

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Droylsden**

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106247

Headteacher: Mr I.D. Spencer.

Reporting inspector: Mr J.P.Sudworth  
[2461]

Dates of inspection: October 9th-13th, 2000.

Inspection number: 224317

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street, Droylsden, Manchester.
Postcode:	M43 7BR
Telephone number:	0161 370 3948
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S. Marsh
Date of previous inspection:	December 9th, 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J.P. Sudworth	Registered inspector	Geography; History; Physical education.	How high are standards? - The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs L. Brock	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 A. Markham	Team inspector	Mathematics; Design and technology; Information technology.	How well is pupils' work assessed ? How good are staffing, accommodation and learning resources?
Miss L. Spooner	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; Science; Art.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs J. Watkins	Team inspector	English; Music; Equal opportunities; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	How good are the opportunities for pupils' personal development?

The inspection contractor was:

Esprit Primary Inspections, 'Woodview', 2C Green Lane, Standish, Wigan. WN6 0TS

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The Registrar,  
Inspection Quality Division,  
The Office for Standards in Education,  
Alexandra House,  
33 Kingsway,  
London WC2B 6SE.

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's C.E. Primary School is an average sized primary school with 225 boys and girls aged 4 - 11 in the main school and 31 children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. At the time of the inspection 30 children in the Reception class had not yet reached statutory school age. There is a range in attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage [Nursery and Reception classes] but overall the levels are typical for the age groups. There is little pupil mobility which reflects the well established nature of the local community. The percentage of pupils on the register of special educational needs is above average at 41%. Two pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, approximately 16%, is broadly average. The Christian foundation is reflected strongly in the school's aims.

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

The national test results at the ages of 7 and 11 and the work seen during the inspection reflect good progress overall in both Key Stage 1 [infants] and Key Stage 2 [juniors] and satisfactory progress overall in the Foundation Stage [Nursery and Reception classes]. There is a clear sense of purpose in the school and, under the very effective leadership of the headteacher, senior staff and governors a well considered programme of improvement has been implemented since the last inspection. The quality of writing, however, remains a weakness. The quality of education provided is good overall. The school is giving good value for money.

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

- Standards are very good in reading, and good in mathematics, science and information and communication technology throughout the school.
- The quality of leadership, the shared sense of purpose and the sense of community have helped to raise standards.
- The quality of teaching is good, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of good quality and pupils are taught to care for others and for the environment.
- Very effective financial planning and an active approach to raising additional funds has enabled the school to provide a good level of staffing and very good learning resources, including excellent information and communication technology facilities.

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

- The quality of pupils' written work, including content, spelling and handwriting.
- The quality of presentation.
- The clarity of learning objectives for individual children in Nursery activities.
- The information given to parents in reports about their children's achievements.

*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 December 1996. Very good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection report. The quality of teaching is now much better. Improved lesson planning and better assessment techniques mean that work is matched well to pupils and teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can attain. This has contributed to the higher overall standards in English, mathematics and science. However, standards in writing are still not high enough. The Governing Body has improved the efficiency of its committee structure and provides good support to the school. Financial planning is now excellent and the school has successfully undertaken projects to improve the buildings, the environment and learning resources. The resources for information and communication technology have been improved considerably and are now excellent. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

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

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

This table of comparisons with other schools relates to 1999. Results then in mathematics and science were in the top 5% of the schools in the same free school meals category but the performance in English was below that of similar schools. In 2000 the school's overall test performance in English improved and the proportion of eleven-year-olds reaching the expected Level 4 was above the national average. However, while the percentages achieving the expected level and the next level in reading were both high, the proportion attaining the expected standard in writing was low. Results in mathematics in 2000 were not as high as the outstanding performance of the previous year but still above the national average at the expected Level 4. In this subject, as in English, the school comfortably met the appropriate targets set for it by the Local Education Authority. The percentage achieving the expected level in science was again very high. While the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 in 2000 rose slightly in English, it fell in mathematics and science. These results represent good progress from the levels achieved by these pupils in the national tests when they were seven years old.

The inspection confirmed that standards of work in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average. The quality of writing is unsatisfactory and pupils do not make enough progress in spelling and handwriting. The school had recognized this prior to the inspection and has already begun to implement some measures to improve pupils' writing. By the age of eleven standards in information and communication technology, geography, history and physical education are above the national expectations. Religious education was inspected separately by a diocesan inspector. Pupils' achievements in all other subjects by eleven are in line with those found in most schools.

The test results for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed a significant improvement on the previous year's satisfactory performance in reading and below average result in writing. A well above average proportion achieved the expected level. The above average results in mathematics and science were maintained. This test performance was a good achievement for a year group whose overall attainment when they first came to school was average. The inspection found that standards in reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology for seven-year-olds are above average. Writing is satisfactory overall but progress in handwriting is unsatisfactory. Attainment in all other subjects is in line with the national expectations for the age group.

In the Nursery and Reception classes children make satisfactory progress overall. Most attain the expected Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year and many achieve more than this in personal, social and emotional development, in which they make good progress.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and show a good level of interest in their work but a minority are easily distracted. The presentation of work is often unsatisfactory.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils respond to the school's positive approach to the management of behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are encouraged to care for each other and for the world around them. Most get on well together.
Attendance	Above the national average. Very little unauthorised absence.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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 96% of lessons seen and good or very good in 3 out of every 5 of these lessons. Teaching was very good in 16% of the lessons. Only three lessons seen were unsatisfactory. This is a marked improvement from the previous inspection, when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory in nearly one quarter of lessons. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and usually have clear targets for what the pupils are to learn but this aspect is not as well developed in the Nursery. Teachers have a clear grasp of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils are usually well managed. Whilst some teachers use marking effectively to help pupils to improve their work, this is not consistent across the school.

The quality of learning is good overall, sometimes very good and seldom unsatisfactory. Pupils apply well in other subjects the reading and mathematics skills they learn during the literacy and numeracy sessions but opportunities to improve their writing skills are not always taken. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good learning opportunities.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities. Homework and out-of-school clubs make a positive impact on pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school identifies early those pupils who have special educational needs and provides very effective support for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very few pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated and do not require special provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The close links with the church help to promote spiritual development. Pupils are taught to appreciate the difference between right and wrong behaviour and encouraged to care for others and for their environment. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is very well supported by the senior management team. Very good progress has been made in addressing the issues from the previous inspection and strategies to raise standards have been implemented successfully.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The Governing Body provides good support for the school and monitors progress towards targets for improvement. Legal requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Test results are analysed and used well to set targets for future improvement. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning are effective.
The strategic use of resources	Financial and strategic planning is very effective in identifying the needs of the school and resources are deployed well.

The school has a good level of staffing. The accommodation has unsatisfactory aspects but it is well cared for and used very effectively. Significant developments are planned for the site in the near future. The school has made substantial improvements in its learning resources and these are now very good. Best value procedures are implemented effectively.

## 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>• Children enjoy coming to school.</li><li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li><li>• They would feel comfortable in approaching the school with any problems.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some parents do not feel well enough informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• A few parents expressed concerns about bullying.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees that pupils enjoy coming to school. During the week of the inspection pupils' behaviour was satisfactory. Parents are encouraged to take an interest in school activities and to come into school. Several offer regular help. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils are usually set appropriately challenging work. Although teachers put a lot of effort into writing reports, they do not always make clear enough to parents the progress that their children have made in all subjects. Several groups of pupils were asked about bullying. They told the inspectors that bullying is not a problem for them. They are happy that teachers take effective action, if any incidents are reported to them. During the week of the inspection there was no evidence of any aggressive behaviour.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The national test results at the ages of 7 and 11 and the work seen during the inspection reflect satisfactory progress during the Foundation Stage and good progress overall in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There has been an improvement in overall standards since the last inspection and these are now very good in reading, and good in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. However, standards in writing are still not high enough. Attainment was satisfactory in all other subjects at the time of the last inspection. It is now above average in geography, history and physical education by the end of Key Stage 2. The school exceeded the targets set by the Local Education Authority for both English and mathematics in 2000.
2. When children first come into school they have a wide range of skills but most are within the broadly average range. Progress overall in the Foundation Stage is at least satisfactory in all areas of learning. Most children are on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals for the age group in the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year, with a few exceeding them. The large majority, including those with special needs, make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and many exceed the expected goals in this area.
3. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above was close to the national average in reading and below average in writing. The 2000 test results show a significant improvement in standards with almost all children achieving Level 2 in both reading and writing and a third of children reaching the higher Level 3 in reading. The percentage of eleven-year-olds reaching Level 4 or above in English in 1999 was close to the national average and to the average for similar schools but the percentage reaching Level 5 was below average. In 2000 there was a significant improvement in the overall English result at the end of Key Stage 2 and the proportion attaining Level 4 was above average. There was a slight improvement in the percentage reaching Level 5 but it remained below average. However, there was a very marked difference between the high standard in reading and the low standard in writing. The school met the target set for it by the Local Education Authority.
4. Inspection evidence shows that standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory by the age of seven, following sound progress in Key Stage 1, and good by the age of eleven. Most pupils listen carefully to the teacher's explanations or to the contributions of others. They respond readily in class and the teachers' good questioning techniques encourage them to extend their answers. The many opportunities for pupils to express themselves, such as drama and leading assemblies, contribute positively to the good progress made during Key Stage 2.
5. Standards in reading by the end of both key stages are above average. The good range of literature and non-fiction appropriate to their interest and attainment levels contributes to the very good progress made by most pupils in reading. The majority of seven-year-olds have good phonic skills, and use their awareness of rhyme and rhythm in accurate, fluent and expressive reading. Most are able to talk confidently about books they are reading. By the age of eleven the majority of pupils have developed very good understanding of setting the scene, characterisation and the development of a plot. They have good information retrieval skills.
6. In Key Stage 1 children are given a range of opportunities to write and most achieve the expected standard in writing by the age of seven. Some higher attainers begin to include speech and exclamation marks in their work. However, although overall progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, a significant number do not form their letters correctly, and this limits their progress in learning to write joined script.

7. Pupils write in a range of forms during Key Stage 2, but not enough progress is made in spelling and handwriting and, in consequence, both the quality of writing and the presentation of work is often unsatisfactory. Although there are specific writing lessons, pupils do not practise their writing skills often enough in other subjects. They do not take enough care with their writing and do not check spellings often enough. They do not readily seek to improve their first efforts by considering a different phrasing or searching for a more interesting word.

