

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Southport**

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104915

Acting Headteacher: Mrs S. Wilson.

Reporting inspector: Mr G.J. Yates  
[2465]

Dates of inspection: September 25th-29th, 2000.

Inspection number: 224315

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Norwood Crescent, Southport.
Postcode:	PR9 7DU
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rt Rev. Mgr. J. Kennedy.
Date of previous inspection:	June 10th, 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G.J. Yates	Registered inspector	Mathematics.	How high are standards? - The school's results and achievements.
Mrs C. Wild	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - 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?
Mr M.J. Bowers	Team inspector	Science; Information technology; Physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr A.V. Calderbank	Team inspector	English; Art; Design and technology; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs J. Watkins	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; Geography; History; Music; Equal opportunities.	How well are pupils taught?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The week before the inspection started the well respected headteacher died after a long period of sickness. The Local Education Authority has seconded a headteacher from a neighbouring school to be the acting headteacher until a permanent appointment is made.

Holy Family Catholic School is a primary school of above average size for boys and girls aged four to eleven. The school is situated near to the centre of Southport. There are eleven classes and the average class size is 27. Currently 278 pupils attend the school and 39 are under the age of five. Pupils start school with broadly average skills. There are 55 pupils on the special educational needs register, 6 of whom have statements of special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. No pupils speak English as a second language. The number of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal is in line with the national average.

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

Standards in English and mathematics have improved significantly this year and are now in line with the national averages by the age of eleven. Standards in science are above average. During the week of the inspection teaching was good overall. The school is giving satisfactory value for money.

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

- ◆ Teaching is good overall.
- ◆ Standards in science are higher than those normally found.
- ◆ Role play in Reception and Key Stage 1 classes contributes well to children's education.
- ◆ Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very good.
- ◆ Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of good quality.
- ◆ Pupils behave well, have very good attitudes towards learning, work very hard and enjoy school.
- ◆ All members of staff work well together as a team and share a strong commitment to improve standards.
- ◆ The Governing Body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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

- ◆ The use of information from assessments and from teachers' marking to set individual targets which help pupils of all attainment levels to improve.
- ◆ The quality of pupils' writing in subjects other than English.
- ◆ Pupils' confidence in using referencing skills.
- ◆ The level of resources in some subjects.
- ◆ The organisation and use made of the Key Stage 2 activity area.
- ◆ The distribution of responsibilities amongst staff.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing most of the issues raised in the last inspection report. The attainment and progress of more able pupils at Key Stage 2 has recently been improved with over 30% of pupils attaining level 5 in English, mathematics and science in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000. A policy and scheme of work in design and technology addresses the weakness in provision identified in the previous report. Older Key Stage 1 pupils are now appropriately challenged and have benefited from the introduction of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, whilst effective procedures have recently been established for assessing and recording pupils' work in English, mathematics and science, the information gathered is not used consistently to inform future curriculum planning and to set appropriate individual targets. The level of resources has improved in some areas of the curriculum but much still needs to be done.

### STANDARDS

*The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests in 1999.*

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	C	A	D	D	well above average A above average B Average C Below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	D	D	D	
Science	A	C	D	D	

The standards achieved in English, mathematics and science in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds were below the national average and below the average for similar schools. However, this cohort of pupils had an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. Over the previous four years the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science has been close to the national average.

The 2000 results show a significant improvement on the previous year's results reported above with the school exceeding the appropriate targets set by the Local Education Authority of 83% of pupils achieving level 4 in English and 72% in mathematics. The school is on line to meet its agreed targets in 2001. Inspection evidence shows that there are average standards of work in English and mathematics and above average standards in science by the end of Key Stage 2. However, pupils do not use their writing skills effectively in other subjects of the curriculum.

There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music, and design and technology. Religious education is to be the subject of a separate archdiocesan inspection to be carried out later in the year. Pupils' achievements in all other subjects are in line with those found in most schools.

By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with the national average. Standards in information and communication technology and all other subjects inspected are similar to those found in most schools. Children under the age of five are on course to achieve all the Early Learning Goals set for five-year-olds and to exceed what is expected in personal, social and emotional development.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show a high level of interest in all that they do and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils move sensibly and quietly around the school. During the week of the inspection there was no evidence of any oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on well together. They are polite to visitors and enjoy undertaking responsibilities.
Attendance	Below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the week of the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen and good in just over 50%. Teaching was very good in 12% of the lessons. This is a significant improvement from that found at the time of the previous inspection when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory in 13% of lessons. In all classes pupils are well managed despite the limitations of a building in which two classes have to walk through another class to enter and leave their rooms. Teachers have a clear grasp of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with appropriate learning opportunities.

The quality of learning is good overall. During the literacy and numeracy sessions pupils are taught the necessary skills to become numerate and literate but do not use their writing skills well in other subjects. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work. They sustain interest in all that they do.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a suitable range of learning opportunities. Homework provision has recently been improved. At the time of the inspection only a limited range of after-school activities was on offer. The school's use of assessment information about pupils' work to guide curriculum planning is unsatisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL [continued]

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by classroom assistants. However, the organisation of the support means that some pupils miss important parts of lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	N/A
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to help with the smooth running of the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a good quality. Staff work hard in encouraging pupils to consider the result of their actions on others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory but the school does not use this information in any coherent way.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Due to the recent death of the headteacher the Governing Body has appointed an acting head from a neighbouring Catholic school. She has worked hard to ensure the smooth running of the school during this difficult period and has received good support from the newly appointed deputy. Some members of the senior management team have too many responsibilities.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The Governing Body is involved effectively in setting targets for school improvement. Legal requirements are met except for the reports sent out on pupils' progress which do not contain all the necessary information.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Test results are analysed but as yet the information is not used effectively to set targets for future improvement. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning have recently been put into place.
The strategic use of resources	Most resources are used well except the library. On occasions too many pupils use the computer suite at the same time.

The school is appropriately staffed. The accommodation is well cared for but space is limited with two classes being taught in areas not designated as classrooms. The school's grounds are very attractive. Value for money is obtained on purchases.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The school is well managed and led.</li> <li>◆ Children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>◆ Children make good progress.</li> <li>◆ Teaching is good.</li> <li>◆ Pupils behave well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The range of activities on offer outside lessons.</li> <li>◆ The amount of information they receive about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>◆ Links between parents and the school.</li> <li>◆ The amount of homework pupils are asked to do at home.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees that pupils do enjoy coming to school. The school's well respected and dedicated headteacher died recently and the inspection team endorses the parents' comments about the quality of leadership and management she provided. Teaching is of good quality and pupils behave very well. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in most classes are making at least satisfactory progress. At the time of the inspection only a limited range of extra-curricular activities was on offer but the school plans to increase this later this term. Parents do not receive sufficient information about how their children are getting on. Homework is provided but the range is narrow and pupils are not given enough opportunities to practice their writing skills. Links with parents are satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Inspection evidence shows that in all subjects most pupils make at least satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' scientific knowledge is a strength of the school. Higher attaining pupils do well in English and mathematics. The weaknesses found in the previous inspection with regard to more able pupils has been addressed. The school exceeded the targets set for both English and mathematics in the Year 2000.
2. Children start school with average skills. Progress for the under-fives in both Reception classes is at least satisfactory in all areas of learning. Most children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning for the age group, with a few exceeding them. Most children, including those with special needs, make good progress in personal, social and emotional development.
3. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 and above was above the national average in reading and close to the national average in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching level 3 and above was below the national average in reading but above average in writing. Speaking and listening skills were found to be below those found nationally. The Year 2000 test results show a significant improvement in standards with over 90% of pupils achieving level 2 in both reading and writing. A far greater percentage of pupils also achieved the higher level 3 in both subjects.
4. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 overall attainment in English is average with a significant minority of pupils achieving above average levels. Pupils enjoy writing and much of it is produced in a neat, printed hand. However, when pupils are asked to write in other subjects they do not always apply the skills they have acquired in using punctuation and correct spelling. Standards in speaking are satisfactory. Pupils listen well. The use of role-play throughout the Key Stage is an important part in pupils' language development. The literacy hour has provided more opportunities for pupils to express their views. Pupils are satisfactory readers and most have developed strategies to read new words.
5. In the 1999 English tests for eleven-year-olds the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 or above was well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving level 5 and above was also well below the national average. However, this class of pupils contained a high number of pupils with special educational needs. The 2000 results show a significant improvement. Almost all pupils achieved level 4 and above and 38% of pupils achieved level 5. Two key factors underpinned these results: the effective use of teaching pupils in ability groups and the positive effect of the National Literacy Strategy on standards.
6. Overall, taking full account of work seen during the inspection and the survey of previous work, most pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are on course to achieve average standards in English. A significant minority of pupils are on course to achieve above average standards. Spellings are set regularly to be learnt as a homework task and spelling conventions are conscientiously taught during the literacy hour. However, pupils are over-reliant on their teachers to correct spellings in their wordbooks and do not check them for themselves using a dictionary.

