

INSPECTION REPORT

OSWALD ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 131030

Acting Headteacher: Mr P J Laverick

Reporting inspector: Mr F P Ravey
11371

Dates of inspection: 18-21 September 2000

Inspection number: 224671

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oswald Road Chorlton-cum-Hardy Manchester
Postcode:	M21 9PL
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Pickering
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr F Ravey, 11371	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Information technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? Finance
Mrs S Drake, 9843	Lay inspector	None	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs A Lowson, 30834	Team inspector	History Geography Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr V Leary, 23319	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Equal opportunities	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Assessment
Mr P Martin, 23262	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
Mrs P Ward, 12761	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art Foundation curriculum	None

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oswald Road Primary School is situated in the Manchester suburban area of Chorlton-cum-Hardy. The local area is multi-ethnic and this is reflected in the school's intake of pupils. Four hundred pupils aged from four to 11 attend the school. A further 54 children are taught in the school's nursery class; most of these children attend the nursery full-time. Children's attainment when starting the nursery class varies widely but on balance it is average. Over half of pupils come from non-white ethnic groups, the largest of which is Pakistani. Other ethnic groups include Indian, Bangladeshi, African, Afro-Caribbean and Chinese. Just over half those on roll are entitled to English language support with about 80 pupils being at the early stages of learning English. This is much higher than the average for primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is just below the national average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs but the school has identified a range of special needs amongst its pupils. These needs include moderate learning difficulties and behavioural difficulties. A significant minority of pupils either leave the school or join it during the course of the school year. Thirty two percent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is becoming increasingly effective following a period when it had serious weaknesses. Standards at age 11 rose considerably in 2000 and work seen during the inspection indicates that this improvement is being sustained. Teaching is now having a positive impact upon learning at Key Stage 2 as well as at Key Stage 1 and for pupils in nursery and reception. The leadership now being provided by the acting headteacher, supported well by the governing body and school staff, is moving the school forward in its development. Given these improvements and the broadly average costs of educating pupils, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards in mathematics by the age of seven.
- Pupils develop their skills of scientific enquiry well at both key stages.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in religious education by the ages of seven and 11.
- Pupils achieve much higher standards at age seven than those in comparable schools nationally.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a very good start to their education.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good, resulting in high levels of harmony between different ethnic groups.
- Good provision is made for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
- The acting headteacher provides very effective leadership.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing at Key Stage 2.
- Standards in information technology at both key stages.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school's partnership with parents.
- Attendance and timekeeping.
- The effectiveness of the school's management planning.
- The quality of the playgrounds.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998, when it was found to have serious weaknesses. Since then a period of instability has followed owing to illness amongst senior staff. The school is now recovering from this and is improving significantly. Standards at age 11 were low until 2000 when they improved considerably. Standards amongst the oldest pupils at present in the school show that this improvement is being maintained. However, the school has not yet made satisfactory improvement in raising the level of attendance or in standards in information technology. In relation to other key issues

raised by the previous inspection, the school has made good progress in improving standards in science and satisfactory progress in developing its use of assessment information and in its curriculum planning. Good progress has been made in improving ways of checking the quality of teaching but the quality of the school's development plan has not yet improved sufficiently. On balance, the school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	D	E	E
Mathematics	C	C	E	D
Science	E	D	D	C

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

Results of National Curriculum tests for 2000 show considerable improvement on those in the above table. Test results in 2000 for science are particularly high. The well below average results in English have also improved. Standards attained by 11 year olds in English and mathematics in 1999 also compared unfavourably with those attained by pupils in similar schools.

The trend in results over time was erratic and unimpressive until 2000. Now, work seen during the inspection indicates that the improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science is being maintained although weaknesses still exist in pupils' performance in writing. The school has recently revised its targets for attainment in English, mathematics and science in recognition of this improvement. Until recently, targets for these subjects were too low. Now they are suitably challenging. Work seen during the inspection indicates that attainment amongst the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and science is average with investigative work in science being a strength. Attainment in English is close to, but still below average, owing to lower attainment in writing. Attainment amongst the oldest pupils at Key Stage 1 is average in reading, writing and science but is above average in mathematics. Attainment in religious education is above average at ages seven and 11 but that in information technology remains below average at ages seven and 11. Standards are high enough in all subjects except in writing at Key Stage 2 and in information technology at both key stages, where they are too low. Children in the nursery and reception classes attain well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils mostly have good attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the vast majority of lessons is at least satisfactory and often it is good. A few pupils are disruptive in a small minority of lessons. Behaviour in the playgrounds is mostly satisfactory although sometimes it becomes unsatisfactory owing in part to the poor quality of play spaces.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good throughout the school. The school achieves a high degree of harmony amongst pupils of all ethnic groups. Pupils take

	responsibility well when it is offered to them.
Attendance	Attendance remains below the national average and is unsatisfactory. A significant minority of pupils are poor timekeepers and this prevents morning sessions from getting off to a smooth start in some classes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Teaching of mathematics is good throughout the school and the skills of numeracy are taught well. Teaching of English is satisfactory at both key stages with teachers making sound use of the literacy hour, especially to develop skills of reading. Teaching of writing skills is improving but is not yet fully effective in allowing pupils to develop these skills well. Teaching of early language skills for children in nursery and reception is very effective whilst teaching for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is also good. However, teaching for pupils with special educational needs is less effective since teachers do not always provide suitable work. Otherwise, teachers provide work that meets the needs of all pupils. Teaching of religious education is good whilst teaching of information technology is improving but it is being held back by lack of good quality computers in many classes. During the inspection, 96 percent of lessons seen were at least satisfactory; 15 percent were very good; 38 percent were good; and 4 percent were unsatisfactory. This represents a significant improvement from the last inspection.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities although this is only a very recent development in information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision has weaknesses, including work not planned sufficiently well to match pupils' individual needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good. As a result, pupils at the early stages of learning English make good progress. Those who are reasonably fluent in English also receive good support to help them achieve satisfactory levels of attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils receive good guidance. All staff provide a good example. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides satisfactory levels of care. Child protection procedures are very good. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress have improved and are now satisfactory.

