role-play situations. For example, they prepare meals, set the table using cutlery and napkins appropriately and make choices about where to place other items. In the reception classes, children enjoy creative activities. When making animal homes, they follow pictorial and written instructions and check their own work for accuracy by looking at pictures. In work in this area they explore the concept of tunnelling and make up stories about what they encounter on their journey. All adults are very supportive and provide opportunities for the children to use their skills and explore concepts and ideas through representation. Children respond to rhythm and pitch when moving to music and sounds in imaginative ways, for example, when exploring the theme of animals at night.
75. The resources for children at the Foundation Stage and classroom support are good. All adults who work in the nursery and reception classes show concern and care for children and have a good knowledge of their educational needs. Parents appreciate the efforts of teachers to involve them in their children's education and to inform them regularly both formally and informally about their progress. Home-school links are firmly established.

ENGLISH

76. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that the pupils' achievement in reading is above the national average and in writing it is well above the national average. When compared to similar schools the pupils' attainment in reading is broadly in line with the average and their writing is above the average.
77. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that the pupils' achievement in English is above average. When compared to similar schools the pupils' attainment is broadly in line.
78. In speaking and listening, pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is a similar result to that found at the previous inspection though standards have continued to rise. By the time they reach the age of seven pupils answer questions sensibly and contribute well in class. For example, a Year 2 class discussed with their teacher how they would link sentences together using interesting link words. At the end of the lesson pupils read their work confidently to the whole class while other pupils commented on their efforts. Pupils listen carefully to teachers' instructions and this helps them to make a confident start to their activities. Teachers make very good use of carpeted areas in classrooms to make it easier for pupils to listen attentively in lessons.
79. By the age of eleven further improvement in speaking and listening has been made. Higher attaining pupils are particularly fluent and have developed a strong and mature vocabulary. Average and lower attaining pupils speak clearly in conversation. Pupils in a Year 5/6 class studied a passage from a book, reviewing their own ideas and those of others, reflecting on their own conclusions. Pupils of all abilities were keen to contribute to the discussion, many showing a keen interest in the subject. In a Year 6 class pupils listened intently to a class assembly. Their homework had been to listen to the news and select items, which they thought ought to be included in their prayers. All pupils were keen to speak and made their contributions interesting for all the class.
80. Pupils' achievement in reading is very good at the end of both key stages. Those who have special educational needs, learn English as an additional language and travellers' children achieve standards that are satisfactory in relation to their prior learning. Guided reading is used effectively at Key Stage 1 and there is a good match of texts to pupils' prior attainment and developing skills. Phonetic skills, such as recognition and articulation of letter sounds are very well developed and this helps pupils tackle unfamiliar texts, underpinning the good rate of progress seen. Most pupils recognise the features of both fiction and non-fiction texts and know how to use the contents page and the index to find information. All pupils take reading books home regularly and are well supported by parents. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils read fluently and show good levels of comprehension. Most recall in detail what they have read and skills of inference and deduction are very well developed. Pupils state their preferences for favourite books and authors, justifying their views. They extend their reading experiences by borrowing books from the school library. The vast majority understands the classification systems and can locate information when required. Many pupils are also members of the local public library. Pupils of all abilities, make good progress, due to the very good quality teaching and the positive attitudes fostered by the school.
81. Pupils' attainment in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 is well above the level expected for their age. Most pupils make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. In Year 1, the more able pupils write in simple sentences unaided using capital letters and full stops with most spellings correct. Other pupils write sentences with very good help from teachers and support staff. By the end of Year 2, pupils write for a range of purposes. Their range of writing is impressive and includes work on retelling stories such as The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Three Little Pigs and Goldilocks and The Three Bears. Pupils learn about story structure and understand all stories have a beginning, middle and an end. When writing a recipe for making bread, in a design and technology lesson, pupils go on to write an account of how they made their loaves. In all Key Stage 1 classes different work matched to pupils' ability level is always provided. Classes in Year 2 set for their extended writing lessons. During the inspection this was seen to be having a very good effect on the attainment of pupils with all work very well matched to the pupils' prior attainment.
82. In Key Stage 2 writing is structured and well organised. Written work by the above average pupils is often lively and thoughtful with interesting and expressive vocabulary. Good progress is being

made in spelling, grammar, and punctuation with pupils demonstrating accurate understanding and use of, for example, speech marks, prefixes, and verb tenses. Pupils in Year 3 convert notes into sentences. They enrich their literacy experiences by using a rich and varied range of books to gain information and refine reference skills. Pupils in Year 4 know about broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. They can write in a range of styles for different audiences and can distinguish between reports and articles and have a very secure understanding about the difference between facts and opinions. In Year 5 pupils study three different versions of the story The Three Little Pigs. They decide which age of child each version was written for and then write the story again for a range of audiences. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a good experience of writing for a range of purposes and audiences. Pupils in Year 6 use such writing approaches for writing a play script for a scene from The Wizard of Oz, the story of a desert disaster, biographies and moods and feelings in poetry. Pupils rewrite Shakespeare in modern style using Macbeth as an example. Until very recently insufficient use has been made of information and communication technology to improve and enhance the finished product but now that the computer suite is operational the school has well organised plans to address this issue. The use of the pupils' literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum is used well in many classes. For example, Year 1 pupils write labels for their designs in design technology, Year 2 write lists of eye colours in science linking effectively with their earlier literacy lesson. Most pupils spell accurately, using a range of appropriate strategies. Handwriting is generally of a good standard. This is particularly so in Years 5 and 6 where the presentation of work is of a very high standard.