7. Pupils are given few opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum. A survey of last year's work shows that, whilst there are some good examples of writing in history, much of what pupils are asked to do consists of completing worksheets that do not require pupils to use their writing skills to express their own views about the topics being studied. Pupils have satisfactory word processing skills. However, the computer equipment in most classes is out of date in comparison with the very good hardware in the computer suite. As a result, opportunities for pupils to use acquired skills in their own classroom are limited.
8. Standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those found in most schools and inspection evidence shows that a significant number of pupils are on course to achieve an even higher level. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of basic number and many have sufficient skill in applying this knowledge to solve problems quickly. They can recognise a number of two-dimensional shapes and can work with money to the value of fifty pence. Numeracy is used well in other subjects, for example simple graphs in science and timelines in history. Both the 1999 and 2000 end of Key Stage 1 mathematics test results showed standards to be close to the national average.
9. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in mathematics for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 and above was close to the national average but the proportion at level 5 was well below the average. However, this group of pupils contained a high number with special educational needs. The most recent National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds show that the percentage reaching level 5 was far higher at 35% and 86% of pupils achieved level 4. Both boys and girls achieved equally as well. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and grouping older pupils on the basis of prior attainment have both had positive effects on the standards pupils achieve.
10. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are on course to reach the expected level in mathematics and a significant minority look set to achieve an even higher level. Most pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of basic number skills and apply them well. A good feature of their work is the aptitude pupils show in knowing when to carry out a written calculation and when to do it mentally. They can recall multiplication facts up to ten times. Progress is satisfactory across the key stage. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, in science they measure the circumference of children's skulls and record their findings.
11. In the 1999 and 2000 teacher assessments in science for pupils aged seven, most pupils were assessed as being at level 2 or above. Inspection evidence shows that standards are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 but are not high enough for the higher attaining pupils.
12. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 science tests 95% of pupils reached the expected level and 55% exceeded it. The previous year the age group contained a high number of pupils with special educational needs and the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 and above was well below the expected level.
13. Inspection evidence shows that by the time pupils leave the school standards in science are above average.
14. Standards in information technology are in line with those found in most schools at the end of both key stages. However, standards in data handling are not as high. Good use is being made of the school's computer suite but at times the room is over-crowded and pupils do not get sufficient 'hands on' experience.

15. Attainment levels in art and design, geography, history, physical education are average at the end of both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. It was not possible to make judgements about standards in design and technology and music in either key stage. The Catholic archdiocesan team will inspect religious education.

16. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. However, at times when withdrawn for additional support they miss important parts of class lessons. Whilst data from previous years shows differences in the performance of boys and girls, inspection evidence shows that now this is not significant.

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

17. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. Parents agree that their children are happy to be at school, they are eager to start their lessons and quickly settle to their assignments. The good teaching and appropriately paced lessons throughout the school ensure pupils are motivated in their work. In classrooms, pupils are enthusiastic in their desire to answer questions, they are attentive to the teachers and readily talk about what they are doing. The school's involvement in charities, such as the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development, helps the pupils to have consideration for others and to be aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

18. In classrooms, around the school, and at play, behaviour is very good. A detailed behaviour policy is successful in practice. Movement around the school takes place in an orderly manner. Pupils, including the new Reception class, form an orderly queue in the dining room and the playground as a matter of course. The very good prefect system develops a discerning outlook in older pupils. Pupils look forward to receiving rewards for good behaviour and certificates in Key Stage 1 and badges in Key Stage 2 help to raise their self-esteem. Good behaviour is also recognised in displays in the assembly hall. Although younger pupils could not easily recall the school rules, when asked, the class rule that quickly came to mind was 'to smile'. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection week. There were two exclusions in the last year.

19. The Catholic ethos of the school strengthens and encourages pupils to have respect for others and themselves. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Staff and parents who assist in the school provide very good role models. At lunchtime older pupils play contentedly with their games. No disagreements were seen during the inspection and a quiet enjoyment, either by taking part or watching and waiting patiently for their turn, was apparent. Pupils are courteous and polite to each other and to visitors. In the classroom pupils collaborate well, share resources and help one another. Assemblies and classroom prayers encourage pupils to reflect on their action on others. No instances of sexist or racist attitudes were observed during the inspection.

20. A well organised prefect system encourages the older pupils to accept responsibility. For example, they help to create an orderly flow of pupils on the stairs and corridors. Good opportunities to show initiative are provided at lunchtime, when pupils are accountable for lunchboxes, and older pupils play with and amuse younger pupils. In the mornings as they come into the Reception class, children are given simple duties to perform. These assignments are taken very seriously by the children, who gain in confidence under the praise of the teacher for remembering and completing the tasks. A School Council fosters a sensible and caring attitude to other pupils and their environment. Older pupils are confident and explain willingly to visitors the work that they undertake.

21. In the previous inspection report, attendance at the school was satisfactory and punctuality was good. Attendance of 93.5% in the 1998/99 academic year is satisfactory, although below the national average. Punctuality is now satisfactory. During the inspection, the majority of pupils arrived on time. However, a minority of pupils, mainly in the early years, was observed to arrive late. Registers and registration meet the statutory requirements. However, monitoring pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.

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

22. The quality of teaching is good overall. As a result there is a good quality of learning. Pupils are suitably challenged to do their best. 54% of the lessons observed were good or better, 12% were very good or better and there was an example of excellent teaching. There was no unsatisfactory teaching, which is a significant improvement on the previous inspection when 13% of lessons were less than satisfactory. The school has made effective use of specialist teaching in the Year 6 'booster' classes and in science in order to raise standards. In music there has been success in the introduction of a new scheme of work by a specialist teacher. The two-year cycle of planning for foundation subjects has involved teachers in appropriate collaboration.

23. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is carried out effectively. This is reflected in the proportion of very good teaching observed and in the school's success in exceeding its agreed targets in English and mathematics in the latest national tests. However, there is still a need to emphasise the use of dictionaries. No lessons were seen in design and technology and geography in Key Stage 1 so no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching in these subjects. Not enough lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about standards in music in either key stage.

24. Excellent teaching was observed in information technology in a Key Stage 1 class taught by a Key Stage 2 teacher. Very effective strategies included excellent organisation. An amusing comic strip illustration ensured that pupils were made fully aware, whilst still in their classroom, of what they had to do when in the computer room. In consequence they were able to maximise their learning opportunities within the limited time and space available.

25. The quality of teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Particular strengths are the emphasis placed on children's personal, social and emotional development and on the language and literacy area of learning. The Reception class teachers plan their work together and identify clear learning objectives. They collaborate well in the use of the limited space available to them.

26. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good overall. There were examples of very good teaching in English when very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm fired children's interest. The use of adults in role-play situations, to promote speaking, listening and the development of imagination, is a strong feature. In mathematics very good mental activities were promoted by encouraging children to use their 'doubling fingers' and in the use made of the class 'shop'. In science, although good lessons were observed, teaching is satisfactory overall. There are examples of too much talking by the teacher, too little practical activity by the children and insufficient challenge of higher attainers. In physical education and art there is insufficient opportunity for children to evaluate their work.

27. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good overall with a higher proportion of very good teaching than in Key Stage 1. Very good features in the teaching of English include very successful application of the principles of the literacy hour and the use made of writing frames to assist pupils in the writing of paragraphs. A relative weakness in the teaching is the comparative lack of opportunity for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Teachers have a good understanding of mathematics. Expectations are high in most lessons with comments such as, 'Come on, I want 25 hands in the air'. Pupils are encouraged to explain their working out. Very good use is sometimes made of the plenary session to ascertain what pupils have understood. When data handling is carried out there is insufficient use made of information technology. A strong feature in the teaching of science is the emphasis placed on the use of the correct terminology and the development of scientific knowledge.

28. In history very good use is often made of resources, including that of outside expertise to develop pupils' interest and understanding in both key stages. In both history and geography teaching fieldwork features appropriately. As in Key Stage 1 few opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others in art and physical education.

29. Collaboration ensures that the parallel reception classes experience similar learning experiences. Planning in language is of good quality but in other areas of learning it is less precise. In both key stages teachers' planning is satisfactory, and used effectively, particularly when learning objectives are shared with pupils. Assessment opportunities are frequently identified at the planning stage but there is no whole-school approach to the use made of assessment.

