

INSPECTION REPORT

**KETTLESHULME ST JAMES CE AIDED
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

High Peak

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111459

Headteacher: Mrs K Greenlees

Reporting inspector: Mr O L Thomas
16041

Dates of inspection: 18th - 20th September 2000

Inspection number: 224639

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: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Macclesfield Road
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Newton

Date of previous inspection: October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr O L Thomas OIN:16041	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Music Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mr D W Jones OIN:19344	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs J B Thomas OIN: 17711	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Foundation Stage	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a small Church of England aided primary school situated in the village of Kettleshulme in the High Peak district. It serves the local village community and surrounding areas. The majority of the 62 pupils on roll come from families with a professional background. Most have attended some form of pre-school facility prior to entering the Reception class. Attainment on entry is mainly above the national average. The small number of pupils receiving free school meals is well below the national average and the 21 per cent on the special educational needs register is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kettleshulme St James Primary is a good school, moving onward and upward due to the determined leadership of the newly appointed Headteacher and the good quality teaching. High expectations are set for achievement, resulting in pupils attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils perform well in the national tests at the age of 11 and they acquire knowledge very well, in English, mathematics and science.
- The high expectations of the teachers and the considerable amount of quality work produced enable pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and stimulating.
- The educational direction given by the Headteacher is excellent. The level of care and pastoral support is excellent.
- The school's formal assessment procedures are good and used well to measure added value and track progress over time.
- The provision for moral development is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology at both key stages although improving are not yet as expected; and, there is room for improvement in writing at Key Stage 1 and pupils' skills of investigation in mathematics and science.
- The teachers' planning is inconsistent. Too often it lacks clarity on the skills to be taught and how learning will be assessed; the planning is not always well informed by the use of day-to-day assessments, evaluations by the pupils themselves or short-term target setting.
- Provision and support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' levels of initiative, interest and independence at Key Stage 2 are low.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

It is impossible to draw a straight analysis of improvement since the last inspection because the school has been through a turbulent period including briefly; a change from grant maintained to LEA status, four Headteachers and two out of three new classteachers in four years. During these changes the school went into considerable decline and became a cause of concern for the LEA. The Headteacher has been in full post for two terms. During that time she has recognised the need to create stability, place standards at the forefront of the priorities and has

skilfully and successfully, with governor and teacher support, created a team spirit and determination to raise the school's level of success. For example, the improvements to the national test results at Key Stage 2, the effective implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and since January 2000 the current Headteacher has recognised the need to review all subjects in the light of National Curriculum developments. Subject managers are taking a positive lead in their subjects. The school is firmly placed to continue to move forward.

STANDARDS

The usual table showing the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests is not illustrated because the cohort was too small for the school's results to be statistically valid.

In the Year 2000 national tests for 11 year olds all pupils attained at the expected levels or above in English, mathematics and science with a substantial number gaining at the higher Level 5 in all subjects. Based on the last four years' test results the school's performance had fallen below the national trend but its targets are now sufficiently challenging. Seven year olds achieved well in reading and mathematics but, although all pupils attained at the expected level in writing, none attained above this; the inspection findings also show room for improvement in pupils' writing.

The inspection finds that pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Whilst pupils' research skills are high by the age of 11 in English, this is not the case for their skills in investigation which are average in mathematics and science. Standards in information technology are not yet as expected in all aspects of the subject. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements on all other subjects. The exceptions are: geography at Key Stage 2 where pupils attain above national expectations; history where their attainment is in line with expectations and, in art, pupils attain above average levels in but have too little knowledge of the work of craftspeople and artists. The school has highlighted information technology as its focus for improvement along with writing at Key Stage 1 and investigation in mathematics and science.

Children under five make good progress in literacy and mathematics. Their physical and creative development is restricted by the confines of the accommodation.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and they feel safe and secure there.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is mainly good in lessons and about the school. There is some lack of self-discipline in the playground by older pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils show appropriate care for each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall, but there is too much holiday taking in term time and some parents do not support the school in ensuring their children arrive promptly at the start of the day. These factors detract from pupils' achievements.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Ten per cent of lessons were judged to be excellent, 20 per cent very good, thirty per cent good and 40 per cent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of English and mathematics are at least good and often very good at the top of the school. The school teaches literacy and numeracy well but recognises the need to analyse its teaching of writing more critically. Practical work is well orchestrated in the infant department but is less successful in the juniors and this restricts pupils' investigative skills and hinders their ability to be independent in their learning. All teachers have high expectations and show excellent levels of care for the pupils. The school benefits from highly skilled classroom support in Key Stage 1. Teachers are not yet using their day-to-day assessments to good effect to aid planning, match work and challenge and support all pupils. Pupils' learning is good overall in the lessons seen because of the teachers' high expectations. They are adept at acquiring information and assimilate knowledge easily. At Key Stage 1, young pupils show an eagerness to join and share their experiences. This is not the case at Key Stage 2, where, the older pupils become, the less interest they show in their work. There is at times a reticence to offer ideas, demonstrate initiative and responsibility. Too many pupils prefer to be receivers of learning rather than share in finding out and offering ideas in spite of the well-prepared and interesting activities offered to them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good at Key Stages 1 and 2 and, satisfactory for the foundation stage. The limited accommodation detracts from the range of activities offered to the youngest pupils. A good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors broaden the pupils' view of the world. The curriculum meets statutory requirements except for information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Procedures are in place but the provision is not yet positively supporting pupils and their needs fully. Identification of needs and specific support for individuals are the main weaknesses.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, teachers use the curriculum well to focus on opportunities which help pupils reflect on the world around them, how people relate to each other and what is acceptable conduct or not. The pupils' awareness that they are growing up in multicultural society is developing particularly well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good consideration given to pupils' protection and welfare. There is scope for greater clarity, simplicity and effective use of the information derived from teachers' day-to-day assessments to improve pupils' progress and overall monitoring of their performance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the Headteacher and other key staff	Excellent direction from the Headteacher which is focused on raising standards. Subject managers are working well on their areas and have made good strides in a short time. Given the school's history and the extent of the initiatives to be addressed it would be appropriate for the school to narrow the range of priorities being tackled at any one time.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Broadly satisfactory but information technology not yet fully in place and there is work still to be done on complying fully with provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school benefits from the commitment of the governors in support of the Headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Early recognition of the need to raise standards and track pupil performance through formal testing has highlighted gaps, which the school is addressing well.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of its funding. Staff are effectively deployed, resources are adequate. The recent purchasing of literacy resources has supported achievement well. The use of resources is carefully linked to long-term planning and best value principles are being applied. Accommodation is overall unsatisfactory. The school gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, are expected to work hard, make good progress and the school strives for high achievement. • Homework is challenging with clear expectations. • School is very well led and managed and they are very positive about the open ethos established by the new Headteacher. • There is good communication and they are very satisfied with annual reports and the information available to them. • The pupils behave well. • Teachers are happy to be involved in parental association activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over the perceived limited number of extra-curricular activities and range of sports offered.

