

INSPECTION REPORT

BUTTERSTILE PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Grove, Prestwich

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105297

Acting Headteacher: Mrs K O'Doherty

Reporting inspector: Revd Malcolm Childs
OFSTED No: 20142

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 November 2000

Inspection number: 224165

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Grove Prestwich Manchester
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Wallworth
Date of previous inspection:	27 – 30 April 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Malcolm Childs (OFSTED No: 20142)	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it?
		Design and technology	How high are standards?
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Helen Barter (OFSTED No: 14032)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Morag Thorpe (OFSTED No: 15236)	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curriculum opportunities offered to pupils?
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	
Robert Allen (OFSTED No: 23413)	Team inspector	English	
		Music	
Valerie Roberts (OFSTED No: 8420)	Team inspector	Under Fives	
		Science	
		Art	
Sue Macintosh (OFSTED No: 20368)	Team inspector	Religious education	
		Geography	
		History	
		Equality of opportunity	
		English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Butterstile Primary School is situated at the extreme southern edge of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, close to its borders with Manchester and Salford. The area served by the school is wide and is one of mixed local authority, housing association and private housing. The proportion of pupils coming from different areas has been changing over time and 28 per cent of pupils now come from areas where high levels of social deprivation have been identified. Pupils' social backgrounds are mixed, but the social circumstances of most may best be described as average; the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average, at 12 per cent.

The number of pupils on roll has fallen from 402 at the time of the last inspection to 350, but remains larger than the national average of 243 pupils. There are 194 boys and 156 girls. Forty-five pupils come from ethnic minorities and have English as an additional language; three are at an early stage of English acquisition. This is a much higher figure than for the majority of schools. The proportion of pupils who have been identified as requiring additional support because they have some degree of special educational need is 16 per cent and there are two pupils with a statement of educational need, both of which are below the national averages.

Attainment on entry into the reception year is below that typical of children under five, with the exception of their personal, social and emotional development.¹

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Butterstile Primary School is an improving and effective school which has been successful in making significant progress since the last inspection. The leadership and management of the school are good and have been the key factors in the improvements that have been achieved in almost all aspects of school life. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in English and science is average and it is above in mathematics. The quality of teaching is good, pupils make good progress overall and the school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2.
- Standards are high in art in Key Stage 2 and in physical education.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The leadership and management have been effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and the social environment of the school.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- The partnership with parents is well developed.
- The moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is promoted effectively.
- The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils, and their care and support are good.

What could be improved

- Individual target setting for pupils is at a very early and limited stage of development.
- The direct monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators.

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

At the time of the last inspection, and subsequently when the school was monitored, it was judged to have serious weaknesses. The level of improvement is such that this is no longer the case.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

¹ The six areas of learning studied by children under five are: personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

The school was last inspected in April 1998 and was judged to have serious weaknesses. A monitoring visit by two additional inspectors in September 1999 confirmed that the school continued to have serious weaknesses. It follows that the positive improvements identified in this report have taken place within a relatively short space of time and the governing body, acting headteacher and staff are to be commended for the progress they have made.

In both 1998 and 1999 the leadership and management of the school were judged to be weak. There was insufficient direction, and management structures were only partly effective. Of particular concern was the poor progress that appeared to have been made between the end of the initial inspection and the subsequent monitoring visit. Decisive action by the governing body, the appointment of an able acting headteacher and the high quality input of a temporary supporting headteacher have meant that the leadership and the management of the school are now providing a clear sense of direction, with an appropriate emphasis on maintaining and raising levels of attainment across the curriculum. The acting headteacher has a clear vision of the school's needs and she works well with her acting deputy and senior management team. The co-ordination of English, mathematics, science, religious education, art and physical education is good and it is satisfactory in all other subjects. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. Planning and work completed are closely monitored.

A satisfactory scheme of work is in place for information technology, based on national guidance, and this is being evaluated over this school year. All elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are in place and teachers have secure subject knowledge. A computer suite was installed during the last school year and is used satisfactorily to support pupils' information and communication technology skills. Further resources, including a digital camera, have just arrived in school. Staff have received appropriate training, weekly support is available, and further training is planned.

An assessment co-ordinator has been appointed and the way in which National Curriculum test results are analysed is rigorous. This information is used to determine the school's educational priorities. Monitoring and assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science; however, there is considerable inconsistency of assessment practice in other subjects. Some teachers are using the good procedures that have been put in place for the non-core subjects and religious education more effectively than others. The school is in process of refining these procedures in order to provide effective individual targets for pupils in all subjects that should improve the quality of learning and raise standards of attainment further. Pupils with special educational needs have targets set for them that are appropriate and achievable. Staff make good use of them when planning their lessons.

Pupils with English as an additional language are supported appropriately and they make good progress. This is because of valuable support from the local authority's specialist teacher, the quality of teachers' planning and the effective use of bi-lingual classroom assistants.

The partnership with parents is now good. They support their children well through their backing for homework, especially hearing their children read. Some help in classrooms and attend school trips. Attendance at curriculum meetings and parents' consultation evenings is high. There is also an active and well-run parents' association that makes a significant contribution through its fundraising activities. The school now meets the statutory requirement to inform parents about its policy in relation to sex education.

The school is judged to have made good progress since September 1999.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				
	all schools			similar schools	
				Prior Attainment	Free School Meals
	1998	1999	2000	2000	2000
English	E	B	C	A	C
Mathematics	C	B	B	A	B
Science	E	B	C	A	C

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has varied over time. It rose in English and science significantly between 1998 and 1999 and declined slightly in 2000 when the results were average when compared with all schools and with similar schools.² Significant progress was also made in mathematics between 1998 and 1999, with more modest improvement between 1999 and 2000 when attainment remained above average, both in comparison with all schools and in comparison with similar schools.

When the prior attainment at Key Stage 1 of the pupils who took the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum assessments in 2000 is taken into consideration, the progress that they made was well above average. This is a very important indicator, showing that the school is making effective educational provision in all three core subjects and that the progress made is amongst the highest 25 per cent of schools nationally and the evidence of the inspection is that levels of progress are continuing to rise.

The school has consistently met and exceeded its published targets for English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2

Pupils also make good progress and achieve well across the school in physical education, and in Key Stage 2 in art. Progress is satisfactory and attainment is average in religious education and all other subjects, with the exception of design and technology, where satisfactory progress is being made but where levels of attainment are below average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and there is very little anti-social behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have good relationships with each other and with staff. They work together well, respect others and enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Levels of attendance are in line with national averages. A few pupils are regularly late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

² Schools where more than eight per cent and up to 20 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

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

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

Taking into account all the evidence available, and especially the very good progress pupils made between the ends of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, was good or better in 48 per cent and very good or better in 24 per cent. In three per cent of lessons it was excellent and in four per cent unsatisfactory. This is a very substantial improvement on the last inspection, when only in five per cent of lessons was teaching very good, in the majority satisfactory and in 11 per cent unsatisfactory.

Examples of good or better teaching were seen in all year groups, although the proportion of good teaching was greater in Key Stage 2. The strong features of teaching include good subject knowledge, high teacher expectations and good management of pupils. High expectations by teachers make an important contribution to the very good progress in Key Stage 2.

Teaching in the core subject of English ranged from satisfactory to excellent; the majority of the teaching good or better and half very good or better. Pupils make good progress between entry into the reception year and the end of Key Stage 2, with the rate of progress greater in Key Stage 2. Effective teaching of literacy is making an important contribution to the development of this subject and to other subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

Good teaching is leading to good progress in mathematics and science between entry into the Foundation Stage and the end of Key Stage 2. Very good progress in Key Stage 2 is built upon the secure foundations laid in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Effective teaching of numeracy means that aspects of subjects such as design and technology, geography and science, where computational skills are required, are being supported well. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in mathematics in the majority of lessons observed, and was very good or better in a quarter. Two unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In science the majority of lessons were satisfactory or better and only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Teaching in nearly half of lessons was good or better. The quality of the best lessons reflected those observed in English, but the unsatisfactory lessons had difficulties that arose from lack of pace and challenge, and weaknesses in pupil management.

No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in other subjects, and good or better teaching was observed in all subjects, with the exception of art and information and communication technology where only a small number of lessons were seen. Teachers are using information and communication technology with increasing confidence to support other subjects in the curriculum apart from music, physical education and religious education.

Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 provides an effective base for the very good progress taking place in Key Stage 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory throughout the school. Good in physical education. Literacy and numeracy have been well incorporated into the curriculum and this is having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and attainment.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good, both in support within the class and in small groups. Targets are specific on individual education plans and records are well maintained.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. An externally funded part-time support teacher and two bi-lingual support assistants provide specialist expertise. They work productively alongside teachers in class to ensure that pupils in the earlier stages of acquiring English have full access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision across the school is good, with particular improvement in the provision for moral, social and cultural development since the last inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and supportive environment and looks after pupils' needs well. Procedures for promoting responsible behaviour and attendance are good. The assessment of academic progress is satisfactory, but target setting for individual pupils needs further development across the curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and senior management team are providing a clear sense of direction that has successfully addressed all the issues that led to the school's previous identification as having serious weaknesses. Opportunities for monitoring science, information and communication technology and religious education were also provided in the planned observation of teaching included in the School Improvement Plan.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body has a clear strategic vision for the development of the school and has worked closely with the senior management and staff to address all the issues identified at the time of the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The work done to address the areas of weakness identified at the time of the last inspection has been very thorough.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory, overall. There are sufficient teaching and support staff to ensure that the curriculum can be taught effectively. The school uses funding well to ensure that enough resources are accessible and available. Accommodation is satisfactory, although there is no purpose-designed play area for the under fives.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are expected to work hard. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • They are comfortable approaching the staff. • Their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range and availability of extra-curricular activities. • The information available to parents. • The amount of homework. • The way the school works with parents.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by the majority of parents. The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and has been improving over time: nevertheless, the provision is better for pupils in Key Stage 2 than it is for younger pupils. With the exception of the annual progress report the information provided to parents is comprehensive. The amount of homework set is generally satisfactory but there is some inconsistency between classes and year groups. Most parents recognise the progress that the school has been making, and the school is working increasingly closely with them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

How high are standards?

The Foundation Stage

1. The school has no nursery provision, and while many children have enjoyed pre-school experience in a nursery or playgroup elsewhere, several have not. Children are admitted to the reception classes at the start of the school year in which they become five.
2. A detailed assessment of their knowledge and skills is carried out during the first half of the autumn term. This shows that for the majority, attainment in all areas of learning³, apart from personal and social development, is below that typically found among children of this age. However, skills in personal, social and emotional development are generally above those that are typical. This has been the pattern over a number of years, although the proportion of children of below average attainment has been gradually increasing over time.
3. Although the previous inspection report indicated that pupils were making good progress and were on target to achieve all the desirable learning outcomes⁴ by the age of five, the increasing demands for formal recording in Key Stage 1 have shown that weaknesses still continue in language and literacy. The school has taken effective steps to address this weakness through a focus on speaking and listening. In previous years, pupils have entered Key Stage 1 with below average skills, especially in language and literacy, and this has impacted on standards at the end of Key Stage 1.
4. The majority of teaching observed was satisfactory, and some was good. The progress being made by the present reception year is good and, if maintained, means that the majority of the children are on target to achieve all the early learning goals⁵, including language and literacy, by the time they become five. This will be a significant improvement in phonic knowledge.
5. The quality of learning and levels of attainment are limited to some degree by the lack of a secure outside area that can act as a natural extension of the indoor classroom and by limitations imposed by the classrooms themselves, where insufficient space is created to offer the stimulating range of activities young children need. The school has identified these weaknesses as an area requiring development over the coming year.

Key Stage 1

6. Pupils' attainment in the statutory National Curriculum tests and assessments in reading has declined steadily since 1997, in part because of changes in the school's intake and in part because of other difficulties that the school was facing which meant that this decline was more difficult to address. Although the evidence available suggests that pupils were making satisfactory progress, the standards being achieved reflected the below average attainment in language and

³ The curriculum for children under five is divided into the following areas: Personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

⁴ The desirable learning outcomes make up the knowledge and skills that children were expected to learn in the different areas of learning, prior to the introduction of the Foundation Stage in September 2000.

⁵ These are the skills that children are expected to learn by the time they are five in each area of learning.

literacy of pupils entering Year 1. In 2000 attainment fell below the national average for the first time.