30. Relationships are very good. Teachers manage their pupils well and act as good role models. This has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and on the quality of learning. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously but they are not always given pointers to show how improvements are to be made. Target setting for individual pupils is at an early stage.

31. Throughout the school teachers use a combination of whole-class, group and individual methods appropriately. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs or larger groups on collaborative tasks and this forms an important part of their social development.

32. Provision for pupils with special needs is satisfactory. Appropriate records are kept, maintained and updated. There is satisfactory consultation with parents. The use of differentiated tasks and the provision of additional adult support are often very effective. There is much effort made to ensure that pupils take part in all the activities available, for example, the inclusion of pupils with physical difficulties in physical education lessons. Whilst the school attempts to ensure that children are not excluded from any lessons there were occasions during the inspection week when a few children missed a key part of a lesson in order to receive additional support in literacy.

33. In both key stages teachers have good knowledge of the National Curriculum subjects. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to apply knowledge across the curriculum, for example, in the provision of opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum and to use their referencing skills to find out information. Pupils' work is marked regularly but written comments are not provided that would help pupils to improve their work.

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

34. The school has improved its curriculum provision since the previous inspection and now provides a broad and balanced programme. All subjects are taught and the curriculum meets the National Curriculum statutory requirements. The curriculum for religious education follows the scheme promoted by the Catholic church. The recent setting up of a computer suite has enabled the school to plan for a full range of information and communication technology applications. The presence of some outdated and unreliable machines in some classrooms prevents the subject from being fully developed as a cross-curricular learning tool. All subjects, with the exception of geography, are supported effectively by schemes of work and detailed planning.

35. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Reception class is satisfactory. The curriculum takes appropriate account of the six areas of learning and addresses the Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage of education. Teachers identify clear learning objectives for all planned activities and there is a good balance between adult-directed tasks and ones in which pupils are given the opportunity to organise their own learning. This provision forms a firm basis for transition to the National Curriculum for all pupils, including those identified with special educational needs.

36. Throughout the school the quality of curriculum planning is satisfactory. There is an appropriate emphasis given to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Time is used effectively. All classes are timetabled to use the computer suite. To ensure that the time allocated to such foundation subjects as art and design and technology is provided in blocks that can be used effectively, they are timetabled in alternate terms.

37. The National Literacy and Numeracy Initiatives are fully in place and have been instrumental in raising standards in English and mathematics. The curriculum has several strengths. In science and information and communication technology the very good practice of deploying specialist teachers ensures that the subjects challenge the pupils. The school recognises the value of sports coaches from local football and rugby clubs to extend the range of skills being taught and to forge constructive links with the local community. Good use is made of the school grounds to widen the curriculum in science. Visitors and visits to places of interest enhance the curriculum. The oldest pupils benefit from residential visits where they study the environment of contrasting areas and are introduced to adventurous activities as part of the physical education programme.

38. All pupils who are identified as having special educational needs are supported well. However, on some occasions pupils miss important parts of lessons when they are taken out of classes. Pupils with statements of special needs, including physical and medical conditions, work alongside pupils of their own age and receive support according to the needs outlined in their statements. Individual education plans satisfactorily support teachers' planning.

39. The school provides a limited range of extra-curricular activities, which are mostly related to sport. Plans are in place to improve this voluntary provision and to add further interest clubs to the chess club that meets regularly. Homework provision has recently been revised but at the moment the range of homework is narrow with few opportunities, for example, for pupils to use their writing skills.

40. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is good and is an improvement on the previous inspection. The school includes provision for sex and drugs education in science and physical education. This good provision is further enhanced by the identification of objectives to support personal development.

41. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual and social development. It makes very good provision for their moral development. Provision for cultural development is sound.

42. The school continues to promote pupils' spiritual development well. Pupils engage daily in collective worship, which is the subject of a separate archdiocesan inspection. The messages from assemblies are echoed in discussions about pupils' relationships with their classmates. There are moments of awe and wonder when pupils examine the contents of an old suitcase containing the clothes and possessions a person would take on holiday during the immediate post-war years. The school makes good efforts to help pupils appreciate the wonders of God's world as seen in the changing natural environment and the cycle of sunshine and rain. Pupils gain insights into the spirituality of non-Christian world religions through the taught religious education programme.

43. The school has taken great care in the promotion of moral development and this is a major strength of the school. 96% of parents who returned the questionnaire agreed that the school expected their child to achieve his or her best. Older pupils understand the school code and know right from wrong in the school situation. They are actively encouraged to think about and to agree class and school rules. Younger pupils stated that they are happy in school and give help to their classmates when they need it. In this way they reflect the school motto and the successful ethos it has created. All members of staff expect pupils to be accountable for their behaviour. In lessons pupils are reminded how to behave and in topics they consider wider moral issues such as conservation and justice.

44. The provision for pupils' social development is good. All pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities within their classrooms. The oldest pupils help in the day-to-day running of the school by accepting duties, which they take seriously and perform diligently. The residential visit gives the oldest pupils the opportunity to become aware of the presence and needs of others and the sporting clubs and competitions include a social dimension. The school promotes well social inclusiveness. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in school life. Pupils' ideas about social responsibilities are successfully promoted through their involvement in charities organised by the Catholic church and by secular charities that develop their awareness of both local and world issues. The newly introduced School Council will add to this provision.

45. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through history, geography, art, dance and music. Pupils visit sites of geographical and historical interest including the Dome and local museums. Not enough opportunities are taken to develop pupils' understanding of world cultures and their appreciation of the role these cultures play in the United Kingdom of today. However, there are a few examples of good practice. Recently the school enabled some pupils meet and work with members of the Moslem and Hindu communities. This gave them some insights into these cultures.

46. There are good links with the local community, including with a national car company and the local newspaper. These links contribute to pupils' awareness of the economics of the locality and the development of communications projects. A 'Mums' and Toddlers' Group' and an 'Afternoon Club', which are organised by parents, meet regularly in the school. There are sound links with the receiving secondary school and good links with the local University College and Further Education College. The school accepts students on teaching practice and on placement for nursery nurse training.

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

47. Very good relationships are a strength of the school. A friendly trusting atmosphere pervades throughout. Pupils relate well to teachers and other adults and in turn are respected and valued. Overall, the school cares for its pupils satisfactorily.

48. Procedures to promote pupils' well-being, health and safety are satisfactory. A detailed health and safety policy, which includes a section on stress management, promotes the well-being of all pupils and staff. The Governing Body Premises Committee monitors the effect of the policy and a nominated member of staff ensures the school complies with the policy on a day-to-day basis. Five members of staff are fully trained in first aid. Written notifications of bumps to the head are provided to parents. The caretaker, who has received appropriate training, deals efficiently with safety issues. Fire procedures are adequate and regular testing of fire and electrical equipment takes place. As well as working in the classroom, non-teaching staff often have other roles in the school, such as lunchtime supervisors or helping with the after-school club. As a result pupils are well known to them and are trusting and confident in their care.

49. Satisfactory child protection procedures are in place. The designated person with responsibility has received training and updates this regularly. A detailed policy assists all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, in carrying out the procedures for child protection. The school receives appropriate support as required from outside agencies.

50. The school has very effective procedures for the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour. The detailed behaviour policy is supported by a system of rewards and sanctions. The expectations of staff and the moral guidance provided, along with implementation of the policy, have a significant effect on the achievement of very good behaviour. Parents agreed that standards of behaviour are good. During the inspection no unacceptable conduct was observed. Mid-day supervisory staff maintain good order and are able to provide information that contributes to the rewards that pupils receive.

51. Assessment procedures have recently been established in English, mathematics and science and a draft whole-school policy introduced. However, the school does not make satisfactory use of the information to inform teachers' planning or to set targets for individuals to achieve. The school has recognised that this is an area for development.

52. Although formal written assessment and monitoring of pupils occurs, a personal development policy is not yet in place, informal procedures are satisfactory, teachers know their pupils well and written records of their achievements in behaviour and effort are kept. Annual reports contain some pastoral information, but not enough to be beneficial.

53. Procedures for the monitoring of attendance are unsatisfactory. Attendance at the school is below the national average and a slight decline is occurring each year. Although computerised registers comply with the statutory requirements and registration takes place at the beginning of each morning and afternoon, there is no analysis of the types of absence to ascertain where the school needs to improve. The school outlines the importance of good attendance in its communications to parents but needs to review its procedures in tracking reasons for absence when parents do not provide an explanation. Attendance figures are not included in pupils' individual progress reports.

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

54. The school has a satisfactory relationship with parents, which has a positive impact on the learning and achievement of the pupils. Parents feel that they have access to the school and that they can approach the staff with any problems. Views expressed by parents in questionnaires are supportive. Overall, parents are happy with the provision the school provides for their children.