83. Provision in English for pupils with special educational needs, and for the few pupils from traveller families is good. Individual programmes of learning are used to plan work and pupils have additional sessions for reading and spelling.
84. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good at both key stages. They enjoy reading and are all keen to read to their teachers in the guided reading lessons. The majority is eager to recount what they have learned in previous lessons. They know the routines of the daily literacy lesson well and organise themselves without disruption to the flow of the lesson. Many are developing good abilities as independent learners when working alone or in groups. Most pupils are interested in the activities offered to them and remain fully occupied throughout the group work sessions. They respond positively and, when sufficient time is made available, they are keen to make contributions in plenary sessions.
85. The quality of teaching in English is better than at the time of the previous inspection and is very good in both key stages. It is never less than good. In three out of the eleven lessons observed it was good, in seven it was very good and in one lesson it was judged to be excellent. Teachers have responded successfully to the introduction of the literacy hour and this was evident in lesson planning which complies fully with the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers endeavour to make sure that planned activities are allocated sufficient time although sometimes shared enthusiasm makes the introductory session rather longer than intended. All teachers have very secure subject knowledge. They promote knowledge, skills and understanding successfully through clear explanation and questioning. They provide work that is well matched to the needs of all pupils taking good account of the targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and of pupils with English as an additional language as well as traveller children. Pupils are usually expected to work at a good pace and to produce a reasonable amount of work. All teachers promote very good relationships and manage pupils very well and this has a positive impact on the learning that is taking place. All teachers carry out detailed day-to-day assessment of pupils' work and they keep careful records of all of the pupils' achievement and use this information to plan future work. However, at the present time there is no common whole-school practice for assessment and recording of attainment. In the lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils, share the objectives of the lesson and ensure that pupils know the focus of each task. Marking is carefully completed and teachers provide pupils with a clear idea of how they might improve their work. The marking of English in the Year 5/6 and Year 6 classes was of a very high standard.
86. A clear and comprehensive policy is in place. Long and medium-term plans are of good quality. They ensure coverage of the programme of study and provide effectively for continuity and progression. Homework is provided on a regular basis and most pupils are keen to complete it.

87. The co-ordinator has worked very hard in her successful leadership of the subject. She monitors planning and the pupils' work and has monitored teaching and learning in the classroom. The headteacher, the subject co-ordinator and the literacy consultant from the local education authority, who has been most helpful and supportive, have undertaken an effective programme of monitoring literacy in the classroom. The school allocated sufficient amounts of money from the curriculum budget to ensure that good resources were in place to support the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. These are of good quality and are used effectively. The school library has been relocated and is now very bright and welcoming to pupils. It is well stocked and is kept very tidy by groups of pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. National Curriculum requirements are met.

MATHEMATICS

88. Standards of work seen during the inspection are satisfactory overall and are above average for a third of pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, especially in number skills. A higher percentage of pupils are well placed to achieve the higher level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 and level 3 at Key Stage 1 if this high rate of work and the commitment to succeed by pupils and teachers is maintained. The work seen during the inspection is therefore higher than the standards attained in the year 2000 national tests and as high as those observed during the previous inspection.
89. Although the standards were high in 1996 at the time of the previous inspection, they declined significantly in 1997 because of the nature of the group and the illness of a teacher. From 1998 onwards there has been an upward trend through 1999 and 2000 with pupils in the present Year 6 well placed to achieve even higher standards. A similar picture has emerged at Key Stage 1 where the high standards achieved in 1996 and 1997 dropped to a low level in 1998 and now again, standards are significantly improving.
90. The governors, headteacher and staff have identified the need to improve the attainment of all pupils; especially those pupils capable of higher attainment and potentially effective measures are now in place. Results of assessment are carefully analysed to identify areas of weakness in pupils' knowledge and skills, and a more challenging curriculum is in place, which is beginning to extend the mathematical capability of the more able pupils. Provision through the curriculum and additional support for those who need help is now structured and is effective. The teachers in Key Stage 1 have analysed the results meticulously and have made changes where required. Teachers at Key Stage 2 have responded well to the findings of the commercial analysis by setting for mathematics throughout the key stage. All pupils now have equality of opportunity for mathematics and the higher attaining pupils as well as those pupils with special educational needs, now have work planned that matches their experience and skills.
91. In Year 2 pupils' skills in mathematics are exemplified by the large majority who have a good understanding of number and confidence in applying it. They count in fives and tens from zero to 100, and count on in tens from any selected number up to 100, and some extend this pattern up to 1,000. They use and apply mental addition and multiplication facts to 100 using a wide range of methods.
92. The work seen during the inspection confirms that standards at the age of 11 are above average in numeracy and are satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1 standards are broadly in line with expectations but there are signs of improvement, particularly in the number of pupils likely to attain a higher than average level. The school has identified the need to improve attainment for more able pupils and positive measures are now in place for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Assessment results are carefully analysed to identify areas of weakness in the pupils' knowledge and skills, and a more challenging curriculum is planned to extend those able to attain higher levels and to support those who need additional help. Pupils understand addition and subtraction and fractions, including halves, quarters and three-quarters.
93. Pupils measure in centimetres, weigh in kilograms and recognise many two- and three-dimensional shapes. They understand that three-dimensional shapes have corners, edges and faces. In one lesson observed, all pupils could tell the time to the hour and half-hour, and a over