The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory although it is now improving. The acting headteacher has made some significant improvements in this area. The school does not yet draw sufficiently upon the interest many parents show in their children's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher provides very effective leadership. He is having a major influence on the work of the school and its development. Other staff are responding well to this and are providing good support. A developing sense of team work is evident amongst staff and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils the vast majority of its responsibilities well. The chairperson of governors provides strong, well-focused leadership.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is now checking pupils' progress closely and is monitoring the effectiveness of teaching. This is helping to secure improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school's management plan for development remains weak. Governors have not yet developed systems to secure best value in their purchases nor to evaluate how well money has been spent.

The school has sufficient suitably qualified teachers and other staff except in relation to pupils with special educational needs, where staff are not suitably qualified. Provision of staff to support pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. The accommodation is generally satisfactory although some classes are small and cramped and the playgrounds are bleak, uninviting and uninteresting places in which to spend leisure time. This contributes to lapses in pupils' behaviour. The lack of enough modern computers hinders pupils' progress in information technology.

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. • The progress their children make. • The quality of teaching. • The way in which the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of communications with the school. • The range of activities provided outside of lessons. • Behaviour • Homework • The school's partnership with parents. • The state of the playgrounds. • The balance between subjects in the school curriculum.

Inspectors generally agree with parents' supportive comments and agree largely with their concerns. Improving the quality of partnership with parents, including communications, is a major challenge for the school. The range of activities provided outside of lessons is limited for a school of this size although measures are now being taken to start to address this. Homework is now being provided more consistently, but the school does not yet do enough to keep parents informed of how best they might support in this. The state of the playgrounds is unsatisfactory. However, inspectors found that behaviour is very largely at an acceptable level at least and that the school provides a curriculum that meets pupils' learning needs whilst taking proper account of the national importance attached to literacy and numeracy.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

Starting school and attainment at the age of five

- 1 Children begin nursery with a broad range of attainments but on balance attainment is average. However, a significant minority of children have a home language other than English and are therefore at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. By the start of Year 1 most children have achieved well and have attained the nationally recognised levels of learning in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. This is due to good teaching.

Results at the age of seven

- 2 Over the past four years, attainment by the age of seven has been above the national average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics although in the last two years attainment has been average in reading and writing. Attainment in mathematics has remained well above average. **Work seen during the inspection amongst pupils in Year 2 reveals a similar picture this year with attainment being average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Attainment in science at age seven is also average.** The reason pupils achieve so well in mathematics is due to good teaching and a very well planned curriculum. Sound teaching of reading and writing promotes satisfactory progress in these subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being taught effectively and this also contributes positively to the standards attained. Compared to pupils in similar schools nationally, pupils at Oswald Road do very well in all three subjects. A strong feature of the attainment of seven year olds at the school in recent years has been the above average proportions of pupils achieving high levels in their work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress thanks to strong specialist teaching and support. As a result, they achieve levels comparable to those of other pupils by the age of seven.

Results at the age of 11

- 3 National test results for 11 year olds showed a much less effective picture until last year. Up to that point results had been at least below average in English and science. In mathematics, results were average except in 1999, when they were below average. Great improvements were made in all three subjects in 2000 although results remain slightly below the level expected of 11 year olds in English. Very effective teaching of investigational skills in science has led to much improved attainment whilst in mathematics, good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a beneficial effect. In English, standards in reading are better than those in writing. This mirrors the national picture. It is due to teaching of reading being more effective than it is in writing. **Work seen during the inspection indicates that the improvements made in 2000 are being sustained throughout Key Stage 2. Attainment in mathematics and science is average but in English lower attainment in writing means that overall attainment in the subject is below average.** This continued improvement in standards is due to much improved assessment of pupils' progress and levels of skill and to teachers using this information to give an appropriate boost

to pupils' learning. Money invested in extra literacy and numeracy classes is also having a positive effect although this is not yet as apparent in teaching writing skills.

- 4 An important factor in the school's poorer results at age 11 is the significant number of pupils who leave the school during the year and the levels of attainment of those who replace them. School data shows clearly that those who leave during the year are generally of higher attainment than those who enter. The effect of this is now being offset by the school's much better systems for identifying pupils' levels of attainment at key points during the year and by the subsequent work done to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. The few pupils who enter the school at the early stages of learning English during Key Stage 2 are given good specialist support and good individual support in lessons. As a result, they achieve well in learning English.

The school's targets

- 5 The school's targets for the levels that 11year olds should attain in English and mathematics this year were too low but have been raised significantly by the acting headteacher in consultation with senior staff. This higher expectation is entirely justified. Work seen during the inspection shows that pupils at present in Year 6 are well capable of achieving the more challenging targets now set for them.

Standards of work seen in literacy during the inspection

- 6 Pupils at Key Stage 1 show a growing knowledge of the alphabet and use their knowledge of letter sounds, pictures and basic key words to establish the meaning of the text they are reading. By the age of seven, most pupils can explain the difference between an author and an illustrator and can name different types of book. They are beginning to read with expression, taking account of capital letters, full stops and speech marks. In writing, by the age of seven, most pupils' understand that a story has a beginning, middle and end. The higher attaining pupils write news and stories using complete sentences. They use capital letters and full stops accurately.
- 7 By the age of 11, most pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in reading. Higher attaining pupils read very fluently. Most pupils show good understanding of the difference between fact and fiction. Most can use a dictionary and a thesaurus. Standards in writing are not at the level usually expected of eleven year olds. Work in books shows too much completion of exercises which promote repetition of skills learnt earlier, for example identification of nouns and adjectives, story planning and use of commas, rather than an increase in pupils' writing skills. There are insufficient examples of longer pieces of writing resulting from pupils finding things out for themselves. Too many pupils are still printing their words.

Standards of work seen in numeracy

- 8 By the age of seven, almost all pupils add and subtract accurately and many also understand multiplication and division. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a sound knowledge of number facts to 20. They can identify tens and units and can arrange numbers to 100 in order. Most pupils recognise and describe the names of common shapes. Higher attainers identify more complex shapes such as cylinders, pyramids and cuboids. Most pupils know their multiplication tables well. By the age of 11, most pupils understand place value to 1,000. They can multiply whole numbers by 10 and multiples of 10. Most can add and subtract simple decimal numbers. Higher attaining pupils can add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers that contain two decimal places and they can also calculate fractions and percentages.