55. As a whole, the information provided to parents is unsatisfactory. Although general information about school activities and about the curriculum are good overall, the information provided to individual parents about their children's progress is not clear enough.

56. The quality of weekly newsletters is very good and provides a useful overview on the school's activities. Curriculum evenings held at the beginning of the term assist the parents in understanding what their children will be studying in the coming year. The school ensures that the parents who are unable to attend receive the same information. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are of a high standard. Information is provided for the induction of pupils to school and for the ease of transfer to the local secondary school.

57. Annual progress evenings are held twice per year and parents are invited to come into school to consult and discuss their children's progress at other times when they have concerns. Annual progress reports celebrate the pupils' academic achievements but do not give a clear enough picture of their strengths and weaknesses. What pupils need to do to improve is not included in the reports. The inspection team agrees with parents that the amount of information they receive on their children's progress is insufficient. Pupils' attendance and unauthorised absence are also omitted from the reports.

58. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in the reviews of the individual educational plans for their children.

59. The school recognises the important contribution parents can make in helping with their children's learning. Parents are encouraged to help in the school. Grandparents are assured of a welcome in working with the children, which ensures good relationships are fostered. An active Friends of the School Association holds social events and raises funds for the school. Parents have volunteered and have assisted with the Groundwork Trust Community Development in a project to improve the outside of the school's surroundings. Though the school's homework policy sets out a framework for the school, the range is too narrow. Homework diaries are not consistently used throughout the school either by staff, parents or pupils.

60. The inspection team agrees with the parents that only a limited range of extra-curricular activities was on offer, but the school has plans to increase this later this term.

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

61. The quality of leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. Due to the recent death of the well-respected and dedicated headteacher the Governing Body has appointed an acting head from a neighbouring Catholic school. She has worked hard to ensure the smooth running of the school during this difficult period and has received good support from the newly appointed deputy and other members of the Senior Management Team. As at the time of the previous inspection, there is a very positive ethos throughout the school and relationships are very good.

62. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues raised in the last inspection report. The attainment and progress of the higher attainers at both key stages has recently improved. For example, over 50% of pupils achieved level 5 in science in the most recent end of Key Stage 2 national tests. Statutory requirements with regard to the teaching of design and technology are now met. However, whilst effective procedures have recently been established for assessing and recording pupils' work in English, mathematics and science, the information gathered is not consistently used to inform future curriculum planning. Though the level of resources has improved in some subjects much still needs to be done.

63. The Governing Body provides committed support for the school and is well led by its chairman. It is now more focused on the raising of standards and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. For example, "a governor of the month" is appointed on a rota basis so that they can get to know the staff and pupils better and become more aware of standards. A Quality Assurance Committee has been set up to look at systems concerned with performance review, comparison with other schools and parental feedback. This ensures that both governors and school have a much clearer and firmer basis on which to make judgements and decisions. Through their committee structure the Governing Body meets most of its statutory responsibilities and keeps an informed eye on school developments. However, teachers' annual reports to parents on pupils' progress do not report progress in all subjects. The literacy, special needs and numeracy governors have a good understanding of their roles.

64. The procedures for monitoring the implementation of policies and the quality of provision are satisfactory. Regular planned monitoring, for example, of literacy and numeracy has taken the form of classroom observations to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. Co-ordinators check lesson planning and some have been provided with time to work alongside colleagues in order to improve the quality of learning. During the week of the inspection the art co-ordinator was observed giving an effective demonstration lesson for a Year 2 teacher. The school recognises the need for more training to be provided for staff on evaluating their own and others' performance.

65. All members of staff have job descriptions. However, some members of the senior management have too many responsibilities and this has an adverse effect upon the effectiveness with which they can carry out their duties. The support given to newly qualified teachers follows the Local Education Authority's guidelines and is good. It ensures that they are fully informed on all procedures. The appraisal system is currently being reviewed in the light of the introduction of performance related pay for teachers and the Governing Body is aware of the need to agree manageable targets for the new headteacher and the deputy head. Staff have attended training mostly linked to the priorities identified by the school.

66. Financial planning and management are good. The headteacher, secretary and governors conscientiously follow clear financial procedures. The Finance Committee meets regularly and carefully monitors spending patterns that reflect the priorities in the School Improvement Plan. The school receives valuable support on a regular basis from its finance officer who helps to produce budget forecasts.

67. Development planning is satisfactory and includes a recently produced Curriculum Development Plan that is based upon a review of all National Curriculum subjects and other whole-school issues such as assessment and management. The governors show a sound understanding of the need to obtain value for money. Reserve balances have been kept to cope with any drop in pupil numbers and to allocate extra expenditure to improve standards. Some spending decisions have been delayed because of the temporary arrangement for the headship. The latest audit report found that procedures in place within the school's financial systems were effective. The few minor points raised have been implemented.

68. The school has a sufficient number of teaching and support staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a wide range of experience amongst the staff, including provision for children who are under five and pupils with special educational needs. The staff as a whole has sufficient knowledge and expertise to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. There has been a high turn-over of staff in the last two years and much staff absence. However, teachers do work well together as a team, sharing experiences and expertise as appropriate, for example, in information technology and art. Classroom support staff are appropriately deployed and well briefed. They make a valuable contribution to the progress pupils make.

69. The money allocated to the school to support pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately. The effectiveness of the provision for special needs pupils is reflected in the satisfactory progress made by the pupils not only in academic work but also in personal and social development. Occasionally, the way this support is organised means that pupils miss a valuable part of a lesson.

70. As at the time of the previous inspection the accommodation is well cared for and cleaned to a high standard. The recently established information and communication technology suite provides good facilities for developing skills in the subject but sometimes pupils are taught in too large a group and this limits pupils' 'hands on' experience. Space within the school is limited with two classes taught in resource bays and another having to be housed in a mobile classroom. The Key Stage 2 activity area is not well organised and is rarely used effectively to support pupils' learning. The school grounds are very attractive and good use is made of them to support pupils' learning in a number of subjects. At the moment they are being further developed in partnership with Groundwork Trust.

There has been some improvements in resources since the last inspection but much still needs to be done. The school has already recognised that resources in music and geography are inadequate. In physical education there is a need for more mats and equipment for younger pupils. Though the provision for information technology has improved significantly with the opening of the computer suite, hardware in classrooms is old and out of date. There is a need also for more resources to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs, especially with regard to appropriate fiction books in classroom libraries. The non-fiction library is situated along a main corridor and is underused. It is not suitable as a resource for personal study because there is no space where pupils can work.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. In order to improve the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should:

**a. ensure that the information gathered from assessments and from teachers' marking is used to set individual targets, which help pupils of all attainment levels to improve, by:**

- ◆ providing training for all staff in the best ways of using assessment information and monitor the implementation of a whole-school approach;
- ◆ implementing the marking policy so that, where appropriate, teachers' written comments give pupils a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work;
- ◆ monitoring the written reports of pupils' progress sent out to parents to ensure that progress is reported in all subjects;

[See paragraphs 51, 57, 62, 98, 108, 133 and 136 in the main report.]

**b. increase the number of opportunities that pupils are given to use their independent writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum;**

[See paragraphs 7, 98, 112 and 129 in the main report.]

**c. improve pupils' confidence in using referencing skills by:**

- ◆ ensuring that they regularly find and use information from reference sources as part of the learning process;
- ◆ encouraging them to use dictionaries and thesauri;
- ◆ reorganising the library to make it easier for pupils to locate books and other reference materials;

[See paragraphs 6, 71, 93 and 95 in the main report.]

**d. improve the level of resources for music, geography, physical education, information and communication technology and special educational needs;**

[See paragraphs 99, 136, 143, 147 and 154 in the main report.]

**e. improve the organisation of the Key Stage 2 activity area and make better use of it during the school day;**

[See paragraph 70 in the main report.]

**f. reallocate responsibilities so that no member of staff is overburdened.**

[See paragraph 65 in the main report.]

Other weaknesses that should be considered by the school:

- ◆ The lack of involvement of pupils in evaluating their own performance and that of others.

[ See paragraphs 122 and 153. ]

- ◆ The type of homework provided.

[ See paragraph 39. ]

- ◆ The organisation of teaching groups for information and communication technology and for special educational needs support.

[ See paragraphs 32 and 140-141. ]

- ◆ The lack of challenge in the work sometimes set for higher attainers in science in Key Stage 1.

[ See paragraph 116. ]

- ◆ The procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance.