half extend this to quarter-past and quarter-to the hour. They understand and explain the differences between digital and analogue clocks, and identify places in the home where digital clocks are used: for example cookers, microwaves and videos. In another Year 2 class pupils use information to draw bar graphs and sort and classify names according to the number of letters. They also interpret graphs accurately. Pupils use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary accurately. This confidence shown by pupils of all abilities reflects the high quality of teaching.

94. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 already have a secure understanding of place value, the majority using numbers beyond 10,000. They use a wide range of mental and written methods to solve problems, understand square numbers and square roots. They also understand multiples, factors, prime numbers and rules for divisibility. In number skills in both Year 6 classes the attainment is already above the standards expected of pupils of this age. Pupils understand place value from hundreds to thousandths and the implications of multiplication and division of numbers by 10, 100 and 1000. They understand equivalent fractions and the equivalence between fractions, decimals and percentages. The higher and average attaining pupils convert percentages to fractions and also to decimals. Pupils make reasonable estimates of results by rounding numbers to 10, 100 or 1000.
95. Number skills are well taught throughout the school and pupils learn a wide range of strategies to complete written and mental calculations. They explore number patterns and learn multiplication tables well. From the analysis of pupils' previous work, at this stage in the year, there has been less emphasis on mathematical investigation of shape and measure and of data handling, although there are examples of this use in other areas of the curriculum. Numeracy skills are applied well in other subjects, especially science and geography, and were effectively used in the lesson observed on information and communications technology.
96. Pupils work hard and are eager to do well. This reflects the confidence and enthusiasm of the teaching and the very successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are extremely confident when they have secure knowledge but in a few cases are reluctant to investigate or apply mathematical knowledge creatively in case they might be wrong. However they trust their teachers and gain in confidence as they respond to their encouragement and their skills increase.
97. These standards and quality of learning and pupils' attitudes are a direct result of good teaching. Nearly 80 per cent of lessons were good or better, and over 50 per cent were very good or better. In all lessons good classroom routines have been established and the National Numeracy Strategy is very effectively implemented. Lesson objectives are clear and relevant and pupils know at the outset what they are going to learn, and at the end of the lessons how well they have achieved. Good relationships with pupils instil confidence and they are eager to do well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and understanding. Their questioning is challenging and activities are prepared which bring out the best from all pupils. Consequently, all pupils gain new knowledge and skills at a good pace. Particularly good features observed during the inspection included the well-planned activities for pupils of all abilities in a mixed year group class at Key Stage 1 and this resulted in all pupils achieving to the best of their abilities and at levels appropriate for them. One inconsistent feature of teaching is the demand made in different classes on pupils' use of time. For example, in some classes pupils are urged to not only work accurately but also at speed in order that the mathematical tasks to be covered are completed during the lesson. However, in other classes there is insufficient focus on pace of work and completing work within a given time. This aspect does not prepare pupils well for the challenge of tests where they have a certain amount of time in which to finish. Some teachers, however, have responded well to this issue. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable in all lessons and this reflects teachers' effective systems for managing pupils' behaviour.
98. The teachers at Key Stage 2 have responded well to the issues identified from the national tests in 1999 as seen in the improving results in 2000. They are continuing to increase their efforts especially in terms of achievement of the more able pupils. As a direct consequence of this work by teachers, pupils in the junior classes are now set by ability for mathematics and this ensures that there is effective and efficient use of teachers' time and skills, resulting in high quality learning for all pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs are making good progress according to the targets set for them and compared with previous learning. Pupils with special

educational needs in the infants' classes also make good progress because of well-planned work and good use of support.

99. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator and the headteacher together. The co-ordinator and teachers have worked hard to implement a revised scheme which reflects the demands of the National Numeracy Strategy. The curriculum closely follows the teaching programme recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy with a detailed emphasis on number work.
100. There is a carefully structured and impressive numeracy action plan with regular opportunities for monitoring and the overseeing of this system by the headteacher and co-ordinator. Although the headteacher has monitored some work in mathematics and the assessment practice is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection, the co-ordinator has not yet had sufficient opportunity to observe her colleagues teach, share her own expertise, nor to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy. However, there is a timetable for this aspect of monitoring planned for the spring term in 2001 when the school will have the support of the local education authority national numeracy co-ordinator.