7. Standards in writing declined between 1997 and 1998, when they were below the national average. Between 1998 and 2000 there has been slow but steady improvement, although standards have remained below the national average.
8. In mathematics, where language has had less effect on standards, there was a decline between 1997 and 1999, when attainment was below the national average for the first time. Attainment improved in 2000 in line with improvement nationally and was close to but below the national average.
9. When compared with similar schools,⁶ attainment at the end of the key stage was well below average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. In addition, in 2000 and earlier years the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3⁷ was below the national average.
10. Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the attainment of girls was better in reading and mathematics than that achieved by boys, with both boys and girls attaining a similar level in writing.⁸ No significant differences in attainment were noted during the inspection in any of these subjects.
11. There are no statutory tests in science, but on the basis of teacher assessments the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 and above in 2000 was well below the national average, although the proportion of pupils attaining level 3 was average. When compared with similar schools the proportion attaining level 2 or above remains well below average, with the proportion attaining the higher level 3 being below average.
12. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and is the most significant factor in improvements in the quality of learning that pupils are now experiencing. Although progress observed in lessons was generally satisfactory, attainment is judged to be average and, if maintained, should result in improved results in the statutory tests and assessments in all three subjects at the end of this school year. There is evidence that teachers are now planning more effectively to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils.
13. In English, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed by the end of the key stage, while those in reading show a wide range of attainment which is average overall; their skills in writing in a range of different forms is also average. In mathematics pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of numbers up to 100, with higher attainers extending their knowledge to 1000. In science, pupils are gaining early scientific skills through controlled investigations connected to sources of light and they build upon their previous knowledge well.
14. Progress is satisfactory and levels of attainment are average for other subjects with the exception of physical education, where progress is good and attainment is above average.

Key Stage 2

15. Attainment in the statutory tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 fell between 1996 and 1998 in English, mathematics and science. Attainment fell below national averages in all three subjects in 1998, the year when the school was identified as having serious weaknesses. Significant improvement took place in all three subjects between 1998 and 1999, when attainment

⁶ Schools where the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is greater than eight per cent and up to 20 per cent.

⁷ The target level at the end of Key Stage 1 is level 2. This Level is subdivided into levels 2C, 2B and 2A. Higher attaining pupils may attain level 3 and very exceptionally level 4.

⁸ The performance of boys in reading fell below the national average, while that for girls was slightly above. The performance of boys in mathematics was below the national average while that for girls was in line. The performance of both boys and girls in writing was below the national average.

rose well above the national average, and when compared with similar schools was also well above average.

16. Attainment in English declined slightly in the 2000 statutory tests and assessments so that it was in line with the national average, which had risen significantly since 1998. Attainment in mathematics rose slightly, but at a slower rate than the national average, and attainment in science remained constant, while the national average rose significantly. Attainment in mathematics remained above the national average, while that for science was average, in comparison with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, attainment in mathematics was above average, while attainment in English and science was average. At first sight the results for 2000 appear to indicate that standards have failed to develop as they should in comparison with those achieved at the end of 1999. However, further analysis shows that when the results which these Year 6 pupils achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 are taken into account, according to nationally published data they have made well above average progress. This places them in the top twenty-five per cent when compared with similar schools nationally. The high level of progress made is a direct result of the improved teaching across the key stage and inspection evidence suggests that levels of progress over time are continuing to improve.
17. More effective planning for higher attaining pupils has resulted in the proportion of pupils attaining level 5 being above the national average in mathematics and science and only slightly below in English.⁹ Taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the performance of boys in English and science was better than that of girls, while their performance in mathematics was similar.¹⁰ No significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls was evident during the inspection.
18. In English, pupils in Year 6 are writing well, especially higher attainers. The majority write fluently and in a variety of different forms, from imaginative prose to poetry and factual reporting. They are enthusiastic readers. Pupils in Year 6 are confident mathematicians. They enjoy challenging work in numeracy and some mental mathematics sessions are both stimulating and demanding. They are on target to maintain above average levels of attainment by the end of the year. In science, pupils' attainment is above average. They confidently carry out experiments and by the end of the key stage they have a good understanding of the meaning of a fair test - for example, devising experiments to show that air resistance slows down the different parachutes that they have designed, using skills developed in design and technology.
19. Pupils make very good progress in art and physical education and they achieve standards above national expectations by the end of the key stage. Progress in other subjects is satisfactory and attainment is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education and, with the exception of design and technology, with national expectations in all other subjects.

English as an additional language and special educational needs

20. Ethnic minority pupils and pupils with English as an additional language achieve on a par with other pupils in national tests at ages 7 and 11. They perform as well in English as in mathematics and science.
21. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of well-focused teaching and good quality support. Care is taken to ensure that pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and provided with individual programmes of work. These are rigidly observed in planning, teaching and recording levels of success.

⁹ The target level for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is level 4. Higher attaining pupils should achieve level 5, or very exceptionally level 6.

¹⁰ The performance of boys exceeded the national average in all three subjects, while only in mathematics did girls do so. The performance of girls in English and science fell below the national average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

22. Since the last inspection, pupils have maintained their good attitudes in lessons and their good standards of behaviour. There is a happy atmosphere in the school and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school life and to their learning. Nearly all parents feel that pupils' behaviour is good and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Parents say that pupils show respect for one another and are understanding of those who have individual difficulties. They are pleased that the school is involving pupils in discussions about behaviour and feel that this is helping to increase personal development. As a result of recent improvements in the school, almost all parents say that their children are much happier and that they really enjoy learning.
23. Overall, attendance at school is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the levels of attendance have improved in line with the national trend and match the nationally expected minimum attendance level of 95 per cent. There is little unauthorised absence, although the school has identified an increase in the numbers who have holidays during term time. Although most pupils arrive in time for registration and the start of school, there is still a small number who are regularly late.
24. Children who are under five are well settled into the routines of school and most are well behaved. They are happy to come into the classroom and are keen to take part in the activities provided for them. They are confident and are learning to get on with others. They are developing independence and are able to carry out tasks on their own, such as taking the register to the office.
25. Pupils have good attitudes to school and most are enthusiastic about their work and school life. They are cheerful and confident in the classroom and around the school. In lessons, they concentrate on their tasks, maintain interest and listen well to their teachers. Pupils work hard and show good levels of personal motivation to improve their work. This makes a significant contribution to their success and the progress that they make. In some lessons pupils are very animated about what they are doing and although they can become noisy, it is because they are enthusiastic about what they are doing. For example, they particularly enjoy opportunities to 'brainstorm' their ideas and, in one lesson, were very excited as they worked together to devise 'silly sentences' to show their understanding of alliteration. In physical education lessons, pupils show particularly good concentration and commitment to their work. There are a few occasions when some become restless, noisy or behave inappropriately in lessons. This occurs when they are provided with work which is not well matched to their abilities: pupils do not know what to do, seek attention from their teacher and the frequent interruptions hinder their progress. These occasions are rare, however, and pupils usually maintain positive attitudes to their work.
26. Pupils' behaviour is good and is fostered through the school's consistent expectations and its emphasis on positive praise. In lessons, most behave well all of the time, although there are some isolated examples of pupils making a fuss when they are not sure what is expected of them by the teacher. Around the school, pupils are clear about the expected standards of behaviour and move sensibly around the building. They are friendly and polite and make visitors to the school feel welcome by greeting them, holding doors open and talking readily about their work and lives at school. In assemblies and in the dining hall they behave well and are courteous towards others. Lunchtimes are sociable, although the acoustics in the dining hall make conversation difficult. In the playground, their play is happy and lively and no incidents of bullying or unpleasant behaviour were observed during the inspection. There have been two fixed period exclusions in the last year relating to one pupil.
27. Pupils are making good progress in their personal development and relationships. Pupils and staff all work together in a caring atmosphere and this raises the quality of pupils' learning and of the life of the school. Pupils respond well to opportunities for taking responsibility; for example, acting as helpers in the classroom and taking registers to the office. A renewed focus on such opportunities has given older pupils the chance to carry out many duties around the school as prefects; these include helping in the dining room and setting the hall out for assembly. They are

confident and act responsibly and sensibly. Older pupils say that they are able to approach teachers with suggestions (for example, concerning arrangements for lunch) and that their ideas are listened to positively. There is no school council in operation, but pupils say that it is easy for them to discuss concerns with their teachers.

28. Pupils are learning to appreciate the opinions and ideas of others. They participate well in team games and are very keen that there is fair play. They work well together in collaboration; for example, when devising a dance. They work as 'response partners' and help each other to make progress. Pupils are developing independence in their learning although they are not yet fully involved in determining their targets for improvement and do not contribute to their end-of-year reports. Overall, pupils are enthusiastic about school life. They have very few dislikes and say that they are being prepared well for secondary school, particularly when organising themselves and ensuring that they get their homework done on time.
29. The personal development of pupils with special educational needs is enhanced by the knowledge of both the teaching staff and support staff. Pupils are therefore self-confident and are actively involved in their learning. Effective use of well-chosen resources that enhance their physical and learning needs further increases their abilities and confidence in participation in group and class activities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

30. Taking into account all the evidence available, and especially the very good progress pupils made between the ends of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, was good or better in 48 per cent and very good or better in 24 per cent. In three per cent of lessons it was excellent and in four per cent unsatisfactory. This is a very substantial improvement on the last inspection, when in only five per cent of lessons was teaching very good, in the majority satisfactory and in 11 per cent unsatisfactory. Good or better teaching was not confined to a year group or subject, but, taking all the evidence into account, spread across the school and the curriculum. The strong features of teaching include good subject knowledge, high teacher expectations and good management of pupils. Teaching is most effective in Key Stage 2 and this is reflected in the well above average progress that pupils make between the end of Key Stage 1 and leaving the school at the end of Year 6.
31. Teaching in the core subject of English ranged from satisfactory to excellent, with the majority of the teaching being good or better and in half the lessons seen very good or better. This represents an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection when in most lessons teaching was judged to be satisfactory and good in a few. In all the lessons observed literacy skills were being taught well and this is reflected in the above average standards being achieved by pupils in reading. In the best lessons planning is very thorough and takes into account the full range of prior attainment and builds effectively on previous work. The pace of such lessons is good: the work is challenging and engages the interest of the pupils, who respond with enthusiasm, work hard and concentrate on their work throughout the lesson. The high expectations of the teachers are reflected in the very good progress being made by pupils over time.
32. The evidence of work produced and the standards achieved in the National Curriculum tests at the ends of both key stages suggest that good teaching is leading to very good progress in mathematics and science between entry into the Foundation Stage and the end of Key Stage 2. However, progress is much better in Key Stage 2 than in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. During the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in mathematics in 83 per cent of the lessons observed and was very good or better in 25 per cent. Two unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In science teaching was satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in only one. Teaching in 45 per cent of lessons was good or better and in 18 per cent very good. The quality of the best lessons reflected those observed in English, but the unsatisfactory lessons had difficulties that arose from lack of pace and challenge, and weaknesses in pupil management. Taking all the evidence into consideration, the unsatisfactory

lessons are judged to be untypical of the usual standards of teaching of the teachers concerned. This is an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection when teaching was judged to be at least satisfactory in mathematics across the school and where it was often good in Years 4 to 6. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Teaching has also improved in science where nearly all teaching was satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, with no good teaching observed and where one lesson was unsatisfactory.

33. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in other subjects and good, or better teaching was observed in all subjects. In art, information and communication technology and design and technology only a small number of lessons were seen. Standards in physical education across the school and in art in Years 4 to 6 are very good. Teachers are using information and communication technology with increasing confidence to support other subjects in the curriculum apart from music, physical education and religious education.
34. Effective teaching of literacy is supporting the pupils' quality of learning in subjects such as geography, history and religious education, while numeracy skills are used well in subjects such as science and design and technology.
35. The improvements in teaching since the last inspection have led to pupils' intellectual, creative and physical efforts being good, overall. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and it is good where the best teaching is observed. They have a good range of curricular experience, which they are increasingly building upon to support one another. The school has recognised that joint short-term planning within year groups would lead to more equality of access to the curriculum between different classes. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science, with rigorous analysis of the statutory National Curriculum tests and non-statutory tests and assessments used by the school. However, teachers have yet to refine their use of the information gained so that clear and achievable targets for improvement can be set for all pupils in addition to those with English as an additional language or those with special educational needs. Similarly good assessment procedures have been put in place for the non-core subjects and religious education that reflect the best national guidance. However, while they are being used well by some teachers, their recent introduction means that the quality of assessment in these subjects is inconsistent overall. The school is aware of this weakness and is taking appropriate steps to ensure that staff receive further training in the effective use of assessment to inform future planning through the setting of individual targets for pupils. Overall, teachers plan efficiently, setting clear objectives that pupils are able to understand and respond to effectively.
36. Teachers' expectations are satisfactory for children under five and good for the rest of the school. Even where lessons did not achieve the highest grades the teachers were conscientiously trying to challenge their pupils in order to raise levels of attainment. In the significant proportion of good or better lessons they challenge and inspire pupils, extending their capabilities effectively. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are deepened through a wide variety of means including extended group work and the development of research skills. A number of methods are used which include whole-class teaching, group, paired and individual work. Teachers choose their methods carefully so as to gain maximum effect from their teaching. Good classroom management is illustrated by the fact that teachers are generally able to work with groups or individuals while other pupils carry on working without the need for continuous supervision.
37. The introduction of schemes of work, based on local and national guidance for all subjects, more effective curricular co-ordination and in-service training have increased teachers' competence overall, and especially in information and communication technology.
38. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The special needs co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues and effective management. There is very good partnership between teachers and support staff. The school has developed individual education plans that contain clear targets for improvement. Teachers are guided by them in classes and support staff use them effectively either in classes or in group work and they help the pupils to make significant advances in the development of their skills, especially in literacy, numeracy and social behaviour. They are also very detailed for pupils with special physical needs.

39. Pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress over a short period of time, particularly those in the early stages of learning English. Teachers are aware that they need to ensure that the learning opportunities are demanding enough, as pupils acquire more English.
40. Management of pupils was good or better in nearly two thirds of lessons seen and satisfactory in a further quarter. It was very good in a quarter of lessons and it was unsatisfactory in just three lessons, which were not typical of the teachers concerned. There is a well-formulated, positive discipline policy that is delivered consistently and effectively in all classrooms. Pupils understand what is expected of them and respond well. Indeed, discussion with pupils indicated that most pupils feel that there has been a significant improvement in the quality of discipline over the last four terms. Pupils know and understand the school and class rules, and records are kept of pupils' responses and efforts. Plenty of praise is given and is proving successful in encouraging pupils to concentrate more and try harder. All the evidence available confirms that procedures are implemented sensitively yet firmly by teachers to ensure that in most lessons the pace of working is kept high. Teachers have a great deal of patience and the good relationships that they have established mean that pupils respond well to the wide variety of learning needs. The teachers listen well to their pupils and value what they say. They are good role models for their pupils and have their respect as a result. Teachers encourage pupils to talk and express opinions.
41. The use of time is satisfactory in the majority of lessons and it is good or better in some. Only in the very small number of unsatisfactory lessons was the timing of the lesson less than satisfactory. Teachers set targets at the start of each lesson and generally ensure that these have been achieved by the end of the lesson. The pace of the work set is matched well to the targets set for the lesson. The use of support staff is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress as a result. The work of local authority funded teaching and support staff for pupils with English as an additional language is a valuable resource that has a positive effect upon the progress of these pupils. Physical resources are used well by teachers, particularly in practical mathematics, design and technology, art, information and communication technology and science lessons.
42. The quality and use of ongoing assessment to inform the next stage of learning is good in English, mathematics and science and it is developing in other subjects, where the effective procedures adopted have yet to be applied consistently by all teachers. Nevertheless, all teachers are able to identify the progress made and skills learned by individual pupils in all subjects across the curriculum. In all subjects the use of assessment to set individual targets for improvement is in the very early stages of development.
43. Some parents expressed concern about provision of homework, opinion being divided between those who felt that there was too much and those who felt that there was not enough. However, there was general agreement that provision was inconsistent both between classes and between year groups. The findings of the inspection are that there is satisfactory provision for homework throughout the school, with the main focus on literacy and numeracy, and on the reinforcement of work undertaken in class. However, there is some inconsistency in provision and the school has recognised the need to remedy this.
44. Teachers offer an increasingly wide range of extra-curricular activities and pupils enthusiastically take these up. However, parents expressed concern that they were not offered consistently across the school and the school recognises that the provision for younger pupils is more limited than that for older pupils.

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

45. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for pupils of all ages from those in the reception class to pupils who are ready to transfer to the secondary stage of education. The four principles which guide curriculum-planning - breadth, balance, relevance and differentiation¹¹ - are reflected in the school's provision. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met and the school is well placed to improve the provision when the requirements of Curriculum 2000 are fully incorporated into curricular planning. The school is taking steps to incorporate the requirements of Curriculum 2000 into the planning, which will include procedures for assessment and ensure that assessment improves the curriculum. The headteacher and senior management team and governors are well aware of the amount of time needed to plan and evaluate the planning to ensure that the curriculum matches the needs of the pupils.
46. The existing curriculum is broad and balanced. The results of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests and assessments show that pupils have made very good progress. They reflect a significant improvement on the findings of the previous report, when it was judged that the curriculum did not enable pupils to progress appropriately. Curricular planning for all aspects of physical education is good and reflects the findings of the previous inspection. This is a strength of the school and is a high profile subject. The school meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education.
47. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Specialist support, the quality of pupils' individual education plans, the monitoring by the co-ordinator and the effective links with outside agencies and parents are all good. Requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met. The school has developed a good balance between the level of support in classrooms and withdrawal from classes of pupils for the specific needs identified on their plans. They have equality of access to all subjects of the curriculum.
48. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported by an additional teacher from the local authority's Curriculum and Language Access Service for one and a half days a week, and two fully-trained bi-lingual assistants for half a day. These specialist staff work effectively with pupils in the classroom alongside the teacher, to support pupils' learning and understanding.
49. The National Literacy Strategy is well incorporated into curricular planning in all classes and is reflected in the structure of literacy lessons. It is increasing confidence in reading and the emphasis given to specialist vocabulary in, for example, mathematics and science, as well as improving work in subjects such as geography, history and religious education.
50. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and has included an appropriate amount of teacher training, good resource provision and has increased pupils' competence in numeracy, especially the mental aspect at Key Stage 2. Pupils' numeracy skills are successfully developed throughout the school in other subjects, good examples being creating of timelines for history and physical education, pupils' understanding of data in mathematics and science.
51. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. Work is usually matched to pupils' capabilities. The school monitors attainment of boys and girls and teachers take care to ensure that both groups are equally involved but the neither dominates in discussions or practical activities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported and participate well in the school's activities.
52. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator is currently undertaking training to help her to develop PSHE throughout the school, including aspects of citizenship. Although there are no timetabled lessons in PSHE, pupils' personal and social development is effectively promoted through the school's

¹¹ Differentiation means that the school provides different kinds of work that builds upon the prior attainment of each pupil across the ability range, from those with special educational needs to the highest attainers.

strategies for reward of positive behaviour and attitudes. 'Circle time'¹² in some classes and themes in assemblies are effectively used to consider issues such as friendship, bullying, sharing and caring for others. Sex education and drugs awareness are satisfactorily taught through the science curriculum. The school also receives good support from the police liaison officer for its work on pupil safety, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. Pupils' health is promoted through aspects of the science curriculum through, for example, topics on healthy eating and dental hygiene. Resources for PSHE are limited but adequate. The co-ordinator knows where improvements need to be made and has bid for funding from the school's budget.

53. The school strongly cultivates pupils' personal development with provision being good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the provision for moral, social and cultural development. The school complies with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.
54. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Occasions are planned for pupils to reflect on the wonder of the world around them in assemblies. These contain a good balance of experiences, which contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development - quiet concentration, well-chosen music, and opportunities for reflection. In one assembly, the good quality of discussion engendered awe, wonder and happiness that were obvious from the reactions of the pupils. In an ensuing prayer, the acting headteacher successfully developed the theme of wonder from the rainbow to the sky vapour trails and the wonder of the flight of aircraft. Pupils responded well and listened attentively. There are also occasions in lessons when pupils show delight and wonder in sharing what they know. For example, in a religious education lesson, one pupil declared, 'I just get so excited when I talk about my faith', after telling the class about the Muslim festival of Eid. However, overall there are too few occasions for pupils to learn about the wonder of the world around them.
55. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. A strong moral thread runs through religious education lessons – resisting temptation, having a conscience, knowing the difference between right and wrong – in which teachers create opportunities for pupils to relate incidents from the Bible to their own lives. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond. The school rules are displayed in classrooms, and teachers refer to them, which helps to reinforce them. The school operates a system of awarding 'planet points' for good behaviour and achievement and 'Butterstile jewels' for individual achievement. These are presented weekly in a celebratory assembly which acts as an incentive for pupils to work hard and behave well.
56. Provision for pupils' social development is also good. Pupils behave well in assemblies. They enter and leave in an orderly manner, waiting their turn patiently. They listen well and put their hands up to contribute. In class, pupils work well independently and collaborate effectively on joint projects, such as in history. 'Circle time' gives all pupils in the class the opportunity to speak while others listen. Teachers use this technique effectively to encourage pupils' social development, such as caring for each other. Pupils and staff relate well to one another. Older pupils who are prefects are given responsibility and act as good role models for younger pupils. Most pupils take others into account when on corridors, moving around the school sensibly and holding doors open.
57. Provision for pupils' cultural development is again good. Pupils learn to appreciate and draw on the art of different cultures. The displays on the corridors and in the hall of pupils' work, inspired by African art and the Native American legend of the Dream Catcher, as well as European art, reflect this good provision. In assemblies teachers choose music from a variety of countries and cultures, including Japanese and Native American percussion, in keeping with the theme or mood, which broadens pupils' awareness. Recently, a visit from a Zulu theatre group was so enthusiastically received that it was booked to revisit a few months later. After a performance that included folk tale, dance and singing, the group put on workshops for pupils, with a successful performance for parents in the evening. These experiences enhance the arts curriculum and

¹² When a group of children sit in a circle with their teacher to discuss sensitive matters within a set of rules that they have agreed between them.

broaden pupils' awareness of people and places. Pupils visit a local church and the Jewish Museum to support their learning in religious education, but no visits are made to other places of worship. However, parents representing the different faiths come into school to speak to classes about their religion, culture and customs, which increases pupils' awareness. Teachers talk about the Muslim festival of Eid, and what it is to be a Hindu, in assembly. For pupils whose first language is not English, the school has bought bi-lingual dictionaries to help them maintain their first languages. Many of the signs around the school are in Urdu as well as English, which increases pupils' awareness of different languages. The school has sponsored a small child in Kenya and hopes to maintain contact with the child. Her photograph is displayed in the midst of photographs of all the people who make up the school community. Overall, the school has made a good start on preparing pupils for life in the twenty-first century.

58. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its reputation for sporting success and continues to compete regularly in football, netball, swimming and cross-country events. The introduction of clubs for craft, lace, cookery, drama and story-time has broadened the range of activities offered and, although most are for pupils in Years 5 and 6, there are some opportunities for each year group. The school choir for Years 4, 5 and 6 is open to pupils who pass an audition. Opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments have just begun. The school does not undertake any residential visits and although there are some visits outside school to places of interest, more take place in some classes than in others. Inconsistency of provision, especially for younger pupils, was a concern expressed by parents. The school has recognised this and is working to increase provision for younger pupils. The school has satisfactory links with the local community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

59. The school has made good improvement in its provision for the care, welfare and support of pupils since the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance and behaviour are now good and the school has good procedures for dealing with any incidents of bullying. Procedures relating to the care and protection of pupils are now firmly established and there has been an improvement in the supervision and organisation of pupils at lunchtime. Overall, the school provides good personal support and guidance for pupils.
60. Parents appreciate the pastoral care provided for their children. They feel that teachers are approachable and are sensitive to concerns about their children's progress or the need for additional support. They are pleased that the school has improved its procedures for promoting good behaviour and for dealing with bullying by involving pupils in discussion, by praising positive attitudes and by the introduction of activities at break time to improve the quality of pupils' play.
61. The school meets the statutory requirements for providing a safe place for pupils and adults to work in. It has clear procedures, supported by a satisfactory health and safety policy, to ensure that any possible hazards are reported and dealt with quickly. Some health and safety issues were noted during the inspection: pupils' toilets are outdated and have an unpleasant smell; the hall floor is beginning to deteriorate along the seams. The school is aware of both of these issues and is currently seeking to make improvements. The procedures for dealing with pupils who are unwell, who hurt themselves or who require medical support are good. There is a satisfactory number of staff trained in first aid who give caring and sympathetic support. Midday staff care well for pupils at lunchtime and in the playground. As a result of training for staff in dealing with behaviour problems, and the reorganisation of ball games that take place, pupils say that they are now much happier at playtime.
62. All staff have good awareness of pupils who may be experiencing difficulties or whose welfare is giving cause for concern. The policy for child protection is satisfactory and staff have received suitable guidance in the correct way to report concerns. Further training for staff and the child protection co-ordinator is planned. The school has a good understanding of its responsibilities for children who are looked after and has good links with outside support agencies. There are good systems for monitoring pupils' attendance and for following up any absences. The school is

aware of the increasing tendency for pupils to have holidays in term time and will not authorise any absences over the ten allowed days. There is good support for the school from the educational welfare officer.