[ See paragraph 53. ]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1.5%	10.4%	41.8%	46.3%	0%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	278
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	36

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	55

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

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.5
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	18 [19]	19 [12]	37 [31]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16 [17]	17 [16]	17 [17]
	Girls	17 [11]	18 [11]	19 [11]
	Total	33 [28]	35 [27]	36 [28]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89% (90%)	95% (87%)	97% (90%)
	National	N/a (82%)	N/a (83%)	N/a (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16 [15]	17 [17]	17 [17]
	Girls	17 [11]	17 [11]	16 [11]
	Total	33 [26]	34 [28]	33 [28]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89% (84%)	92% (90%)	89% (90%)
	National	N/a (82%)	N/a (86%)	N/a (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	23	21	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20 [12]	19 [14]	21 [12]
	Girls	19 [14]	19 [16]	21 [14]
	Total	39 [26]	38 [30]	42 [26]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89% (63%)	86% (73%)	95% (63%)
	National	N/a (70%)	N/a (69%)	N/a (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17 [12]	19 [16]	19 [14]
	Girls	19 [12]	19 [13]	19 [9]
	Total	36 [24]	38 [29]	38 [23]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82% (59%)	86% (71%)	86% (68%)
	National	N/a (68%)	N/a (69%)	N/a (75%)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	245
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	27.8

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

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	114

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	504,241
Total expenditure	463,607
Expenditure per pupil	1,588
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,480
Balance carried forward to next year	56,114

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	278
Number of questionnaires returned	121

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72%	23%	2%	1%	2%
My child is making good progress in school.	73%	22%	3%	1%	1%
Behaviour in the school is good.	54%	42%	0%	1%	3%
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35%	31%	24%	7%	3%
The teaching is good.	66%	29%	2%	1%	2%
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52%	36%	8%	1%	2%
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63%	30%	5%	0%	2%
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64%	32%	2%	0%	2%
The school works closely with parents.	43%	42%	10%	1%	4%
The school is well led and managed.	55%	36%	7%	0%	2%
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62%	33%	2%	0%	2%
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30%	34%	23%	4%	9%

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

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

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

73. It is not possible to evaluate improvement in the provision for the under-fives since the previous inspection as there is no mention of the Foundation Stage within the previous inspection report. That inspection took place in the summer term at a time when very few pupils were still under the age of five.

74. Children enter the Reception classes with a variety of pre-school experiences and with overall attainment levels within the average range. Most children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals for the age group, in the six areas of learning, with a few exceeding them. This represents satisfactory progress for all pupils. Most children, including those with special needs, make good progress in personal, social and emotional education. Very good attitudes towards learning are fostered during the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching is good in most areas of learning and never less than satisfactory.

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

75. Children's good progress in personal, social and emotional development begins almost as soon they start school, when both teachers place high priority on this area of development. Appropriate transition arrangements, which include pre-entry familiarisation visits and a shorter day during the first week, enable children to settle very quickly into the expected routines. They are encouraged to undertake helpful tasks in the classroom. Relationships are very good. Children are eager to learn. They listen carefully to the adults who care for them. During the inspection, which took place early in the school year, children had begun to co-operate on joint tasks. Most show good levels of concentration for their age, and persevere with the activities provided until they are completed to their satisfaction. Behaviour is very good and this contributes positively to the quality of learning. They enjoy the celebration of happy occasions such as birthdays.

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

76. Language and literacy are well promoted and the quality of teaching and learning is good. Role-play is a particular strength, and this contributes well to speaking, listening and imagination. Adult participation in the 'Three Bears' Cottage' and the 'Optician's' is of very high quality and the main contributory factor to its success. The literacy hour is introduced at an early stage in the school year and the children enjoy sharing 'Big Books', such as "What Did You See?", as a group with the teacher. By the end of the year almost all have begun to read, with some higher attaining children acquiring a good degree of fluency, and most children are able to attempt to write a sentence independently.

#### **Mathematical development.**

77. Provision for mathematical development is satisfactory. This judgement is based on evidence of work carried out during the previous year. By the end of the school year most children achieve the expectation for the age group, where most can count reliably, recognise and write numbers to 10, know terms of comparative measurement, such as bigger, smaller, longer, shorter, and use them with understanding. They can name common plane shapes and have an appropriate understanding of capacity. The school has recently introduced a more practical approach to mathematical learning to improve children's understanding of the concepts involved, but it is at too early a stage to evaluate its success.

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

78. This area is well promoted and the quality of teaching is good. Good use is made of the locality to reinforce the concept “we live in a town” and as a stimulus for painting and model making. Children successfully record observations within the classroom, such as the grouping of hot and cold things, and the growth of seeds as they germinate. Information and communication technology skills are soundly promoted and frequent opportunities are created for pupils to use computers to reinforce other areas of learning. By the end of the Reception year attainment levels are those expected for the age group.

### **Physical development.**

79. Satisfactory progress is made overall in physical development. By the age of five almost all children achieve the expected standard. They use tools and construction equipment and puzzles with increasing dexterity. Teachers’ plans indicate skill development in the use of small apparatus is carried out systematically in physical education lessons and children have planned opportunities to move to music. However, there is a lack of appropriate large apparatus for the development of skills such as climbing and balancing. The quality of teaching is good.

### **Creative development.**

80. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. During the course of the school year children use colour, texture and shape to produce patterns and models. Collaborative work from the previous year, using wax crayons and fabric to make a “Beautiful Butterfly Blanket” was of high quality. The children enjoy singing a range of action songs and number rhymes and they have appropriate opportunities to use percussion instruments. By the end of the Reception year most children have made satisfactory progress and achieve the expected level for the age group.

81. The two Reception teachers plan their work together, identify clear learning outcomes for all activities, and there is a good balance between adult-directed and independent tasks. They make very good use of the limited space available. Classrooms are well organised and materials well prepared. Relationships are very good. The contribution made to children’s learning by the support staff is significant.

82. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory and form a firm basis for the transition to the National Curriculum. A baseline assessment is carried out to establish children’s attainment levels on entry. Parents are informed of its purpose and the results are used appropriately to provide for future learning. On-going assessment is successfully carried out during the Reception year, and the information used appropriately for the completion of reports to parents.

83. Records of children’s progress in language and literacy are comprehensive. However, the records for other areas of learning do not indicate clearly enough what children know, understand and can do. Classroom resources are satisfactory overall, in good condition and of high quality.

## ENGLISH

84. At the end of both key stages standards in English are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. These findings are similar to the judgements made at the time of the previous inspection but improvements have been made. For example, the results of the most recent National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show an increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher level 5. At the end of Key Stage 1 more pupils are attaining level 3 in writing than in previous years. These results show that higher attainers do well, because there is a better match of work.

85. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests the percentage of children reaching the expected level 2 was above the national average in reading and close to the average in writing. The proportion achieving the higher level 3 was below the national average in reading, but above average in writing. These results were broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Teacher assessments in speaking and listening show the percentage achieving level 2 and the higher level 3 to be below the national figures. Overall results in English in 1999 showed the percentage of pupils achieving levels 2 and 3 to be in line with the national average. The results from the most recent National Curriculum Tests taken in 2000 show a noticeable increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels. The results show that there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

86. Inspection evidence shows that speaking and listening skills are average. The majority of children are on course to achieve the national target of level 2 in reading and writing. A significant number are set to reach level 3. Most pupils make satisfactory progress. Children with special educational needs are well supported. Individual children who have difficulty in learning to read are identified at an early stage and additional support and resources are targeted effectively to help them make sound progress. The literacy hour is well established and has helped to focus the development of reading and writing skills as well as the promotion of speaking and listening.

87. By the age of seven pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations, to stories and to each other. All lessons include good opportunities for pupils to answer questions, talk about their work and express a response to well chosen and good quality "Big Books". Some excellent role-play areas, such as "Brighton's Bargains" and "The Coffee Pot Café", are playing an important part in developing pupils' language skills throughout the key stage.

88. Most children by the age of seven read with appropriate fluency. The school has a structured reading programme. Pupils are given a satisfactory grounding in basic reading skills and have developed a sound phonic awareness. Most can use picture and phonic clues to attack new words. In whole-class reading sessions during the literacy hour pupils are able to follow and read the text confidently. Well chosen books, such as "Kippers Birthday", really capture the pupils' interest. Reading and writing are linked well with one class, for example, using the story of "The Bad Tempered Ladybird" to sequence sentences using "and", "but" and "then".

89. In Key Stage 1 pupils' writing skills are developed soundly and they make satisfactory progress. They write, usually with letters correctly formed and appropriate awareness of full stops and capital letters. Pupils' work from this year and from the previous year indicates that most can apply these skills to a range of writing such as a recipe for a "Rascally Cake" or book reviews based on the works of Roald Dahl. Work is usually well presented and higher attainers write in a joined style. However, a significant minority of pupils do not apply the spelling rules they have learnt in literacy lessons.