Most pupils can interpret data accurately in graphs and charts. They record their results in fractions and decimal fractions.

Other subjects

- 9 Standards of work are similar to those usually found in primary schools at ages seven and age 11 in science, art, history, geography, music and physical education. Attainment in science at both key stages is strong in the area of scientific investigation, owing to good teaching. Standards in design and technology are at the expected level at age seven but there was not sufficient information available during the inspection for a judgement to be made about attainment in this subject at age 11. In religious education, standards are above the expected level at age seven and age 11. Pupils show good knowledge and understanding. This is particularly evident at age eleven in relation to knowledge of the beliefs and practices of major world faiths. In information technology, standards are below the expected levels at age seven and 11. Until recently, information technology has not been planned or taught systematically and pupils have not had sufficient opportunity to develop their skills. This has been recognised by the school and improvements are now starting to take place.

How well pupils achieve

- 10 Pupils mostly make satisfactory progress in their learning. The level of challenge in work is usually appropriate to enable pupils of differing attainments to learn effectively. In information technology lessons seen at Key Stage 1, pupils made at least satisfactory progress in developing their skills owing to teachers following closely the national guidelines for this subject. Progress in writing is still unsatisfactory for pupils of all levels of attainment at Key Stage 2. Conversely, pupils at both key stages make good progress in developing their religious understanding. In some very effective lessons, pupils work at full stretch and as a result they make very good progress in these lessons. This was seen, for example, in many lessons for the under-fives and also in literacy lessons in Year 6.
- 11 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when they are provided with appropriate adult support. However, insufficient support for some pupils with specific needs results in them not making the progress of which they are capable. At Key Stage 2, when pupils are grouped by ability for literacy and numeracy, work is well planned to meet their needs. However, the lack of individual education plans and sometimes the lack of appropriate teaching support mean that often the progress of these pupils in reading and writing and social skills in other lessons is not as good as it could be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Attitudes, values and behaviour

- 12 The great majority of pupils have satisfactory attitudes towards school, show an interest in the activities that teachers provide for them, behave in a satisfactory manner and develop a real respect for others' opinions and beliefs. One of the school's strengths, as it was at the time of the previous inspection, is the way that pupils from a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds work and play together in an atmosphere of tolerance and harmony.
- 13 From the time they first enter the nursery, children are relaxed and happy at the school. In lessons there are usually many volunteers to help the teachers and qualified support staff, or to offer opinions and answers. Pupils at both key stages can show great enthusiasm when a topic catches their interest as it did, for example, in a Year 6 lesson about river erosion or when a very young baby was brought into the reception class. An unusually high percentage of parents, however, indicated their concerns about pupils' behaviour, and there is a small minority of pupils, mainly boys, who regularly challenge teachers' skills in coping with disruptive activity. During the most recent academic year the school has had to exclude pupils, either for a fixed period or permanently, more frequently than is the case in similar schools though, the actual number of pupils involved is very small. During the week of inspection, both pupils' attitudes towards learning and their behaviour in almost every lesson was at least satisfactory, and in most lessons it was good. Inspectors spoke with many people who have been connected with the school for a number of years, who all consider that pupils' behaviour has improved since the introduction, this term, of a new code of conduct. There are still times when some pupils' misbehaviour interrupts a lesson and means that neither they nor their peers manage to complete a sufficient amount of work, but such instances are infrequent. Pupils move around the school sensibly and are remarkably quiet in, for instance, physical education lessons, but behaviour in the playground occasionally gets out of hand, in large part due to the size and barrenness of the environment.
- 14 Overall the attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. They participate well in lessons and most pupils try hard. A small minority of these pupils have extremely challenging behaviour which interrupts their own learning and also that of others. Some are lacking in self-esteem and are not aware of the effect of their own behaviour on others.

Personal development

- 15 Pupils carry out any responsibilities well and they co-operate well when, for example, helping to take milk bottles around the school in the morning or carrying out investigative work in science lessons. They build up good relationships with each other and with staff, charmingly demonstrated by a pupil's written apology to her teacher for leaving a virtually blank page in her art book because she 'needed it for colour sampling.' Pupils treat each other and resources with respect. In circle time, they listen well to each other and make thoughtful suggestions about how to help others out of difficulties. In religious education lessons in particular, pupils demonstrate a high level of religious tolerance and racial harmony, showing genuine interest in and respect for others' beliefs and traditions. They wait patiently for others, who may be having difficulty expressing their thoughts, to have their say. Although there are occasions when pupils fall out with each other, in general there is little bullying and pupils are prepared to inform adults if other pupils are making them feel unhappy, confident in the belief that the problem will be dealt with effectively.

Attendance

- 16 Since the previous inspection the level of pupils' attendance at school has improved, but it is still unsatisfactory and below the national average. In each half term of the last school year, around one quarter of pupils had less than 90 percent attendance. Some parents are too willing to allow their children to stay at home for inappropriate reasons. The school's systems for promoting good attendance have improved and this has helped to reduce significantly the amount of unauthorised absence to around the national average. The new system, together with teachers' increased rigour in recording pupils' late arrival, has helped to highlight the large numbers of families and pupils who do not consider it important to arrive on time in the morning. As with pupils' attendance, their timekeeping has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in the reduction of those who arrive very late, but it is still unsatisfactory and prevents the day getting off to a good start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 17 The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 2. During the inspection, 96 percent of lessons were at least satisfactory, compared with 86 percent last time. More significantly, the percentage of good teaching has risen since the last inspection. Teaching is now having a particularly positive impact upon pupils' learning in numeracy and science at both key stages and in the reading aspect of literacy. Teaching of writing is improving although, similar to the national picture, this is not as effective in raising standards as it is in reading. Teaching of information technology is not yet having the successful impact it should, largely because planning of the curriculum in this subject is only just becoming organised throughout the school and the good effect of this is only starting to become apparent. The school's recent improvements in national test results and the standards of work seen during the inspection reflect the improved quality of teaching.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage

- 18 Teaching for children in the new Foundation Stage is very effective. In the nursery, well-planned activities and a very stimulating learning environment enable children to develop the full range of early literacy and numeracy skills identified in the new curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop their skills of speaking and listening by acting parts in games. They are taught to hold their pencils correctly, to form their letters and to write their name and simple words and sentences. Children get plenty of opportunities to develop their skills of counting. They also develop important mathematical ideas such as 'bigger' and 'smaller'. Working together in small groups, children in the nursery made a variety of 'eggs' from modelling clay. The learning came when they accurately placed the eggs in order and described how some were big and some smaller. In reception, national guidelines for literacy are used imaginatively to develop reading skills. Children know that stories follow a sequence of events. Teaching of other aspects of learning is equally effective, owing to a very well planned curriculum and very well designed classroom learning areas. A strong feature of the teaching is very effective questioning which helps to develop speech and language skills. The very good quality of qualified support in these two classes means that children are always stimulated to learn, whether indoors, for example listening to a story, or outside, improving their skills of throwing a ball through a hoop.

Teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2

- 19 Teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 plan conscientiously and are particularly successful in communicating to pupils what they are to learn during lessons. Often, teachers were observed to point out 'objectives for learning' and sometimes they referred back to these later in the lesson. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being implemented satisfactorily throughout the school and this is having a good impact on pupils' learning although this is still not so apparent in the teaching of writing. Teachers sometimes bring a touch of flair and imagination to literacy and numeracy lessons. For example, in Year 6, the start of a lesson focused upon the writing of biographies was planned to get pupils researching and discussing ideas right away in small groups before making notes of their findings and then helping to build upon a biography with the rest of the class. This resulted in good development of writing, speaking and listening skills as well as enthusing pupils to learn. In all, it was a very productive session. The skills of reading are generally taught effectively at both key stages. As a result, many pupils develop into fluent readers and also have the ability to find information from reference books although this latter skill is less well-developed in some pupils owing to the lack of suitable facilities for them to use. Teaching of writing is less effective at Key Stage 2 although it is improving. Work in books shows that teachers pay too much attention to exercises which promote repetition of skills learnt earlier.
- 20 The skills of numeracy are taught well in many lessons at both key stages. Often, teachers show good subject knowledge and high expectations, giving pupils the confidence and time to think and to talk through their ideas. They also use assessments of pupils' progress effectively to help plan the next steps in learning. Very occasionally, however, teaching of numeracy is less effective when teachers do not concentrate sufficiently upon direct teaching of skills. Then pupils are insufficiently challenged and do not learn well. Improvements in lesson planning in information technology are also having a positive effect upon learning as teachers follow closely the national guidelines and improve pupils' skills as a result. During the inspection this was especially apparent at Key Stage 1. However, teachers are still at the early stages of acquiring the confidence needed to teach information technology effectively. They are hindered by the poor quality of some computers which prevents pupils, for example, from using information technology effectively as a means of researching information. One high attaining pupil at Key Stage 2 tried in vain to get a computer to provide information from a CD-ROM before declaring that he might as well go off and do some other work!
- 21 Pupils' enthusiasm for learning is encouraged by the good relationships that exist in the vast majority of lessons. Teachers work hard to establish a friendly 'feel' to lessons whilst still expecting pupils to work hard. Searching questions encourage pupils to think before answering. This results in them often working very productively. Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well, implementing the school's behaviour policy effectively. However, in a small number of lessons at Key Stage 2 pupils are disruptive and this leads to unsatisfactory teaching with significant numbers of pupils not learning well in these lessons. A few pupils at Key Stage 2 are very challenging in their behaviour and very occasionally, particularly in the afternoon when pupils are getting tired, teachers find it difficult to find an effective way to encourage good behaviour. However, such incidents are few in number and in the vast majority of lessons pupils are encouraged successfully to behave well and to learn effectively.
- 22 Pupils' learning is now being supported more consistently by homework, especially in English and mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 6 were quick to point out, when asked, that they receive homework regularly - twice a week this year - although this had not been the case previously. Parents expressed concern at the amount of

homework their children receive. Inspectors found that this has improved but that parents are not yet being informed sufficiently about the sort and amount of homework their children should receive.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs

- 23 Teachers provide work that effectively meets the needs of pupils of different prior attainments, except in relation to pupils with special educational needs. Specialist support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning by providing the individual attention that enables pupils to feel secure and to gain in confidence in tackling new tasks. However, teachers have not yet had sufficient training to enable them to write and implement the school's newly-introduced individual education plans.

Teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language

- 24 For pupils learning English as an additional language, specialist teaching and support are very effective. This support often takes place in lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2, and is provided unobtrusively but well by the staff concerned. The importance of practising spoken English is recognised whilst good attention is still paid to developing skills of reading and writing. Teaching of pupils at the early stages of learning English is particularly effective in helping these pupils to make good progress. Good use of assessments also helps specialist staff to provide challenging but enjoyable work.

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

The school curriculum

- 25 The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. There is now a coherent whole school plan for the curriculum, representing a sound improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum provision for the under fives is good, covering the recommended areas of learning fully. Children are provided with a very effective and very well planned range of learning opportunities that allows them to develop their skills well in the nursery and reception classes.

- 26 For pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2, the school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. The curriculum provides all the expected subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school is in the process of adopting government recommended guidelines for all National Curriculum subjects (except in physical education where they are adopting the local education authority's guidelines). These help to ensure that pupils' learning opportunities cover the required ground, build effectively on what they already know and that pupils in the same year but different classes have similar opportunities, another improvement since the previous inspection. Opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding are now being provided systematically throughout the school although this is only a recent development. The curriculum includes appropriate provision for personal, social and health education as well as for sex education and for learning about the dangers of substance misuse.

Provision to meet other learning needs

- 27 The school makes good provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Identification of such pupils is early and effective, owing to the good organisation of local authority specialist support. Well-planned opportunities are provided for pupils to develop the skills of spoken and written English. This support extends effectively to pupils who join during the school year. However, provision for pupils with special educational needs has weaknesses, with work not planned sufficiently well to match pupils' individual needs.