63. The school has good procedures for the promotion of pupils' behaviour and for dealing with unsatisfactory behaviour. All staff have clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and are consistent in their approach to any lapses. The consistency with which staff treat pupils has a good effect on their behaviour. Pupils are involved in negotiating class and school rules and, as a result, understand what is expected of them. They are clear that the acting headteacher and staff will deal very quickly with any worries that they may have about unkind behaviour or bullying and some use the 'Tell Me' box for this purpose. The school makes good use of the local behaviour support services when working with pupils with individual difficulties, as in the case of a recent exclusion from the school.
64. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Good use is made of systems such as 'planet points', 'jewels' and certificates to reward good behaviour, attitudes to work and improvement. There are regular opportunities to share in pupils' achievements and successes in school assemblies, which raise their self-esteem and encourage them to do better. The importance of achievement is also shown through the public display in the foyer of the names of pupils who have had success in areas such as reading or numeracy. Staff know pupils well and give them good guidance and support when they need to make improvements. Pupils' development against targets set for them in areas such as behaviour, attitudes to work and organisation is monitored as part of the review of their individual education plans. There are few opportunities for pupils themselves to evaluate regularly how well they are doing and to identify where they need to make improvement. The activities planned for pupils with special educational needs are well matched to their needs and reflect their individual education plans.
65. In the last inspection, it was found that the effectiveness of the curriculum was reduced because of the shortcomings of the assessment procedures, which did not provide clear objectives for learning. Systems were in place for English, mathematics and science, but were not yet effective in science. There were no whole-school arrangements for the other subjects. This situation was described as a serious weakness. Since then, there have been considerable developments and further improvements are in hand.
66. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science there are now regular assessments using national criteria. Good use is routinely made of objective tests which are purchased from agencies outside the school. In other subjects, assessment forms part of the continuous review of planning which takes place. This may be seen in teachers' record books, and in the planning forms, completed every week, on which there is a space for the identification of pupils who are performing significantly above or below national expectations. These procedures are of good quality, but the fact that they are in the early stages of introduction for non-core subjects¹³ and religious education means that some teachers are using them less effectively than others. The school is also introducing individual target setting in English and mathematics. This is not yet well developed, but all the elements are in place to secure its effectiveness in the subjects concerned, and to support its application across the curriculum. The process of development, which was among the beneficial innovations that accompanied changes in the school's leadership, continues very constructively. Effective action has therefore been taken to meet the key issues concerning assessment which were listed after the last inspection. However, this action still needs to be reinforced and accelerated in all subjects, in relation to individual target setting, and carried forward as a key issue (which inspectors are confident that the school is able rapidly to resolve) arising from the current inspection.
67. The teachers assess all pupils who have English as an additional language in order to establish their level of competence in spoken and written English, so that those needing support are

¹³ Art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education.

identified. Those few pupils in the earlier stages of acquiring English are given additional support by the local authority's Curriculum and Language Access Service. The externally funded teacher works closely and effectively with the pupils' class teachers in planning appropriate work, giving advice, as well as working with the pupils and the teacher in class. The bi-lingual assistants support younger pupils well in their first language to help them understand and learn, and they make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

68. The quality of partnership that the school has with parents is good, and improves pupils' learning and their experiences of school life. Since the last inspection, the school has gone through a period of uncertainty and staffing changes. As a result, many parents lost confidence in the school and the education provided for their children. However, through the effective work of the supporting headteacher and the acting headteacher and staff, parents are now feeling more positive about the school, the improvements that are being made and the rising standards.
69. At the parents' meeting before the inspection and in the questionnaires, most parents showed good support for the school and its work. Nearly all parents feel that they can approach the school with any questions or problems and say that staff are always willing to speak to them and to take time to discuss their child's progress. Most feel that teaching is good and that their children are making good progress because the school expects them to work hard and achieve well. Parents feel that they get plenty of information about school events and activities, and that they get enough information about the work that their children are doing in school. This helps them to support their children's work at home. Overall, parents say that the school is much improved. Staff are more approachable, their children enjoy coming to school more and that the school has a much better reputation in the local area. Many parents, however, are still concerned that a permanent appointment has not been made for the headteacher's post, as this is unsettling for their children.
70. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well involved at all stages and in most cases attend all review meetings. The special educational needs co-ordinator gives additional reminders to parents where necessary and they are well involved in all aspects. The prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents are informative, clearly written and comply with statutory requirements regarding special educational needs.
71. Good contact is maintained between the families and teachers of pupils who have English as an additional language. Home visits are made to parents of those designated as needing additional support, to discuss the progress of their children. The externally funded teacher and bi-lingual assistants have time allocated to visit families of pupils they are working with. Class teachers also sometimes visit with the bi-lingual assistant.
72. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is good. Parents receive regular newsletters about events and activities taking place in school. Half-termly letters from class teachers give parents good information about what their children will be learning and encourage parents to be involved with their children's learning at home. Parents of children who are new to the school in the reception class receive good information in a booklet and a range of leaflets about organisation, school routines and helping their children to learn. Nevertheless, in the questionnaires, a significant minority of parents with children in all parts of the school criticised the information that they receive about their children's progress. The inspection team's view is that although parents receive good oral information about their children's progress through meetings and regular communication with teachers, this is not reflected satisfactorily in pupils' end-of-year written reports. The current format for reporting does not allow teachers to give parents enough information on achievement and progress in each subject of the National Curriculum. There is no formal identification of children's targets, which would enable parents further to support their child's work at home. The school prospectus and governing body's annual

report to parents have satisfactory information about the organisation of the school and include all statutory requirements

73. The school makes a good commitment to an open and positive relationship with parents through its home-school agreement, which most parents have signed to indicate their support. It encourages parents to keep in regular contact with teachers at parents' evenings, at meetings and when they meet staff informally at the beginning and end of the school day. There is good attendance by parents at meetings to discuss their children's progress and to learn about new developments, such as the strategies for literacy and numeracy. The school is keen that parents should feel that it is 'open' and the acting headteacher readily makes herself available to speak to parents when they have concerns. Parents say that teachers always have time for them. The school has begun to involve parents in its development by consulting them through questionnaires, and responds positively to their suggestions, such as giving pupils responsibility as prefects and making amendments to the home-school agreement so that it appears more positive.
74. Parents give good support to the work of the school and to their children's learning through their involvement in pupils' homework activities. Many parents regularly hear their children read, help with activities such as spelling, and provide children with resources to bring into school to support work in the classroom. In the questionnaires received before the inspection and at the meeting, some parents were critical of the provision for homework. The inspection team's view is that the provision for homework is satisfactory, although there is some inconsistency between classes and year groups. Some parents and grandparents also support the school by helping in the classroom with activities such as reading, design technology, and using the library. Many parents are involved with the organisation of a wide range of fundraising and social activities held by the Parent Association. The association raises significant sums of money to improve the resources of the school and is providing a valuable social setting in which families, pupils and staff can meet.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

75. The acting headteacher is a good leader who has been providing a clear sense of direction for the school since her appointment in September 1999. This is an important achievement, as lack of strong leadership at the time of the last inspection (April 1998) was the main reason for the school being judged to have serious weaknesses and for its remaining in the serious weaknesses category when it was monitored by two additional inspectors in September the following year. She worked closely with a support headteacher from November 1999 to March 2000 and has built steadily on his organisational ideas and vision. Her most positive achievement has been to develop a strong team spirit and commitment to improving the quality of learning and raising standards. She has very good interpersonal skills and is able to bring out the best in people, making them feel that their contribution, no matter how small, is important. She is supported by an effective governing body which shares a firm commitment to the school and to the raising of standards for all pupils.
76. Although some key issues were addressed after the last inspection, the progress made was insufficient because weaknesses within the leadership and management of the school continued. Further, they were identified as a continuing source of concern when the additional inspectors made their monitoring visit in September 1999. After this visit the governing body took strong and decisive action with the support of the local education authority. The chair and vice-chair of the governing body made an important contribution to the positive changes being made. The subsequent appointment of an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, supported from November 1999 to March 2000 by an experienced local headteacher, proved to be a turning point and within the very short space of three terms sufficient progress had been made for the governing body to ask for the school to have an early re-inspection. With strong effective leadership and management in place and with all the key issues from the previous report having been addressed, this confidence was not misplaced, and the school no longer has serious weaknesses.

Nevertheless, the school is not complacent and is now engaged upon the task of raising pupils' attainment further.

77. The school's aims and values are published and they show an appropriate balance between a commitment to high attainment for all pupils and the creation of a caring environment in which the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of each pupil's development can be addressed within a secure and caring environment. The diligence and high quality of relationships within the school demonstrate the commitment of pupils, staff, governors and parents to achieve them in full.
78. The senior management team has directly observed the teaching of literacy, numeracy, mathematics, science, English, information and communications technology and religious education, but opportunities for subject co-ordinators to undertake this aspect of their management role are not fully in place and the school has identified this as an area for further development. There are also few opportunities for teachers within year groups to observe each other's teaching. Nevertheless, effective monitoring of teachers' planning and assessment records, the provision of good in-service training, regular whole-staff discussion of important educational developments and improvement in staff morale have led to considerable improvement in standards of teaching since the previous inspection. The school has also identified the need to introduce more joint short-term planning within year groups in order better to maintain equality of opportunity for pupils between different classes.
79. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities in terms of pupils with special educational needs. The leadership and management of the acting headteacher, who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator, are good in all aspects, including the management of teaching and support staff and making effective links with external support agencies. The requirements of the National Code of Practice are fully in place. Finance is spent appropriately and resources for pupils with special educational needs meet their identified requirements. The special needs room is used well for storage of records, resources, group work and additional literacy support.
80. The school buildings would allow pupils with special physical requirements to have access to all teaching areas. There is no toilet for disabled pupils or people, although there are plans to provide one. The school is anxious to become a school where pupils with special physical needs can be fully integrated.
81. The acting headteacher has responsibility for monitoring and co-ordinating the support for ethnic minority pupils, including those with English as an additional language. She liaises well with local authority personnel to ensure that good support and training are offered to staff. Recent training on assessing pupils' levels of competence in English has helped teachers to identify accurately pupils' language needs.
82. Under the strong leadership of the chair and vice chair the governing body exercises its statutory responsibilities well. Virtually every governor participates fully in the work of the governing body, which gives strength in depth. They have had to take many difficult decisions, especially since September 1999, and they have done whatever has been necessary in the interests of the pupils. Within the constraints imposed by the fixed costs that the school has to pay, educational priorities determine the structure of the budget. These priorities are the result of a comprehensive consultation exercise, which involves the senior management of the school, the school administrator, teaching and support staff, governors and parents.
83. The governing body is effective. Governors play an active part in the life of the school and provide strong and committed support, while at the same time being prepared to question and challenge when they feel this is appropriate. The committee structure is logical and well organised. The action committee, established to address the serious weaknesses, has made a particularly important contribution to the improvements that have been made. All committees have clear terms of reference. The governors have a clear view of the future developmental needs of the school and they make an important contribution to the development of the school improvement plan and the educational priorities it identifies. They are especially effective in identifying clear, achievable and

measurable criteria by which to judge the effectiveness of the actions that have been taken to improve the quality of learning and the pupils' levels of attainment.

84. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum 2000 and religious education are being taught effectively. A good range of qualifications and experience also contributes positively to the teaching provision. Support staff have received a range of appropriate training, they work well in classrooms and make an important contribution to the effective teaching, pupils' progress and good behaviour observed in lessons. Good induction procedures support teachers who are new to the school. Supervisory staff at lunchtimes and the kitchen staff also make a positive contribution to the good standards of behaviour and mutual respect observed around the school. However, the supervisory staff would benefit from further training in the supervision of play activities at lunchtimes.
85. The school has made satisfactory use of the accommodation available and some features, such as the separate dining hall and the computer suite, are good. Effective use is also made of the school grounds. However, there is no separate outside area that can act as a secure play and learning environment for children under five and the classroom environment for these young children needs further development, as insufficient space has been used to create the full range of activities to which the children should have access on a daily basis. The school caretaker and the cleaning staff make every effort to keep the school as a clean and pleasant working environment. However, the school toilets are difficult to maintain because of their age.
86. The school's arrangements for financial management and control are very efficient. For example, the school's falling roll led to a financial surplus becoming a small deficit, with the potential for the deficit to increase, but effective steps were taken to prevent this happening. The governing body, budget manager, acting headteacher and senior management team (which includes the school administrator) work very closely together to prepare a budget that will support the priorities that have been identified in the school development plan. Effective use is made of additional funding for pupils with special educational needs, the standards fund for in-service training, the National Grid for Learning, and the funding resulting from the school's having been identified as having serious weaknesses, as well as other sources of revenue. Financial pressures resulting from a slowly falling roll are being prudently addressed.
87. The school administrator's considerable experience of dealing with many suppliers and the rigorous procedures put in place by the governing body ensure that the school seeks and secures best value for money. Competitive quotations are sought where major expenditure is involved. The school accounts are held on computer and the governing body and acting headteacher are able to benefit from regular and detailed reports about the progress of expenditure under the different budget headings. When necessary, firm action is taken to avoid overspending. A recent audit identified a few minor weaknesses which have been addressed, but confirmed that all major financial procedures were secure and effective. The school does not have its own chequebook account and works closely with a finance officer of the local authority, who visits regularly. All major payments are authorised by the school and paid by the local authority. The school administrator, her clerical assistant and the acting headteacher make good use of information and communication technology for maintaining financial control and pupils' records. The school office is efficient and provides a warm and welcoming first contact for parents and other visitors to the school.
88. Both income and expenditure are within the middle band when compared with the majority of schools. Taking into account the good leadership and management of the school, the significant improvements that have been made since September 1999, the maintenance of above average levels of progress and attainment in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2 and the culture of continuous improvement, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

89. The governing body, acting headteacher and staff should seek to increase the effectiveness of the improvements which have already been made in the following ways:

- (1) by extending and refining the individual target setting procedures (which are currently at a very early and limited stage) so that they apply to all pupils and all subjects;
(Paragraphs: 35, 45, 66, 116, 130 and 136)
- (2) by enabling subject co-ordinators to exercise their monitoring role more effectively by making arrangements for them directly to observe teaching and analyse learning.
(Paragraphs: 130 and 188)

In addition to the above key issues the following less significant areas of concern should be considered:

- (a) improving the written reports on pupils' progress and attainment in line with the good informal reporting to parents that already takes place;
(Paragraphs: 28 and 72)
- (b) raising standards in design and technology;
(Paragraphs: 145 and 146)
- (c) improving joint year group short-term planning;
(Paragraphs: 35, 78 and 125)
- (d) improving the learning environment for the Foundation Stage to make it more stimulating for children under five;
(Paragraphs: 104, 108 and 109)
- (e) completing the process of adapting existing schemes of work to take account of the good local and national guidance that is now underpinning the work of all subjects;
(Paragraph: 37)
- (f) improving standards of toilet provision for pupils.
(Paragraph: 61)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	21	24	48	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	350
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	65

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	45

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.2	School data	0.1
National comparative data	5.2	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	30	18	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	21	27
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	38	35	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79.2 (80)	72.9 (82)	87.5 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	23
	Girls	21	15	14
	Total	45	39	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79.2 (80)	81 (79)	77 (80)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	31	25	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	25	25
	Girls	22	19	20
	Total	44	44	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78.6 (85)	78.6 (81)	80 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	25
	Girls	22	21	20
	Total	44	44	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78.6 (85)	78.6 (80)	80 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	5
Pakistani	17
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	252
Any other minority ethnic group	13

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	2	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)	14.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	158

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	626566
Total expenditure	644466
Expenditure per pupil	1752
Balance brought forward from previous year	17156
Balance carried forward to next year	-744

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	350
Number of questionnaires returned	105

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	45	8	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	42	9	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	41	17	1	3
The teaching is good.	54	39	3	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	43	18	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	31	5	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	31	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	43	15	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	42	46	4	4	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	43	6	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	46	13	4	7

Note: Because of statistical rounding up or down some rows may not equal 100 per cent.