90. The school's 1999 National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the proportions achieving levels 4 and 5 were below the national average and below the average for similar schools. However, that class of eleven-year-olds had an above average number of pupils with special educational needs and this had a detrimental effect on the results. Over the past four years the performance of pupils in English has been close to the national average. The 2000 results show a significant improvement with the school exceeding its targets of 83% of pupils achieving level 4. The school is on line to meet its agreed targets in 2001. Grouping the Year 6 pupils into single-age classes and good teaching has brought about the rise in pupils' standards of achievement. In addition the Local Education Authority and the governors bought in extra staffing. As a result, pupils benefited from being taught in smaller groups and this helped to raise standards. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys.

91. The current level of work suggests that the majority of eleven-year-olds are on course to achieve the national expectation; this represents satisfactory progress. A significant minority is on course to achieve a higher level. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. However, the organisation of the support means that some pupils miss important parts of their lessons.

92. Key Stage 2 pupils have good opportunities during lessons for speaking and listening. During the inspection pupils showed proficiency in the use of technical and descriptive vocabulary. A feature of most lessons is the time older pupils are given to discuss ideas before being asked to articulate their thoughts during discussions. During the week of the inspection pupils in Year 6 spoke confidently during an assembly. They entered into drama to perform scenes from the parable of "The Prodigal Son".

93. Attainment in reading is average by the end of Key Stage 2. Most are confident, if not always expressive, readers. They use a range of strategies to make sense of what they read, sometimes including inference and deduction. For example, in one lesson Year 6 pupils used "Boy" by Roald Dahl to pick out statements which were factually correct and others which were opinion. Pupils are less competent, however, in explaining their choice of author and finding information from non-fiction books. The library is not well situated and, when asked to use it, pupils were not able to locate books easily or quickly.

94. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in writing is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Work from the previous year included a wide range of opportunities to write for a comprehensive range of purposes and audiences. Some examples, across a range of curricular areas included personal responses to the poetry of Robert Browning and the re-writing of portions of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin", biographical and autobiographical writing, poems of many kinds, including personification poetry, formal letters and book reviews.

95. Spellings are set regularly to be learnt as a homework task and spelling conventions are conscientiously taught during the literacy hour. However, pupils are over-reliant on their teachers to correct spellings in their word books and do not check them for themselves using a dictionary. Spelling mistakes are sometimes still apparent after pupils have re-drafted their work. By the age of eleven pupils' handwriting is well formed. Work is usually well presented and most pupils take a pride in their work. The majority of pupils make sound progress in developing punctuation skills.

96. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to English are good. They listen carefully and generally carry out instructions well. Behaviour is very good at all times and concentration levels are generally high.

97. The quality of teaching is good overall in both key stages and sometimes it is very good. The literacy hour has been implemented very well and all teachers use the strategies with confidence. In most lessons there are tangible links between each section. Many use good questioning techniques to extend pupils' thinking. Most deploy non-teaching assistants effectively, for example to assist with writing tasks or to work with children in the role-play areas. In Key Stage 2 great care is taken to select appropriately interesting material for the difficult task of analysing the structure of a paragraph and investigating the use of words. The range of writing tasks is imaginative, and gives pupils reasons to write for a good range of audiences.

98. All teachers plan their work well and have a good subject knowledge. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities in other subjects of the curriculum to use their writing skills. Too often pupils' personal writing is restricted to one or two lines. Work is marked but, although comments are usually supportive, they rarely give pupils ideas on what to do next in order to improve. Homework has recently been reorganised.

99. National Curriculum requirements are met. Both boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum. The subject is well managed. Lesson observations have been carried out as part of the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but the information gathered is not used effectively to inform future curriculum planning. Resources are adequate overall. However, classroom library areas are unattractive and the quality and range of some of the books are unsatisfactory especially for pupils with special educational needs.

## **MATHEMATICS**

100. The previous inspection found that whilst standards were broadly in line with national expectations, the most able pupils in both key stages were not making the progress they should. This inspection shows that this issue has been addressed successfully. Improved planning and the effect of teachers using the National Numeracy Strategy have both had a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. In the most recent National Curriculum end of Key Stage tests the percentage of pupils achieving higher than expected levels at the end of both key stages was higher than that normally found. A key factor in the improvement made by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 was the school's decision to teach pupils in ability groups.

101. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected level 4 was close to the national average. However, the proportion reaching level 5 and above was well below the national average. When the school's results are compared with those found in similar schools they are below average. This can be explained by the fact that there was a higher number of pupils with special educational needs in the 1999 class than normally found. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 the performance of pupils in mathematics was close to the national average. The boys' performance over that same period was below the national average for boys, but the girls' performance was above the national average for girls. The results in 2000 show a significant improvement on the previous year with the school's target for the year being exceeded by 10%. Over 85% of the age group attained the expected level and 30% of pupils attained level 5.

102. The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 results show that the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 or above was close to the national average and above that found in similar schools. Pupils' performance over the four years up to 1999 was above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching level 3 and above was above the national average. Both boys and girls achieved above average results. Results in the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests showed most pupils achieving level 2 or above.

103. Evidence from lesson observations, the scrutiny of previous work and talking with pupils indicates that standards are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages. Higher than average proportions of pupils at the end of both key stages are attaining standards above those normally found. Significant contributing factors towards these high standards are the successful introduction and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the organisation of pupils into ability groups at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that the school's strategies to improve the performance of boys have been successful. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and older pupils benefit from being taught in a small class. In all classes special educational needs pupils are skilfully included in mental and oral sessions by the teachers' use of questions carefully directed towards pupils of different abilities.

104. By the end of Key Stage 1 a significant number of pupils are working successfully at tasks that are at a higher level than expected for pupils of this age. For example, they are able to add two-digit numbers mentally. Most can count in fives and tens forwards and backwards to one hundred. They have a good grasp of odd and even numbers. Pupils are developing good problem-solving skills. This was apparent when they were asked to work out answers related to the menu in the 'Coffee Pot Café.' Pupils could calculate the total cost of a waffle at 8 pence and two sausages at 10 pence each. The café rules insist on the correct change being rendered! A scrutiny of previous work indicates that a large majority of pupils recognise a number of two-dimensional shapes, understand simple fractions and can double and halve numbers accurately. Pupils understand simple analogue and digital time and can use their knowledge when solving problems. Younger pupils are able to recall and suggest combinations of numbers that make 10 and demonstrate this by using unifix equipment.

105. Most pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of basic number skills and apply them well. A good feature of their work is that pupils know when to carry out a written calculation and when to do it mentally. They can recall multiplication facts up to ten times. Evidence from the previous year's work shows that pupils use their knowledge of number and mathematical formulae effectively to work out the areas of squares and rectangles. They know how to find the perimeter of a regular shape. Lower attaining pupils are developing strategies for halving and doubling two-digit numbers. Older pupils have a wide repertoire of mathematical vocabulary that is used appropriately. They have a good knowledge and understanding of rounding numbers up and down and equivalent fractions. Younger pupils make good gains in knowledge as a result of being involved in the 'Standing Long Jump Olympics'. They record the length of their classmates' jumps and then change measurements from centimetres into metres and centimetres. Information technology is not used well in class to support the development of data handling skills.

106. The quality of learning is good. Because teachers ask pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers and give them time to do it, pupils gain in confidence. Pupils work hard, are confident and willing to explain their reasoning, persevere with challenging tasks and demonstrate pride in their work. Pupils behave well.

107. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Expectations are high in most lessons with comments such as, 'Come on, I want 25 hands in the air', challenging all pupils to answer the questions. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their working out. Teachers plan effectively within the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are efficiently organised and relationships are of a high quality. There is some inconsistencies between classes in the amount of mathematics homework pupils are asked to do. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in most other subjects of the curriculum. In science, for example, pupils measure the size of pupils' skulls and in history timelines are evident. Good use is made of role play in Key Stage 1 to enable pupils to use their mathematical skills, including shopping opportunities in the 'Brighton Bargains Shop'. Pupils have to provide the exact amount of money to pay for the items. Good use was made in the last academic year of ability group teaching to target pupils of different attainment levels.

108. The school demonstrates a clear commitment to raising standards. National Curriculum requirements are met. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and monitors the subject on a regular basis. He has led staff training sessions and provides good support to colleagues despite his many other responsibilities. Whilst assessments are carried out there is no whole-school approach to using the information gathered to set future targets. Currently there is no system of internal moderation of standards. The school has ensured that resource provision is adequate. Governors are very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The numeracy governor has monitored lessons and reported to the full Governing Body on the success of the numeracy strategy.