The inspection agrees overall with the positive points raised by parents. Parents are well informed about their children's work and progress and the school makes useful attempts to involve them in the pupils' learning. The contribution of parents to children's learning is satisfactory. In relation to their concerns, given the size of school and number of staff, extra-curricular provision is good and the school has won many of the local sporting fixtures. The school profitably directs much of the teachers' directed time to planning and preparing for their teaching which results in the high standards achieved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. It is not possible to compare the school's performance in the 1999 national tests either nationally or with similar schools because the cohort was too small for the school's results to be statistically valid.

2. The school's results had declined during the period since the last inspection. Based on the last four years' results the school's performance had fallen below the national trend but the considerable instability at management level and changes in staffing should be borne in mind. Since the appointment of the new Headteacher the goal has been firmly towards restoring high level performance and raising standards. The school's targets are now challenging and it aims to achieve 100 per cent success at expected levels but drives determinedly towards the higher levels. This is demonstrated by the most recent Year 2000 national tests for 11 year olds where all pupils attained at the expected levels or above in English, mathematics and science. These results cannot yet be verified against national figures but the number gaining at the higher Level 5 was substantial in all subjects. Seventy five per cent gained Level 5 in English, 50 per cent in mathematics and all pupils attained at Level 5 in science. This picture is very positive.

3. At Key Stage 1, the performance is also positive in reading and mathematics with 75 per cent attaining at the higher Level 3 in the Year 2000 reading tests and about 40 per cent attaining at this level in mathematics. However, although all pupils attained at the expected level in writing none attained above this and the school is working on remedying this recognised weakness.

4. The inspection finds that pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. In English at both key stages pupils' speaking skills are only average, too many of them, particularly at Key Stage 2 are reticent to offer ideas or contribute to class discussions; their listening skills are generally good. Standards in reading are good at both key stages. Pupils' research skills are high by the age of 11 and they also produce good quality writing, using Standard English well. This is not the case at Key Stage 1 where the inspection findings show that although average standards are attained there is still room for improvement in pupils' writing. Standards of presentation are good throughout the school and spelling is showing improvement.

5. Standards achieved by 11 year old pupils in mathematics are above average although their skills of investigation are average and their achievements in this area need improvement. By the age of seven, pupils have good use of mental recall and can manipulate numbers well in their heads. By the age of 11, they know their tables well and produce considerable quantities of accurate work, which test their abilities to compute whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages. There are individuals who are working towards Level 6 in some aspects of their mathematics. The picture in science echoes that of mathematics where pupils' knowledge of scientific phenomena, processes and living things is above average but their abilities to investigate and think through investigations for themselves are limited. The inspection finds a link between those areas of learning which require pupils to absorb and retain knowledge with generally good standards achieved, but where the requirement of a subject is for pupils to think for themselves, show initiative, explore and contribute their ideas, their achievements are lower. This latter finding reflects weaknesses found in pupils' work ethic and levels of effort. Standards in information technology are broadly average with a minority of pupils who attain above in communication technology, word processing, using the Internet and accessing information. However, there is insufficient use of data handling and very little control technology. In these areas pupils do not achieve as expected.

6. In the other subjects, pupils attain above average levels in their use and exploration of art but have too little knowledge of the work of craftspeople and artists. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements on all other subjects except geography at Key Stage 2 where pupils attain above national expectations and in history where their attainment is in line with expectations.

7. On entry to the school the attainment of most but not all pupils is above average. Children under five make good progress in literacy and mathematics. Their physical and creative development is however, restricted by the confines of the accommodation.

8. The reasons for the good standards are because the current staff have high expectations and recognise that their pupils are mainly quite able. Teachers capitalise on pupils' capabilities but they have to work hard at times to engage pupils' responses. This weakness in pupils' attitudes is restricting their own achievements in spite of the teachers' best efforts. The school has highlighted information technology as its focus for improvement along with writing at Key Stage 1 and investigation in mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The pupils' attitude to school and their behaviour are generally good. The quality of their personal development, relationships and attendance are satisfactory.

10. Across the key stages the pupils' attitude to learning is mostly good. They are attentive and they sustain concentration when working on tasks. Reception pupils were observed to work diligently and with a good level of independence. For example, one child on the computer was able to follow the sequence of the program and derived great pleasure from identifying and matching numerals to objects. He cheerfully explained the task and was keen to move to a 'harder' program. Pupils enjoy receiving information and in Key Stage 1 they show an eagerness for most activities. For example, when they co-operated playing 'bingo' in a numeracy lesson; they listened carefully to the teacher and identified numbers by tens and units on their card; as well as checking their own level of success they were happy and willing to help each other. However, attitudes are not consistent and some older pupils do not contribute well to lessons. During a music lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils, some displayed a lack of enthusiasm and commitment to develop their performance, which hindered the lesson's progress. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were observed enjoying a dance lesson when they listened attentively and co-operated well; most tried hard to improve their performance. On too many occasions in Key Stage 2 older pupils were passive in their learning and reticent to offer ideas; these attitudes slowed the lesson when the teacher had to regularly try to 'fire' their enthusiasm but there was at times an air of dissent amongst some. Parents report that children enjoy school and this is confirmed from discussions with most pupils.

11. The overall good behaviour of the pupils contributes well to the learning. Although on occasions class teachers are required to apply assertive discipline strategies, the pupils respond well and the progress of the lesson is not significantly affected. There is also some lack of self-discipline in the playground by older pupils leading to rough play and inconsideration for others when playing football. The pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and they are involved, through their representation on the school council, in contributing to the school's rules for behaviour and conduct. The school council is a good starting point for the further development of initiative and responsibility.

12. The pupils enjoy confident, secure relationships with all of the school staff and they are supportive and friendly with one another. They report that bullying is not a feature of their school life and are sure of the support and guidance available from their teachers should it occur. Their personal development is enhanced through residential visits, studies into citizenship and their

involvement with the recently initiated school council when they have the opportunity to influence aspects of their life in school. Among the most senior pupils there are a number who display a reluctance to interact with adults and appear truculent when approached. However, others are articulate, open minded and friendly. They are aware of the wide range of cultures and beliefs about them and throughout the world which, they accept without prejudice or bias.

13. The youngest pupils who are under five years benefit from their inclusion with pupils from Years 1 and 2. They are quickly integrated and confident and clearly enjoy their school time. During a shared reading lesson they were well behaved, with good levels of self-discipline. They have good relations with each other and adults, and they are polite and courteous.

14. The attitudes found during the previous inspection have been maintained overall but with greater inconsistency prevailing now. The many positive, recent introductions by the Headteacher still need time to impact on the pupils' standards of personal development and relationships.

15. The level of attendance is satisfactory and lessons begin and end on time. Absence is most affected by lateness and pupils being taken on holiday during term time. The school has achieved some success in gaining parental support to reduce these aspects. However, they remain a significant feature, which must impact on the pupils' continuity of learning. No exclusions have been recorded.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching at the end of both key stages and an incidence of excellent teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. It was never less than satisfactory during the inspection. This level of good teaching resulted in the pupils making good progress in their learning in many of the lessons observed. Evidence from the scrutiny of work over the past year, shows that since January the pupils' activities have been well structured within an appropriate scheme of work for each subject, which has safeguarded continuity and progression of the curriculum throughout the school.

17. The teachers' assessment and evaluation of pupils' knowledge and understanding in literacy and numeracy have been extremely thorough which has resulted in high quality direct teaching of subject skills.