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

90. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, within a safe and secure environment. There are 28 children under five in the school. Five children, who are the oldest of the group, are included in the Year 1 class and the rest form the reception class. Attainment on entry is generally below average. Although many children enter school with good personal and social skills, their skills in language and literacy and in number are not so well developed. This is confirmed by the initial assessment carried out by the school in the first weeks after entry.
91. Changes in the school's intake have meant that a higher proportion of children have been entering with below average levels of attainment, which in turn have affected the results achieved at the end of Key Stage 1. Although the previous inspection report indicated that pupils were making good progress and were on target to achieve all the desirable learning outcomes¹⁴ by the age of five, the increasing demands for writing in letters and numbers in Key Stage 1 have shown that weaknesses still continue in this area of learning. The school has taken effective steps to address this weakness in language and literacy.
92. Within a short time, all children settle readily into the routines of the school. The evidence available indicates that by the time the present reception year are ready to enter the curriculum for Year 1 they will have achieved well and will have satisfactorily attained the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. The good progress achieved so far results from supportive teaching in both classes which, while satisfactory overall, is good in physical development and in some aspects of mathematical development. Increasingly effective work in relation to language and literacy points to progress and levels of attainment achieved being improved across Key Stage 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

93. Children enter reception with good skills in personal, social and emotional development and this achievement is maintained as they make good progress towards their early learning goals. Most are confident as they come into school, hanging their coats independently and joining group activities quickly and purposefully. They quickly adapt to the routines of the school and walk sensibly, as a group, to assembly or lessons in the hall. Their relationships with one another are good and they are keen to assist their teachers with the register or selecting "The Big Book". When painting, most children share the paint willingly. They help one another in group activities: for example, they collaborate when sticking 'socks' on the washing line, or checking the numbers for each other.
94. Good relationships among adults in the class encourage pupils to help each other when making "rockets" for their fireworks display and their make-believe torches. The majority of children dress and undress independently for physical education lessons and very few need support from adults.
95. All children readily respond to teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Good demonstration and praise give positive support in structured outdoor and indoor activities. Satisfying pupils' curiosity, teachers clearly explain why lines of children can be a mix of boys and girls and why class labels are written in two languages. Teachers are sensitive to the fears of children and carefully reassure them, increasing their confidence and self-assurance.

¹⁴ The desirable learning outcomes made up the knowledge and skills that children were expected to learn in the different areas of learning, before the introduction of the Foundation Stage in September 2000.

Communication, language and literacy

96. The majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. Both teachers exercise basic skills well and work very effectively on letter sounds. Teachers use questions and story-time to give good opportunities for talk. Children easily discuss their feelings about darkness and feeling safe through the story of *Goodnight Teddy Horsely*.
97. In both reception classes children listen attentively to stories and rhymes and enjoyed taking part in "show and tell" about Bonfire Night. Within a short time they joined in the rhyme successfully and higher attaining children began to predict how the story would end. They were curious about the illustration in the story of *Lazy Mary* and asked "Why is she unhappy?" Their interest was caught well by teachers, but occasionally some opportunities to extend children's ideas were lost when teachers concentrated too much on directing children towards their tasks.
98. Teachers incorporate methods used in literacy lessons to enhance reading experiences. As a result, children understand the meaning of 'title' and are familiar with a simple range of key words. Teachers are successful in helping children to remember the sounds of letters. Children enjoy practising the sounds they know and can clearly explain the purpose behind their 'fish' work sheet when working with the sound 'f'.
99. Most children talk about their reading books with confidence and can tell the sequence of events by the illustrations. Higher attaining children are well launched into early reading and know how to find simple information from the factual books that they are given to read. Teachers record the progress of children's reading regularly but do not always highlight the weaknesses.
100. Several children in reception write their own names successfully and they know their addresses, which they attempt in the writing corner. They enjoy sticking their stamps on the envelope in preparation for their letter to "Mum". Children work hard at attempting to write, " I went to see some fireworks and a fire" and begin to use the sounds they have learned when making their first attempts. A few higher attainers are ready to write the sentence but need support and resources which will allow them to make faster progress. Good support is available for lower attaining pupils but higher attaining pupils are not given demanding tasks to improve their writing.

Mathematical development

101. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children will satisfactorily achieve the early learning goals in mathematical development, as a result of regular reinforcement of mathematical knowledge. Teachers use many opportunities for counting on to 20 and beyond and practising 'fives' when waiting to line up for assembly. They use familiar songs such as *Ten Green Bottles* but change the words to fit the topic of the day. For example, when singing "Seven Teddies" most children accurately place a number of paper "teddies" on a number line. They understand mathematical language such as "more than" and "less than". Teachers plan their mathematical activities well and include cutting, glueing and ordering in their work sheets. All children successfully counted and stuck seven "socks" on the washing line carefully. When working with small, assorted bricks, they named simple shapes correctly and built towers of cubes, which they finished with a " cone". . Some children used a computer program to build more towers of cubes. Many children are skilled when using the mouse for these programs and quickly move shapes across the screen or choose the correct colour for the animal character.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

102. Children in reception classes have a good awareness of where they live and several can give simple directions of how to get to their home from school. If they do not live in the area they can say how they make a journey home. Children talk readily about their place in the family and what they know from their walks around the immediate locality with their teachers. They demonstrate good speaking skills when talking about the light sources brought by the teachers. When looking for dark places they begin to investigate what a torch can show around the classroom and corridor. Teachers increase children's learning effectively by giving opportunities

to see similarities and differences between sources of light such as a candle, a torch and an electric lamp. Children are interested in how things work and they make sure that there are buttons on their model torches to “switch” them on. They use scissors and glue successfully to construct their model torches and rockets. Children enjoy learning about themselves and their work shows an ability to label body parts when supported by pre-written labels.

103. Children receive a good foundation in this area of learning through many opportunities for first-hand experience. They are encouraged to explore, to observe and to make predictions about what is likely to happen in different situations. They are satisfactorily prepared for the work that they will undertake when they enter Year 1.

Physical development

104. There is no separate outdoor play area for under fives. A section of the playground is partitioned to limit the area for structured play and where children are able to use large mobile toys. Children use this area with enthusiasm when guiding their vehicles accurately along the marked patterns in the playground. Support for small groups is limited and, while a support assistant works well with children for the short periods of outdoor activity, planning and assessment for these sessions are very informal. Consequently, good progression in this area of learning is constrained. Large apparatus for use in outdoor activities is also limited but adequate.
105. However, indoor lessons for physical development are better. Children have better opportunities to develop their physical skills, which by the end of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The majority of children are lively and controlled when moving in space. They control a ball well and direct it satisfactorily to a given target. All children understand in simple terms that their hearts will beat faster as they become more active and that exercise is a healthy activity. Teachers ensure that children know about issues of safety and have an awareness of others in lively activities. Their behaviour is good. Pace of lessons is good in physical education sessions. Children’s interest is maintained and they participate successfully in all activities.
106. Children handle small pieces of equipment with ease. Their use of pencils, scissors and paint shows good control and many children handle small pieces of equipment, such as moulds for play dough, well.

Creative development

107. Teachers give good opportunities to children for exploring a range of materials and paints in their creative work. Children are well prepared to achieve the early learning goals. With good support they concentrated effectively when making colourful rockets as part of their work on Bonfire Night and as a result, finished off their models well. They make bold choices of colour when painting pictures of their family and use their brushes confidently when filling in the background. When making a model torch they were concerned with including the correct detail they had observed. Most children are familiar with well-known songs and rhymes, which are combined with other areas of learning, and children sing tunefully.
108. Imaginative role-play is not well developed, as relevant areas in the classroom are rather cramped and scope for imaginative play is limited. The home corner has too little room for children to adapt the environment independently, and the writing corner is too small to allow them to extend their writing ideas for any length of time. Children’s imagination is exercised more when playing in the sand tray, where they often carefully shape their mould to represent the story they are sharing with one another.

Other matters

109. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, overall, and teachers make good provision for children with special educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language. Teachers' knowledge of the way in which children learn is secure, but planning and the content of the stepping stones for the Foundation Stage do not always arouse children's interest as well as expected. The pace of some lessons is slow and the needs of higher attaining children are not always met. However, teachers manage their children well and most children have good attitudes to learning and behave well. While some areas of classrooms have good display and are well organised, areas for imaginative and structured play are limited indoors and outdoors. The resources for role-play are worn and in need of replacement. Few children choose to use the writing corner for any length of time. These limitations affect some children's progress, particularly in terms of stimulating and sustaining their interest in some tasks.

ENGLISH

110. In National Curriculum tests for 2000, pupils' performance in reading at Key Stage 1 was slightly below the national average, but the proportion of those attaining a higher grade was above the average. In writing, the percentages were lower than the national averages for pupils reaching level 2 and level 3. When compared with "similar" schools (i.e. those with similar proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals), these results are below average. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 was above the national average, while the percentage reaching level 5 matched it. The picture is similar when comparing the school's results with those of similar schools.
111. At Key Stage 1, these results represent a decline from results at the time of the last inspection, when it was found that standards in English were in line with the national average at the ends of both key stages. In the 1997 tests, results were above average for percentages gaining level 2 at the end of Key Stage 1, and pupils gaining level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in both key stages were found to be performing in line with pupils from "similar" schools across the country. The changes in levels of attainment over time at the end of Key Stage 1 reflect changes in the school's intake, which are being addressed well by the school. Improvement made by pupils in their levels of attainment between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Year 6 was well above the national average when compared with similar schools nationally.
112. The findings of this inspection are that pupils' attainment corresponds generally with national averages at the ends of both key stages. A significant number of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are already reaching above average standards. Given that pupils' language skills on entering the school are below average, they make good progress as they move through their primary school lives.
113. In the first of the three elements of English, speaking and listening, pupils' skills are well developed. In Key Stage 1, they listen to their peers and their teachers respectfully, and even from the earliest years the conventions of putting up hands before answering or asking are well established. They think before they speak, and their responses are usually relevant and carefully worded. In Key Stage 2, Year 4 pupils presented an improvisation about the Roman invasion of Britain to a whole-school assembly. Their choral speaking was good, confident and clear, and both Roman and Celtic solo speakers showed confidence and a good awareness of the requirements of the situation. In Year 6, pupils discuss poetry sensitively and intelligently, and their work together in groups is characterised by logical, well developed arguments. The overall good performance in this aspect of English from youngest to oldest pupils is attributable to their confidence, a quality conferred by the supportive ethos of the school and the collaborative style of the teachers.
114. In the second element of English, reading, pupils show a wide range of attainment in both key stages. All are at ease with books and stories, and see them as a source of pleasure. In Year 1,

higher attaining pupils already understand aspects of how a book is put together, with title, author, and contents. Good strategies for making sense of written language have been developed by pupils of all abilities by the end of Key Stage 1. These are well supported by the informal reading records, on which parents and carers enter the texts which they have heard pupils read - although there are no formal and evaluative home-school reading diaries. Pupils with above average reading skills make good progress throughout Key Stage 2. They have favourite authors, and talk about them with a good perception of how and why books are written. By Year 6, these pupils read with very sensitive understanding and expression: one pupil almost acted the text. Pupils with average levels of prior achievement can tell the stories of their favourite books knowledgeably, and can suggest why authors - J.K. Rowling, for example - have become popular with young people of their age. All pupils are enthusiastic about books and, even though reading aloud may be hesitant, can show great engagement with poets such as Spike Milligan or Roger McGough. Standards of reading in both key stages are often above national expectations, and the reading environment which the school provides is rich and stimulating.