SCIENCE

101. The attainment of pupils is similar to that seen at the time of the previous inspection. In 2000, the teachers' assessments of standards at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that almost all of the pupils achieved the nationally expected level 2 or above. This is above the national average. Almost half of pupils achieved the higher level, level 3. This is well above the national average. Test results at Key Stage 2 in 2000 showed that the standards fell below the national average overall although the percentage attaining the expected level, level 4, was close to the national average. The reason for the overall below average standard was that fewer pupils attained the higher level, level 5 than in schools nationally. When compared with similar schools the standard of attainment of the group of pupils tested in 2000 was well below the average. The school believes that this was in part due to the nature and interests of the group and the fact that because of staff sickness some parts of the curriculum were less well covered during the year. The curriculum has been thoroughly reviewed and inspection evidence indicates that pupils at the end of both key stages are now achieving standards that are above national expectations and that a significant number of pupils are well challenged and are expected to achieve the higher levels.
102. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding and very good progress in their investigation skills. They are beginning to use appropriate scientific vocabulary. They know that light comes from many sources including the sun. They know the difference between living and non-living things. They sort materials by properties using everyday terms such as 'twisty', 'bendy' and 'squashy'. Through their experiments they are beginning to understand how to make a test fair, for example when testing materials to find which are waterproof and which are not. They identify parts of flowering plants such as leaf, stem and root, labelling their drawings correctly. Pupils are also developing an understanding of electricity. They can identify household items that use electricity and know some of the dangers associated with electricity. Through their investigations they are able to construct a simple circuit to make a buzzer sound or light a bulb. Through their study of human beings they not only learn about different parts of the body, but also about medicinal drugs and why dangerous substances should be kept out of reach of children. Work is recorded in a variety of ways, including lists, simple charts and descriptive writing. Higher-attaining pupils present their work neatly and their written work is more detailed. The work of almost all pupils is legible and is clearly presented.
103. The learning and progress made by pupils with special educational needs, in Key Stage 2 is good and, because of the carefully matched work and the additional help provided by teachers, usually matches that of their classmates. Work to develop all pupils' experimental and investigation skills has been a main focus of the school and it is now good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know more about the sources of light, light and shadows and day and night. They know from which direction light is travelling and why. Through investigations they find out which materials are transparent or opaque. They learn what is meant by translucent. They have a clear understanding

of the concept of a fair test, for example when investigating the effects of liquids on a range of powders. They understood how to change some parts of the test such as changing the temperature or volume of the liquid and maintaining other sections of the experiment so that they could identify why changes happened. Pupils recognised that when some powders effervesced it was because a gas was formed and that in other cases some apparent bubbling was caused just by the displacement of air. Their study of animal habitats leads into work on food chains and recorded work shows them to have very good understanding of life cycles. Through their study of the human body pupils recognise and can name the most important bones in the human skeleton and have a good understanding how different joints work. When pupils revisit a topic their knowledge and understanding is deepened by the amount of detail incorporated in their studies. In their work on electricity they learn to use the appropriate symbols for switch, battery, motor, and bulb when drawing circuits. Occasionally pupils use information and communication technology to extend their knowledge and understanding and more such work is included in planning files now that the computer suite is almost completed. However, at the present time the use of information and communication technology to support learning in science is insufficiently developed. The work of higher attainers is very well presented whilst that of average and below average attainers is always neat and legible.

104. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, listen very well to each other and value each other's opinions. There is a very high level of collaboration and co-operation in investigative work. Behaviour is always good and is usually very good. Equipment and materials are handled very sensibly. The atmosphere for learning through investigation and experimentation in science, throughout the school, is very good.
105. Teaching is at least good at both key stages and in 80 per cent of the lessons observed in Key Stage 2, the teaching was judged to be very good. This is a significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection. The foundations for the high standard of teaching lie in the good subject knowledge and understanding of the teachers. Planning, in which clear objectives are set, is good and the work planned leads to outcomes that can be measured. The quality of the new assessment procedures influences subsequent teaching so that in all classes pupils build on earlier learning and increase their knowledge and understanding systematically. Teachers use praise and encouragement to support pupils and direct their thinking to make discoveries for themselves. Questioning, particularly that which is open-ended, is used well to promote and consolidate pupils' learning. Where teaching is very good the aims of the lesson are made clear to the pupils. Teachers use an imaginative approach to stimulate the interest of pupils. All resources, particularly members of the support staff and voluntary helpers are used very well. The organisation of the classroom and the management of pupils are very good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set challenging tasks based on their prior attainment. In a Year 4 lesson in which pupils were investigating how they might recover materials in suspension or solution from liquids the teacher intervened with very good questions that promoted pupils' understanding of a fair test. Teachers take the opportunity in science to consolidate pupils' learning in areas of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy and personal and social education. In all classes pupils worked in mixed gender groups. All work is marked, some beside pupils and some with very detailed comments, which helps to promote thought and move pupils' learning on.
106. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and teaches with great flair and skill. As yet there has been very little time allocated for the sharing of the expertise of skilled teachers in the subject and there has been too little systematic monitoring of work in classrooms or of completed work. The senior management team and the governing body recognise the need for a greater sharing of expertise by all teachers. They understand the need for a thorough programme of monitoring, of work in all classrooms, by the co-ordinator, in order to ensure a consistent approach and to maintain the overall enhanced standard of science throughout the school. The monitoring of planning is an improving feature, which is already contributing to raising standards. There is a revised science policy based on the recommendations of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) that includes effective and manageable strategies for whole-school assessment. The work provided for in the new scheme ensures continuity and progression across both key stages. The previous inspection indicated that there was a need to develop a detailed scheme of work and to develop assessment and recording procedures. These issues have now been addressed successfully. The school makes good use of teacher assessments in Key Stage 1. Teacher assessment combined with optional standard attainment tests in Key Stage 2 enables