Numeracy and literacy

- 28 The numeracy and literacy strategies are being soundly implemented although provision to teach writing skills is still unsatisfactory. The numeracy strategy has been well introduced and has a positive effect on the pupils' achievements.

Other activities

- 29 There is some concern amongst parents that the range of activities provided outside normal school hours is limited. This view is supported by the inspection. The school provides some clubs including board games, craft club, sewing, and science for children with a parent and a Saturday morning football club, that participates in a local league. However, there are few activities available for younger pupils or to do with wider cultural issues such as music, although a few children take part in a band at a local high school. The range and number of activities provided are less than is generally found in schools of this size. However, plans have been made to improve this situation. Led by some parent governors, football, art and board games are planned for this term. An annual residential camp for pupils in Year 2 assists in developing social skills.

Links with the community

- 30 A good range of links with the wider community contributes well to pupils' quality of learning. Pupils regularly visit the local library to learn library skills – this alleviates the lack of a school library a little. As reported in the previous inspection, pupils visit places of worship for all the major world faiths. Pupils make visits to a nearby Water Park for environmental studies and a place of historical interest to enhance their learning about times gone by. These visits make a positive contribution to their learning and to their own personal development. The school also has useful and effective links with other organisations such as Manchester City Football Club, which has provided soccer coaching and the local business centre for squash and

swimming. Some local businesses support plans for developing the school grounds, intended to make the grounds a useful resource as well as enhancing the environment. Students from local schools gain work experience at the school, thus providing useful assistance.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 31 There is good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Since the last inspection, the quality of this provision has been maintained. The school provides a welcoming and caring environment in which pupils from different faiths and cultures work together very effectively in harmony and learn to respect and celebrate each other's different beliefs and customs.
- 32 **Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.** In assemblies, carefully prepared and effective acts of collective worship allow pupils to reflect and pray in their own manner thereby developing their spiritual awareness. Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their relationships in the community, in the family and with their friends. Through their studies of world religions in religious education, pupils learn to recognise and respect the beliefs of other faiths, enabling them to reflect upon their own beliefs. The school uses opportunities well to sensitise pupils about their own distinctiveness. In a lesson, at the foundation stage, pupils shared a special moment with a member of staff who brought in her new baby. However, opportunities to explore the use music to provide moments of spiritual uplift at the start and end of assemblies are not always developed.
- 33 **Provision for pupils' moral development is good.** It is promoted effectively through the school's positive atmosphere, with high expectations of behaviour and relationships. Pupils are provided with clear expectations for good behaviour. School rules are displayed prominently in corridors and each classroom. Staff provide pupils with a good example of how to behave, showing respect and concern for the individual needs of all pupils. A strong feature of pupils' moral development is the way they are taught about wider moral issues through the personal and social development programme. Pupils in Year 5, for example, shared with their teacher the importance of feeling valued and its positive impact on raising self-esteem and improving relationships with others. Assemblies are used effectively to provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on positive personal qualities such as tolerance, kindness and sensitivity to others' needs and rights.
- 34 **Provision for pupils' social development is good.** Good relationships are a strong feature of the school. Achievements in work and behaviour are celebrated weekly in the 'highlight' assemblies, with certificates being awarded for good work, citizenship and good behaviour. Opportunities are provided for pupils in both key stages to take on responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school. In all classes there are nominated special helpers who carry out responsibly tasks such as taking the register to the office and delivering messages. Older pupils are very sensible when given the opportunity to prepare the hall for assemblies and, as prefects, some are given good opportunities to look after the younger pupils at lunch times and help to organise playtime equipment. There are useful occasions for pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship. Recently, the older pupils were involved in leading discussions with staff and younger pupils in the designing of new playgrounds for the school. Pupils from both key stages are involved in community activities which also help develop their social awareness. They visit a senior citizen's home sharing teatime with the residents, tidying up their gardens and at Christmas time singing carols. Charity work, such as fundraising for cancer sufferers, is a regular feature of school life and also contribute to pupils' awareness of the needs of others.

Educational visits are an effective aspect of social provision. At both key stages there are residential visits to a scout camp at Marple. The school also involves its pupils usefully in local community sports competitions. There is a School Council, set up to allow pupils to express their views on school issues, although this has not met recently.

- 35 **Provision for pupils' cultural development is good.** Pupils at both key stages are provided with a curriculum which promotes an understanding of their country, whilst also giving them opportunities to discover and understand other cultures. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to share their experiences and customs, promoting awareness and tolerance. Assemblies are similarly focused throughout the year on the celebrations of different faiths. In subjects, good opportunities are provided to promote the wide cultural diversity of the school's community. In religious education awareness of other cultures and faiths is strongly fostered. Pupils visit synagogues, temples, mosques and Christian churches. In dance, they participate in national folk dancing and also in African and South American dancing. This broadens their cultural awareness. Displays and art work throughout the school feature aspects of cultural diversity. An example of this is a mathematics display of Islamic tiles and the Buddhist exhibit. The school is now developing a good range of books and artefacts that represent the richness and diversity of a wide range of cultures. The diversity of educational visits and visitors also has a positive impact on pupils' cultural development. Visitors to the school include professional sportsmen, musicians and ministers of different faiths. Visits are also made into the local community to explore its rich cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 36 The school provides a satisfactory level of care for its pupils, with many staff developing a good knowledge of individuals' home and family circumstances which allows them to offer informed support when necessary. Staff use the information gleaned from the school's improved assessment procedures to pinpoint individual's strengths and weaknesses. They combine this with the knowledge of pupils' personal development, which they build up through day-to-day observation and activities such as circle time, in order to offer pupils appropriate help and guidance.
- 37 The school maintains a satisfactory register of special educational needs. However, pupils with special educational needs are not identified soon enough and this hinders the effectiveness of provision. Pupils with special educational needs are not yet provided with sufficient additional support. Procedures for assessing their attainment and progress are not yet sufficiently developed.
- 38 Procedures relating to child protection are very good, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Staff receive training about what to do should they have concerns about a pupil. They are quick to notice any possible symptoms of abuse and any records are kept in a suitably confidential manner. The arrangements for first aid and the care of those who feel unwell are also good, as was demonstrated when a pupil fell awkwardly in the playground on the first day of the inspection. Named members of staff, together with a governor, conduct regular audits of the building and are observant about any problems that need attention. Inspectors highlighted to the school a number of concerns relating to health and safety. The condition of the playgrounds continues to be a problem, from before the time that the school was last inspected, with the result that, despite the generous number of lunchtime organisers and satisfactory supervision at other times, too many pupils have accidents.