8. In the 1999 mathematics tests for seven-year-olds the results were well above both the national average and similar schools. In 2000 every child reached the expected Level 2, and the proportion at Level 3 was broadly average. In 1999 the results for eleven-year-olds were well above the national average and in the top 5% for similar schools. In 2000, the proportion achieving Level 4 was above average but the percentage attaining Level 5 was well below average. The school exceeded the target set by the Local Education Authority for the percentage of eleven-year-olds at the expected level.

9. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of seven, children have made good progress in mathematics and standards are above average. Most pupils have confident number skills. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a good grasp of number facts to 20. They have good mental skills and add one- and two-digit numbers. Their mathematical vocabulary is well developed. Pupils achieve well across a wide range of mathematical topics including money, the measuring of length and the attributes of shapes.

10. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are also attaining good standards, which are above the national average for mathematics and which reflect good progress from their achievements as seven-year-olds. The majority are skilled in number and respond to mental activities enthusiastically. They show a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and can apply their knowledge when solving problems related to real situations. Good use is made of spreadsheets to analyse data and create graphs. They know the properties of shapes and can measure angles accurately. Pupils' use of mathematical skills across the curriculum is being developed in a range of subjects. They carry out investigations and surveys involving the gathering of data and present their findings in graphs using computers in geography and science.

11. In both 1999 and 2000 the percentage of seven-year-olds assessed as reaching the expected standard in science was high. In 1999 the percentage eleven-year-olds reaching Level 4 or above in the national science tests was well above the national average and the average for similar schools. This high standard has been maintained in the 2000 tests.

12. Attainment in science by the end of both key stages is above the national expectation. This represents good progress through Key Stage 1 from the attainment on entry and good progress during Key Stage 2 from the results the current Year 6 achieved when they were seven years old. The school has made significant improvements in standards in science since the time of the previous inspection.

13. The school systematically develops investigative work in science. By the age of seven children have a good understanding of the principles of fair tests, and by the age of eleven pupils are developing a rigorous approach to predicting, testing and evaluating their results. In Key Stage 1 children have a good understanding of the properties and uses of different materials and are developing good skills in classification. Older pupils use a study of the link between exercise and circulation to develop the skills of collecting, organising and comparing information using a data base. They have a good understanding of food chains and food webs.

14. By the end of both key stages most pupils have made good progress in information and communication technology and are achieving standards that are above the national expectations in all aspects of the subject. Some demonstrate higher levels of knowledge and skills. The excellent resource provision contributes well to these achievements. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects. They use the Internet confidently to search for information on the Victorians and to answer questions on the life and works of William Morris. They use computers to create music and link this with work using actual musical instruments in another lesson. They use databases to obtain information and spreadsheets to collate information and produce graphs.

15. In both geography and history children make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1 and achieve the expected standards at the age of seven. During Key Stage 2 pupils' progress is good in both these subjects and by the age of eleven attainment is above average. Their achievements are enhanced by the careful development of key skills alongside topic knowledge. A strength of the school is the high quality of the work on environmental education.

16. Overall standards in music at the end of both key stages are in line with those found in most schools and the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. Although pupils benefit from very good experiences in assemblies and in some lessons, there is limited time for pupils to develop performance skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular musical activities, and the minority who do so make good progress, often achieving standards higher than those found normally.

17. Pupils' attainment in art and design and in design and technology is in line with national expectations for pupils at the ages of both seven and eleven. This represents satisfactory progress during both key stages. In physical education children make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1 and achieve the expected standard by the age of seven. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and attainment levels for many are above those normally found. They show good control in their movements and are able to apply their skills well to games situations. Religious education was inspected separately by a diocesan representative.

18. As at the time of the previous inspection, provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make good progress. Pupils experiencing difficulties are identified at an early stage and they benefit from well structured support programmes. Extension work is also provided for more able pupils, though none are identified as 'gifted'. The very few pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated and do not require special provision. There was no significant difference during the inspection between the progress of boys and girls or between other groups of pupils.

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

19. The atmosphere of the school reflects a happy environment where most pupils show respect for each other and the staff. They know they go to school to learn and most enjoy the experience.

20. Although the inspection took place early in the school year, children in the Foundation Stage had already developed a good understanding of the classroom routines. They willingly take part in activities and some show a capacity to concentrate for extended periods. Not all children find listening easy but the consistent and fair approach to the management of their behaviour is successful in improving their social skills.

21. The majority of pupils have good attitudes to school life and to learning. Most settle down quickly, are keen to participate and work hard, showing appropriate levels of concentration and perseverance. For example, Year 3 pupils showed a good attitude to learning when using computers to punctuate speech. In a Year 4 music lesson pupils were clear about their learning goals and their interest and attention contributed well to the progress they made. A few pupils are easily distracted but the mature attitude to learning of most pupils usually prevents this having a negative impact on the learning. Only occasionally do pupils in a small group disturb one another and disrupt the learning. Throughout the school pupils listen well to the teacher and follow instructions. However, they do not show enough pride in the presentation of their work or give enough care to handwriting and spelling. Opportunities to join the study club and a range of extra-curricular activities have a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school.

22. Behaviour is satisfactory overall in all age groups. Teachers usually manage their classes well and behaviour in lessons is often good. Younger children are developing a clear understanding of what is expected of them and try to behave well. In an infant assembly pupils listened well to a story and sang with enthusiasm. Year 6 pupils' good behaviour when planning and drafting poetry helped the lesson to move on at a good pace. Most pupils respond well to the school's code of conduct. The occasional lapses by some pupils are dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with the agreed behaviour policy. Good behaviour is recognised by a set of rewards, the gaining of which is taken seriously by pupils. Pupils do not consider bullying to be a problem and they know what to do if an incident occurs. They express confidence in the school's anti-bullying procedures. There were five fixed-period exclusions last year and this reflects the school's determination not to tolerate aggressive behaviour.

23. Relationships across the school are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Most pupils respond well to praise and support from teachers and other staff. Older pupils care for younger in the playground making them feel safe and secure. In a Year 2 circle time [discussion session] children shared their thoughts about happy and sad times and all took the lesson seriously, responding in a mature way.

24. The personal development of pupils is good. They accept the many opportunities offered to take on responsibilities and duties around the school. These include the 'buddy' system where older pupils help younger, the School Council and Health Council, Eco-warriors, litter pickers and register monitors. Pupils display mature attitudes in these roles. Opportunities to participate in sporting events, in the choir and in church services all enhance pupils' personal development and sense of citizenship.

25. Attendance is good and above the national average. Pupils are maintaining a steady 95% attendance overall and during last year, fifty-two pupils achieved 100% attendance. Unauthorised absence is low. An analysis of attendance for the current term shows that the school is on target to maintain the good attendance. A few pupils are late to school but teachers do not allow this to interrupt the flow of lessons. Pupils like school and are keen to attend regularly as confirmed by parents at their meeting with the inspectors and through the parental questionnaire.

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

26. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the week of the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in 96% of lessons seen and good or very good in three out of every five of these lessons. Teaching was very good in 16% of the lessons. Only three lessons seen were unsatisfactory. This is a marked improvement from the previous inspection, when teaching was found to be unsatisfactory in nearly one quarter of lessons. As a result, the quality of learning is good overall, sometimes very good and seldom unsatisfactory.

27. The overall quality of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is better in the Reception class where over half the lessons observed were good. Strengths are the clear routines, the careful match of learning targets to what the children already know and understand and high expectations of behaviour and effort. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well organised. Explanations are clear and children are given good opportunities to contribute to the lesson and to become actively involved in their own learning. The organisation of the Nursery takes satisfactory account of the six areas of learning but activities are not always planned sufficiently well to ensure that there are clear and precise learning objectives for individual children. This led to a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. The nursery nurses organise the activities satisfactorily to interest the children and settle them well into school, but they do not always have the expertise to capitalise on learning opportunities that arise spontaneously.

28. In Key Stage 1 the overall quality of teaching is good. Three out of every five lessons seen were good and a tenth of them were very good. In a personal and social education lesson the teacher's very good relations with the class and her sensitive approach encouraged the children to share their own sad and happy experiences and to develop a mature response to the feeling of others. Another teacher structured a design and technology lesson well to ensure that children had the skills and resources to be successful in making their rocking bird but left them to make individual decisions about which joining methods to use. The consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the different techniques contributed effectively to their learning. The only unsatisfactory teaching seen in Key Stage 1 was when a support teacher had difficulty in managing the uncooperative behaviour of a group children with special needs and in consequence they did not make sufficient progress.

29. In Key Stage 2 three-quarters of the lessons seen were good or better and a quarter of them were very good. Examples of very good teaching were seen in a range of subjects and situations. They included a music session for the whole key stage which gave the group insights into the potential of a range of instruments and set high standards for their own performance; a class physical education lesson which combined the development of personal skills very well with the teaching of games strategies; and very well structured group research into a history topic where pupils were able to draw on a range of primary and secondary sources of evidence. Common strengths in very good lessons included very confident teacher knowledge of the subject, very well planned sequences of activities which were well chosen both to challenge pupils and to encourage them to learn and very effective management of pupils and resources. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen in the key stage, when explanations about ideas in mathematics were not sufficiently clear.

30. The overall teaching of English in both key stages is good. The literacy hour is planned and taught well. The clear learning objectives of the lesson are explained to pupils and the plenary session is used effectively to reinforce what has been learnt. Reading is promoted very effectively through the school and practised well in other subjects. Writing has been identified by the school as a weakness and recent initiatives such as writing targets and spelling journals have been introduced. Not enough attention is given to ensuring that correct letter formation is taught and monitored from an early stage and that pupils follow the spelling strategies accurately. Neither pupils nor teachers were observed to apply the targets for written work to subjects other than English.

31. The quality of teaching in mathematics is variable but good overall. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Most mental mathematics sessions are challenging and group activities are well organised. Teachers make effective use of plenary sessions to consolidate learning and make additional teaching points. Pupils' learning of mathematical skills is developed satisfactorily in other subjects, such as science and geography.

32. The quality of teaching in science is good. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and the confident teaching of scientific method through investigational work is a strength of the subject. In information and communication technology teaching is good and sometimes very good. Teachers with particular subject expertise teach a range of classes and their confidence with the skill areas and their high expectations are helping to raise the achievement of pupils. The emphasis on the development of key skills and the good use of resources contribute to the overall good teaching and learning in geography and history.