115. In writing, the third element of English, attainment, while remaining satisfactory in both key stages, is weaker than in speaking and listening and in reading. The school has recognised the need to promote writing skills, but excessive emphasis and time spent upon formal exercises have restricted opportunities for pupils to experiment with words and to enjoy the process of writing imaginatively. For example, in exercise books in Key Stage 2, the amount of space taken up with technical work so far in the current term is approximately two thirds or more, compared with one third or less devoted to continuous and imaginative writing. Nevertheless, pupils of higher attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 write thoughtfully and often quite copiously - over 120 words, for example, about a worried dinosaur. Average attainers write narratives of 50-60 words, with spelling which though sometimes inaccurate is justifiable (wuds/woods, horbul/horrible), and with sensitive word choice ("terrified", "gloomy"). Below average attainers are still motivated to write at length, but half of what they produce may only be 50 per cent understandable. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attainers write with accurate punctuation, good word choice and paragraph separation. Average pupils write fluently and often at some length. However, they write very much as they speak: they take little care in selecting words, and narratives tend to be chatty rather than well expressed. Below average attainers spell understandably rather than accurately and capital letters are used almost indiscriminately. Joined handwriting is introduced from the beginning of Key Stage 2, but even at the end of Year 6, some pupils do not apply it consistently. Only a very limited range of kinds of writing was seen in this first part of the school year. There was good evidence of good writing from last year - like the alliterative verse which accompanied paintings by last year's Year 5 - but basing the judgement on what was submitted for the current year, writing is average, with a good number of above average examples, suggesting that this is likely to be the profile in the National Curriculum tests in 2001.
116. The quality of pupils' learning is good. Good progress from entry has been mentioned. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning: they enjoy English and respond very readily to the demands teachers make of them. They enjoy the shared text reading which is part of the national literacy hour, and when teachers share lesson objectives with them, they work hard to meet them. They are enthusiastic: in Year 2, as the teacher issued instructions for group activities it was almost as if pupils were competing as to who had the best. In all classes, pupils co-operate with one another and with their teachers very effectively. The recently introduced procedures for individual target setting are beginning to draw pupils and teachers further together in collaborative improvement, but these need further refinement and detail. There is, however, still a tendency to stop work and ask an adult if there is a problem: independent learning and spontaneous research are underdeveloped - although one small group of Year 6 pupils was observed using the library for this purpose. Behaviour is almost always good: however enthusiastic or excited pupils may become, they continue to work at their tasks. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language enjoy the same good quality of learning as their peers; teachers know their needs well and try to meet them accordingly.
117. Teaching is very good. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons, good or better in 74 per cent and very good or better in 50 per cent. One lesson was judged as excellent. In general, teachers' subject knowledge is good, though even at the top of the school there were examples of

teachers' inaccurate punctuation and inadequate grammatical knowledge. Lesson planning and preparation are very good. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, but they do not always provide opportunities for the most able pupils to extend themselves fully. Lesson objectives are usually shared with classes, but specifying the extent to which these objectives have been reached is often omitted from the final plenary sessions. There are good formal assessment procedures for reading and writing, but none for speaking and listening. Statutory and non-statutory tests and assessments are rigorously analysed in order to inform future planning. Marking is conscientious and regular, though only some of it is at the moment sufficiently analytic to form part of the target setting process.

118. English is well managed by the subject co-ordinator, who is effective and experienced. She knows the school extremely well, and has a lively vision of its needs and those of the subject. She has overseen the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which is now well established and adapted to the needs of the school. The scheme of work, which covers all aspects of English and incorporates the National Literacy Strategy, is a detailed and effective document, providing good guidance for teachers. Resources are good, well used and cared for. The school library is poor. The recent amalgamation of the two key stage libraries is not yet complete, and the removal of a number of outdated or inappropriate texts has resulted in some depletion. There are no adult reference books, and the fiction collection is out of order. The area which the library occupies is bleak - between the playground doors and the hall. It is not carpeted, nor furnished appropriately. These shortcomings are recognised, and it is intended to remedy them as soon as possible.
119. English makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral development through the collaboration necessary in the literacy hour, and through the discussions which take place. Its contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development is also good, through discussions of values and feelings, and through reading literature from a variety of cultures and the world's great stories.
120. Teachers pay consistent attention to the development of pupils' literacy skills in subjects other than English. Technical errors are usually marked, and pupils are encouraged to write correctly. New words are introduced, and vocabularies are progressively extended. Careful speaking and respectful listening are encouraged throughout the school, and books are clearly valued by all.

MATHEMATICS

121. The levels achieved in the 2000 National Curriculum tests reflect a significant improvement since the previous inspection, especially for those achieving the higher levels 5 and 6 and also reflect an improving trend over the last two years after a drop between 1997 and 1998. Although the standards achieved in 2000 were slightly lower than those achieved in 1999, the progress made by these pupils since the end of Key Stage 1 was well above average and in the top twenty-five per cent of schools who achieved similar results at the end of Key Stage 1. This is a significant indicator of the quality of teaching over time. Inspection, based on the analysis of pupils' completed work and lessons observed in Year 6, found that standards are satisfactory, overall, with continued strengths in numeracy that are largely due to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the emphasis on mental mathematics. Pupils are on course to reach above average levels of attainment by the end of the school year, continuing the improving trend over time already noted.
122. There was, however, a contrasting picture for the attainment of seven-year-old pupils in the 2000 National Curriculum tests. Results were below the national average and also below those of similar schools. This reflects a continuing downward trend from 1997 that has taken place at the same time as changes in the school intake. However, the school has taken appropriate measures to halt this decline and levels of attainment observed during the inspection were in line with the national average. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, although there have been slight variations during the national tests over the past four years.

123. Pupils in Year 2, at this early time in the school's academic year, have a secure understanding of number up to 100; higher attaining pupils extending their knowledge to 1000. The majority understand halving and doubling and they know some multiplication tables, especially the 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s. These skills are demonstrated during mental mathematics activities and when pupils apply previous knowledge to more complicated calculations. Pupils apply their knowledge of number to money, and most of them know the equivalent values of coins to £1. They draw and measure lengths accurately, using centimetres, and recognise many two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes: they accurately identify squares, oblongs and triangles, cylinders, cubes and cuboids. Most pupils tell the correct time to the hour and half-hour, and many extend their knowledge beyond this.
124. Pupils in the present Year 6 are working at standards appropriate to their ages. They are confident in number and regularly practise solving number problems mentally. In one Year 6 class, very good examples of pupils' mental skills were observed when they used numbers to 10,000 when solving subtraction, using 'counting-on' as well as their good established knowledge of number patterns and facts. In this class, pupils are encouraged to try different methods and they are confident in their skills. They also understand and use terms such as 'factors', 'multiples' and 'digits'. Pupils calculate fractional parts of quantities and understand the equivalence between fractions, decimals and percentages. They use efficient methods for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, and also achieve part of the higher level 5 attainment target in understanding place value in decimals when multiplying and dividing by 10 and 100. In another Year 6 class, pupils calculated the perimeters of regular and, in some cases, irregular shapes by measuring and also using their knowledge of multiplication and addition. Higher attaining pupils accurately calculated the measurement of each side of a square given the perimeter. Pupils apply numeracy skills well, good examples being the range of measurements and graphical recording of cooling curves when in science they compare the insulating qualities of materials. Information technology skills are effectively applied at this key stage.
125. In over one third of lessons the quality of teaching was good or better. In a quarter of lessons teaching was very good, in one lesson it was excellent and in two lessons (one in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2) it was unsatisfactory. Although long-term and medium-term planning is good, the quality of teaching varies between parallel year groups throughout the school, because year groups do not jointly revise their short-term planning. In part, the variation noted in Year 6 reflected the disturbed year that one class had experienced last year when the management of the school was being re-organised. The school is taking appropriate action to remedy this situation that should ensure that work missed last year is effectively covered over the course of this year. This variation in teaching is reflected in the level of pupils' confidence and rate of application of numerical skills and problem solving. In the lessons in which teaching was good, very good and excellent, pupils were constantly challenged and responded very well to the enthusiastic teaching styles in these classes. Pupils of all abilities were well motivated and concentrated on the interesting yet challenging work set for them. There were even additional challenges for a pupil who was gifted in mathematics. All pupils worked at a good pace and had positive attitudes, including a desire to improve. In these lessons, planning was closely matched to pupils' abilities, and amended as the lessons developed. Good account was taken of the results of assessments from the previous week when organising groups. Pupils were given many opportunities to work independently and, when repetition occurred, it consolidated pupils' knowledge before they moved on to the next stage of learning. In these lessons, teachers' personal skills and understanding of how to teach mathematics were reflected in the range of activities planned and their high expectations of accuracy, speed and presentation. In the majority of these lessons pupils worked neatly and applied previous numerical skills well.
126. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching resulted from slow pace and resulted in pupils showing insufficient care in presentation. There was little difference between the activities planned for the higher attaining and average attaining pupils, resulting in pockets of unsatisfactory progress for higher attaining pupils.

127. A consistently good feature of all teaching is the initial planning and this reflects the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result, pupils have well-balanced lessons in terms of opportunities for mental skills, direct teaching and group activities. The teaching of basic skills is secure and pupils of all ages are given the opportunity to work independently. Teachers' management of pupils is usually good. The quality of marking is satisfactory and work is marked regularly. However, the level of comments which guide pupils to improve further in accuracy and presentation are variable and reflect the quality of teaching. The contribution of homework, which is set regularly in most classes, has a good impact on standards. Pupils are regularly asked to complete work or to learn tables. This helps them to take part confidently in the mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of most numeracy lessons.
128. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by class teachers and classroom support assistants, and as a result make good progress towards the targets planned for them. The level of support for the pupils for whom English is an additional language is also good.
129. The quality of learning observed through the school is satisfactory, and is directly related to the quality of teaching. However, the data available show that pupils have been making good progress over time between entry into the Foundation Stage and the end of Year 6, and very good progress in Key Stage 2. There is no significant difference between pupils' behaviour from class to class: it is generally good and pupils understand what they are doing and how they can improve in most lessons.
130. The management and co-ordination of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy, conducted training for staff, and given parents clear information about the strategy and its implications for their children. Assessment procedures and target setting are now consistent and good features of the school's provision for mathematics. A good feature of the weekly planning sheets is the efficient system for ongoing assessment, in which teachers record the pupils who achieve well in their learning and those who need extra support and revision. The quality and range of resources are good and match the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The effectiveness of the use of new technology in the recently installed technology suite is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has identified key elements which need to be addressed, including the monitoring of teaching and the significant differences between classes in teaching, attainment and learning, which were evident in lessons and in the analysis of pupils' work.

SCIENCE

131. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) and above was above the national average. At the end of Key Stage 1, results show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level (level 2) and above was below the national average. While this was also the case in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching level 2 or above has shown some improvement this year. This is supported by inspection findings, which judged pupils in Key Stage 1 to be achieving satisfactorily. Most significantly, when the results obtained by the Year 6 pupils in 2000 are compared with those they achieved at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are judged to have made very good progress, within the top twenty-five per cent of schools where pupils attained similar results at the end of Key Stage 1. The improving trend in standards is due to improved teaching, the establishment of a sound scheme of work and better opportunities for pupils to experience first-hand investigative science. No significant difference was observed between the performance of boys and girls.
132. Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve satisfactorily. They gain early scientific skills through controlled investigations connected to sources of light, and build on their previous learning well. Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well in using their knowledge and understanding to carry out investigations. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well as a result of the good support available to them. Most pupils build up their scientific

vocabulary, which supports their skills when recording their investigations, and in some classes science connects positively with the work pupils meet in the literacy and numeracy lessons.

133. Pupils begin to record and label their work clearly from the beginning of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make appropriate observations related to their tasks and positively develop their recording skills. In Year 1 pupils record their predictions of what colours they think are best seen in the dark. They make connections between their suggestions of "light clothes" in the dark and the fluorescent jackets police wear. Year 2 pupils explain how water becomes ice and how ice changes to water. They know that ice is made in the freezer because "it is colder than the fridge" and they talk about how ice slides through their fingers. With teacher support, they know the conditions required for a fair test. Pupils write simple sentences about their experiments or draw pictures which they can label. In other Year 2 lessons, pupils make observations about the changes that occur when water is boiled and predict what will happen.
134. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the properties of materials. They talk together about what plastics feel, smell and look like and can describe them as "opaque" or "transparent". Pupils compare different plastics with domestic objects and identify those that are made of plastic or have plastic parts. By studying forces in Year 4 they understand how to measure "push and pull" with a force meter and how to read scales of measurement. They further develop their understanding of fair testing and begin to plan their own investigations when setting up a fair test. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good knowledge of the need for food, growth and health and a sound knowledge of solids, liquids and gases. In Year 6 they know that air resistance slows down the parachutes they make and they understand the forces of movement when their 'spinners' are pulled to the ground.
135. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good, overall, within both key stages. They listen well. Most pupils are curious about and enthused by the activities which teachers prepare for them. For example, Year 6 pupils were amazed as the paper spinner acted like a propeller as it descended to the ground. There is a minority of boys who occasionally exhibit challenging behaviour, but the majority of pupils behave well in lessons. Most work together well on group activities and are keen to carry out their own investigations.
136. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good or better in nearly half of lessons, very good in two lessons and unsatisfactory in one. In Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory with some good features, such as respect for pupils' opinions and ideas, and well-paced lessons. In Key Stage 2 teaching is mainly good but was less than satisfactory in one lesson where a few pupils presented challenging behaviour. Teachers' preparation and planning are good and this results in good levels of interest in the majority of pupils. Very good questioning and stimulating discussion lead to good levels of scientific knowledge, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers organise their time well and consequently pupils concentrate on recording and produce good results. Pupils' vocabulary widens as well their understanding of the world when teachers make good links with literacy lessons. For example, a Year 2 teacher quickly caught the attention of pupils by introducing her science lesson with a poem. Teachers manage their pupils well. Good assessment procedures are in place and teachers use these effectively to inform future planning. However, individual target setting for pupils is in the early stages of development.
137. The subject is well co-ordinated and as a result standards have been raised significantly. The co-ordinator has successfully put the scheme of work in place and staff have collaborated positively in maintaining a consistent approach.
138. The management of the subject has improved significantly since the last inspection and has contributed positively to the raising of standards in the subject. The commitment to good teaching and consistency in delivering the scheme of work has had a positive impact on pupils' learning.