18. The teachers' subject knowledge is secure in most subjects. This is most evident in mathematics where they set clear learning objectives for the lessons, which helps the pupils to understand what and why they are doing certain activities. However, teachers are inconsistent in their use of this effective strategy in other subjects. Often their short-term planning for pupils to be involved in the learning process is not as good. Teachers' knowledge of information technology has been recognised as an area for development in the staff training programme, although there are examples of effective teaching of word processing, researching information and use of the Internet.

19. The planning for English follows closely the structure of the literacy hour, but teachers adapt sessions to develop teaching points more carefully or to give greater emphasis to certain aspects where needed. The school's approach to teaching literacy is good. Technical points, subject vocabulary and phonics are given appropriate attention. Writing, although satisfactory has been earmarked for attention to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment. Implementing the National Numeracy Strategy has also given teachers good support with their planning and evaluation of progress. Several teachers have good subject knowledge and put this to good effect as they teach basic literacy and numeracy skills. In science, teachers use

adopted commercial schemes well to extend the pupils' learning through good use of the environment. However, investigative mathematics and scientific enquiry are recognised as being underdeveloped by the school. These aspects are to be focused on in future staff development sessions.

20. The teachers expect pupils to pay attention and behave well, encouraging them to concentrate on their work consistently throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, the young pupils show an eagerness to join in activities and to share experiences and respond well to the teachers' high expectations. However, this is not the case at Key Stage 2. The teachers are regularly dealing with pupils who appear too lazy to offer ideas, lack initiative and prefer to be receivers of learning, rather than share in the process, in spite of the well-prepared, interesting activities being offered to them.

21. Very good use is made of support staff in the infant class. The classroom assistants' contribution to the pupils' progress and wellbeing is of extremely high quality. Where adult volunteers help within the school, their support is valued and their contribution makes a positive impact on the overall quality of education offered. Very good use is made of visitors and visits. Work illustrating a residential visit to the Gradbach outdoor centre illustrates the teachers' excellent use of the environment to make use of the pupils' basic skills and in providing the opportunity for them to broaden their academic and personal development.

22. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and assessments shows that sometimes there are weaknesses in the use teachers make of the information they have of pupils' attainment and progress in order to guide the next stage of planning. In order to drive forward the progress of individuals, planning needs to take account far more frequently of teachers' day-to-day assessments of what pupils have learned. The marking of pupils' work is also inconsistent. Whilst it takes place, it is often not enough to aid improvement in learning, and there is insufficient critical comment. Marking overall is failing to get to the heart of what needs to be improved and this is not having the desired effect on pupils' attainment and progress particularly in writing.

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

23. The school continues since the last inspection to provide a curriculum, which has overall good breadth and balance over the school year and provides an interesting range of socially inclusive experiences. During the intervening periods between inspections although developments have taken place, they have lacked cohesion and not kept pace fully with national initiatives. However, since January 2000 the current Headteacher has recognised the need to review all subjects in the light of National Curriculum developments and this is necessary. Although the long-term plan shows coverage of the subjects on a rolling cycle to cater for the mixed year groups, medium-term planning emphasises knowledge and activities to be taught at the expense of subject skills. Planning is not consistently based on the accurate assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do. The Headteacher has focused rightly on the implementation and resourcing of the literacy and numeracy hours. In addition, she has highlighted priorities for improvement within planning, policy making and curriculum delivery, which echo the findings of this inspection, for example, the full delivery of information technology, improvements to standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and the need to improve pupils' skills of investigation. The school has already made good quality improvements for example, to its policies for history and geography and has provided useful in-service training to staff on the delivery of science. All subjects are highlighted over time for review in the school improvement plan. Overall, the planning and delivery of the curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum save for some aspects of information technology. The school also offers the teaching of French to all pupils.

24. The governors have agreed to deliver sex education through the other subjects for example, science and to answer pupils' questions honestly as they arise but not treat this aspect of their development as a separate subject. Appropriate provision is made for sex education. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. This includes some work on drug abuse awareness which is taught when pupils study 'Keeping Healthy'.

25. The foundation curriculum for the children who are under five is satisfactory. A strong emphasis is placed on their personal and social development along with language, literacy and mathematics. The curriculum related to knowledge and understanding of the world is soundly linked to that of the National Curriculum in planning. However, the creative and physical elements of children's learning are less well catered for and hindered significantly by the small class space, inadequate hall space and absence of a safe, secure outside play area to enhance gross motor skills. The teachers' day-to-day planning identifies specific activities for these children but long and medium-term planning falls short of a clear programme of development. The school recognises the need to review and update its planning for these children in line with national guidance. The small number of children are well integrated into the class they share with pupils in Key Stage 1 and there is a good link to the work of the National Curriculum when children reach their fifth birthday.

26. The provision and support for the pupils with special educational needs are weak and are recognised by the Headteacher as an area that needs to improve quickly. This process has already begun but time has not been available to bring the situation to a stage of fully meeting the recommendations of the national Code of Practice. The Headteacher is the special needs co-ordinator and her own class teaching commitment bears heavily on her time but nevertheless she has an awareness of the need for earlier identification and heightened levels of support through both personnel and matching work more closely. Class teachers complete the individual education plans and they address suitably some but not all of pupils' needs. The school meets the recommendations of the Code of Practice in organising meetings with parents to review the progress their children make.

27. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well adopted by the school and are impacting well on pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subjects.

28. Pupils have very good access to curriculum opportunities and all are treated equally in terms of access to experiences. Overall the school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. New initiatives such as the school's council are beginning to improve pupils' awareness of taking responsibility and the processes of living in a community. Developing pupils' initiative has some way to go.

29. The provision for extra-curricular activity to extend pupils' learning is good but a significant minority of parents believe there should be even better provision of after school activities. They have enjoyed a residential visit to the Gradbach Youth Hostel, which supports their educational and personal development. Further visits by pupils have included spending the day with the Peak Ranger Service, a pilgrimage to Lyme Park and attending music concerts. After school activities include a range of sports activities in addition to French, art and craft clubs which given the size of school and staffing are good.

30. The school's links with the community support pupils' learning well. Members of the community come into school to help, the school has re-established good links with neighbouring institutions and has also set up marketing of the school through Whaley Bridge's Millennium guide. The school joins in local sporting activities and achieves considerable success given its size. It also participates in the Macclesfield Music festival. Best use is made of its location within

the High Peak National Park and the contribution of the park rangers to improve pupils' environmental knowledge.

31. The provision for development of pupils' spiritual, social and cultural values is good. Their moral development is very good.

32. Through the curriculum the pupils' learning is full of opportunities to develop their awareness of spiritual values. In their artwork displayed about the school they reveal their growing awareness and reflection on nature and pattern with their painted leaf prints, drawings of their visit to Gradbach and the ceramic patterns which they made with a visiting artist for Millennium 2000. In literacy, senior pupils have recorded memories of their time at Kettleshulme School as they prepare to transfer to secondary school. The whole school enjoys daily acts of collective worship which meet requirements, with significant emphasis on reflection and spiritual sense. The pupils' religious studies also introduce them to the values and beliefs of others which, they understand and respect.