33. In the design and technology lessons seen, teaching was generally good. The appropriately challenging tasks interested the pupils and led to good learning. No judgement of teaching in art and design can be made owing to the limited number of lessons seen in each key stage. The quality of music teaching observed was very good overall. Teachers' musical expertise, a careful sequence of activities to build up skills and understanding and careful organisation to keep all the pupils involved are strengths of the teaching in this subject. The quality of teaching in physical education is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well organised and the sequence of activities is well planned to promote the development of skills.

34. The specialist teaching of pupils with special needs is very good. The co-ordinator is both knowledgeable and well organised. She enthuses the pupils she teaches and builds up their self-esteem as well as enabling them to make good progress in key skills. A group of younger pupils was motivated well by very good use of a variety of activities which kept them focused on the task in hand. An older group of pupils with difficulties in writing became so involved in contributing ideas to a group story with a classroom assistant that they could hardly wait to begin to write their own versions. The co-ordinator involves teachers in the drawing up of targets for the pupils in their class. Support assistants are well briefed and effective in supporting individual pupils or groups. The few pupils with English as a second language are fully integrated into lessons and activities.

35. Planning was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. Now in most lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2 the quality of planning is good. There are clear objectives for learning, which are well matched to what pupils already know, and the targets for what pupils will be able to do are appropriately challenging. Throughout both key stages teachers include a variety of activities, using a combination of whole-class, group and individual methods appropriately.

36. In both key stages teachers have good knowledge of the National Curriculum subjects. In music, information and communication technology, geography and physical education specialist knowledge is used very effectively to set high standards and this contributed well to the very good lessons seen. Relationships are good. In most lessons teachers manage their pupils well. This has a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and on the quality of learning. Resources and equipment are organised well.

37. The use of on-going assessment is very positively applied in some lessons where teachers make good use of comment, question and feedback to develop pupils' learning. Guidance on the use of formative assessment is clear and is reflected in the teachers' effective use of learning objectives and targets for lessons, which are conveyed to pupils. The school has a good marking policy but implementation is not consistent amongst all teachers and as a result the quality of presentation of pupils' work is sometimes unsatisfactory. Effective action has been taken to ensure the accuracy of teacher assessments. A comprehensive portfolio has been developed to show examples of work at the different levels in English, mathematics and science.

38. Homework is set regularly and older pupils have homework diaries. In addition, the school offers success-maker and study clubs. The majority of parents are satisfied with the amounts of homework and during the inspection an appropriate range of tasks was set to be completed at home.



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

39. The quality and range of the curriculum is good overall. It promotes pupils' intellectual, physical, social and personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of education. Statutory requirements are fully met.

40. The previous inspection identified the curriculum for the under-fives as unsatisfactory, as it was planned to the National Curriculum rather than offering the range of experiences recommended for young children. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage now makes satisfactory provision for children to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. It addresses the six areas of learning recommended nationally and prepares children to begin working in the National Curriculum when they transfer to Key Stage 1. A good level of emphasis is given to the development of the children's personal, social and emotional development. Learning through play and the development of independent skills are valued, but in the Nursery targets for individuals are not always sufficiently clear. Elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are introduced at an appropriate level in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Good links are maintained across the Foundation Stage through the use of shared space and some resources. The Nursery and Reception staff members plan as a team and this provides for continuity in provision and opportunities for learning.

41. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is relevant, broad and balanced, and complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum. All subjects have a policy and scheme of work and these provide good guidelines for medium- and short-term planning. In many subjects the school integrates the most recent guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Planning is detailed and well matched to the full range of ability. In accordance with the governors' policies, the school makes good provision for personal and social development, sex education and drugs awareness through an appropriate and comprehensive programme of study. In addition, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are provided with the opportunity to learn French. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, including music, drama and competitive sport.

42. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory overall and particularly strong in the teaching of reading. The school has recognised weaknesses in pupils' writing and introduced strategies to improve writing and spelling but these have not, as yet, had time to make a significant impact on standards in these aspects. Setting arrangements allow for relatively small groups and make provision for pupils in different year groups but with similar levels of ability to work together. Very effective use is made of information technology to individualise work at levels that are well matched to pupils' prior learning.

43. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented successfully and makes a positive contribution to improving standards in mathematics. This is evident in pupils' growing skills in mental arithmetic. Good emphasis is given to numeracy both as a subject in its own right and as a part of other subjects. Teachers' planning is securely based on the national guidelines and this provides a consistency of approach.

44. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Procedures are very well organised. The requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are fully met. The full-time special educational needs co-ordinator is very knowledgeable about a wide range of special educational needs and works effectively with all members of staff. Pupils' individual education plans are of a good quality. They contain realistic learning targets and are used well by teachers to inform planning. Parents are appropriately involved in reviews and target setting. Every pupil on the school's special educational needs register has full access to the curriculum. Occasionally, pupils are withdrawn from lessons for additional support. The school ensures that the same lessons are not missed by rotating the timetable. Statements of special educational needs are reviewed regularly to monitor each pupil's progress towards their learning targets and to set new ones.

45. The school makes satisfactory provision for all pupils to make progress and to have equal access to all aspects of school life. Lessons in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 2 are organised in ability groups across the key stage. This takes account of the needs of all pupils, including higher attaining pupils. Boys and girls have equal access to all school-based activities and the few pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated.

46. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was found to be satisfactory. The school has a strong Christian foundation, which is reflected in its aims and daily life.

47. Provision for pupils' spiritual education is good. The school succeeds in its aim to aid pupils on their spiritual journey. It successfully provides opportunities for prayer and reflection, for example in the course of school worship and church services. In addition, as part of their personal and social education, pupils are asked to examine their own feelings and consider the effect of their actions on others. Through drama they have good opportunities to participate imaginatively in a role. Music and literature are used appropriately in pupils' emotional development.

48. Provision for moral development is good and based on a clear framework of Christian values. Most pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. There is a well understood whole-school approach to behaviour management. Class rules are negotiated at the beginning of each year. The sanction system is reviewed each year by staff, governors and the pupil representatives on the School Council. Effective incentive systems are in place and success is recognised in assemblies. The school has a very strong environmental awareness. It has become an Eco-school and won the Green Flag Award. 'Eco-warriors' clear litter and check that energy is conserved. The school has a wildlife garden, which is maintained by the pupils. Most classes are represented on the school's Health Council.

49. Provision for social development is good. This confirms the views of parents who feel that the school helps their child to become mature and responsible. A recently introduced programme of drugs and safety education involves parents in this aspect of social education. Throughout the school pupils undertake helpful tasks, such as keeping toys and equipment tidy within the classroom and acting as register monitors. They are often required in lessons to work with a partner or as part of a group. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger children in a 'buddy' system. Year 6 gain good understanding of the emergency services through their involvement in 'Crucial Crew' activities. Elected representatives on the School Council raise points on behalf of their classes and, at the time of the inspection, were organising fund-raising activities to support a Kenyan child sponsored by the school. There are links with elderly citizens of the Church Fellowship and the school supports various charities.

50. The provision for cultural education is good. The celebration of festivals is integral to the close links with the church, and involves dramatic and musical performances by the pupils. Visits to places of interest are organised and visitors are invited on a regular basis to support the curriculum. They include actors, artists, authors and musicians. Pupils learn about artists such as Monet and Van Gogh in their art lessons. There are links with schools in Blackpool, the Peak District and other localities as part of studies in geography. Extra-curricular activities include cultural pursuits such as music and drama. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument. Historical artefacts, including a timetable, part of a wall panel and a 'time capsule', are used effectively to give pupils an understanding of the cultural heritage of their own school.

51. Understanding of other cultures is successfully promoted through the teaching of French to older pupils. There are planned opportunities for learning about other cultures such as the Egyptians, in history, and Judaism and Islam in religious education. Multi-cultural resources include library books of stories, customs and festivals and the school has a good selection of musical instruments from other cultures.

52. There are good links with the community through a wide range of activities. These include the home-school partnership, very close links with the church and other churches in the locality, and links with local industries and the 'New Deal' initiative to provide work placements for young people.

53. There are also good contacts with other schools in the area, for example when they come together for musical performances and competitive sport. Pupils from other local primary schools attend the study club and summer school. Links with secondary schools in the area are active. In addition to providing opportunities for Year 6 pupils to visit their new schools towards the end of the year, the school also invites teachers from the secondary schools to come to the school to meet and teach the pupils. Teachers in upper Key Stage 2 take a full part in the primary and secondary schools' curriculum forum. These activities make a good contribution towards ensuring that Year 6 pupils make a smooth transition to their secondary schools.

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

54. The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils. This is based on the good relationships within the school. Most parents feel that the school provides a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere and pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure. Much time, effort, commitment and patience is spent by members of staff in talking to pupils who experience problems of any kind, especially when they find difficulty in adhering to the school's code of conduct. Pupils can share problems and concerns with the school counsellor.

55. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance in the core subjects are good. The school assesses attainment on entry and monitors progress throughout each year by using a series of nationally recognised diagnostic tests and by making good use of the optional national tests as well as the statutory end of key stage tests. This information is collated to support the tracking of pupils and the identification of performance of groups of pupils. As a result the school has a clear view of the performance of boys relative to girls. It has led to the school taking positive action to raising standards in English and mathematics through the introduction of setting in Key Stage 2.

56. Teachers know pupils well and use this knowledge to record their academic and personal progress. Appropriate academic and personal achievement records follow pupils throughout their years in school. Teachers liaise at the end of each academic year to discuss the transfer of pupils from one class to another. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their self-esteem and self-confidence is raised at every opportunity. There are good systems for the regular assessment of pupils with statements of special educational needs. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets, which are informed by detailed assessments of pupils' difficulties. This information is used effectively to plan appropriate work and have a positive effect on the pupils' progress.

57. There are discrete lessons in personal and social education and these are giving pupils the skills and knowledge to make decisions about their lives in and out of school. The lessons feature health education, including the misuse of drugs. Sex education is delivered sensitively within the context of family relationships and parents have approved the content. A consideration of the feelings, beliefs and values of others is a strong feature of the whole-school programme and lessons observed during the inspection showed this to operate well in practice. The school's procedures for child protection are good including the protection of children in care. There is a suitable policy and a designated teacher with responsibility for this aspect. All members of staff understand their role in the early identification of concerns.