teachers to track the progress of all pupils and to set appropriate and challenging targets for them as individuals and in groups. Resources, including books, are satisfactory for the delivery of the National Curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

107. In addition to the lessons seen in art and design, overall judgements take account of analyses of pupils' work and teachers' plans, displays around the school and discussion with staff and pupils. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations. Some of the work observed was better than this and had good features. This represents the maintenance of standards since the last inspection, with improvement in some aspects such as three-dimensional work.
108. Pupils in classes 1 and 2 learn well, using a variety of techniques and the best work shows good features. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to use different materials. Pupils communicate ideas using a wide range of media and techniques in their work. They have completed self-portraits after careful observation using mirrors and, with painstaking attention to detail, in matching skin tones. Sketchbooks are used for investigations of different types of lines, which are then used in pattern and design. The sketchbooks do not as yet contain enough examples of work to reflect earlier experiences nor do they provide sufficient stimulus for new work and the progression of skills. Links with history and religious education are evident in attractive and careful designs of a church and in individual illustrated books about the different stages of pupils' lives. Attractive covers have been designed using a computer program.
109. By the time pupils are eleven the work of the majority is at least in line with that found in most schools and some is above average. Junior pupils build effectively on the work in the earlier classes and some work has good features. Pupils have explored the intentions of artists such as Paul Klee to produce effective designs related to the artist's style and to the context in which he worked. In an in-depth study of the Tudors, pupils have used a range of materials and techniques to produce careful and attractive work, including weaving, designs in stained glass and illuminated manuscripts. At the end of the key stage pupils have undertaken detailed observational drawings, linked with work in science, with great care and skill. The quality of this work is better than average. Pupils identify problems encountered by completing useful evaluation sheets, but again work in sketchbooks is not sufficiently well developed to reflect systematic work and progression. Pupils use computer programs well to produce a range of designs and pictures. The work, learning and progress made by pupils with special educational needs match that of their classmates at both key stages.
110. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school and in one lesson seen it was very good. The work completed reflects careful planning and a growing interest in the subject. Assessment is ongoing and pupils receive technical advice and encouragement in order to help them to improve their work. Reports to parents indicate the specific skills that children are developing in art and design. In the best lesson seen, pupils' progress resulted from a high level of teacher expertise together with high expectations. Pupils enjoy the subject and work hard. In the lessons their behaviour was good.
111. Resources for art are satisfactory overall although some shortages were identified during the inspection. The subject is led effectively by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is currently selecting from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documentation throughout the school using the ideas as a basis for the school's scheme of work. She is well informed and has the necessary skills to move the subject forward.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. As most of the classes were being taught art this half term it was only possible to observe Year 2 pupils in design and technology lessons. However by looking at finished products and talking to pupils and teachers it is clear that attainment is as expected at the ages of seven and eleven. Standards are similar to those of the last inspection.

113. Pupils from an early age are taught the correct design processes. They plan their work, consider materials, change and adapt their work to overcome problems, produce a good quality finished product and evaluate the success of their efforts. Year 1 make night-lights with leaded lights in readiness for Christmas. They work in small groups to bake bread, designing and making a recipe book in which they write the ingredients and make notes on the methods used. Year 2 design and make a fruit salad, again they work in small groups with a teaching assistant and enjoy eating the product of their efforts. Year 3 enhance their work on the Tudors by learning how to weave, they construct Tudor houses and make clay tiles. Year 4 design and make photo frames, construct park rides using art straws and practise their sewing skills making a tree to represent the four seasons. Year 5 design and construct suspension bridges using a variety of materials and techniques. The finished products on display were excellent. Year 6 investigate methods of constructing joints and corners to give strength before constructing buildings as part of a project on shops. The work is well matched to the pupils' age and ability as they move through the school.
114. The quality of teaching, as seen in the teachers' planning and the work produced by pupils is at least satisfactory. Teachers plan work carefully and have sufficient subject knowledge to teach the pupils the relevant skills required to make the finished products. These products are highly valued by both teachers and pupils who are very happy to discuss their work.
115. The co-ordinator gives useful advice to colleagues and helps them if they are unsure as to the way to use a particular material or tool. The policy and scheme of work is at present under review. It is to the credit of the school that they have continued to cover all aspects of the subject despite the recent focus on literacy and numeracy. The school strives to link design and technology with other subjects whenever possible and this adds to the pupils' interest and enjoyment of the subject. For example Year 3 work with their Tudor houses and Year 5 and Year 6 use their knowledge of mathematics in their constructions. Resources are satisfactory. They are readily accessible and are well looked after by both staff and pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