- 39 This term, the school has introduced a new code of conduct, which is already proving effective in improving pupils' standards of behaviour. Pupils respond well to receiving stickers as rewards for their good behaviour, and most staff are managing to implement the system of recognition and consequences in a consistent manner. Members of the local authority's behaviour support team together with other outside experts provide good support and training that are proving helpful to staff in the classroom. The systems are very new to the school and will need some more time to become fully embedded in daily practice, but have already helped to create a generally calm and predictable environment in which quality learning can take place. Also new since the previous inspection are the increasingly stringent procedures to monitor and encourage good attendance. While they have had some effect in improving pupils' attendance and punctuality, these are still unsatisfactory and, despite the school's best efforts, attendance gradually decreased throughout last year.

Assessment

- 40 The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and recording progress. Use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is also satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection where the use of assessment was a key issue.
- 41 Accurate early assessments of children's attainment are carried out in the nursery class. The results of these and later assessments are used well in both the nursery and reception classes to help teachers plan appropriate work. Good progress results.
- 42 In both key stages, there is considerable monitoring of the pupils' performance. Assessment and recording systems have been introduced derived from national developments in curriculum planning in English, mathematics and science. From analysis of the data produced from these assessments, key issues are established. For example, 'planning must be focussed and pitched at "challenge" zone', in handwriting and spelling there must be regular practice'. A significant development in the assessment process is the deeper involvement of all staff. They now assess their pupils' progress over a year by completing a class record sheet which shows each pupil's level of attainment at the start of the year, half way through the year and at the end of the year. Effective action is now taken to ensure the accuracy of teachers' assessments. Teacher meetings are held to agree levels of work in English, mathematics and science. Scrutiny of samples of pupils' work is at an early stage of development, but indications are that with further refinement this has the potential to provide the information needed to enable targets to be set for individual pupils.
- 43 Overall, the school makes satisfactory use of this data, with the exception of mathematics, where there is a notable strength in the use of assessment information to guide help teachers plan the next steps in learning. This is more noticeable at Key Stage 2 where standards have risen in recent times from well below national standards to in line with national standards. Targets being set are realistic and challenging. For example, an analysis of the Key Stage 2 annual test in mathematics revealed a weakness in multiplication and division. As a result, throughout Key Stage 2, there has been a strong focus on developing the pupils' skills in this aspect of numeracy. The teachers' marking is now more evaluative in some classes. However, the school's assessment system is not being used effectively in raising standards in all subjects, notably in English, where assessment has focused more on presentation skills in writing at the expense of the development of skills in writing

composition.

- 44 An important strategy resulting from the school's better knowledge of their pupils' attainment is the setting of pupils in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6. The teachers are able to plan and target their teaching more effectively and utilise the skills of the specialist English language support staff more efficiently. This procedure is assisting the teachers greatly in their task of improving standards and raising their expectations. There is a positive climate where teachers are now revising their targets for Years 6 pupils to achieve in English, mathematics and science to more challenging levels. An area requiring further development, however, is the setting of individual targets. They are inconsistently used in the classroom and are not mentioned in the pupil's annual school reports. The use of day-to-day assessment is generally effective, with teachers making good use of question and feedback to develop pupils' learning. However, pupils' own views of their learning are seldom discussed or recorded.
- 45 Assessment of progress by pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Thorough records are kept and help specialist staff and class teachers to prepare appropriate work and to check its effectiveness in developing pupils' skills.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 46 The school's partnership with the parent body as a whole is unsatisfactory. Over recent months the school has lived through a period of uncertainty. Parents understandably have been concerned about this and it may be a reason why they have given an unusually high level of negative response to the inspection questionnaire. Many parents consider that the school does not offer their children a sufficiently wide range of interesting activities, or the right amount of useful homework. They do not feel that the school works closely with parents or that teachers provide parents with enough information about how well their children are getting on. Many are concerned about pupils' standards of behaviour, and the way in which the school is managed. However, most of the parents who responded to the questionnaire tended to agree with its positive statements. The tone of the parents' meeting held prior to inspection was mostly positive, and the great majority of those spoken to during the inspection expressed their general satisfaction with the quality of education and support that the school offers their children.

- 47 The main problem seems to be one of a breakdown in communication. Many of the school's parents are intensely interested in their children's education and this leads them to ask probing questions. Some of the questions cannot readily be answered, since governors themselves do not always have sufficient information to allow them to reach firm decisions. In a period when key members of staff have been absent due to illness, the school has not always succeeded in taking action relating to parents' concerns as swiftly or openly as parents would like. However, the acting headteacher has been generous and humble in his apologies for any mistakes, and governors and staff are now beginning to work together with new determination to capitalise on parents' skills and interest in order to enhance the quality of education for all pupils.
- 48 Teachers provide useful information for parents about what their children will be learning in the coming weeks and how best they can help them. They make themselves available at the end of the school day to talk informally with parents, and offer an open evening each term at which parents can discuss their children's progress more formally and, together with class teachers, set targets for pupils to aim for during the coming term. These progress meetings are well attended but other events, such as that to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy, have attracted fewer participants. Pupils' progress reports have improved since the time of the previous inspection. However, they still include too many statements relating to pupils' enjoyment of the topics that have been covered, rather than clear comment on how well the pupils are performing. Some of the school's information is available in translation for parents for whom English is an additional language, and such parents have good opportunities to find out about what is happening, through staff belonging to the local authority Ethnic Minority Support Service. Parental concern that pupils are not receiving sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in physical education and other subjects is not justified. Pupils at Oswald Road receive a similar provision to that found in most primary schools nationally.
- 49 Support for the Friends of Oswald Road School has dwindled in recent years but the school grounds improvement group, a small team of highly committed parents, has helped to make a great improvement to one corner of the playground, creating the quiet 'Owl' and vegetable garden. They have firm plans to continue with further environmental work. Some other parents assist in school on a regular basis while others are prepared to help out on specific occasions. Parents generally help their children with their homework. Although the school's links with parents are not currently strong enough, there is much energy and interest on which to build in order to improve the situation in the future.
- 50 The partnership established with parents of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is regular contact with parents of those pupils who have particular special educational needs. In addition, school staff make themselves readily available informally. However, there is no formal system to keep parents informed of the targets for progress set for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 51 The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The recently appointed acting headteacher provides very good leadership. He gives clear educational direction to the work of the school. The senior management team has been very supportive and has quickly established an effective working relationship with the acting headteacher. All staff work together with the shared goal of raising standards in this improving school. Staff with responsibilities carry out their delegated tasks conscientiously, working as a team to ensure that the stated aims of the school