33. The school's expectation for behaviour and moral values is underlined by its Home/School agreement that clearly outlines expected standards and the nature of relationships. Parents view the school as very successful in its behaviour management strategies and its delivery of a moral code for pupils. The pupils have elected representatives on the school council where issues related to behaviour and conduct are decided. They contribute to classroom rules, which illustrates their clear understanding for right and wrong.

34. The school is active in seeking to encourage the pupils' social development and this is supported through the very good role models that staff provide for them. Teachers are able to guide and advise well on relationships and develop their social values. The pupils mainly work well together, supporting each other and co-operating during activities and play, although this more positive with the younger than the older pupils. Strategies recently introduced are aimed to further extend this aspect of their personal development.

35. There is broad, well planned provision within the curriculum for the development of pupils' cultural values of both their own and other cultures. The pupils' awareness that they are growing up in multicultural society is developing particularly well. In religious education they have studied the Islamic and Jewish religions and compared them with Christianity. They have studied aspects of life for people in an African village and spent a day in school with a Ghanaian visitor who taught them traditional dance, cookery and poetry. Knowledge of their own culture has been raised through visits to the Buxton Opera House, the Stockport museum and an air raid shelter.

36. The youngest pupils who are under five share their learning with Year 1 and 2 pupils. During a lesson for religious education they held 'Circle Time' when they shared their feelings. They related well to the setting and made good responses. They have good behaviour and co-operate and share tasks.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school makes very good provision for child protection, ensuring pupils' welfare and for educational and personal support and guidance for pupils. Monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory overall but with some good features. The quality of care for pupils has been sustained since the last inspection.

38. The school uses a broad set of formal tests to measure the outcomes of pupils' learning and has established good procedures using computer systems to track their progress over time. This recent initiative is proving very valuable in measuring added value and identifying pupils in need of booster support from one key stage to the other. It is the careful setting up and

analysis of this information, which has impacted so well on pulling pupils' performance in tests up to the higher levels. Discussions with the Headteacher reveal a very high level of knowledge about individuals' performance and where extra support is needed. For example, the current Year 4 has a high proportion (about one third) of pupils who have recently arrived at the school, and also this year group has more pupils with special educational needs than any other. The school is already planning to give additional support to these pupils. Teachers keep many assessments about pupils but this information is not easy to access. Too often it is not used well to share with pupils themselves on what they do well and how they need to improve and also to plan work which is suitably challenging to the range of age and need within the classes. There is scope for greater clarity, simplicity and more effective use of assessment information to raise standards and monitor more precisely pupils' performance to aid further progress.

39. The care of pupils is underpinned by the very good level of teachers' pastoral knowledge of them. Secure and trusting relationships are evident throughout the school and pupils are confident and relaxed in the learning environment. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have made progress, however this aspect needs further development.

40. The arrangements for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good. However, staff training in child protection is not up to date. Procedures for the retention and administering of medicines are established and secure. The school is a safe secure learning environment. The pupils are taught personal health and safety but this does not include education on drugs' misuse. The school invites a number of visitors into school to support the teaching of health and safety. The only weakness in the school's provision for health and safety is the lack of a separate, secure play area for those pupils who are under five years of age.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has maintained the good quality of its links found during the previous inspection. The parents report satisfaction with the school's arrangements for involving them in the life of the school but some are dissatisfied with the level of extra-curricular activity which this inspection views as good. They receive regular newsletters informing them of current activities related to the children's education as well as social events. The school encourages parents to be involved in the pupils' learning and makes provision for this to happen. The home/school agreement emphasises the value of partnership in supporting learning. The school's reading scheme is supported by written advice for parents when assisting with their child's learning at home. The parent/teacher association is very active in supporting the school through events and fund raising. Some parents help regularly in school as do governors and the level of support from parents in the classroom is broadly satisfactory. Good opportunities are provided for parents to be informed on their children's progress. Annual reports of pupils' progress are good and meet with requirement.

42. The school seeks to involve pupils in the local and wider community, inviting visitors into school and through visits to educational venues. There are strong links with the local church where parents and community are invited to share in celebrations. The pupils are involved in the life of their local community through fund raising for charities and the distribution of collections for Harvest Festival. Parental and community involvement makes a satisfactory contribution to learning and personal development.

43. Links with parents of those children who are under 5 years are good. Many are seen in the classroom settling in their child or talking with the teacher at the start of the school day.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. Since the last inspection in 1996 the school has been through a turbulent period including a change from Grant Maintained to LEA status, four Headteachers and two out of three new classteachers. During this period the school went into considerable decline and became a cause for concern for the LEA. The main reason for the recent successes of the school is the excellent leadership provided by the Headteacher since her appointment in January 2000. Her enthusiasm and commitment has been infectious, inspiring staff, governors and the majority of parents to support her in her quest of taking the school forward and upwards.

45. Explicit aims and values express a commitment to high expectations, everything the school does aims for high quality. The Headteacher's clear vision of what sort of school Kettlethulme should be has been well communicated and the role models set by the Headteacher and staff are exemplary. The recent upward trend in the standards achieved by the pupils is testimony to how the school has been successful in working towards fulfilling its aims in a short space of time.

46. Staff work well as a team and subject coordinators have made good progress in developing policy statements and in influencing the delivery of their subjects. Particular success has been achieved in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

47. The governors contribute well to the effectiveness of the school. They have a broad level of expertise and are well organised and thorough in their approach to holding the school to account. Sub-committees are kept well informed through regular reporting by the Headteacher and, also by individual governors following their school visits or attendance at training sessions. They are involved in the process of strategic planning and apply the principles of best value when considering expenditure on staffing and other resources. They meet their statutory responsibilities except for the delivery of some aspects of information technology and the Code of Practice for special educational needs.

48. The current school development plan is extensive, covering all aspects of the school, itemising lists of concerns, which require attention. The document identifies priorities and acts as a point of reference for self-review by the school in determining its success. However, the overwhelming number of initiatives that have been tackled has given little time for reflection by the Headteacher and key members of staff. The lack of opportunity to evaluate the impact of decisions at any real depth is recognised by the Headteacher who is conscious that future strategic planning should be more specifically focused on the most significant priorities concerned with raising standards of attainment and teaching.

49. The strategic use of the adequate resources is very good. Financial control and planning are very good and expenditure well linked to educational priorities. The school has used specific grants very well to raise standards. The governors are applying the principles of best value well. Effective use is made of the accommodation, which is unsatisfactory in respect of the small hall and the infant and lower junior classrooms.

50. The careful monitoring and evaluation of pupils' performance and the tracking of their progress has been an important feature in the school's steps to raising standards. It is planned that the whole staff approach to monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning will become more structured and systematic. This is planned to link with meeting future requirements of national performance management initiatives, and to safeguard the personal development needs of individual members of staff, following the example already piloted in the monitoring programme undertaken which focused well on the teaching of mathematics.

51. The Headteacher's expertise and determination coupled with the support of staff, governors and parents places the school in a strong position for further growth.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. The governors, Headteacher and staff now need to:

- Raise standards in information technology at both key stages, writing at Key Stage 1 and pupils' skills of investigation in mathematics and science across the school by improving: staff knowledge of how to teach these aspects of pupils' learning; and applying greater precision in analysing what pupils can and cannot do.