ART

139. Standards in art have been maintained at nationally expected levels at Key Stage 1 and have improved to above expected levels at Key Stage 2. At both key stages, pupils have the opportunity to use a range of techniques and a variety of media to express their ideas through observational drawings, painting, collage and clay work. They successfully explore the work of other artists such as Monet, Van Gogh, Lowry and Dali. Pupils have benefited from the visit of an artist who brought to life the colours and environment of the African landscape. Older pupils have very successfully imitated his style.
140. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in art is at expected levels for their age. Pupils develop skills in drawing and painting and the use of a range of materials. For example, in Year 2 pupils make lively use of colour to recreate pictures in the style of Monet. Pupils observe the patterns of William Morris to make an illustration of their own, using paint and sometimes using a stippling technique. They also accurately cut shapes which will be used for a symmetrical pattern based on the discussion they have had with their teacher. They use tissue well to create simple flower arrangements.
141. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well and their attainment is above that expected for their age. In Year 5 pupils create good still-life fruit bowls in pastel and include a three-dimensional effect through the skilful use of lighter shades. In Year 6, pupils benefited from the techniques demonstrated by the art co-ordinator: they successfully captured the heat and light of Africa and cut lively dancing figures to complete their illustrations. Their work in sketchbooks is developing positively. Movement and figure drawing are well applied in the silhouettes of athletic figures on an intense ground.
142. Pupils' attitudes to art are good at both key stages. They enjoy art and look forward to lessons. Their work shows a care with presentation which often leads to good standards, and they handle their tools and colours with confidence.
143. Teaching is satisfactory within Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they exercise this when delivering their lessons. This often results in pupils learning with enthusiasm and improving their skills. In lessons teachers generally plan well, but occasionally their long-term planning, where design technology is linked with art, is not as successful. They have good expectations and consequently pupils' work is well presented. They use additional adult support well in Key Stage 1 and pupils have good opportunities to discuss what they would like to do when creating their patterns. Teachers make good links with other subjects, particularly literacy. They use poetry and ideas from other countries, such as the American Indian Dreammaker, to stimulate pupils' ideas. National guidance has been followed in relation to assessment procedures, although their recent introduction means that they are being used more effectively by some teachers than by others.
144. The co-ordinator is well qualified to manage the subject. The quality of the display is very good and indicates the importance of the subject across the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

145. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection. The judgements made have taken into account teachers' planning and assessment, discussions with pupils and teachers and the scrutiny of work, primarily in the form of classroom displays and photographic evidence.
146. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is currently below nationally expected levels, although the school has put in place a broad and challenging curriculum for this school year, based on national guidance and the National Curriculum 2000 programmes of study. This represents a decline from the findings of the previous report, when standards at the end of both key stages were in line with national expectations. However, the curriculum now in place, the effective way in which it is being evaluated and refined, the confidence of the teachers and the positive attitudes of the pupils mean that the school is on course to achieve average standards at the end of this school year.
147. Teaching observed was mainly satisfactory. One lesson in Year 4 was very good, because of the stimulating and challenging learning environment that had been created which embraced all the elements of the subject curriculum. Photographic and display evidence confirms that teaching is satisfactory, overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school because of the good planning leading to consistent teaching. Design and technology is taught regularly throughout the year and this enables pupils to build consistently on their previous knowledge. However, where lessons are taught jointly with art, they are less effective, as there is insufficient time for either subject. A wide range of topics is being studied. For example, pupils in Year 1 were observed developing their skills in the use of a pivot as part of a system for linking the separate parts of a decorative hanger. The skills acquired in this lesson are to be used later in the term to help the pupils design their own Christmas decoration, using appropriate materials. In addition, they will have the opportunity to evaluate and refine their designs. In Year 2 pupils worked on the design of a toy puppet and they know how to prepare an initial plan, consider and write down the materials they will need and the importance of testing their finished products.
148. Year 3 pupils are very aware of the importance of making sandwich snacks properly¹⁵, while pupils in Year 4 talk confidently about how they examine a range of commercially produced money holders before they design and make their own. The rigour with which the pupils review the success of their original designs is very good. Pupils in Year 5 plan bread making, while those in Year 6 follow a well designed project on structures. This engages them in designing for a purpose, the evaluation and refinement of their initial designs, the making of those designs and the review of the level of success that they have achieved. Most are able to distinguish what works well and what could be improved. Pupils across the school learn to use a range of tools sensibly and safely.
149. The improvements made during this academic year¹⁶ are the result of effective preparatory work carried out by the acting deputy headteacher last year. Between January and July last year she put in place, in consultation with her colleagues, the curriculum that is now being taught, based on national guidelines. In addition she developed the good assessment procedures that are in place and which are being used well by some teachers. Lesson planning and lessons observed pay clear attention to safety. A particular challenge that has had to be addressed is the need to fill in gaps in pupils' prior knowledge as they work on units of work that are deemed to be appropriate for their age. Under this leadership the staff have been doing this well during the present term.
150. A new co-ordinator has only recently been appointed and she is in process of evaluating the work that has already been done and is carrying out a resource audit. Although she had been in post for only three weeks at the time of the inspection she has a clear view of what needs to be done in order to produce a scheme of work that, while based on national guidance, is specific to the

¹⁵ The study of food technology also forms part of this subject

¹⁶ September 2000 to July 2001.

school. Resources are satisfactory and the school is purchasing new materials as the different units of work demand them.

GEOGRAPHY

151. It was not possible to observe teaching in this subject in the inspection week owing to the arrangement of the timetable. However, the range of evidence made available and discussion with pupils confirms that standards in geography have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations by the ends of both key stages.
152. In Year 4 pupils study the topic of improving the environment. They look at environmental problems in their own locality and record what they find. They learn to make tally charts and use graphs to record the amount of classroom rubbish collected in one week. They increase their learning about recycling and the problems of disposing of litter. They go on to look at the movement of people in the main areas of the school, but find it difficult to represent this in a plan. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the water cycle. They have studied rivers and are able to explain and use the appropriate geographical terms such as 'meanders', 'erodes', 'deposit', 'source', and know the importance of rivers to people. Pupils are keen to talk about geography and what they have found out and learnt.
153. The recently appointed co-ordinator has introduced a new national scheme of work which is now being trialled, to be reviewed and evaluated next spring when needs for resources and artefacts will also be identified. Good assessment procedures, based on national guidance, have been put in place, but these are not yet being used consistently to inform future planning. Teachers are using the units of the scheme for areas they are more familiar with and where they have the resources to support them. The co-ordinator has had funding to supply new globes to Key Stage 2 classes and to purchase some new atlases.

HISTORY

154. Standards in history have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations by the ends of both key stages. Pupils follow a combined history and geography scheme of work in Key Stage 1. In Year 1 they learn about war memorials and what they symbolise, linked to the Day of Remembrance, and the significance of poppies. This link helps them to increase their awareness of the nature of special occasions. The teacher comments in one pupil's book that he told her a lot about the Cenotaph, soldiers dying and poppies, to show he understood fully. In Year 2, to increase their awareness of the past, pupils look at what has changed at the seaside, for example swimwear, now and then. They learn about Guy Fawkes, and their books show they understand what his intentions were. (One pupil's drawing has a speech bubble stating 'I'm going to kill the king', and the teacher's comment confirms 'Yes, that's what he wanted to do')
155. In assembly, pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of the invading Romans and local Celts to enact a mock battle. In class they compare the features of a Roman villa and a Celtic home effectively and knowledgeably. Pupils learn a lot of facts about Henry VIII in a short space of time when studying the Tudors in Year 5. Some pupils bring in their own books and encyclopaedias from home as well as information downloaded from the Internet, to add to what they find out in lessons. They already know that Henry 'made his own church' and that he married women from different countries 'to make friends and stop wars'. They know the dates of the Tudors. They do not yet understand terms such as 'Protestantism' or 'the dissolution of the monasteries'. Pupils in Year 6 studying the Victorians, benefit from the good supply of books from the Project Loan Service, as well as from the school library. These attractive resources provide them with access to a wide range of evidence on the lives of children in Victorian times. When presenting their information to the class, some referred to electricity and computers to illustrate the difference between then and now. They showed good understanding and recall of what they had found out.

For example, some talked about the working conditions of children in the cotton mills, crawling underneath spinning machines to mend the broken threads.

156. Teaching in history is satisfactory throughout Key Stage 1. In lessons observed at Key Stage 2, it was satisfactory in half the lessons and good in the other half. This has maintained exactly the position as in the last inspection. In the best lessons, effective teaching gives pupils good opportunities to learn and increase their historical understanding. The teacher makes pupils think hard by her skilful questioning, and pushes pupils to explain and justify their answers. Pupils are interested and keen to learn and share their ideas. In Year 6, pupils collaborate well in their groups, sorting out the tasks so that they achieve a good amount of work in the time. History lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills when finding information in books, note-taking and summarising, as well as presentational skills when speaking to the class. Where teaching is not so effective, teachers do not ask sufficiently open-ended questions to develop pupils' historical understanding, or take contributions and queries from pupils, even though hands are up. In one lesson, the teacher was not clear what she expected pupils to achieve in the time, and pupils achieved less as a consequence. Some younger pupils were restless and did not concentrate or listen carefully, so they made little progress.
157. The curriculum is enhanced by a visit for each year appropriate to the period they are studying. For example, Year 6 visit Colne Valley Museum to experience life in the Victorian era for a day, while Year 4 visit Castlefield, a Roman settlement.
158. The school is trialling a new national scheme of work and the recently appointed co-ordinator has organised the topics as close as possible to what the school taught previously. Staff will review this new scheme in the spring and necessary resources and artefacts will be identified. Good assessment procedures, based on national guidance, have recently been put into place, but they are not yet being used consistently. The co-ordinator's role is one of informal support, especially helping new colleagues with planning and ideas, and looking after resources. She has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. Because of her recent appointment there has been no formal monitoring of pupils' written work or teachers' planning. Few resources have been purchased recently and there are very few historical artefacts available to enhance pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

159. During the inspection only a small amount of teaching was observed in Key Stage 2 and none in Key Stage 1. The judgements given here have taken into account additional evidence obtained through discussion with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of teachers' planning and assessment, scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of pupils using computers, and evidence of their using other information and communication equipment such as programmable robotic devices and tape recorders.
160. Pupils' attainment at the ends of both key stages is at the standard expected nationally for their age, although the aspects of computer skills, such as the use of a mouse, keyboard, files, older and menus, word processing and data handling are better established than other parts of the National Curriculum programme of study. The school has identified the specific needs of each year group and pupils are making satisfactory progress. This represents a significant improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection when attainment did not reach nationally expected standards at the end of either key stage, and pupils were failing to make satisfactory progress.
161. Although the four lessons seen in Key Stage 2 were all judged satisfactory, the key factor in the improvements that have been made is teachers' increased awareness resulting from good in-service training, regular weekly support workshops, and the sharing of information and communication technology skills among the staff. Teachers in both key stages are confident in

their use of the good facilities available in the computer suite and they benefit from the technical support provided by the school administrator.