58. There are a number of detailed policies and procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of pupils. Three members of staff are fully qualified to administer first aid and a further two have had some training. In-service training on health and safety is a feature of staff development. The named co-ordinator is conscientious in his duties and keeps up-to-date with current legislation. Accident reporting procedures are appropriate and fire drills are carried out regularly. Regular risk assessments are carried out and documented. These include potential hazards within certain classroom activities. There are good procedures for the safety of pupils whilst on visits out of school. Appropriate support agencies are contacted as and when necessary.

59. Procedures for monitoring and ensuring good behaviour are clearly understood by staff, pupils and parents. No evidence of bullying was seen during the inspection. Pupils have confidence in the anti-bullying strategies in place and are happy that the school deals with any concerns that are reported. Pupils enjoy receiving rewards for good work and behaviour and the successful promotion of Christian values throughout the school has a positive effect on them. The school has won a World Wildlife Fund Award for its management of the playground environment and playground games.

60. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting attendance and this is reflected in the good attendance of most pupils. With the support of the education welfare officer, the school is vigilant in following up absences and closely monitors attendance on a regular basis. Registration periods are efficient and provide an orderly start to the school sessions.

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

61. The school is welcoming to parents and visitors. Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the school and several parents offer useful classroom support. Most parents have a positive view of the school and appreciate the efforts made to help their children to become mature and responsible.

62. The general information for parents is good. There is a parents' information desk in the foyer. There is an interesting newsletter and a monthly school magazine, 'The Chronicle', edited by a parent. School celebrations and news about pupils' achievements are a regular feature of the magazine. The school prospectus gives a clear overview of the school and the induction booklet for parents of children new to the school is very helpful. The school gives parents a half-termly summary of the topics their children will be studying but some parents would appreciate more information about what children are learning.

63. There are effective arrangements for discussing pupils' progress with parents at three planned sessions in the year, and parents are also welcome to make an appointment to hold further discussions as desired. Much hard work has gone into compiling the annual progress reports to parents but these still need further refinement. Whilst they give good details of the work covered by pupils and their strengths, they do not consistently tell parents in plain language how much progress their children have made, how this compares with what is expected for the age group, and what their children need to do to improve. A general concern at the meeting for parents held prior to the inspection was that reports can be bland and do not always spell out weaknesses.

64. There are a number of opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. Most parents listen to children read at home and support them with homework. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to the review meetings of their children's progress. Those parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that they would feel comfortable approaching the school.

65. There are regular workshops for parents who appreciate these and confirm that the training helps them to support their children. The most recent one was information on special educational needs and assessment. Parents have been consulted about the sex education programme. Some participated in the "Parents' Role in Drugs and Safety Education" project.

66. Parents and friends help to escort pupils to the Medlock Sports Centre and assist in classrooms. Some have taken on the management of the school football team and provide transport to sporting events. The Home School Partnership Association is representative of the whole school family and funds it has raised have contributed to projects, such as the information and communication technology suite. Parents enjoy attending assemblies and church worship; they comment positively that the school's links with the church have brought an added dimension to its spiritual and social life. Parents are appreciative of the Study Club and the Kids' Club and feel secure in the knowledge that their children are cared for well.

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

67. The overall quality of leadership and management of the school is very good. Very good progress has been made in addressing the issues from the previous inspection and strategies to raise standards, to improve the quality of teaching and to increase the efficiency of the management have been implemented successfully.

68. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He provides a clear sense of direction and has a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. His own commitment to improving standards and willingness to work energetically towards the targets he sets provide a very good example to his colleagues. He is very well supported by his deputy and other members of the senior management team. Subject co-ordinators have worked very hard to effect the necessary improvements in long-, medium- and short-term planning that have contributed to the improvements in teaching and learning. A strength of the school is the teamwork and the shared sense of purpose.

69. The Governing Body provides good support for the school. It is now more focused on the raising of standards and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are fully involved in planning the development programme and in monitoring progress towards targets for improvement. They set appropriate targets for the headteacher. The Governing Body has improved the efficiency of its committee structure since the previous inspection and the effective procedures now in place ensure that all legal requirements are met. Individual governors also contribute through work in the school or through supporting literacy, special needs and numeracy.

70. The School Improvement Plan is an effective working document. It is drawn up by the management team, staff and governors. The identified priorities are expressed as measurable targets and progress towards them is monitored. There are clear links between the resource implications of this plan and the budget-setting process.

71. Financial planning is now excellent and the school has successfully undertaken projects to improve the buildings, the environment and learning resources. The resources for information technology have been improved considerably and are now excellent. Staffing levels have also been improved. The school has taken responsibility for its own meals service and also provides pre-school, after-school care and holiday care as well as a Study Club and Summer School. Concerns were expressed in the previous report about overspending the budget. Although there was a slight overspend in the latest year, the school is on course to have an appropriate level in balances by the end of the current financial year.

72. The school projects its financial planning across a five-year period. It considers what it would like to do, what the basic budget allocation will allow and how the gap can be bridged. The active search for grants and other additional funding, together with the efficient use of these monies, has allowed the school to carry out a programme of improvements far in excess of what could otherwise have been achieved.

73. The headteacher, secretaries and governors conscientiously follow clear financial procedures recommended by the Local Education Authority. An audit report received by the school shortly before the inspection noted that: 'the headteacher and the secretaries work well together to provide a very orderly and well controlled approach to the task of handling the finances of the school.' The school has a good appreciation of the principles of best value. The Governing Body's Finance Committee meets regularly and carefully monitors spending patterns.

74. The procedures for monitoring the implementation of policies and the quality of provision are good. Co-ordinators check lesson planning. Monitoring includes classroom observations to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. Test results are analysed and the information from these used to plan improvements. The weakness in writing, for example, has been identified by the school and a number of measures taken to begin to improve the quality of the work. A positive feature has been the sharing of these targets with pupils. The school makes good use of classroom assistants to support the identified needs of pupils.

75. The school has made a good start to performance management. A policy has been drawn up and a cycle of performance review meetings are held annually at which teachers set targets for the following year. Arrangements are in place to assist the induction of newly qualified teachers and other staff new to the school. The importance that the school attaches to professional development can be seen in the decision to create the post of assistant headteacher to support the headteacher and deputy head in the management of the in-service training within the school.

76. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well and the funds for individual support are used efficiently. The effectiveness of the provision is reflected in the good progress made by the pupils not only in academic work but also in personal and social development.

77. The school has a good level of well qualified teachers and classroom assistants, all of whom are deployed effectively. The school benefits from having a number of staff with particular subject skills. Their skills are used to support the raising of standards by teaching groups of children and developing the expertise of other teachers. This is particularly the case in special education needs and information and communication technology. The school has a full-time special needs teacher with no class responsibility, and two teachers with good information and communication technology skills. All teachers are benefiting from the New Opportunities Fund training. The Nursery class is taught by two nursery nurses, supervised by the Reception class teacher, who teaches in the Nursery herself one session per week. There are times when opportunities to promote individual children's learning within the framework of the Nursery activities session are missed.

78. The accommodation is well cared for and used very effectively but has many limitations. Some classrooms are small for the number of pupils. Office accommodation is very cramped. The school playground is small and its use requires carefully synchronised timetabling arrangements for mid-session breaks and lunchtimes. There is no playing field for games lessons and classes have to walk to a local sports hall. Whilst the school successfully overcomes these limitations, and makes very good use of the space available, accommodation remains unsatisfactory. Significant developments are planned for the site in the near future.

79. Resources for learning are very good. They are well stored, both in classrooms and central storerooms. Classroom resources are well organised and labelled. The school library benefits from a computerised loan system. Information and communication technology provision is a strength of the school. The information and communication technology suite is very well equipped with twenty computers and a teaching screen. Classrooms are also well equipped with computers, which are linked to the computer suite. The use of the suite is effectively timetabled and together with the classroom provision ensures that pupils get good access to computers.

80. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and the good quality of self-evaluation and the very effective teamwork, together with the very good leadership ensure that it is well placed to continue to improve.

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

81. In order to build on the very good progress made since the last inspection the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. improve the quality of pupils' writing by:
  - ◆ setting clear targets in all classes for individual children's progress in writing, and building on the excellent examples of this within the school;
  - ◆ giving pupils more opportunities to write extensively in subjects other than English;
  - ◆ ensuring that pupils follow the spelling strategies conscientiously;
  - ◆ encouraging pupils to use dictionaries and thesauri regularly and systematically;
  - ◆ teaching and monitoring correct letter formation from an early stage;

[See paragraphs 1, 3, 6, 7, 30, 95, 96, 100, 101, 103 and 150.]

2. encourage pupils to take more pride in the presentation of their work;

[See paragraphs 7, 21, 37, 96, 103, 105, 110 and 148.]

3. define clear learning objectives for individual Nursery children during activity sessions;

[See paragraphs 27 and 92.]

4. ensure that annual reports to parents about their children's work:
  - ◆ indicate standards and progress clearly in all subjects;
  - ◆ are written in plain language;
  - ◆ explain what the child needs to do next to improve.

[See paragraph 63.]

Other weaknesses that should be considered by the school:

- ◆ The lack of consistency in implementing the marking policy and in using teachers' written comments to give pupils a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve.

[See paragraphs 37, 103 and 124.]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	16%	44%	36%	4%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	239
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	47

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	102

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

<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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.6

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.1
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 [16]	16 [17]	34 [33]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16 [14]	17 [12]	18 [16]
	Girls	16 [14]	16 [15]	16 [16]
	Total	32 [28]	33 [27]	34 [32]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94% [85%]	97% [82%]	100% [97%]
	National	83% [82%]	84% [83%]	90% [87%]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16 [16]	16 [16]	16 [16]
	Girls	16 [16]	16 [17]	16 [17]
	Total	32 [32]	32 [33]	32 [33]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95% [97%]	95% [100%]	95% [100%]
	National	84% [82%]	88% [86%]	88% [87%]

### 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	16 [24]	18 [28]	34 [52]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13 [17]	12 [24]	16 [24]
	Girls	16 [23]	15 [25]	17 [26]
	Total	29 [40]	27 [49]	33 [50]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85% (77%)	79% (94%)	97% (96%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12 [17]	10 [20]	12 [20]
	Girls	16 [22]	16 [22]	17 [22]
	Total	28 [39]	26 [42]	29 [42]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82% (75%)	76% (81%)	85% (81%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	79% (75%)

Notes: 1. Figures in brackets refer to the previous year.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	192
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)	9.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	32

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	165

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.1*
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	150*

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.1
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**\* Note.** The Nursery class is taught by two nursery nurses for most of the week and by the Reception teacher for 1 session.