Reference to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no: 3, 5, 19, 60, 61, 64, 87, 94, 98.

- Improve the teachers' planning by placing a greater focus on the skills to be taught and how learning will be assessed: subsequently, making better use of the teachers' day to day assessments to involve pupils in the process of evaluating what they have done well or not and in setting short term targets for improvement.

Reference to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no: 22, 23, 38, 58,68.

- Improve provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and that in particular their needs are identified early and regularly reviewed, and that work is carefully matched.

Reference to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no: 26, 47.

- Improve pupils' levels of initiative, interest and independence particularly at Key Stage 2 by sustaining efforts to place an onus on the pupils to contribute ideas, use their knowledge through investigation and to encourage them to take a more active role in their own learning.

Reference to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no: 5, 10, 38, 62, 69

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	20	30	40	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	62
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	5

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	n/a

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	96.7
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence	%
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
	1999	5	4	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	4	4	3
	Total	9	9	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	100	89
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	4	4	3
	Total	9	9	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	89	89
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	7	3	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	2	3	3
	Total	9	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90	100	100
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	59
Any other minority ethnic group	

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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	13.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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	1999/00
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	£
Total income	186,060
Total expenditure	180,125
Expenditure per pupil	2,860
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,447
Balance carried forward to next year	9,382

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	47
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	38	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	46	0	0	0
The teaching is good.	83	17	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	71	29	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	21	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	21	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	25	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	42	25	0	0

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

53. There were four children of reception age and only three of them were in school during the week of inspection. The evidence base is, therefore limited but supplemented by scrutiny of assessment data, the work of reception children last year and discussions with pupils about what they know. On entry to the school, baseline assessments show that most, but not all children are of above average ability. The school builds well on the children's knowledge and skills and during the foundation stage they make good progress towards the targets of the National Curriculum in their personal and social, language, literacy and mathematical understanding. This is because teaching quality is good and very well supported by a highly qualified and skilled classroom support assistant. The children's progress in the other areas of learning is satisfactory. It is hindered in creative and physical development due to the small size of the class teaching space which is shared with the Key Stage 1 pupils and also by the absence of a safe, secure outside play area.

Personal and social development

54. The interesting, well planned and well taught experiences make the children eager to come to school. They have settled well into school and have quickly learned routines. They display confidence and show that they are secure in their learning when they move into the hall space to work in small groups. The children relate well to adults and each other and are happy to share their work. They listen well to stories and when playing together in the home corner they take turns and share the equipment and roles fairly. When using the computer a child displays patience waiting for it to respond. All the children understand clearly about right and wrong. Both the class teacher and classroom assistant expect and receive the children's attention and have set very good role models for how to behave and for listening to each other and taking turns. The quality of teaching is very good in this important aspect and all children observed are well on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage.

Language and literacy

55. The children attain well in speaking, listening, early reading and writing. They enjoyed listening to and joining in the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. The children showed they knew the sequence of events, they listened well to instructions and joined in reciting the story. All were able to identify that the pigs lived in different types of houses. The children could recognise 'p' and 'w' words, make letter shapes with dough and turn the pages of a book from left to right when following a talking book. The children also had some sight recognition of common key words. The quality of teaching was good prompting the children to think through events and the good quality visual aids helped the children to relate to the main points of the story. The children were well behaved and exhibited a good level of self-discipline for their young ages when not directly supervised by the teacher. The children read regularly in school and enjoy taking books home to share with adults. Scrutiny of writing activities shows that they are starting to recognise that print carries meaning, can follow a pattern from left to right are gaining control of pencils and beginning to scribe letters and even their own names. Letters formed although recognisable are not always correctly formed or even in size. The children are well on target to achieve the early learning goals and move smoothly into the National Curriculum.

Mathematical development

56. The children's mathematical development is underpinned well by practical activities and oral work and supported by very good quality teaching. The children are learning the names of shapes, colours and can easily say and use number names when counting. They can count to four correctly and match the numeral name to a set of objects. For example, when playing 'blind man's buff' they follow the shape and identify the number. The teaching is very good and creatively planned to stimulate the children. Counting themes are reinforced well using a puppet who eats up pigs; the children squeal with delight and are eager to have their turn and show that they are able to count aloud the correct number. Their number work is reinforced well through information technology usage, matching objects to numbers on a screen and in shaping dough into numerals. They are beginning to learn the language of mathematics to describe 'more than', 'less than', etc; their use of positional language, such as up, down, next to and above is growing steadily. The children respond well and show a curiosity in exploring patterns and threading beads. They co-operate well with each other and use their listening skills well to understand what to do. They are well on target to meet the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage.

Other areas of learning

57. There is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on standards in the remaining areas of learning but the teacher's planning clearly shows coverage of all three. There is sand and water available in the classroom and a very small home corner. However, there is no space to display the children's models or use them for follow up language work. The lack of a secure, outside play area and the restricted hall all detract from important physical development activities particularly pulling, pushing and climbing and, space for creative work and theme corners to stimulate the imagination is poor. In spite of these weaknesses the teacher and classroom assistant make the best of what they have to support the children's learning.

58. The school recognises the need to improve its planning procedures for the foundation stage over the long term although day to day planning recognises the 'specialness' of this stage of learning. Assessments are regular and thorough but not necessarily well-organised or simple to access. It is hard to come to a rounded profile of the child from the broad range of assessments kept.

59. Within the confines of the accommodation and given the 'newness' of the foundation stage the school's provision is satisfactory and through good quality teaching enables good progress to be made over time.

ENGLISH

60. Standards in English are at similar good levels as at the time of the previous inspection although the school's performance has been much lower than the national trend over the last four years. The pupils' performance in the national tests in 1999 cannot be compared either nationally or with similar schools because the cohort is too small for the results to be statistically valid. However, nine out of ten pupils did attain at the expected Level 4 with two of these gaining the higher Level 5. There were twice the number of boys in the cohort to girls and unusually boys performance was better than the girls. Although positive these results did not reflect fully the pupils' prior attainment and the school was determined to improve upon them in Year 2000. It was successful in its goal; all pupils attained at the expected Level 4 and three quarters of them achieved the higher Level 5. Even without national comparisons these results are impressive! The school's targets for future years are equally challenging and based on careful analysis of past performance. At Key Stage 1, in 1999 all pupils performed well in the reading tests with a good proportion attaining at the higher Level 3 but in writing whilst all pupils achieved the

expected Level 2 none attained at Level 3 which is unusual, particularly given the pupils' prior attainment. In Year 2000, three out of four pupils attained at the higher Level 3 in reading but success at the higher level in writing has still eluded the school. These results mirror closely the inspection findings which showed that currently whilst standards in reading are good writing is only average and is in need of further improvement. The school had identified the weakness within its development planning and is working hard to support pupils in achieving the higher levels.

61. The National Literacy Strategy has been overall effectively implemented and all sessions seen during the inspection and scrutiny of planning show appropriate attention to each part of the hour. There is scope for staff to be more specific about learning objectives for lessons. Two literacy hours were seen in each of the three classes. Pupils, across the range of ability, were heard to read in each year, discussions held with pupils about their work and a considerable amount of past work was scrutinised, including that from the previous year. All of this enables the judgement to be made that overall pupils at both key stages are attaining above average levels in English with underachievement in writing at Key Stage 1 and less so in pupils' speaking skills in Key Stage 2. This latter weakness is more to do with pupils' attitudes than their capabilities.

62. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 ready and able to cope with the National Curriculum and by the end of it their speaking and listening skills are above average. For example, they sat and listened for sustained periods, absorbing the detail of the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. They showed confidence to read aloud and concentrated hard to answer questions in sentences. In discussions with them they could articulate very well about the books they have read and explained in some cases why they liked them, referring to authors and illustrations. Through the literacy hour and other subjects, pupils are increasing their vocabulary and becoming used to using technical terms to explain their ideas. For example, in information technology they explain that 'well, the mouse helps you to move the object up and down the screen and then you select which one you think is right'. By the age of 11, pupils' listening is good but they do not use their speaking skills readily to offer ideas or contribute to discussion. It was apparent throughout all lessons in Key Stage 2 that pupils, even though required to, did not want to volunteer information; too many lacked a willingness to be involved, rather than ability, and others seemed to pick up this mood and follow suit. One to one conversations showed their capability, understanding and ability to explain fully what they had to do and what they had learned. The teachers recognise this as an ongoing difficulty, which they work hard to address.

63. Standards in reading are good by the ages of seven and 11. The school is using a structured phonic programme to help pupils to build new words when reading; improvements are also evident in their spelling. Pupils have a good grasp of the common key words, recognise speech and that the way this is read requires more expression. Most can describe well the key plot of their story and name the characters. By the age of 11, pupils are reading a good range of fiction, contemporary and classic and their knowledge of authors is broad. They do not particularly enjoy reading aloud. Pupils have acquired all of the expected technical conventions of reading but the most significant feature of their reading achievement is their ability to research information. They are already learning skimming and scanning skills at the start of Year 6; they can easily look up any information in a book and are learning the advantages and disadvantages of using books versus the Internet to seek out information. Most are very conversant with accessing the Internet. They know about different types of reference books, can use a thesaurus and a dictionary very competently.

64. Standards in writing are average by the age of seven. Pupils write competent personal accounts. They are beginning to recognise the need for simple punctuation. Some pupils' writing shows better use of vocabulary and more thoughtful detail to engage the reader but this is infrequent. Pupils make plausible attempts to write words they cannot spell and some, but not

all, know that they can use a dictionary to help with spelling. None of the pupils understood how to use a simple thesaurus to support vocabulary extension. Pupils are not working well towards learning or using a joined script by the age of seven. Too rarely are pupils pointed towards how to improve their ideas and the vocabulary they use to express them.

65. By the age of 11, pupils' standards of writing are at least in line with the national average and often above. Work is well presented, all pupils use a joined script and some are even developing their own style. They write for a broad range of purposes; to rewrite events in their own words, report factual accounts, write from the perspective of others, use similes and metaphors to make their writing more vivid. They use the conventions of Standard English well and during the inspection they were acquiring new skills of using colons and semi-colons to punctuate their work. Pupils have produced a good deal of work and they use their writing well in other subjects. For example, they use captions to express and record their impressions of Greece and can write a synopsis of life in Ancient Greece. The higher attaining pupils produce work, which is not only presented in a more sophisticated way but the terminology they use in description is of a high order. When analysing Raymond Briggs' book, 'The Tin Pot Foreign General and the Iron Lady' a pupil describes the style of writing as 'simple and repetitive' and refers to terms such as 'structure and layout'. There is considerable added value in the standard of pupils' writing by the end of Key Stage 2.

66. Teaching quality is good overall, and ranges from satisfactory to excellent this has been maintained since the last inspection. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject requirements and they have taken on the principles of the literacy hour well overall. Some use techniques to reinforce and assess learning more effectively than others. For example, not all regularly and clearly share the learning intentions with pupils at the start of lessons or revisit them thoroughly during plenary sessions.

67. In Key Stage 1, in both of the lessons seen teaching was at least good with some very good features. The teaching had a positive impact on learning and enabled pupils to reinforce previous learning well and use their knowledge to explain their current tasks. The style of teaching gave these young pupils confidence to join in and motivated them to talk about their feelings and project into the animals feelings in the story. The teacher and classroom assistant were both skilled in harnessing the pupils' energies and directing their talk and responses to the task in hand, constantly reinforcing personal and social skills. The teacher's effective questioning and skilful use of adult support ensured that the work was well matched and that Year 1 pupils progressed well in story sequencing activities and recognising initial letters and rhyming words. By the end of both lessons the well-motivated Year 2 pupils had improved their knowledge of types of writing and had acquired an awareness of how play scripts were written differently to a story, learned new words with enthusiasm such as 'narrator' and 'scene' and had begun to recognise speech marks and exclamation marks. The pupils achieved well.

68. In Key Stage 2 teaching is more variable. In the lower key stage it is consistently satisfactory and the recurring weakness is that there are lost opportunities to challenge and support individuals better through more careful match of work. Pupils do progress in their learning and there are high expectations for attention and concentration but at times the tasks themselves are not moving learning forward quickly enough for the highest attainers. This class is challenging with a high level of pupils with special educational needs. One third of Year 4 are newly admitted pupils with significant gaps in their learning and not enough additional support is provided for the range of age and need. More rigorous assessments are needed on which to build clearer learning programmes. In upper Key Stage 2 the picture is very different, teaching is good at least and on occasion excellent. Both teachers are very knowledgeable about the subject and present highly interesting and stimulating work. They challenge the pupils well, lessons are full, demanding and on occasion humorous when the teacher dresses up in wellingtons, an old cardigan, balaclava and carrying a sandwich to teach the pupils about

'eponyms'. By the end of the lesson they are quite clear about the derivation of these and many other words and have learned how to reference an eponymous dictionary. Both teachers link the teaching of English very well with information communication technology particularly highlighting its use for research, word processing and improving and editing text. It is the pace, expectation, challenge and range of work offered by both teachers in the upper school, which results in good progress in learning in lessons and over time pushing standards forward.

69. Pupils enjoy reading and all of the activities offered to them at Key Stage 1. They particularly like learning 'difficult' new words and repeating them. This enthusiasm for learning is not sustained through the school where by the end of the key stage although pupils work hard on the given tasks they present a picture of being receivers rather than participants in the learning activities. Teachers have to work very hard to encourage too many pupils to engage.

70. The delivery of English meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The coordinator is managing the subject well given the broad responsibilities she carries. Resources have been considerably improved. The broad range of formal assessments kept help to track pupils' progress well and to measure added value. There is room to raise all teaching to the highest levels at Key Stage 2 and improve writing as recognised in the school improvement plan.

MATHEMATICS

71. The pupils' performance in the national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, in mathematics have been consistently good over time, and have been sustained since the last inspection. No national comparisons can be made because of the size of the cohort. For example, in the 1999 assessments, 100 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 4 and 40 per cent the higher Level 5, which was well above the national average and above that of similar schools. Performance of both boys and girls was very high. In the Year 2000 tests (not yet verified with national figures) all pupils attained at the expected Level 4 and 50 per cent at the higher Level 5.