116. Only two geography lessons were observed during the inspection but additional evidence was taken from the analysis of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator. The attainment for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 is typical of that found in most schools and of the standards found in the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn and make progress at a satisfactory rate. By the time they are seven pupils know many geographical features of the localities both near school and near their homes. They identify routes taken on the way to school and understand the purposes of many buildings in the area. They know about the two churches near to the school and name the churches where they worship.
117. The book 'Katy Morag' has been used effectively in Year 2 to help pupils compare differences in ways of life on the Isle of Struay off the coast of Scotland and on the Scottish mainland. As a result of well-planned activities, pupils identify differences in terms of geographical features: homes, transport, occupations and climate. They understand how different physical conditions affect occupations, lifestyles and the types of clothing worn. One example of this is the pupils' understanding of the different lifestyles of Katy Morag's grandmothers. Pupils extend their geographical skills to identify the countries of the United Kingdom and their understanding that Britain is an island surrounded by many smaller islands.
118. By the time they are 11 pupils extend their learning to identifying many countries of the world, the capitals of the countries and the continents. They know the positions of the equator, the Arctic and the Antarctic and the reasons for the differences in climates. Pupils consider location, climate, landscape and vegetation. As they grow older pupils develop an awareness of environmental issues ranging from rivers, to the study of climates and natural hazards. The topic on water and rivers has been appropriately extended to include topical information about the recent floods in many parts of Britain and pupils have recorded the daily rainfall in some areas: a good application of numeracy, in addition to issues concerning global warming. Discussions with pupils revealed how well they understood the parts of the river. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 describe tributaries, the source, estuary and also some of the main rivers of Great Britain, a particular

strength being their knowledge of the River Severn and the towns located near it. They also know and locate major mountain ranges, motorways and main roads. Pupils consider the uses of water and gain a greater understanding of its uses in farming, industry and leisure. Most pupils use atlases well and recognise a range of mapping symbols.

119. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on teaching. However, the analysis of pupils' work shows that geographical facts are taught well, although there is too little evidence to demonstrate sufficient opportunities for independent recording.
120. The curriculum co-ordinator provides sound leadership, a particular strength being the level of curricular guidance, the methods with which she has incorporated Curriculum 2000 into an effective and progressive curriculum and has given clear guidelines. She has benefited from attendance at a course on the introduction of the new curriculum, has audited the available resources well and identified the resources which are needed in order to meet the needs of the newly-planned curriculum. The budget for geography is managed well and, during the inspection, she took the time to find out which information and communication technology resources were available in the computer suite. When geography becomes part of the school development plan she is well placed to further extend and improve both the curricular provision and standards.

HISTORY

121. No history lessons were observed being taught at Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and teachers. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in history is in line with national expectations. Some of the work observed was better than this and had good features. This represents an overall maintenance of standards since the last inspection, with some improvement.
122. Infant pupils learn well, the sound investigative skills and sense of curiosity cultivated at the Foundation Stage prepares them well for work on their own family trees and time-lines. Pupils have researched the Christian and surnames of parents and grandparents and are developing a sense of chronology placing events and objects in order. At the end of the key stage, they use relevant sources of evidence including, photographs, pictures, books and information provided by older people in the community, to investigate changes in shops in Denton. They are able to describe the differences between the past and present by studying the history of St. Mary's church and school.
123. Junior pupils make satisfactory progress. At the beginning of the key stage, they recognise that the past can be divided into different periods of time. When working on a Tudor topic, they draw comparisons between living and hygiene for the rich and the poor in Tudor times and in present day homes. They make effective links between history, art and religious education producing attractive stained glass window designs and illuminated manuscripts of a high standard. At the end of the key stage, pupils write informatively about artefacts found in Norway at a Viking burial site and what these objects reveal about the people buried there. They have enjoyed learning how to translate runic inscriptions for further information.
124. The learning and progress made by pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory at both key stages. Progress is better than this in those classes where teachers prepare interesting and different work that is closely matched to pupils' abilities. In a few isolated instances small groups of pupils capable of higher attainment are insufficiently challenged and, then, too little is expected of them.
125. Based on the small number of lessons seen and a scrutiny of teachers' plans, the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in all lessons there are good features. Teachers plan and prepare well and use appropriate artefacts to stimulate pupils' interest. Much work is based on worksheets, which are usually interesting and matched very well to the topic being studied. However in a few instances the work offered by the sheets repeated that already undertaken by pupils. Teachers assess understanding and help pupils to improve their work through taxing questioning and discussion. During the inspection some introductory sessions seemed to be rather long, although they invariably sustained pupils' interest and maintained their eagerness to

learn. At the end of lessons, what had been learned was reviewed and these closing sessions were effective. In most lessons the good behaviour of all pupils contributed to the positive atmosphere and the good work produced. In one particular lesson pupils told the teacher how much they had enjoyed the lesson.