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	548,455
Total expenditure	549,168
Expenditure per pupil	2,042
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1,710
Balance carried forward to next year	-2,423

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	77

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49%	43%	4%	4%	0%
My child is making good progress in school.	38%	47%	10%	3%	3%
Behaviour in the school is good.	36%	55%	1%	1%	6%
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26%	55%	8%	0%	12%
The teaching is good.	48%	45%	1%	0%	5%
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32%	47%	13%	3%	5%
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42%	49%	5%	3%	1%
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51%	43%	4%	0%	3%
The school works closely with parents.	34%	45%	10%	1%	9%
The school is well led and managed.	43%	45%	3%	3%	6%
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49%	40%	6%	1%	3%
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35%	47%	6%	1%	10%

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**

82. Children are admitted to the Nursery part-time at the beginning of the school year during which they reach four years of age and into the Reception class full-time at the beginning of the school year during which they become five. Two qualified nursery nurses are in charge of the Nursery under the supervision of the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage, who is also the Reception class teacher. During the inspection there was temporary extra provision for Reception children who were withdrawn for work in small groups. On entry to the Reception class attainment for the majority is close to the average for children of this age. Some have well developed skills and others have yet to develop the skills expected at this age.

83. Overall progress during the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. By the end of the Reception year attainment is in line with national expectations in all areas of learning except for personal, social and emotional behaviour where attainment is above average. The school has broadly maintained the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Good provision is in place for children with special educational needs and as a result they make good progress.

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

84. In the Nursery children settle quickly into the established routines of the school and develop satisfactory skills in choosing what they would like to do. When, for example, playing in the water or with the road mat, many are able to share toys and wait until it is their turn and remain occupied for an appropriate length of time. They are learning good levels of independence when washing their hands in preparation for a baking session. In more formal situations, for example when listening to a story or playing a number game, a minority of children find difficulty in listening, following instructions or taking turns. This interrupts the flow of the lesson and affects the progress being made. In the Reception class the children are attentive and listen carefully to their teacher and to other children. This results in real discussion where children are learning to share ideas. When working in groups, for example in literacy and numeracy lessons, the children demonstrate good levels of independence and can stay on task without the need for direct supervision. In all of the lessons observed in the Reception class the children were well behaved.

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

85. The majority of children are on target to attain all the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. In the Nursery a few are able to speak confidently to adults they know. Most listen attentively to stories and enjoy joining in with familiar words and phrases. They are starting to show interest in illustrations and print in books. When involved in play, many children are able to talk about what is happening using a few words or simple phrases. Children observed in the role-play area were beginning to use talk to pretend they were working in a hospital. A small minority in the Nursery are making marks to represent writing and attempting to copy their names.

86. A majority in Reception are confident to speak to adults in the classroom. They listen carefully and follow instructions. During literacy lessons they talk about the writing and the pictures in the book, and respond appropriately to the teacher's questions. Many are able to express themselves using longer phrases or simple sentences and are developing the vocabulary to explain what they know and understand. When looking at books, many children behave as readers, turning the pages and telling the story by using the pictures and some familiar words as clues. Higher attaining children recognise many of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds these make, and are able to read from the early books in the school's reading scheme. In their writing the majority of children write letters to represent meaning; higher attaining children attempt to form recognisable letters. The majority of children hold a pencil or crayon correctly.

## **Mathematical development**

87. The majority of children are on target to attain the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. In the Nursery children show an interest in counting out loud when counting the cars waiting in line on the road mat. A small number of higher attaining children are developing the skill of counting one-to-one. With support, many are able to match the numbers one, two and three to a picture of a similar number of objects. Children in the Reception class are interested in mathematics and are developing good number awareness. Most children can count to five and beyond. They make appropriate use of mathematical vocabulary such as 'above' or 'behind'. The majority can identify patterns in sequenced shapes and can predict what shape comes next.

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

88. Children in the Nursery are interested in the world around them. When moving vehicles around on the road mat, children comment about where the cars are going. In an activity on sinking and floating the majority were able to predict that a plastic bottle would float and a piece of coal would sink. The children observed working at the computers were able to use a mouse to control events on the screen. Children in the Reception class enjoy working on the computer. A few follow the teacher's instructions and are able to enter their names onto the screen successfully. The majority are still in the early stages of finding the letters on the keyboard and discovering the functions of other keys. When working with mirrors, they are enthusiastic. Although many are only beginning to develop an understanding of the concept of reflection, they talk confidently about what they can see.

## **Physical development**

89. The development of physical skills is broadly in line with expectations of children of this age. Children in the Nursery show satisfactory levels of control when moving about the classroom and are aware of their own and others' safety. They handle brushes, pencils and crayons with satisfactory levels of skill. A small number of children are able to colour with good levels of control whilst the majority have still to learn how to keep within a shape. Children in the Reception class demonstrate satisfactory pencil, crayon and scissors control in a range of activities.

## **Creative development**

90. Children in the Nursery paint, draw and print. They cut out shapes and stick them onto paper to make pictures and patterns. In the Reception class, the children enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes. They know the names of a small range of percussion instruments and use them well to maintain a steady beat to accompany a song.

91. The quality of the teaching observed is satisfactory overall in each of the areas of learning. Teaching was good in half of lessons seen in the Reception class. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the Nursery. The best features in teaching across the Foundation Stage are in the good relationships fostered and the promotion of the children's emotional, personal and social development. This has a positive impact on how the children settle into class routines and respond to adults and other children.

92. In the Nursery teachers do not always make it clear how they expect children to behave in more formal group situations. As a result, learning is sometimes interrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Activities are well organised and teachers make satisfactory use of resources to gain children's interest and help them settle at the beginning of the morning or afternoon sessions. However, these activities are not planned sufficiently well to ensure that clear and precise learning objectives are in place for each child. The organisation of the Nursery takes satisfactory account of the six areas of learning. Children enjoy playing at being medical staff in the 'hospital' but the role play area is not used as effectively as it might be to stimulate their imagination and language.

93. Teachers of the Reception children provide good opportunities for learning through clear routines made explicit to the children, and have high expectations of behaviour and effort. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well organised. Lesson plans match learning targets accurately to what the children already know and understand. Teaching demonstrates good subject knowledge in all areas of learning with clear explanations and good opportunities for children to contribute to the lesson. This results in good levels of independent learning and children responding positively to their work. Resources are well prepared and used effectively to promote learning. Good use is made of the skills of the classroom support assistant to support individuals and groups.

94. The curriculum, planned jointly by Reception and Nursery staff, provides a satisfactory range of activities and opportunities to help children learn. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has worked hard to put into place the most recent developments in early years education. The inside accommodation is of an adequate size and the Reception and Nursery classes are linked. The outside accommodation is secure and accessible to both the Nursery and Reception classes although it is rather cramped. It provides both hard play and grassed areas. There is a wide range of resources of good quality to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.

## **ENGLISH**

95. The previous inspection reported that attainment in English at the end of both key stages was in line with the national average. In 1999 the performance of seven-year-olds was satisfactory in reading and below average in writing. There was a significant improvement in 2000 and the proportion reaching the expected level in both reading and writing was well above average. The end of Key Stage 2 performance in English in 1999 was close to the national average but below average when compared with similar schools. In the 2000 national test the proportion achieving an overall Level 4 in English improved to above the national average. However, while the percentage of eleven-year-olds achieving the expected level and the next level in reading were both high, the proportion attaining the expected level in writing was low.

96. The inspection findings confirm that standards in reading by the end of both key stages are above average. Most pupils achieve the expected standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1. However, the quality of pupils' writing by the end of Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Not enough progress is made in spelling and handwriting and in consequence the presentation of their work is often unsatisfactory.

97. Standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good by the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils listen carefully, make sensible responses to teachers' questions and join in class discussions. For example, they are able to respond with appropriate answers when asked about why we take care of others and they are willing to speak at length about what makes them happy. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to express themselves. Teachers' good questioning techniques encourage them to extend their answers. Participation in drama activities and leading assemblies contribute positively to the good progress made. By the end of Key Stage 2 a significant number of pupils are able to justify their choice of vocabulary, describe events and opinions and question the ideas of others. During the inspection a group of high attaining pupils engaged in animated discussion with an authoress about aspects of her writing.

98. The principles of the literacy hour are well established. Throughout the school pupils are provided with a good range of literature and non-fiction appropriate to their interest and attainment level. This contributes to the very good progress made by most pupils in reading. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of children have good phonic skills, and an awareness of rhyme and rhythm, which is reflected in accurate, fluent and expressive reading, particularly by the higher attaining children. Most are able to express opinions about the stories they read, to relate the sequence of events and to predict what might happen next.

99. By the time they leave the school the majority of pupils have developed very good understanding of significant ideas, such as the importance of setting the scene, the construction of characters and the development of a plot. Many can justify their own views about the appropriateness of the vocabulary to a particular text, such as the language used in a review, which seeks to persuade the reader. The majority have good information retrieval skills, often using information technology for this purpose. Higher attaining pupils are able to skim and scan text effectively.

100. In Key Stage 1 pupils are given appropriate opportunities to write. They use labels, captions and speech bubbles. They write lists and sequence sentences. Examination of the previous year's work shows that they have successfully written their own 'news', composed acrostic poems, and compiled a flow chart, for example, to show the life-cycle of a butterfly. In an extended story about a hurricane, higher attaining pupils show that they know how to construct a sentence accurately and punctuate it properly. Some of their writing includes other punctuation such as speech and exclamation marks. There are some examples of legibly formed joined handwriting. However, during the inspection it was observed that a significant number of children do not form their letters correctly, and this limits their progress in learning to write joined script.