are realised in day to day life. There is a real sense of staff wanting to work together in order to make improvements. This contributed significantly to the recent improvements in standards in National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds.

- 52 The acting headteacher has a very clear vision of what the school needs to do to improve further. He has identified what needs to be done and who will do it. The chairperson of the governing body has a very clear view of the school's needs and is building a supportive team to help it improve. Real improvements have been made on many of the issues identified in the previous inspection, particularly in standards of attainment and in the quality of teaching throughout the school, and progress is satisfactory. Key issues from the last inspection, which are still to be addressed satisfactorily are procedures to improve the timekeeping and attendance of pupils and the quality of whole school development planning. The school development plan is very brief, but is, however, a secure short-term document to take the school forward until the end of the year. Plans are already in place to involve all staff and governors in the planning and implementation of a more rigorous document that will chart the school's course for development over the next three years.
- 53 The governing body is very committed to school improvement and it fulfils the vast majority of its statutory obligations. The chairperson of governors provides strong leadership. He has a clear view of the need for improvement and an equally strong commitment to achieving it. Governors work conscientiously in partnership with school staff, acting as a critical friend as they examine national and school test data to look at how closely the school compares with similar schools. Governors and senior staff have worked closely and effectively with advisers from the local education authority to help bring about improvement. The governing body is aware of weaknesses in the school development plan and the need to connect the school budget more closely to raising standards in school. Presently, there is a lack of strategic planning for the longer-term improvement of the school as a whole. Governors are now receiving training to deal with this issue. The acting headteacher values the work of all staff and governors. Good relationships are evident. There is now a shared commitment to raising standards.
- 54 Formal appraisal of staff has not been undertaken recently, but the acting headteacher has talked to all staff in order to help them set individual targets for professional development. As the acting head teacher has only been in post for a matter of weeks, the governing body has not yet agreed with him professional development targets linked to school improvement.
- 55 The local education authority and senior members of staff have been instrumental in establishing an effective monitoring process, which rigorously evaluates the standards achieved by pupils and examines the quality of teaching throughout the school. Assessment sheets that monitor the progress of each pupil were introduced two years ago and are completed each term. This process enables teachers to use the data to set challenging targets and to promote sound progress. All staff have scrutinised the work of pupils throughout the school in English, mathematics and science. As a result of this work, staff can assess if standards of work are high enough, where weaker areas need to be addressed and subsequently plan a teaching programme with the aim of raising standards. The acting headteacher and senior staff are developing strategies to deal with the pockets of unsatisfactory behaviour in school, whilst recognising and rewarding the good behaviour displayed by the vast majority of pupils. Since the last inspection, procedures for monitoring teaching have been made much more rigorous. The acting head teacher has now monitored the teaching of each member of staff and given very detailed feedback, which builds upon the good practice seen and provides useful points for further development. This has

helped improve the quality of teaching throughout the school considerably since the last inspection. Many of the school monitoring procedures are at an early stage of development, but they have enabled a clear picture to emerge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is beginning to improve the quality of education provided.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 56 The school has adequate numbers of suitably qualified staff to teach the curriculum, and uses training effectively to increase their expertise in areas of particular relevance to the school's needs at any one time. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, in part due to good support for teachers, which has had positive effects on, for instance, pupils' investigative and experimental skills in science, and behaviour management throughout the school. An area of weakness in the staffing is the provision of specialist support for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator has no specialist qualification and none of the classroom assistants has been trained to provide specialist support. This is having an impact on the quality of the school's provision for these pupils. The school also has an inadequate amount of administrative support to cope properly with the demands of running a large establishment. The level and quality of staffing to support pupils for whom English is an additional language is good.
- 57 In various ways, the school's accommodation provides an unsatisfactory environment for learning. Some classrooms are cramped for the numbers of pupils and have very little storage space. Neither hall is large enough to hold all the pupils at one time; both are used for eating in as well as for physical education, assemblies and music, when the poor acoustics detract from pupils' learning. The halls also act as corridors, so activities are often interrupted by people passing through. The absence of a library has a negative effect on pupils' research skills. Outside, there is no secure play area for pupils in the reception classes, so they have to walk across to the nursery, and the state of the playgrounds creates a health and safety hazard for pupils as well as leading to some unsatisfactory behaviour. Despite these disadvantages, staff make the accommodation as attractive as possible through bright displays and good standards of cleanliness. The school's resources for learning are satisfactory overall with strengths in the quality and range of musical instruments, in part thanks to past pupils the Bee Gees, and weaknesses in the quality of some computers, the number of books, and outdoor play equipment for reception children. The poor quality of some computers has a negative effect upon pupils' eagerness to learn through computers' slowness in processing information. The lack of a connection to the Internet hinders teachers' work in Year 6 where photocopied sheets of 'web' pages are an enterprising but poor substitute for the real thing. However, cabling for such a connection has recently been installed.