126. The history co-ordinator is well informed and has the necessary knowledge and skills to take the subject forward. Materials from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance are currently being used selectively as the basis for improving the present scheme of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average overall. Opportunities to use pupils' skills using computers, calculators and listening centres are used effectively in lessons across the curriculum. Where pupils have benefited from good experiences and good teaching they are confident using skills learned in this subject across the curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs have access to computers in the classroom to support their work in literacy and numeracy.
128. In classes at Key Stage 1 standards match those expected for the pupils' age. Pupils use computers for word processing, numeracy and mathematics reinforcement activities and painting programs. They are confident as they explain how information and communication technology is useful in many areas of every day life. Pupils explain about bar-code readers, video recorders and facsimile machines as well as remote controls for toys and household and leisure equipment.
129. The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with that expected for pupils of their age except in communication skills using e-mail and the Internet. Pupils are confident using keyboard skills and change fonts, style and colour as they enhance their written work. Pupils' use of programs for modelling and control technology is developing very well. Opportunities to develop skills in drafting and editing work are being developed rapidly now that the computer suite, in operation for just two weeks at the time of the inspection, is being used successfully. Pupils use computers and calculators readily when working with data and display their results using bar graphs and pie charts. However, because the new computer suite is still waiting to be connected to the Internet, except for those pupils with access to the World Wide Web outside school, most pupils' present standards in this element of the curriculum, are below the level expected by the end of the junior phase.
130. The teaching seen, almost all at Key Stage 2, was never less than good. Teachers at both key stages are confident in teaching those areas of the subject currently available for pupils in the school. Additional training has been planned for 2001, through the new opportunities programme, to extend the knowledge and understanding of all teachers in the use of the Internet and in communication with other schools using e-mail facilities. This work to increase the awareness of teachers about the extended use of the subject to support learning in other areas across the curriculum is eagerly awaited by teachers and pupils.
131. The subject co-ordinator is well informed and has prepared an effective scheme of work to support all teachers. The scheme now plans for all pupils to have full access to the entire range of activities in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Until this year the evaluation of skills learned and records of how pupils used their knowledge and understanding in the classroom, depended on the understanding of individual teachers. Assessment procedures are now structured effectively and the overview of pupils' increased attainments is beginning to be used to plan future stages for development. Resources are now good but the school's place in the programme to develop the National Grid for Learning has meant that this is a new situation as many of the computers in the classrooms are prone to breakdown and many programs regularly crash, spoiling pupils' work.
132. The school has made satisfactory progress in the development of the subject since the last inspection but the delay in the completion of the computer suite, which has been outside the control of the teachers, has caused some delay in pupils' progress.

MUSIC

133. Standards in music are broadly in line with those seen nationally for seven- and 11-year-old pupils. This judgement reflects the findings of the previous inspection where the strength was in singing but other aspects of the curriculum were under-represented.
134. Although few lessons were observed during the inspection, evidence is taken from listening to pupils sing during assembly, discussions with pupils, discussions with the co-ordinator and headteacher, and a careful analysis of teachers' plans.
135. Pupils' skills in Year 2 are exemplified by their understanding of pitch and dynamics and their ability to maintain an accurate rhythmic beat using a wide range of untuned percussion instruments. Because they listen attentively, pupils sing with accurate pitch and varying dynamics following the teacher's lead well. These skills were well developed in a Year 1 class where pupils sang a range of nursery rhymes with accurate pitch and played percussion instruments at levels higher than those expected for pupils of this age. A further strength of pupils' work in this lesson was their ability to maintain the steady beat in groups and know the precise moment when they should participate and also when to stop.
136. By the time they are 11 years old, pupils' skills in singing are well developed. This was reflected during hymn practice when pupils sang a wide variety of hymns with different styles from the celebratory to the reflective, the spiritual and one which had a distinctive Eastern style. They demonstrate a well-developed sense of performance, listen attentively to one another and sing with accurate pitch, a good dynamic range and a sensitive awareness of the type of hymn. Breath control and articulation are good and pupils are prepared to persevere in order to improve their performance. Singing is a particular strength of the musical skills of the pupils and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In the lesson observed the overall quality of group performance using untuned percussion was below the levels expected for pupils of this age group, although one group of pupils reflected the feeling and emotion of water in their tone poem based on 'Floods'. Some pupils in Year 6 know conventional notation for crotchets, quavers and minims, and read a given range of instructions accurately. In listening to and appraising music, especially from 'Carnival of the Animals' by Saint-Saëns, the majority of pupils develop an appropriate understanding of how musical styles and instruments are used to communicate moods and effects. A good example of this was their discussion of the effects of instrumentation used in the focus on 'Elephants' from this music.
137. Insufficient lessons were observed during the inspection in order to make a judgement about teaching, but from the evidence of assemblies and hymn practice, teachers have good personal skills in accompaniment and manage pupils well. Because of this, the quality of learning throughout the school is good in singing, and pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. However, there are insufficient planned activities in lessons at Key Stage 2 to develop and extend the musical skills of the pupils who have brass lessons. The use of tuned percussion instruments, a progressive development of reading musical scores and listening to and appraising music are at this stage underdeveloped.