101. Pupils write in a range of forms as they progress through Key Stage 2 which include persuasive writing, including film and book reviews, descriptive writing about characters, autobiographies, play-scripts, such as 'Children of Winter', and poetry including haiku. Opportunities are given to write for a real audience as in contributions to St. Mary's Chronicle and e-mail letters to pupils at another school. However, insufficient progress is made in handwriting and spelling and this is a major factor in standards of writing being insufficiently high. By the end of the key stage many pupils are still not writing in legible, fluent joined script. Spelling mistakes are frequent. In the course of writing lessons there is often insufficient work produced. Dictionaries are under-used to check the accuracy of spelling and thesauri are not used sufficiently to extend the vocabulary which pupils use in their writing. Many pupils do not review their work with a critical eye and demonstrate the desire to improve it. Ground rules need to be established for different stages of the writing process. There is no clear message about how and where 'jottings', drafts and final presentations are to be recorded.

102. Since the previous inspection and the introduction of the literacy hour, there has been improvement in lesson planning, better assessment techniques and the introduction of 'setting' arrangements for pupils in Key Stage 2. This means that a combination of higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, together with work which is well suited to pupils' attainment levels, are contributing to a higher quality of teaching. A higher number of pupils on the special needs register is indicative of the early intervention strategies now in place for pupils who experience difficulties in learning. They are provided with very effective support. Additionally, good provision is now made to extend the achievements of high attaining pupils to raise their standards.

103. The overall quality of teaching is good. Very good features in the teaching of English in Key Stage 2 include very good subject expertise and enthusiasm, which leads to the setting of challenging tasks. The introduction of writing targets and the keeping of spelling journals for older pupils are good initiatives, but these have not been in place for long enough to have a full impact on standards. Neither pupils nor teachers appear to apply the writing targets for written work to subjects other than English. The literacy hour is planned and taught well. Teachers usually share the learning objectives of the lesson with their pupils and use the plenary session effectively to reinforce what has been learnt. Throughout the school teachers manage pupils well. Not enough attention is given to ensuring that correct letter formation is taught and monitored from an early stage and that pupils follow the spelling strategies accurately. Expectations in respect of the presentation of pupils' work are not high enough. Whilst some marking of pupils' work is used effectively to help them improve, this is not consistent throughout the school.

104. There are very good features in the teaching of pupils with special needs in both key stages. The co-ordinator is both knowledgeable and well organised. She involves teachers in the drawing up of targets for the pupils in their class. Support assistants are well briefed and effective. Records are well maintained, and there is good use of information and communication technology in teaching, for example, in the use of the 'Initial Reading' programme and for the regular updating of records. The inspection findings agree with the opinions of parents that pupils with special needs make good progress.

105. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall. The majority show a good level of interest in their work but a minority are easily distracted and restless. Many enjoy reading. Older pupils often prefer to complete their written work on a word processor in preference to pen and paper. Many take insufficient pride in the presentation of their written work.

106. The two co-ordinators are enthusiastic and conscientious. They attend courses and run workshops to inform staff and parents of curriculum developments. Appropriate systems are in place to track pupils' progress and a file of moderated written work is maintained. Test results are analysed and used as the basis to remedy any weaknesses, which are identified. The quality of resources is good. The library is well stocked with a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts. In addition there is a good selection of CD ROMs, videos and teaching materials stored in various areas of the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

107. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds were both well above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving a higher than expected level was above the national average in Key Stage 1 and well above the national average in Key Stage 2. Compared with similar schools the results were well above average at age seven and very high at age eleven. In 2000 every seven-year-old achieved the expected level, though the percentage reaching a higher level was below average. Although there is a fall from the previous year's very high level at Key Stage 2, the school comfortably met the mathematics target set for it by the Local Education Authority in 2000. The proportion at Level 4 was above the national average but the percentage at Level 5 was well below average. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999, results fluctuate year on year but show a gradual improvement. These results show good improvement since the last inspection in both key stages.

108. The current Year 2 pupils are attaining standards above the national average. Pupils in Year 6 are also attaining good standards. This continued success is the result of the school's monitoring of the teaching of mathematics and the subsequent development of teachers' subject expertise, linked to the successful introduction and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has also introduced a new pattern of curricular organisation in Key Stage 2, grouping pupils by prior attainment, which has resulted in improved targeting of activities to present the appropriate challenge to pupils.

109. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils have good number skills. They have good mental skills and carry out horizontal addition involving one and two digit numbers. Pupils can order coins in terms of value and can add and subtract two numbers accurately. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a good grasp of number facts to 20. They have a good mathematical vocabulary and can associate different terminology to the correct process. Pupils cover a wide range of mathematical topics including money, the measurement and the attributes of shapes.



110. The work of pupils in Key Stage 2 is good but the standard of presentation is often below that normally found. Years 3 and 4 pupils have good number skills and carry out calculations confidently. They add and subtract 2 digits, carry out doubling of numbers, multiply and divide two digits by one digit and demonstrate a good awareness of numbers up to 1000. They have a clear grasp of multiplication tables and apply this to mental activities effectively.

111. By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils are skilled in number and they respond to mental activities enthusiastically. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and can use their knowledge when solving problems related to real situations. They multiply and divide fractions with confidence. Good use is made of spreadsheets to analyse data and create graphs. Higher attaining pupils are able to draw up frequency charts, can explain the range of a set of data and are aware of the difference between the mean, median and the mode. Work in measurement shows good understanding of area and perimeter. Pupils know the attributes of shapes and can measure angles accurately.

112. Special education needs pupils in Key Stage 2 cover a wide range of work and are making satisfactory progress. They are developing good skills in number, decimals and fractions. Their confidence and skills are developed effectively as a result of the well organised extra support they receive in the classroom.

113. Pupils' use of mathematical skills across the curriculum is being developed in a range of subjects. They carry out investigations and surveys involving the gathering of data and present their findings in graphs using computers in geography and science.

114. The quality of teaching in mathematics is variable but good overall. In all but two lessons teaching is at least satisfactory with one half of lessons good or very good. All teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use this to positive effect to give clear explanations of mathematical concepts. Lessons are well planned and have clear objectives, which are shared with the pupils. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and the school has made a successful start to its implementation since last September. Most lessons begin with a challenging mental mathematics session, which is followed by a well organised and planned group activity. Teachers make effective use of plenary sessions to consolidate learning and make additional teaching points. Only occasionally were explanations about ideas in mathematics not sufficiently clear to enable pupils to make appropriate progress in their learning. The quality of teaching has been instrumental in raising pupils' attainment and improving their progress in mathematics. Relationships in classrooms are very good and, as a result, pupils work hard and enjoy the subject. In most lessons teachers manage their classes well but, on one occasion observed, a support teacher had difficulty in managing the uncooperative behaviour of a group of younger children with special needs in mathematics.

115. Most pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics and work with commitment and enthusiasm. They respond well to questions in whole-class sessions and maintain a high level of concentration during group activities, producing work at a good pace. This was particularly evident in a very good lesson involving a top set of Years 5 and 6 pupils. The teaching in this lesson was marked in particular by the high degree of challenge presented in both the opening mental activity session and the following group work, which involved the analysis and interpretation of a range of different graphs. The teacher's clarity of presentation and subsequent support through questions and comment was effective in promoting good learning. In a middle set, comprising pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils were able to respond rapidly to a series of questions on consecutive numbers and knew the appropriate number operation to carry out to determine how long ago events occurred when working on a time line. Pupils benefit from the effective use made by teachers of class assistants. This helps to ensure that all pupils receive the necessary support and as a result learn well. Occasionally, however, the level of support given to pupils is too great and results in work being done for pupils, which limits actual learning.

116. Opportunities are taken to develop pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects, for example in measuring activities in design and technology and in using bar charts and graphs to record their findings in science lessons. Literacy skills are used appropriately with teachers developing mathematical vocabulary and encouraging pupils to read the learning objectives at the start of the lesson. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in their lessons to support pupils' general number skills and to develop their skills in handling data.

117. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard and has successfully led the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. She has a clear overview of the subject and has produced a detailed action plan. The plan includes some observation of teaching and learning but this is a feature requiring further development. She also monitors the subject through the examination of planning and pupils' work. Teacher expectations have been successfully raised by the introduction of targeting for all pupils. Good use is made of optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, to monitor the progress of pupils and to inform teaching. National Tests results in Years 2 and 6 are analysed and trends examined over time. Data is being gathered and compiled into a file that supports the tracking of pupils and determining of appropriate action as necessary. Graphs are charted showing the performance of individual pupils in order to monitor progress and carry out simple value added calculations. An analysis of answers to questions in the national tests has been carried out to indicate weaknesses in provision and this information is used to inform teachers' future planning of learning activities.

118. The school has taken significant action to improve the teaching of mathematics and raise standards in the subject since the previous inspection report. The school has taken the required organisational measures to teach pupils in ability groupings. The range, quality and use of resources are good. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

## **SCIENCE**

119. The 1999 teacher assessment results for seven-year-olds indicate that the proportion attaining Level 2 and above was very high when compared to all schools and similar schools. The percentage attaining Level 3 was average when compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools. Teacher assessment for 2000 indicates results which are only slightly lower than the previous year and still above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that a large majority of pupils should attain the expected Level 2 with some attaining Level 3 and that attainment is above the national expectation. This represents good progress during Key Stage 1.

120. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in science pupils' performance was well above the national average at both Level 4 and at Level 5. When compared with similar schools, their results were very high. In the 2000 tests the high proportion attaining the expected Level 4 was maintained but the proportion attaining Level 5 declined from the previous year's very high percentage. The school's analysis of the results indicates that the 1999 Year 6 group contained a significant proportion of higher attainers. Nevertheless, over the four years from 1996 to 1999 the science results at Key Stage 2 have been consistently above average. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in science by the age of eleven is above the national expectation. The Year 6 pupils have made good progress since they were assessed as seven-year-olds.

121. The school has made significant improvements in standards in science since the time of the previous inspection when attainment was judged as average at the end of both key stages. Throughout the school there has been a systematic focus on the improvement of investigative work and the development of a balanced science programme of study. This has helped to raise attainment at both key stages. Pupils from the beginning of Key Stage 1 learn to answer questions through the use of scientific method. The approach to their investigations becomes increasingly more complex from year to year so that by Year 6 pupils are developing a rigorous approach to predicting, testing and evaluating their results.

122. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are developing a good understanding of the properties and uses of different materials. Their investigations into freezing and melting indicates a secure understanding of the process. In the lesson observed, Year 2 children were able to explain some of the differences between animals and plants and the main criteria by which to identify them. They are developing good skills in classification based on a range of variables.

123. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 study how sugar decays teeth through experimentation with a range of solutions. They know the effects of sugars and the need for dental hygiene and a healthy diet. Pupils in Year 4 are able to carry out a fair test to discover the resistance of water to different shapes. They collect and organise data and handle it carefully during their investigations. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrate a good understanding of circulation. Most can find and measure their pulse. They know about the link between exercise and circulation and are developing the skills of collecting, organising and comparing information using a database. In Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of food chains and can explain the difference between a food chain and a food web. They know that animals have a different status in the food chain and can explain the terms producers, consumers and predators.

124. The quality of teaching seen was good in four out of five lessons and never less than satisfactory. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge. They use this knowledge well to provide clear explanations. Lesson planning is detailed and contains clear learning targets that are well designed to promote learning. Teachers build effectively on what pupils have learned in previous lessons and use questioning effectively to check their knowledge and understanding. The teaching of scientific method and promotion of investigational work is a strength of the subject. The quality of on-going assessment during lessons, through questioning and discussion, is good. However, the quality of teachers' marking throughout both key stages is unsatisfactory. The scrutiny of pupils' work completed over a period of time indicates limited evidence of marking to provide pupils with a clear understanding of how they might improve their work or what they need to do next. Lessons are organised well and most teachers manage pupils effectively. However, on occasions less effective behaviour management was observed which allowed pupils to behave inappropriately.

125. The quality of teaching generally ensures a positive response. Pupils listen carefully and concentrate on the task in hand. Teachers' clear explanations of tasks means that pupils settle promptly to their tasks, know what they are expected to do, and remain involved. A small number of pupils in upper Key Stage 2 find difficulty in responding appropriately to the school's expectations of behaviour.

126. The science curriculum is broad, balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Long- and medium-term planning are both good. They address the new programme of study and take full account of other curriculum initiatives and guidelines. Assessment and recording procedures provide a good basis for monitoring pupils' progress. Teachers keep on-going information throughout the year. This is used to inform reports to parents and the next teacher or school. Pupils are provided with satisfactory opportunities to use their data handling skills when dealing with scientific information. However, although information and communication technology is occasionally used to support the subject, evidence from previous work and during lessons indicates that this link is not as well developed as in some other subjects.

127. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is clearly committed to further improving standards. The school improvement plan clearly outlines targets for improvement. The subject is generously resourced. These resources are well organised, easily accessible and used effectively to support teaching and learning. Science makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

128. Pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of both key stages. During the inspection it was possible to observe only two art and design lessons. One in Key Stage 1 and one in lower Key Stage 2. However, judgements of standards can be made based on lessons seen, work previously completed and on display or retained in art and design portfolios, and discussions with pupils. Standards remain broadly similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

129. The work of the pupils in the lesson observed in Year 2 demonstrated a satisfactory ability to use paint to create pictures and patterns. A good link was observed between art and design and design and technology in the colourful designs produced by pupils as part of their puppet making and name card work. Work previously completed includes printmaking using polyblock printing plates, still-life observational drawings, paper weaving, and contrast pictures of skeleton figures.

130. During the inspection pupils in Year 3 worked on the use of a grid to transfer and enlarge images from one piece of paper to another. Pupils made satisfactory first attempts but not all were aware of the need to ensure that both sheets of paper should either be portrait or landscape. Pupils in Year 4 discussed their work on mosaic tiles linked to a history project on the Romans. The finished work demonstrates the ability to make suitable choices of tools and materials and use them effectively to make a design. Previously completed work demonstrates that pupils have acquired skills to enable them to produce work in the style of Lowry, Monet, William Morris and other famous artists.

131. No overall judgement of teaching can be made owing to the limited number of lessons seen in each key stage. The quality of teaching in both lessons seen was satisfactory. Strengths included careful planning and good organisation of resources, clear explanations and good use of exemplars, and effective class management. In some activities there were insufficient opportunities for the development of skills, such as colour mixing.

132. A satisfactory policy is in place, which is due for review as part of the school's improvement plan. Although no evidence was seen of three-dimensional work, long-term planning fully addresses all aspects of the subject. The scheme of work has not, as yet, been updated to take account of the recently revised programme of study. Art and design is planned mainly as a subject in its own right but is also integrated into other subjects of the curriculum and good links are in place. Teachers keep their own records of progress and use these to inform end of year reports to parents. There are sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in both skills and knowledge acquisition. These are conveniently stored in a central area. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, social and cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

133. During the inspection only two lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 and one lesson in Key Stage 2. A range of work was on display around the school and in books and evidence was made available of work completed in the previous year. Taken together this indicates that standards in design and technology are satisfactory in both key stages.

134. From Year 1 appropriate emphasis is given to developing pupils' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating. Year 1 pupils are able to think of their own ideas when designing moving puppets and a rocking bird to be made from card. They work well together and share their ideas with others. The majority of pupils are able to cut out the parts in preparation for their moving model. They use scissors well, taking account of safety, and join moving parts to produce effective models. Pupils plan a design for a cat box and decide on the tools to use and how they will start. They use a planning sheet effectively to plan how to cook a fruit or custard tart. Pupils in Year 2 develop these skills through designing and making books involving moving parts with hinges and pop-out flaps. They develop good skills using paper to weave and create montage patterns.

135. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 design and make interesting models using joining techniques in order to test the capability of structures to take stress. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 link their work in design and technology to a project in the school playground involving planting shrubs and laying paving. They carry out a project on the making of slippers involving investigating the capability of materials to protect against water and design a fair test to determine their results. They make models using straws involving designing a shape that will prove effective in taking stress. Pupils make Easter cards and Christmas cards of various designs, involving moving parts. They evaluate the end product effectively to explore ways in which it might be improved. Their work demonstrates an awareness of the strength obtained from triangular shapes and the development of a range of cutting and joining techniques. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in technological activities and make good progress. Pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy and numeracy skills in this subject as they label diagrams, prepare designs and learn to measure their work accurately.

136. In the lessons seen, teaching was generally good. Teachers plan their lessons well and clearly state the objectives to pupils at the start of the lesson. Teachers exhibit good subject knowledge and confidence when explaining and demonstrating to pupils. The tasks set for pupils are appropriate and the degree of challenge matches the ability of the pupils. This results in pupils being enthusiastic and eager to get on with the activities. Teachers make good use of questions and direct instruction to develop pupils' learning and use positive feedback effectively. Teachers clearly identify what resources pupils will need to do their work and as a result lessons progress at a good pace. Pupils enjoy the subject and have good attitudes to it and work hard.

137. The subject is managed effectively. Co-ordinators have drawn up an action plan based on appropriate priorities following an audit. The policy clearly outlines strategies for teaching, cross-curricular issues, and assessment and record keeping in the subject. The school is making effective use of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines as a scheme of work. The co-ordinators have carried out some monitoring, through the examination of teachers' half-term plans and pupils' work, but have not been given release time to observe teachers in their classrooms. The small budget allocated to the subject is managed effectively, being mainly used for the purchase of equipment and resources. Assessment and recording progress in design and technology are not well developed in practice and remain areas requiring attention.

138. There has been improvement in resource provision since the last inspection and teachers are now more confident in the subject as a result of the support given by the co-ordinators.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

139. No geography lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 during the inspection but evidence from previous work shows that standards by the age of seven are those expected for the age group. Geographical skills and knowledge are developed well through topics, such as holidays, buildings and around the school. From an early stage children are introduced to fieldwork and to mapping skills. Overall progress through the key stage is sound.

140. By the age of eleven standards for many are above those normally found. The emphasis on developing key skills through the study of places and themes enables the pupils to make good progress. In lower Key Stage 2 pupils gain a good understanding of the aspects which caused people to select places for settlement and of the factors which cause places to change. They develop good insights into physical features and ways of life in contrasting parts of Britain and in other countries. Older pupils are well used to undertaking practical investigations and to reasoning out connections between location and what is found there. They achieve a good understanding of themes such as rivers but are less confident in general knowledge about places. Pupils use e-mail links with schools in other areas to exchange information about local data and use the Internet confidently to find out about places and themes they are studying.

141. Environmental education is a strength of the school. In addition to learning about the interaction between people and the environment, they consider moral and social aspects, such as co-operation, interdependence and responsibility. Environmental issues are studied across the curriculum, for example fair trading and sustainability in geography, empowerment in history and sources of power in science. The school has an Eco committee which addresses both issues within the school, such as energy conservation, and schemes to raise awareness of environmental topics. Pupils have studied both the advantages and disadvantages for the local area of the planned extension of the Metrolink. Because of the high quality of work in this area, the school has been awarded Eco-school status.

142. Most pupils enjoy their work in geography. Many have a commitment to environmental issues and they show maturity in considering different points of view. They concentrate well on tasks and co-operate in group situations.

143. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good overall. Teachers have very good understanding of the subject. This enables them to organise the development of skills and concepts well, so that pupils learn effectively and can apply them in real situations. The well organised activities within lessons interest pupils and encourage them to achieve well. Teachers manage both pupils and resources proficiently.

144. The leadership of the subject is very good. The learning targets for the subject are very clear. The level of resources is good and effective use is made of field trips and practical activities.

145. The standards and the quality of teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection, because of the considerable effort that has been into planning both geography and environmental education.

## **HISTORY**

146. During Key Stage 1 children make satisfactory progress in history and by the age of seven levels of attainment are those expected for the age group. Children learn to compare and contrast ways of life in previous times with the present age through topics such as holidays and appreciate how everyday articles and toys have changed over time. Through considering the lives of people like Samuel Pepys and Florence Nightingale they see some of the influences that cause changes. Year 1 children readily identify features in a Victorian classroom that are different from their own experience and they are confident in explaining how the situation has changed.

147. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils show good knowledge of the topics they have studied. They have above average study skills in history and this contributes significantly to their effective learning and good progress. When considering the different life-styles within Victorian society they are able to draw on a wide range of evidence to compare and contrast the daily lives of rich and poor families. They interrogate census data, interpret a contemporary picture and read documents from the period as well as considering critically video reconstructions of what life was like and researching the topic from CD ROM and the Internet. They are able to think themselves into the situation of Victorian children and have a good appreciation of how they might have felt. Earlier in the key stage they gain sound insights into Ancient Egypt, the impact of invaders and settlers on Britain and key aspects of the Tudor period. These topics are used well to develop their history skills.