162. Increased confidence among the teaching staff is reflected in the enthusiastic way in which pupils in both key stages relate to this subject. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 look forward to using a programmable floor turtle and they use other programs to support their development in literacy, numeracy, their understanding of the world, word processing, decision making and data handling. They also enjoy using a tape recorder. Their skills in using a computer are appropriate for their age.
163. In Key Stage 2, the teachers are developing pupils' skills in accessing and using databases well, although pupils in Years 5 and 6 would benefit from a more flexible database than the one they are currently able to use. Pupils across the key stage have secure keyboard skills, and are able to load and save programs. They make confident use of the computer's menu systems and understand well terms such as "file" and "folder". By Year 6, they are able to present data in a variety of tabular and graphical forms, identifying those that are most appropriate for their particular needs. Word processing skills are also well developed. Pupils from a wide range of ability talk securely about their use of information and communication technology. Many indicated that their knowledge had primarily come from their teachers, as they did not have computers at home. The school is linked to the National Grid for Learning, although the use of e-mail was not observed during the inspection. The level of enthusiasm exhibited by the pupils is already leading to satisfactory progress, with every indication that this is likely to have improved further by the end of the school year.
164. The subject is under the leadership of a knowledgeable and well organised co-ordinator who has identified manageable steps for improvement. She has correctly focused upon the importance of developing the aspects of control and modelling and access to the Internet over the present school year. She has provided effective in-service training and support for her colleagues, and is working productively with them to adapt national guidance and fully to implement the National Curriculum 2000. Assessment procedures are in place, allowing the progress of individual pupils to be identified; there is evidence of this information being used to inform future planning. Nevertheless, these assessment procedures have only recently been introduced and some teachers are using them better than others. Although little evidence was observed during the inspection of the use of information and communication technology in other subjects, teachers' planning confirms that the skills learned are being used in subjects such as literacy, mathematics, science, history and geography, and that increasing use is being planned as new computer programs become available.
165. Resources are satisfactory overall, with pupils having access to tape recorders, a programmable floor turtle and a recently acquired digital camera, in addition to a range of computers of various ages. The commitment given to this subject is indicated by the recent increase in the number of computers available in the computer suite.

MUSIC

166. Largely because of the way in which music is timetabled, with lessons split, sometimes across a lunch hour, it was difficult to see complete lessons, and impossible to offer a secure final judgement as to attainment. The indications, from the lessons seen, from assemblies, and from hearing pupils talking about their music, are that they attain in line with pupils of similar ages in each key stage. This represents an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection when achievements were in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and below them at the end of Key Stage 2.
167. The performance of pupils as they sing in assemblies is inconsistent. Usually, it is tuneful and confident, if not enthusiastic. Sometimes, however - and especially if they are not familiar with what they are singing - it is ragged and off pitch. This applies to both key stages. In the Key Stage 1 lesson (Year 2) which was seen in its entirety, pupils showed that they could follow a

conductor carefully, and that they could evaluate their own performance thoughtfully. While their singing was not very tuneful, they showed wide knowledge of the instruments available to them. They were able to suggest the most suitable for an imaginative and illustrative composition, and to perform satisfactorily. In Key Stage 2, where only fragments of lessons were seen, pupils showed that they could develop basic and contrasting rhythmic patterns, using a variety of untuned instruments. At the end of the key stage, pupils show an ability to improve their performance quickly from one repetition to another, showing satisfactory understanding of musical requirements, as well as rehearsal skills.

168. The quality of learning is satisfactory, because of teachers' basically sound methods and pupils' own enthusiasm. While music lessons may be noisy, they are not disorderly, and pupils are anxious to perform at their best. Because objectives are clear, pupils respond well.
169. Teaching is satisfactory. While some teachers may have limited musical knowledge, good use is made of the subject guidance and of the stock of tape and disc recordings in the school. However, this use is inconsistent. The scheme of work which was in place until the current year (which drew largely from a scheme produced by a local education authority) is in process of being combined with national guidance. This process is incomplete, with the result that some teachers tend to choose their own lesson content, and that there is a lack of developmental structure in the music curriculum. Assessment procedures have been introduced, but they are not yet being consistently used to inform planning
170. The subject co-ordinator, who is an effective teacher and a musician, acknowledges this problem and is working upon a new combined scheme. A further shortcoming is the timetabling of music in split lessons. When the introduction and basic teaching takes place at the end of the morning, and the performance and evaluation are conducted at the beginning of the afternoon, much continuity and sense of purpose is lost. Extra-curricular music is limited. There is one choir of about 30 pupils from Year 4 and above, and access to this is through audition. There are no singing groups for younger children, nor for those who simply enjoy singing, whatever their ability. There are no instrumental groups, but individual instrumental tuition has been provided by the local music service over many years.
171. Resources for music in terms of tapes and compact discs are in need of review and matching to the new scheme of work. Instruments for use in the classroom are inadequate, both in quantity and quality.
172. In spite of its place in assemblies and of the fact that the choir takes part in significant local musical events, music does not play a prominent or more than satisfactory part in pupils' cultural development. Their social development is well supported through ensemble work, in which each person must contribute to the whole. Through the experimentation with words which is part of singing, and through the counting which is part of musical timing, it contributes well to literacy and numeracy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

173. Standards at the ends of both key stages are above national expectations, with particular strengths in pupils' abilities in games. These standards reflect the levels found in the previous inspection. Although no complete lessons were observed for pupils in the younger key stage, evidence was taken from discussions with pupils and observation of their skills, teachers' records and planning, and consideration of the skills of pupils in Year 3. Pupils in Year 2 develop good hand and eye co-ordination, and improve their accuracy in throwing and catching, and they also show a high level of awareness when positioning themselves to intercept throws or retrieve balls. They understand and explain the importance of warming up before strenuous activities and how to relax their bodies at the end of lessons.

174. Pupils' well-established skills and knowledge are further extended throughout Key Stage 2, so that in Year 6 pupils maintain consistently high standards in all aspects of physical education. This is reflected in high levels of agility and the ability to guard and intercept in a wide range of games: netball, lacrosse, hockey and football. During the lessons observed, pupils achieved very high standards in throwing the ball, using shoulder passes in netball, dribbling in hockey, keeping the ball very close to the stick and therefore successfully keeping possession or moving around obstacles. Their abilities to drive the ball accurately, anticipating their partners' positions, were very good. Particular strengths during games lessons were pupils' skills in catching and throwing balls using lacrosse nets, and passing and retrieving balls in all games. They understand and explain very clearly how to relax the right arm when catching and how to tense and stretch the muscles when throwing. Although no swimming was on the timetable during the inspection week, the school makes good provision for the teaching and learning of swimming. All pupils in Year 5 have a detailed programme, which gives a good level of continuity and regularity in swimming, resulting in a high proportion of pupils achieving the required standard, with many pupils swimming extended distances using a wide variety of strokes.
175. Pupils take all aspects of physical education very seriously, warming up before activities and relaxing at the end, showing their understanding of their bodies' cardiovascular systems and the effect of exercise on muscles. They are very well motivated and consider that physical education will be an important component in their adult lives. In all physical education activities, teachers and pupils wear appropriate clothing and footwear, and pupils are proud of their own appearance and achievements.
176. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress and sometimes very good progress in the full range of physical education activities, especially in the wide range of games, their development of dance and their consistent improvement in gymnastics skills. During a Year 3 dance lesson observed, pupils made sophisticated sequences in movement and developed confidence in extending their gymnastic and movement skills when responding to changes in the style of music and their teachers' expectations. Pupils' abilities to sequence a range of movements, change pace, stretch, slide and curl and incorporate these into dance, reflect good progress. In gymnastics pupils make good and at times very good progress in transferring their floor skills to apparatus, especially in jumping, twisting, curling, stretching and balance. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 attain high standards in gymnastics. They practise, refine and repeat a series of actions on the floor and then on apparatus, showing a high level of awareness of body tension.
177. Throughout the school pupils use available spaces, whether in the hall, in the playground or on the field very effectively. They produce interesting and varied shapes and progress to joining them into more fluent sequences and interpret music creatively. They use apparatus very thoughtfully and in an ever-extending range of movements.
178. There are significant contributory factors to the high quality of learning throughout the school. One is the quality of teaching, which is never less than good, and in some lessons very good. Teachers plan their lessons well and continuously give clear instructions and praise and, as a result, pupils understand their expectations. In each lesson observed all activities were demanding and lessons moved at a brisk pace, resulting in all pupils being well challenged and interested. Teachers use their high level of expertise to good effect when demonstrating skills and explaining techniques: this encourages pupils to improve their own performances. As a result, the quality of learning in all the lessons seen was good, and at times very good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, not only toward their targets but also in a wide range of activities. During the inspection there were good examples of these pupils participating and being not only welcomed but also chosen by other pupils for the team activities. This reflects the positive comments from parents.
179. Another positive contributory factor is pupils' attitudes to the dance, gymnastics and games lessons observed. They change quickly and quietly and listen carefully to instructions. All pupils have a high regard for their own safety and that of others. Behaviour is very good, which means that little time is wasted and therefore more skills are acquired. Pupils of all ages and abilities are well motivated, hardworking and keen to learn. They have a very good sense of responsibility

and understanding of fair play. They all wait patiently for their turns without queue jumping, and work well both with partners and in flexible groupings.

180. A third contributory factor is the high quality of curricular leadership. The high level of personal skills of the co-ordinator, together with her knowledge of how skills progress from one activity to another, are reflected in the high quality of curricular guidance given to teachers. She has produced a well-considered policy and scheme of work for each aspect of physical education, giving very good guidance. During the inspection week the co-ordinator was in the process of incorporating the requirements of Curriculum 2000 into the planning of physical education. There is a school plan for assessment and reporting, but it is not yet being used to inform planning.
181. Physical education was a high profile subject during the previous inspection and the co-ordinator has successfully continued and extended this to include a wider range of games (for example, lacrosse) and focusing on sport nationally and internationally: a good example is the display of a timeline on Olympic Games over the past 12 years with a high level of emphasis on the recent Olympic Games in Sydney.
182. The very good range of games equipment, which has recently been extended as a result of the co-ordinator's involvement and enterprise with local communities, is stored well and is easily accessible to both teachers and pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory, and includes the gymnastic provision in the hall, a good level of hard play area, and sufficient grassed area for the teaching of games skills and other outdoor activities, although there is not enough space for a football pitch. All resources are effectively used and well cared for, and the management of them contributes well towards pupils' attainment and progress. During the inspection week professional coaches were effectively involved in coaching Year 6 and the school is resourceful in using the local community.
183. Physical education is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially games. Pupils feel a strong commitment to this subject, which makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral development through team games, and to their spiritual and cultural development through dance and the revelation of the beauty of movement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

184. Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been maintained, and at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved. Pupils' achievements are now in line with those expected in the (local education authority) agreed syllabus at the ends of both key stages. In the previous inspection, standards were below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. A scheme of work has been recently introduced that interprets appropriately the requirements of the agreed syllabus. The knowledge and understanding of pupils are satisfactory at the ends of both key stages.
185. In Year 2, pupils look at the celebration of marriage and learn that not all weddings are the same. Pupils are familiar with some of the aspects of a Christian wedding. They discuss why people choose to get married and what love means. They show good understanding in their writing of harvest time and Harvest Festival, and retell the story of the Last Supper accurately. They compile a list of 'what God wants': characteristics such as caring, sharing, respect and consideration. In Year 3, pupils read stories about the Creation in different cultures as well as in the Bible, and compare them. After the Bible story of Cain and Abel, pupils explain and discuss what it means to feel jealous. In Year 4, pupils learn about the Temptations of Jesus and consider how to distinguish right from wrong in their own lives. This is developed further in Year 6, in the context of Islam, when pupils discuss the role of conscience in religion, and the value of being able to feel guilty. Pupils in Year 5 learn about Islam and Judaism and make a time line of the major world religions as well as of their own lives. Following on from the story of Ibrahim who listened to God, pupils learn about the Muslim celebration of Eid ul Adha, and the religious customs associated with it.

186. The teaching of religious education was satisfactory in all lessons seen; in one lesson it was good and in another it was very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was satisfactory in just over half the lessons and unsatisfactory in the others. Teachers use skilful questioning to extend pupils' thinking about moral and religious issues. They encourage and welcome contributions from pupils and often allow them time to give considered responses, drawing on their own experiences. They make good use of pupils' own knowledge of religion to enhance the interest in the lesson. A few Muslim pupils are very keen to contribute from their own experience and knowledge, encouraged by the teachers. Pupils in a Year 5 class ask a Muslim pupil questions about Islam and the customs associated with the festival of Eid ul Adha. They showed great interest and listened well to his clear explanations. This promoted their knowledge and understanding. The teacher made good use of this opportunity to draw comparisons between religious practices and customs in Islam, Christianity and Judaism. However, to some extent teachers' lack of knowledge of Islam limits their ability to build on pupils' contributions effectively, or to make those comparisons themselves where there are no such pupils.
187. In some lessons, the teaching of religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills (for example, when they composed a number of sentences about weddings in Year 2). In other lessons however, and in pupils' books, some written activities are too undemanding and contribute little to pupils' learning. Few artefacts are used in lessons, or big picture books when telling Bible stories, to stimulate pupils' interest. Teachers work hard to maintain pupils' engagement in lessons, and most listen well and are keen to participate.
188. Much progress has been made by the recently appointed co-ordinator to improve standards, ensuring that the new scheme of work ties in with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In line with the School Improvement Plan, a programme of monitoring the teaching and learning has been initiated. Pupils' books are monitored, with appropriate feedback given at staff meetings. However, assessment is in its early stages and as yet is being used inconsistently. On the advice of the supporting head, an audit of resources was undertaken which led to a successful bid, to the local authority to improve provision. This includes computer software on world religions to widen teachers' and pupils' knowledge. However, there are still few artefacts for teachers to use, and there are only limited visits to places of worship, such as a local mosque, to enhance pupils' learning and understanding and to increase teachers' knowledge and confidence.