72. Results of the National Curriculum tests in 1999 showed pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1 to be close to the national average. In the Year 2000 tests all pupils attained at the expected Level 2 and about forty per cent achieved the higher level 3.

73. Tracking of test results over time show that pupils make good progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 providing good value added. Future targets reflect the school's confidence that teaching strategies will have an ongoing effect on raising pupils' attainment and progress, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1. Teacher assessment has been reasonably accurate in recent years.

74. The inspection finds that pupils within both key stages are working well and making good progress which is putting them on line to attain standards above the national average by the end of the key stages.

75. Following a sound start in their reception year, pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress with their usage and application of mathematical knowledge. Pupils gain a good command of mathematical terms and are able to use signs and symbols appropriately in Year 1. They solve simple problems, see patterns in numbers and have confidence in participating in mental recall involving sequencing of numbers up to ten.

76. In Year 2, they use terms such as highest and lowest accurately and are able to identify patterns of odd and even numbers in a number square. In Year 3, pupils fill in missing numbers from a series, while in Year 5 they make good progress in solving more complex problems.

They are able to see calculations and computations when they are hidden in wordy problems. Year 6 pupils tackle long multiplication and division with absolute confidence.

77. The school has used the National Numeracy Strategy well to support the continued good improvement in its number work. Pupils in Year 2 order numbers to 100 and carry out appropriate addition and subtraction sums involving tens and units accurately. They recognise coins and calculate amounts of money, being able to work out the change they might get in various transactions. In the initial parts of mathematics lessons, it is clear that they are getting quicker at mental recall of simple number facts. Progress through Key Stage 2 is good and at times very good. Pupils can order by size fractions and decimals, they understand multiples. They carry out long division and long multiplication sums and calculate percentages competently. They are progressing well in their ability to devise formulae from an examination of facts leading to generalisations.

78. Pupils throughout both key stages have a good knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measurement. Infant pupils describe two and three-dimensional shapes using correct terms such as angle, solid and face. They are able to measure a variety of objects accurately. They have represented their knowledge of symmetry in art form, their colourful paintings enhancing the classroom walls. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils understand how to measure angles. They know the names of different angles and many know the name of different triangles and other mathematical shapes.

79. Work in data handling is adequately covered in both key stages. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are able to produce block graphs, sets, for example, in distinguishing similarities and differences in objects in science. By the end of Year 6 the pupils interpret data from such things as Distance Charts. They have begun work in using information technology to record, analyse and interpret data, but here their knowledge and understanding is yet incomplete.

80. Within classes the different ability groups make at least sound progress, and in Years 1, 2, 5, and 6 progress is good. Pupils with special educational needs make adequate progress but it is least good in Year 4 where the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high. These pupils are well catered for by the class teachers but would benefit further from specialist support, focused on their individual targets. Scrutiny of work shows that it is well matched to the needs of the different ability groups within Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2. However, there is not the same level of challenge in the work being set in lower Key Stage 2, where greater care needs to be exercised in using assessment information to plan work which is better matched to the pupils' needs.

81. The overall quality of teaching is good; it is good at Key Stage 1, satisfactory at lower Key Stage 2 and very good at upper Key Stage 2, with an excellent lesson being observed at this stage. Pupils were working on using a Distance Chart. The teacher had planned the work in great detail. There was a good structure to the lesson, which safeguarded the use of time and pace of the lesson. Basic skills of interpreting data were very well taught and the tasks set challenged the pupils whatever their ability. As a result, the pupils were fully committed to their work and progress in the lesson was very good for all pupils because they were vigilantly challenged to join in.

82. The teachers have good subject knowledge and put this to good effect as they teach basic skills with success. As a result, pupils are enjoying being successful, especially in their work in number. The better planned activities seen during the week clearly appeal to the different ability groups encouraging pupils to concentrate hard on their work. In all lessons the teachers' management of the class and its work was good and very good at upper Key Stage 2. Through good relationships and well-focused tasks, pupils are generally happy to work away at their activities with little thought of misbehaving. However, the attitude of some junior pupils and

their lack of concentration and perseverance had an adverse effect on the time spent on task and ultimately on the progress they made in the lessons. Teachers move around the groups well. They engage pupils in discussion and make themselves aware of the progress individuals and groups are making.

83. Throughout the lessons, not all of the teachers shared the learning objectives with the pupils, in order to give them a clear understanding of what they are going to learn in the lesson. The impact of this, where it happened, is that pupils had a better understanding not only of the planning behind the lesson but also of the way that their activities will support their understanding. As a result of being more involved in their learning, Year 1 and 2 pupils showed good attitudes to mathematics. The use of this strategy across all classes may go some way to helping improve the attitude of all pupils, but particularly those of the older pupils, who lack concentration, perseverance and self-discipline.

84. The subject coordinator in partnership with her colleagues has worked hard to improve standards and the quality of teaching. The school has an effective range of test materials and uses information well to track progress and to set targets for individuals and groups. Careful analysis of results has been carried out to identify strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' performance and in the quality of teaching. It would be even more beneficial if pupils were also more involved in their own target setting and assessments. Marking needs to be more analytical and involve the pupils in the process where and when appropriate. This would be a useful strategy in overcoming some of the problems surrounding the way in which older pupils particularly are reticent in 'getting involved' in their own learning.

85. Very good use is made of the resources available, teachers are creative in finding interesting ways in which to motivate the pupils and to encourage their interest in mathematics.

SCIENCE

86. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection although have fallen in the intervening period. In the 1999 National Assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attained well although because it was a small cohort no national comparisons can be made. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show pupils' attainment as being in line with the national average. The evidence from the work of the Year 3 pupils suggests that these assessments were reasonably accurate, pupils are working well towards Level 3. In the Year 2000 tests (not yet verified with national figures) all pupils attained at the higher Level 5 which is very positive performance.

87. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were observed working on how to set up and carry out a scientific enquiry into light. They had a good knowledge and understanding of the key elements that light travels from a source, that it is able to travel through certain materials and not others, and were able to ask sensible questions as a prelude to their hypothesis. However, they found it difficult to formulate a line of enquiry, which would lead them to findings on which they could come to a conclusion. The lack of this skill in older pupils is recognised by the school and by the inspection, which found that the majority of work in the subject, although based on scientific investigation, is pre-determined, planned, resourced and structured by the teachers.

88. Pupils from a young age understand 'fair' testing and have experienced the process, but have rarely had the onus put on them to think things through for themselves. It is this flaw in the past delivery of the subject, which has caused the problem in the upper school.

89. The quality of teaching observed at Key Stage 2, was satisfactory overall with some good features. Introductions were clear and set out learning objectives which motivated the pupils and captured their interest. The planned activities were well resourced and resulted in the work meeting the differing needs of the pupils. Ongoing assessment through observation, discussion

and questioning safeguarded the pupils' progress in reaching the object of the lesson. Quality time was given to individuals and groups which helped the less able to understand what they were doing and extended the thinking of the more able pupils. The lesson observed in lower Key Stage 1 was not one in which the pupils were required to carry out an investigation. They, however, were able to demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the parts of a plant and how they contribute to its life. The pupils responded well to the activities, listening to the teacher's exposition, instructions and questions well. They concentrated and persevered with the task set and made satisfactory progress within the lesson.