148. Pupils' have positive attitudes to history lessons. They respond well in whole-class discussions, and work well in groups or at individual tasks. Most apply themselves well and make effective use of the time available. At times, however, they do not show enough pride in the presentation of their work.

149. The teaching seen in Key Stage 1 was good. In Key Stage 2 the teaching varied from very good to satisfactory but was good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the topics and of how to develop pupils' historical skills. Well planned activities capture pupils' interest and skilful questioning makes pupils think not only about what information they have gained but also about what inferences and conclusions they can draw from it. Teachers manage their pupils well. Effective classroom organisation allows pupils to work effectively in a number of groups using a variety of resources.

150. The teaching and learning of history is well organised through the school. The effective planning allows for good coverage of both topic knowledge and subject skills and this has led to an improvement in standards at the age of eleven from satisfactory at the previous inspection to good. The quality and the range of resources are both good and the visits to places of interest and visitors to the school enhance pupils' understanding and their enjoyment of history. At times worksheets are used which limit pupils' responses and opportunities to develop writing skills are missed. In contrast, there are good links between historical research and the development of information and communication technology skills. There are also effective links with art and design and with design and technology.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

151. By the end of both key stages most pupils are achieving good standards, which are above the national expectations in all aspects of the subject; some demonstrate even higher levels of knowledge and skills. The school has made considerable improvements in provision since the last inspection. The computer suite is equipped with twenty computers and has a teaching screen. A full class of pupils can now comfortably work individually or in pairs at a computer. Each classroom has a small suite of four computers. This ensures that all pupils get regular time at the keyboard. The very good provision is having a positive impact upon standards and enables information and communication technology to be used across the curriculum.

152. Children in Key Stage 1 make good progress. In Year 1 they use a word bank to make up sentences to go with a picture. They make good use of a range of programs to support activities in subjects of the curriculum, for example number games to develop numeracy skills and simple word processing in literacy lessons. Year 2 children use word processing skills well to write their stories and support the development of skills in grammar by the correct use of capitals and full stops and enhance their work through the use of different fonts. They use data effectively to create graphs on a number of topics, such as their favourite pets and eye colour. They develop skills in control by entering commands into a programmable toy in order for it to follow a planned route. By the end of Key Stage 1 most children are confident in their use of the mouse and keyboard and can load and save their work.

153. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils of all levels of attainment continue to develop good skills in information technology. Word processing skills are developed in Years 3 and 4 with pupils writing their poems and stories. They edit their stories confidently and can select elements, change fonts and save and print their work. They use their computer skills effectively when creating a newspaper front page on the rain forests, importing a picture and creating a further picture of their own to illustrate the writing. Skills in control are developed through continued use of programmable robots and the Roamer World program. Most pupils can confidently develop a series of instructions into a routine to direct an object on the screen around a route. Pupils develop their number skills through the use of computers in numeracy lessons.

154. By the end of Year 6 pupils can edit their stories effectively, move text, cut and paste and change the size of the font. They add pictures to text using the school's digital camera and scanner. Artwork is developed using the 'Dazzle' program to produce work in the style of Matisse. They use databases to obtain information and spreadsheets to collate information and produce graphs. Pupils demonstrate good skills in using the Internet to search for information on the Victorians and answering questions on the life and works of William Morris. Older pupils are starting to develop links with another school through e-mail. They use computers to create music and link this with work using actual musical instruments in another lesson. Pupils are covering all requirements of the National Curriculum well.

155. During the inspection no whole-class teaching of information and communication technology was observed in Key Stage 1. However, many teachers have good skill levels and are confident in their teaching of groups and individuals. In Key Stage 2 four class lessons were observed in which whole classes used the computer suite. The quality of teaching in these lessons was good and some was very good. The school has organised the timetable to enable the teaching in the computer suite to be delivered by teachers with particular subject expertise. This works well. These teachers display a degree of knowledge and skill, which is proving to be very beneficial in raising pupils' achievement.

156. Teaching is well planned, with clear objectives that are stated to pupils at the start of the lesson. Teachers diligently check the work of pupils at the computers during sessions and make good interventions to challenge pupils and ensure effective learning. Teachers' clear instructions and the objectives set for pupils are successful in ensuring that pupils understand and can explain their work clearly. In lessons in other subjects teachers make effective use of the computers in their classrooms to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils create and analyse graphs on a laptop involving the use of spreadsheets. Programs to develop numeracy and literacy skills are used throughout the key stage. Good use is made of support staff to ensure that special educational needs pupils have access to the curriculum and make good progress.

157. Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology. They work productively in lessons in response to the skill, enthusiasm and confidence shown by teachers and the good relationships established. Pupils are very eager to work on computers or other devices and throughout the school enjoy their work in information and communication technology. There are good levels of collaboration when pupils are asked to co-operate.



158. The subject is managed effectively by two co-ordinators who monitor work through examination of planning and pupils' work and discussion with colleagues. The recording of work by pupils is collated in files and folders on a computer to enable the close monitoring of progress. An audit of teachers' skills has been carried out and needs are being addressed through the New Opportunities Fund training. The two co-ordinators are disseminating their skills and knowledge to other teachers. This is developing the skills level of all staff who demonstrate a good degree of confidence in the subject. Resources for information and communication technology are excellent and are well used.

159. The previous inspection found that attainment in information technology was satisfactory. The school has subsequently put great emphasis on the improvement of provision in the subject. This has resulted in very good improvement since the last inspection in terms of coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum, the resources available to pupils and in the standards attained throughout the school.

## **MUSIC**

160. Overall standards in music at the end of both key stages are in line with those found in most schools and the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular musical activities, and the minority who do so make good progress, often achieving standards higher than those found normally.

161. In Key Stage 1 teachers' planning indicates that all the required elements of music are covered. In acts of worship children listen to music, and during the inspection week they responded well to the idea of mood in music. They are familiar with the terms for parts of the viola and know the material used for a bow. Most are able to clap simple rhythms and have a wide repertoire of songs, which they sing with enjoyment, maintaining the pitch well for their age.

162. During the inspection Key Stage 2 pupils listened carefully to an extract from Vaughan Williams 'Suite for Viola'. A few were able to offer suggested differences between the violin and viola and all were enthralled by a live performance. They sing well, showing that they can maintain parts when singing in a round such as 'Shalom'. They use instruments expressively, for example when composing their own music to represent Autumn as part of their work about the four seasons. They are familiar with and can use simple graphical scores.

163. Seven pupils in the Year 5 recorder group were able to perform a 'Duetto' playing their own line of music with reasonable awareness of performers playing a different line. The quality of singing by the twenty girls who are members of the school choir in 'Come Let Us Reason' was very high. They gave good attention to dynamics, diction and the sustaining of notes whilst maintaining their parts harmoniously.

164. The quality of teaching observed was very good overall. Good musical expertise, a logically stepped lesson, good pupil management and careful organisation are particular features, which have a positive impact on the quality of learning. However a substantial proportion of the teaching takes place with an entire key stage of pupils present. In these circumstances it is not possible to provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their performance skills fully. Nevertheless, the subject makes a good contribution to their cultural education.

165. Pupils' attitudes to music are good. They enjoy their music lessons and most join enthusiastically in singing. They treat the instruments with appropriate care and look forward to being chosen to play them. Key Stage 2 pupils applauded spontaneously in appreciation of the live performance.

166. The subject is very well resourced. The quality and range of instruments, which includes unusual items from other cultures, are excellent. There is a wide variety of recorded music and a generous selection of information and communication technology resources available. A detailed scheme of work has been drawn up by the co-ordinator who is a specialist musician. It provides very effective and detailed guidance in a form which can be used easily by the non-specialist teachers. Provision of instrumental tuition on keyboard, guitar, strings, woodwind and brass is made available through an outside agency for which a payment is made in line with the schools' charging policy. Members of the Manchester Camerata and the Halle Orchestra have worked effectively with both staff and pupils. There is a tradition of groups of pupils performing in a range of settings before a variety of audiences. These include church services, musical soirées, school concerts, joint performances with other primary schools, as in "Children of Tameside Sing", Christmas concerts with the local high schools, and at venues such as the Bridgewater Hall and Tameside Hippodrome.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

167. Standards of performance in physical education are satisfactory by the age of seven. Some children display a good range of individual ideas for patterns of movement but the quality of control, agility and balance is that expected for the age group. This reflects sound progress during the key stage. Children are beginning to appreciate what makes a sequence of movements effective and to point out good features in the performances of others.

168. By the age of eleven standards are often above those expected. Pupils are able to incorporate movements into a flowing sequence and to fit this well to music. They show good understanding of the factors which enhance performance. In games sessions pupils become increasingly more adept in ball skills. They display good catching and sending skills and adjust their position well to strike the ball with a racquet. As they develop a good understanding of the strategies associated with attack and defence games, they move into space well to deliver and receive a pass. A strength of the learning in physical education is the emphasis on control and this contributes to the good progress made during Key Stage 2. Most pupils can swim the expected distance before they leave and many achieve a higher standard than this. In the latest inter-school athletics championship the school came first.

169. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes in physical education lessons and work with enthusiasm. They perform sensibly on their own and collaborate well in pair or group activities. Pupils make good use of the time available to practise, modify and to improve their physical skills. They respond well to instructions and suggestions from their teachers.

170. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. Lessons are carefully planned with a well balanced sequence of activities which keep pupils energetically involved. Appropriate account is taken of safety. Warm up and warm down sessions often have an imaginative aspect which ensures that pupils see the significance of toning up muscles before strenuous exercise. Explanations and directions are clear and pupils know what is expected of them. Lessons usually contain a clear series of steps so that skills are built up carefully and good use is made of the time available. There is a good balance between skill development and practice and the application of these skills in performance or in a games situation. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject. They manage pupils well and use positive reinforcement, a brisk pace and good organisation to create a good working atmosphere.

171. The subject is well managed. There is a clear scheme of work which allows for good development of skills and gives pupils a wide range of experiences. Standards, which were satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection, are now good by the time pupils leave the school. The accommodation for physical education is unsatisfactory. The hall, although of a reasonable size, is a main thoroughfare to classrooms and cloakrooms and there are frequent interruptions. Some furniture has to be stored in this space. The playgrounds are too small and there is no attached playing field. Pupils have to walk to a sports centre about a mile away from the school to gain access to playing fields. Despite this the school participates in team sports with other schools. The quality and the range of equipment are both good.