138. In most cases, pupils have positive attitudes to music. They are well behaved and keen to succeed, especially in singing. Groups of pupils interviewed were very enthusiastic about the African music they played when a person who had lived in Kenya visited school to discuss the culture of the country including the music. They remembered some of the songs and the instruments they played.
139. Although there are performances at Christmas and pupils know many hymns associated with festivals and special occasions, music does not have a sufficiently high profile within the school. There is no regular choir although, when prepared for special events, pupils sing tunefully with evident enjoyment. Music at the start and end of assembly and collective worship is not a significant feature and is not consistently incorporated into the worship or spiritual elements of the periods of reflection. Although a small number of pupils have free brass tuition when a governor and the headteacher make very good contributions, instrumental work is not sufficiently well developed. At this stage there is a policy for music and the school acknowledges the need for a comprehensive scheme of work which gives structured guidance for all teachers in the progression of skills. There are sufficient untuned percussion instruments including some from other cultures. However, there are insufficient tuned percussion instruments including keyboards and there is only a very narrow range of music for listening and appraising. The school recognises the need to develop an effective scheme of work and improve the attainment and progress in all aspects of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. During the inspection pupils were observed in gymnastics, swimming, dance and games lessons, in which they make progress which is at least good and often very good. The full range of physical activity including athletics is undertaken over the year and pupils have some opportunities to engage in more adventurous activities on their residential visit to Kingswood Activity Centre in the summer term. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 participate in swimming lessons. This is a very popular activity in the school, which has close ties with the town's swimming club. Most pupils achieve the level expected in swimming and many attain very high levels by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with the majority of their peers. The very good level of support available to all pupils with special educational needs was clearly demonstrated in a Year 3/4 class when the teacher was observed providing very good support and encouragement to a pupil with tasks well suited to the pupil's abilities. Throughout the school standards have improved since the time of the last inspection. This is due to a better standard of teaching.
141. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils change into their physical education kit with the minimum of fuss. Year 1 pupils use a recorded broadcast to help with their dance lesson. Pupils gradually build up a sequence of movements when creating a dance, which fits the music. Pupils in Year 2 were observed transferring the movements they practised on the floor to the apparatus. Pupils know they can use any of the apparatus at any time providing there is no queuing. This encourages them think carefully about the sequence they want to explore. Year 3 pupils perform excellent country dances. They remember the dance routines very well and enjoy taking turns to perform for their friends. In their gymnastics lesson Year 4 pupils can jump off boxes and planks landing with good control. During the lesson all pupils make good progress in their learning. Pupils make use of all the equipment, enjoy watching each other perform and applaud spontaneously when one of their number is successful in completing a difficult movement. Year 5 and Year 6 combine well for their games and swimming lessons. With the help of the headteacher and a volunteer helper pupils are able to learn skills in rugby, soccer, hockey and small ball games. These lessons are very well organised on a rota basis throughout the year with the addition of athletics in the summer term. Pupils are very fortunate to have such a wide range of expert tuition available.
142. The school organises a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which are very well organised, and much appreciated by both pupils and parents. Teachers give a great deal of their time to organising these sessions and very good training is provided for the large number of pupils who take advantage of these opportunities which are open to both sexes. During the week of the inspection many pupils took part in a variety of sports and the girls played a local school at

netball.

143. Pupils' attitudes to these lessons are almost always very good and are never less than good. Pupils clearly enjoy the opportunity to engage in physical activity and all pupils behave well, even when they have to sit still, listening to the teacher or waiting their turn to demonstrate. They all follow safety rules well, clearly understanding the need to warm up before and cool down after exercise. They co-operate sensibly with one another in pairs and in small groups and use their initiative and imagination creatively.
144. The quality of teaching is never less than good with seven out of ten lessons observed being very good and one lesson judged to be excellent. Teachers are always dressed appropriately and all have secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. In the lessons observed, all teachers demanded constant effort from the pupils in order to extend their movements and skills beyond a satisfactory level. Teachers invariably insist on pupils striving for a higher level or press for a more imaginative response. Teachers provide a good variety of warm up exercises, often in the form of simple games, which the pupils enjoy. All teachers have good control and very good rapport with their pupils. This makes pupils want to co-operate and do their best, resulting in very good progress being made in lessons. This was most noticeable in the Year 5/6 swimming lesson when, with very good tuition provided by the class teacher and the two swimming instructors, pupils made very good progress in their learning.
145. The staff has worked hard to address the areas for improvement suggested in the last inspection report. There is no system of assessment in place but pupils' progress is reported to parents annually. The facilities for physical education are good with the hard surface areas well marked out for a variety of games, a reasonable sized hall and a playing field. Resources are organised effectively and there is a wide range of good quality equipment.