90. From scrutiny of work it is evident that all aspects of the subject are covered, including scientific enquiry, through a well-structured programme of activities. Overall the pupils attain well and make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of natural and physical scientific phenomena.

91. The subject has been better managed and organised, since the Headteacher took over as subject manager the commercial schemes used safeguard continuity and progression and the teachers' own creativity in presenting topics extends the experiences offered.

92. Educational visits, including residential visits are of particular value. Work on a river study by the older pupils produced work of a high quality, ranging across all the aspects of the subject, for example, animals and their habitats.

93. Good use is made of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but information technology is not used as well as generally expected.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

94. Only one lesson was observed in upper Key Stage 2 but this along with evidence from seeing technology used in other subjects, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their past work enables the judgements to be made. Pupils by the end of both key stages broadly attain as expected in communication technology but standards in control technology and use of data handling are below expected.

95. Pupils have access to technology from entry into the National Curriculum and work is planned to give a suitable range of experiences through Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, pupils are able to use the mouse to control objects on the screen and they know that the arrow keys move objects forward, backwards, left and right. They are able to select what they want from a menu. Examples of pupils' word processing show that they recognise the use of the space bar and can input text. In a geography topic pupils used a paint program to design a flower, selecting colours and tools to create different effects. By the age of 11, pupils' skills in the use and knowledge of communication technology are at least average and for individuals they are good. Pupils can start the computer by themselves, select their programmes use file to select their work input text, improve it use a spellchecker and print it out. They know about the use of computers to research information and using references to CD- ROM readily. Pupils have some knowledge of using data handling programs to collect and handle information. For example, in geography to record weather patterns and compare them between two countries. However, their skills have not been systematically developed over time and therefore they cannot reach the required standard by the age of 11. In discussions with them pupils have very limited knowledge of control technology. Most from an early age can operate a tape recorder and listening centre. Older pupils can describe how to use Ceefax on the television and discuss its use. Some know what a 'roamer' is and that you can tell it which way to go but their answers are limited when asked to describe how to program it. There is no evidence of work using a screen turtle and when asked pupils did not know what this was. Neither have pupils any experience of setting up devices and using sensors or control mechanisms to make them work.

96. The school has highlighted information technology as its priority even though standards were judged as average at the time of the last inspection. This is because staff knowledge needs updating, and the subject requirements and capability of technology have moved on considerably so a direct comparison is difficult to make.

97. Where teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6 it was very good. Planning was extremely thorough and showed very clear progression and direct teaching of subject skills, knowledge and vocabulary. The lesson was focused on the use of the Internet and the teacher's probing questions engaged the pupils in recalling the previous week's lesson for example, 'home means back where we started'. Subject vocabulary such as 'site', 'search engine' 'pages' and 'hyperlink' were clearly explained and what the pupils had to do and understand by the end of the lesson was made crystal clear. A very useful session requiring the pupils to think and offer ideas was held on the advantages and disadvantages of using technology for research and the pupils did offer ideas although a core of pupils seemed adamant not to join in. Homework was also used very effectively linked to English study on the author Alan Garner and pupils were required to find out information ready for next week's lesson. By the end of the session groups of pupils had had ample opportunity to practice their skills and they made good gains in quickly logging on, searching sites and reading information. Their skimming and scanning skills were well employed. Their responses were better than in other lessons seen but still lacked sparkle. The termly planning shows a very detailed progression of skills cross-referencing the work across the curriculum. The planning by other staff in no way matched this depth or quality and the school has an opportunity to use its own good practice to drive standards and expertise forward.

98. The coordinator is newly appointed to the subject. Staff training and knowledge is a key element of need identified by the school and resources have improved to adequate overall. There are no whole school assessment procedures to track attainment or measure progress although some teachers keep their own records. The delivery of the subject does not fully meet national requirements and standards have dropped since the last inspection.

THE OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM

99. In the other subjects of the curriculum very little evidence was gained to make firm judgements on standards and, therefore, the subjects are reported generally rather individually as with the core subjects.

ART

100. There was sufficient evidence for example in art of past work to say that pupils attain good standards and are skilled in using techniques, exploring media and representing their ideas and thoughts. Their knowledge of craftspeople and artists is weaker.

HISTORY

101. In history evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of periods of history and the lifestyles people led. They are able to compare and contrast people's homes, cultures and pastimes and this is evident from work seen on Ancient Greece and Britain since the 1930's. They use their English skills both to research and record their ideas.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Past work in geography on a river study shows good standards being achieved in the ability to use six figure map reference skills and in describing the main features of a river. Pupils

used their mathematical skills well to measure the river's speed and depth and they were able to present this information in clear graphical form of high quality. The pupils also gain good knowledge of other countries and have compared the climate, farming, landscape features and lifestyles of people in Africa with their own. The depth and quality of pupils' observations is incisive. In both history and geography the school makes full use of environmental visits, the local area and visitors to the school to engage pupils in learning through first hand experiences.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. In design and technology the school acknowledges that standards are below expectations as the subject has not been a focal point during the period of change and certainly not given high priority during the implementation of the national strategies. Nevertheless, teachers do plan for the subject to link with other work for example, building a replica of a Greek temple that was well finished and designing gardens in Key Stage 1 and tables in Key Stage 2. The subject whilst taught is not fully represented and pupils do not have sustained well-developed experiences which build on skills in a structured way.

MUSIC

104. One music lesson was seen at Key Stage 2 but this is insufficient to make judgements on standards, the quality of pupils' learning or teaching overall. As with the other subjects the subject is planned for over time and the school employs a specialist music teacher on a part time basis. The teachers also use a commercial scheme to provide structure and to make up for their lack of subject knowledge. In the lesson teaching was good and promoted learning well. The teacher's subject knowledge is strong and her approach captured the pupils' interest well although the indolent attitudes of some pupils seen elsewhere during the inspection prevailed to detract from the learning in spite of the teacher's best efforts. During the lesson most pupils demonstrated their ability to sing in tune, but without any real enthusiasm, and to recognise patterns and chords. Good reference was made by the teacher to sounds and vibration linking the pupils' scientific knowledge to their music. Pupils join in a range of musical activities within the community and whole school productions. Instrumental teachers give specialist tuition to some pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. In physical education standards are hindered by the lack of appropriate hall space but the school works hard to limit the effect of this on pupils' attainment by using outdoor facilities as often as possible. No overall judgement can be made on standards but in the lessons seen one in Years 1 and 2 and the other in Years 3 and 4 the pupils attained as expected for their ages. The youngest pupils were able to demonstrate skills of listening carefully, using space, exercising control on stopping and starting, jumping and hopping. The teaching was very good because it catered for the range of age and ability and enabled pupils to make very good progress through effective use of time and improving their performance. In Years 3 and 4 teaching was satisfactory and learning about rhythm and sequencing different movements was adequate. By the end of the lesson pupils were able to move and balance as part of a sequence to form a short dance. The work was linked to the class topic on Islam in Religious education. Most pupils behaved sensibly in the frustratingly small space. Planning shows a suitable programme of events through the year including swimming at Key Stage 2. Educational visits have given pupils opportunity to engage in orienteering activities on a visit to nearby Gradbach centre, discussions with them reveal that pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