## **SCIENCE**

109. A particular strength in the teaching of the subject is the development and use of scientific vocabulary and the acquisition of knowledge.

110. In the 1999 national end of Key Stage 2 tests the percentage of pupils reaching the level expected for their age was below the national average. However, there was a high number of pupils with special educational needs. The 2000 results show that almost all pupils achieved level 4 and above and over 50% achieved level 5. Teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils' attainment in 1999 showed standards close to the national average but well below the national average for the higher level. The 2000 results reflected the previous year's teacher assessments but a higher percentage achieved level 3.

111. Inspection evidence shows that standards are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, but are not high enough for the higher attaining pupils. At Key Stage 2 standards are above average. Pupils have good scientific knowledge. The use of Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines has helped to raise teachers' confidence in teaching science. These improvements have had a positive effect on the quality of the curriculum and on standards, particularly at Key Stage 2.

112. The last inspection identified weaknesses in curriculum planning that did not ensure adequate progression in the pupils' acquisition of scientific knowledge and skills. This has been successfully addressed and pupils are now taught all elements of the National Curriculum. Pupils carry out investigations and simple experiments but teachers set up and direct the process. Further work is required to enable pupils to be more original in their recording of science investigations to enable them to write independently.

113. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress overall. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is sound. Year 6 pupils have made good progress owing to the good teaching, the high emphasis on the teacher's accurate scientific vocabulary, good subject planning and careful preparation for the national tests. Progress is good in those lessons where teachers carefully link the new knowledge with pupils' previous learning and where the investigation captures their interest, enthusing them to begin their work.

114. At Key Stage 1 the oldest pupils learn about all aspects of the science curriculum. They observe sections of a good variety of types of fruit to identify the seeds. They learn to record their observations in labelled diagrams, which are accurately and carefully drawn, but higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough. The younger pupils recognize the origins of everyday sounds and know the parts of the human body connected with the senses of sight, sound, touch and smell. They quickly learn to record the object, which makes a particular sound when they listen to sounds played on a tape recorder.

115. Key Stage 2 pupils build on this knowledge and skill. They develop a sound awareness of scientific procedures and, by Year 6, have a satisfactory understanding of a fair test. The oldest pupils in the key stage quickly assimilate facts about the seashore environment. They use keys to classify creatures quickly and accurately, identifying their names. Year 4 pupils accurately compile measurements of body parts, including the length of limbs and the circumference of skulls as they investigate the similarities and differences between members of the class. Very good use is made of the data handling application of information and communication technology to order the data and present it in graphical form.

116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1. All teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and give clear introductory explanations. However, these explanations are sometimes too long and pupils lose their concentration. In these lessons time is not used efficiently and opportunities to involve pupils in practical work in the second part of the period are not used. Occasionally the teachers' analysis of fair testing with the whole class is over-complicated and leaves many pupils confused. Where teaching is good, pupils' observational skills are enhanced by the use of magnifiers adding to their surprise and excitement. Explanations are precise and supported by good probing questioning, which helps them to organise their thoughts and ideas. Evidence from pupils' books shows a lack of challenge for some higher attaining pupils.

117. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. High quality introductory explanations, which are supported by overhead projector displays, give pupils good opportunities to assimilate new scientific ideas and information. In a combined Year 5 and Year 6 lesson the teacher used two pupils to demonstrate how their physical characteristics could be analysed through the use of keys. Other Year 5 pupils were given opportunities to handle seashells to identify their physical characteristics, using keys to identify the creature that once lived in the shell. In a Year 4 lesson pupils were challenged to devise methods of measuring the circumference of their skulls. These teaching strategies made pupils think independently, work collaboratively and created high levels of interest. There were good positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and the teacher. Pupils enjoyed their work.

118. The work in the pupils' books indicates good subject planning that ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum. The subject co-ordinator has worked successfully to provide direction and guidance for staff. A particularly good initiative has been the implementation of team and specialist teaching which has raised standards and ensured that the more able pupils make appropriate progress. This has enabled the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching and its effect on pupils' learning. Further work is required to help teachers of the younger pupils to identify the more able and provide them with more challenging work. Resources are adequate but not always readily available.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

119. Pupils' standards of achievement in art and design are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be broadly in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to work with a range of suitable media, including paints, pastels and crayon. The work of Matisse from his jazz period provided the stimulus for Year 2 pupils to produce their own effective pictures using a similar style. Throughout the key stage pupils are developing an appropriate range of techniques and skills. For example, they competently use different materials to produce a collage of the school site. Observational drawings and paintings of fruit and flowers show that some pupils have a good eye for detail.

121. Good use is made of the works of famous artists in some classes in Key Stage 2 to develop specific skills. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to produce some detailed drawings of a variety of artefacts after studying some of Cézanne's paintings. Younger pupils have made imaginative use in their own work of their knowledge of the characteristics of art and design from other cultures such as the Aborigines. Throughout the key stage there is evidence of some good work. Years 3 and 4 have, for example, produced some observational drawings of quality on black paper using chalk and pastels. However, there is very little three-dimensional work being done at the moment and pupils do not make appropriate use of information and communication technology in the subject.

122. The quality of teaching was good overall in the lessons observed. Lessons are planned effectively. Teachers have a good relationship with pupils and support them well through explanation, demonstration and discussion. Where teaching is more successful, the techniques are clearly demonstrated and teachers encourage the pupils while they work, extending and challenging them to improve. In such lessons the quality of learning is good because pupils are able to review and modify their work. However, pupils' ability to evaluate their own and others' work in order to improve it is less well developed.

123. The subject is well co-ordinated. The school's policy and scheme of work have been updated in the light of the recommendations of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines. The co-ordinator has been given time to work alongside colleagues in order to develop the subject and improve standards. However, there is no formal assessment or recording of pupils' attainment in the subject. Resources are adequate.

124. Only two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection and there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about standards or the quality of learning at the end of both key stages.

125. The previous inspection found that design and technology was significantly under-represented and the school did not meet statutory requirements for the subject. A scrutiny of teachers' planning, and discussions held with the co-ordinator, show that the subject does now feature appropriately on the timetable. Much good work has been done by the co-ordinator to produce a policy and scheme of work for design and technology that addresses the weaknesses in provision identified in the last inspection report. Resources have been improved and are adequate. Staff have undertaken in-service training to improve their expertise and confidence in teaching the subject which now meets statutory requirements.

126. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed in Key Stage 2 was good. Design process and practical skills were carefully taught. Pupils had been given good opportunities to study the features of commercially produced wallets and purses before designing their own. The teacher demonstrated clearly different types of stitches, such as running, back and blanket, before allowing the pupils to practise their own stitching with thread. Good use was made of support staff and a parent to work alongside the pupils. Due account was taken of health and safety factors.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

127. By the end of both key stages pupils achieve average standards in history and in geography and make satisfactory progress in both subjects.

128. Key Stage 1 history lessons pupils use information sources, such as old or new toys, to ask questions about the past and talk about changes over time. During the inspection week, the learning experiences for a Year 1 class were enhanced by a range of wartime toys brought in by a grandparent. Pupils were enthralled by the experience. Older children become familiar with time-lines in relation to events in their own lives and in a wider historical context. They are able to describe houses and roads in London at the time of the Great Fire and how these differed from their own homes. They know that they can obtain information from contemporary sources such as the Diary of Samuel Pepys. Pupils are familiar with famous historical characters, such as Florence Nightingale, her influence on hospitals of the Crimean War, and how hospitals today differ from those of earlier times.

129. During Key Stage 2 pupils develop their understanding of historical time periods. Younger pupils acquire and use appropriate vocabulary such as B.C. and A.D. and can recall factual information about events and lifestyles in Ancient Egypt. Older pupils encounter the mythical heritage and political organisations in Ancient Greece. Throughout the key stage they are encouraged to interpret the past by the use of a variety of sources. These include video recordings, pictures, photographs, census returns, inventories, artefacts and observation of Victorian architecture in the locality. There are some examples of pupils being given good opportunities to organise and communicate historical information. For example, the use of writing frames to create paragraphs about food in Ancient Egypt, descriptions of what it was like to be poor in Tudor times and the writing of a letter home from the point of view of an evacuee during the Second World War. However, more could be done to promote opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills with less emphasis placed on commercial worksheets.

130. Only a small number of geography lessons were seen during the week of the inspection, because of the way the subject is timetabled. However, information from a survey of pupils' work and discussions held with pupils enables judgements to be made. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and standards are average by the ages of seven and eleven.

131. By the end of the Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound geographical vocabulary associated with the seaside, have drawn sketch maps and used simple keys. They have examined the differences between town, countryside and seaside and made a study of transport on the imaginary Isle of Struay.

132. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to apply their mapping skills well as part of a study of a village in India. Older pupils successfully design and carry out shopping surveys and have mapped services provided in the local town centre. They make studies of the world's weather. However, more could be done to apply their mathematical skills, for example, in the recording of weather data.

133. The quality of teaching in history is satisfactory in both key stages and there are some good and very good features. These include the use of visitors with particular knowledge, good use of the resources available within school, provision of imaginative tasks, which stimulate pupils' interest and the employment of effective questioning techniques, which encourage pupils to extend their thinking. These strategies also indicate that teachers' own subject knowledge is good. Work is marked but teachers seldom provide written comments on how pupils might improve their work. Too few opportunities are given for pupils to use their referencing skills in the library. The quality of teaching observed in geography was satisfactory in Key Stage 2. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1.

134. The attitude of pupils to the learning of history and geography is very good. They respond well to opportunities to work on collaborative tasks. Their very good behaviour impacts positively on the quality of learning.

135. Provision for both subjects follows the guidelines issued by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which have been introduced since the previous inspection. A member of the Governing Body has been successfully involved in drawing up the school policy for history. Topic planning continues to be satisfactorily carried out in both subjects over a two-year cycle, which takes suitable account of the mixed-age classes. Both history and geography make a good contribution to pupils' cultural education.

136. Resources for history are satisfactory. Effective use is made of the local area in both subjects for fieldwork. Residential visits have in the past contributed positively to the learning experiences in both subjects and this provision is under review. Geography resources are unsatisfactory. For, example, there are not enough maps available. The school has identified the need to rationalise and update geography resources. There is no whole-school approach to assessment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

137. Standards are satisfactory at the ages of seven and eleven. The majority of pupils at the end of both key stages attain the expected level in most applications of the subject. The previous inspection judged standards to be above the national expectations. This is no longer the case because pupils are now expected to attain more complex skills. The introduction of such resources as a computer suite in many schools gives them more time to practise and benefit from large group and class teaching. The school has recently acquired a computer suite, however, its limited area containing fifteen machines, makes it difficult for whole classes to be taught. The school is currently investigating the most effective way of using this new resource. The regular use of this facility is increasing all pupils' confidence, competence and skills. Many pupils are beginning to make good progress.

138. The oldest pupils, when working individually on the computer, show satisfactory levels of attainment in word processing. They accurately enter text and use command keys and the mouse to edit and change words. Pupils confidently change the style and size of text fonts. They quickly call up the menu to engage other applications. They demonstrate the skills that are typical for their age.

139. There are developing links with other areas of the curriculum but most data handling is still completed manually. Occasionally, when data handling programs are used in science, to analyse and graph pupils' measurements of their arms and legs and circumference of their skulls, it is very effective in assisting them to identify patterns and make comparison. In some classrooms the machinery is outdated and unreliable. The school recognises this and so the subject action plan includes upgrading existing computers and purchasing new machines. The current objective is to incorporate the computer suite fully into the daily routine of the school to ensure that all pupils acquire the appropriate skills.

140. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good overall. A teacher from Key Stage 2 is used effectively to teach a class of Year 2 pupils. When they work on the computer suite about half of the year group make very good progress. They use the mouse and keyboard to insert direct speech into their writing. Excellent teaching strategies used by the subject co-ordinator introduce the activity effectively in the classroom. When the pupils begin their tasks in the computer suite they know and understand what is expected of them. They log on, enter text and punctuate it accurately showing good control. Year 1 pupils open programmes to create a labelled diagram of a flowering plant. Many progress well in their learning to gain good standards of accuracy and confidence. However, the pace of the lesson falls away because pupils have to take turns on the machines and the general over-crowded environment prevents the teacher from moving quickly round the class to give pupils the help they require.

141. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 and so no overall judgement about the quality of teaching can be made. In this lesson the teacher's knowledge was secure but the practice of teaching a whole year class in the computer suite prevented many pupils from making the progress of which they were capable. Almost all pupils were able to log on and use the mouse to create a diagram of a flowering plant to include the petals and the reproductive organs. Good links were made with science but the pace of the work was slow.

142. Pupils' attitudes are good. They all enjoy working on the new computer suite although the younger pupils are often over-excited at first. When they settle to their tasks they show good levels of interest. The oldest pupils are confident and try out their ideas as they develop a positive self-help attitude. Pupils confidently demonstrate how programs work and are able to co-operate closely together to help and support each other.

143. The co-ordinator is instigating and managing change effectively. A commercial scheme has been chosen and national guidance has been introduced to support teachers in their planning and to ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Portfolios of pupils' work are being compiled. These will help teachers to form judgements about pupils' progress and help them to plan accordingly. A good range of software is easily accessible through the linked computers in the suite and for those situated in the classrooms. Links with other subjects are being established. There are still some teething problems relating to the installation, which results in one of the machines being isolated from the rest of the suite. Facilities for Internet and e-mail facilities are not in place. There is a good action plan, which identifies the way forward to improve standards. Appropriate staff training has been completed with further areas for development identified.

## **MUSIC**

144. During the week of the inspection it was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about current standards in music in either key stage. This was also the case at the time of the previous inspection.

145. In Key Stage 1 children are able to sing with appropriate attention to diction and pitch. They can name simple percussion instruments and discriminate between their timbre. Lower Key Stage 2 pupils can keep a steady beat and maintain parts successfully when singing rounds such as 'Row, row, row your boat'.

146. Evidence from teachers' planning and from discussions with the co-ordinator, indicates that a published scheme of work has been successfully introduced into the school using the expertise of a peripatetic music teacher to develop teachers' own musical skills. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory.

147. At the time of the inspection planned activities, such as instrumental tuition and the establishment of a choir, were not yet in place. Although pupils have some opportunity to listen to music in assemblies more could be done to raise their awareness of the extracts which are played. There are no procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory. For example, there are insufficient tuned instruments of good quality. The school has identified this and taken steps to address the issue.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. Pupils' overall attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to that found in most schools. These findings reflect the standards observed during the previous inspection. The school ensures that all pupils receive the full range of physical education activities. By the end of Year 6 almost all pupils can swim unaided over a distance of at least 25 metres. This success reflects the effective planning that ensures the younger pupils in the juniors receive two full terms of swimming tuition.

149. The progress made by all pupils, including those with special needs, is satisfactory. Many pupils show good levels of interest in their work, concentrating to learn new skills. The Year 5 pupils make sound progress in the games lessons as they learn the basic skills of passing and receiving a ball in rugby. The Year 2 pupils begin to move imaginatively, jumping, turning and making shapes with their bodies as they dance to taped music. Good efforts are made to include pupils who are physically challenged in the activities.

150. Year 1 pupils are systematically learning the routines of the physical education lesson. They change confidently and are excited and keen to begin their work. They successfully interpret the ideas presented in taped music to move like a frog or a snake, expressing their ideas confidently through their dance. The dance performance includes arm, eye and shoulder movements as they slide and glide, hop and bounce around the hall.

151. By Year 4 pupils roll in a variety of shapes, change their speed and shape during gymnastic lessons. They begin to create their own repertoires by linking two contrasting rolls. The oldest pupils develop sound basic hockey skills. They learn to hold a hockey stick correctly in order to receive a pass. They control a ball and learn to push the ball accurately to a team-mate. Pupils develop travelling skills, moving with the ball and begin to turn to pass the ball to a team mate. They are not yet applying these skills to any form of competitive game.

152. Throughout the school pupils' behaviour is often very good. They listen attentively to the teacher and work hard to practise their skills. They raise their heart rate and effectively apply the rules of safety to activities to ensure that they continue with good pace.

153. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory. It is sometimes good. All teachers have secure subject knowledge, which is used well to help pupils understand what they have to do. They ensure that pupils carry out warm up and cool down sequences at the start and end of the lessons. However, pupils are not asked to evaluate their own performance and that of others. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson falls away when the teacher is reorganising group activities. In the better lessons, the clear explanations of skills during instructions are an important element of pupils' progress. Effective and enthusiastic teacher demonstration and careful analysis of the pupils' skills helps them to improve their performance considerably. These lessons progress with good pace.

154. The subject co-ordinator has worked successfully to ensure that pupils have a wide experience of physical activities. Sports coaches are often involved in the delivery of games lessons. Although teachers regularly monitor pupils' performance during lessons there are no systems to record their progress. There is a limited range of sports clubs that meet regularly. The school enters teams in many local inter-school competitions. Whilst resources for physical education are satisfactory there is a shortage of small apparatus suitable for use by younger pupils. Good use is made overall of an outdoor education centre where the older pupils are introduced to adventurous activities.