Finance and efficiency

- 58 The governing body has put school finances on a sound footing after a recent period of budget uncertainty outside the school's control. The governors' finance committee is well informed and meets regularly to check spending. Governors have recently undertaken a thorough review of clerical administration, producing a draft report which is now under consideration. All educational grants are used properly. The governing body is beginning to apply the principles of best value to its major spending decisions but has not yet finalised procedures that will enable it to do this systematically. Spending on educational priorities is linked broadly to the school development plan but such links are not yet detailed enough to allow governors to form a longer term view of spending or to check how effectively money has been spent.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 59 In order to build upon recent improvements and to take these further, the governing body should:
- (1) Raise standards of attainment in pupils' writing at Key Stage 2 by:
providing teachers with further professional training in the skills of teaching writing;
monitoring their success in implementing such training.
(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 7, 19, 84, 88)
 - (2) Raise standards in information technology at both key stages by:
providing teachers and support staff with further training in key skills;
continuing to improve the quality of resources;
implementing the subject action plan in full. *
(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 9, 20, 57, 136-140)
 - (3) Improve provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
developing teachers' ability to write and to implement pupils' individual learning plans;
allocating appropriate resources to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 11, 23, 27, 37, 56, 89,96, 116)
 - (4) Improve the school's partnership with parents by:
improving communications with parents;
building and capitalising upon parents' interest in their children's education and upon their existing goodwill;
devising and implementing strategies to improve parents' involvement in their children's learning.
(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 46-50)
 - (5) Raise levels of attendance and improve pupils' timekeeping by:
continuing to highlight to parents the importance of regular attendance and

good timekeeping.

(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 16, 39)

- (6) Make the school development plan a more effective aid to the school's longer term development by:

increasing the period of time covered by the plan;

focusing on fewer, more significant priorities;

providing more detailed action plans for the year ahead;

linking educational priorities more closely to the school budget;

(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 52, 53, 58)

- (7) Improve the state of the school playgrounds in order to make them more attractive and stimulating places in which to play.

(Main references to this issue in the report are in paragraphs 38, 57)

- 60 In addition, the governing body should consider the following for inclusion in its action plan:

developing the school library; *

(paragraphs 57, 82)

improving provision of activities outside of lessons;

(paragraph 29)

developing procedures for assessing best value. *

(paragraph 58)

* Already identified by the school as a priority for development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15	38	42	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	44	400
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	127

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	80

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	214

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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	29	22	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	24
	Girls	17	17	21
	Total	37	39	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73	76	88
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	22
	Girls	19	21	19
	Total	41	45	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80	88	80
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	32	22	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	17	25
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	25	29	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46	54	70
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	15	20
	Girls	12	13	12
	Total	20	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	37	52	59
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	53
Indian	43
Pakistani	111
Bangladeshi	12
Chinese	6
White	183
Any other minority ethnic group	42

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian	1	
Pakistani	4	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	8	1
Other minority ethnic groups	4	

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	44

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.6
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	822810
Total expenditure	807669
Expenditure per pupil	
Balance brought forward from previous year	35099
Balance carried forward to next year	50240

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	355
Number of questionnaires returned	121

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	38	3	1	6
My child is making good progress in school.	33	50	7	2	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	45	16	2	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	30	31	9	13
The teaching is good.	35	47	6	2	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	40	17	4	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	26	7	3	12
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	39	8	4	10
The school works closely with parents.	31	39	13	6	12
The school is well led and managed.	21	45	9	6	19
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	46	5	1	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	30	23	13	14

Other issues raised by parents

A significant minority of parents attending the pre-inspection meeting considered the school playgrounds to be of unsatisfactory quality. They also considered that too little time is spent on subjects other than literacy and numeracy, and especially that too little time is spent on physical education.

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

- 61 Children begin nursery with average attainment overall, although individual levels of attainment vary greatly. A significant minority of children have a home language other than English and are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection there were 29 full time four-year-old children in the nursery and twenty six three-year-old children attending on a part time basis. In the reception class there were 30 children attending full time, starting the academic year in which they become five.
- 62 Children make good progress in the nursery and when they transfer to the reception class this good progress is maintained. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children have achieved well and attain the expected levels of learning in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. This is due to very good teaching in these areas of learning. The good quality of provision has been sustained since the time of the school's last inspection.

Personal social and emotional development

- 63 Good procedures for introducing children to school life and a carefully planned transfer programme between the nursery and reception class, help the children settle in with ease. Care is taken to meet with parents and carers either in school or at home in order to be able to plan carefully to meet the individual needs of children. Extra support is given to parents of children who are new to the English language. This support is much appreciated by these parents and helps settle their children into school.
- 64 Nearly all the children enter the nursery class with average skills in personal and social development. This area is given high priority, and by the time they leave the reception class the children have made good progress in working as part of a group or class and meet the levels of learning expected for children this age. Most are confident to try new activities and speak to other children and adults. This reflects skilful teaching in both the nursery and the reception classes. In both settings, staff ensure that children feel secure, encourage and support them and have high expectation of what they can achieve. Children whose first language is not English receive good support enabling them to make good progress in their work. There are clear expectations of children to grow in independence and to have good behaviour. Particular cultural and religious beliefs are carefully taken into account in planning play and learning.
- 65 In the nursery, the majority of children are eager to learn and, even though they have only been in class for a short time, already show good understanding of class routines. In both year groups, children play and work together well. In the reception class, children even though very excited at the prospect of a visit from a mother and new baby, respond well to expectations to sit quietly on the carpet. Many children happily engage in activities of their own, for example quietly reading or using the computer. They respond well to teachers' instructions, for example to remember to say "Please" and "Thank you". They listen carefully to their teachers and do as they are told. They demonstrate growing independence in their dressing skills and in personal hygiene, for example putting on aprons and washing hands following a

painting activity and putting their coats on the correct peg in the cloakroom.

Communication, Language and literacy

- 66 This area of learning is particularly well taught. In both classes listening and speaking skills are extended effectively through a wide range of carefully planned activities. When children are playing, staff engage them in discussion, question them effectively and challenge them to think. Staff keep detailed records of the progress children make. An improvement since the last inspection has been the better use in the reception class of the nursery records and assessments to build successfully upon what children already know and can do. This enables children to attain expected levels of learning.
- 67 In the nursery, well-planned activities, which include children speaking and listening, enable them to communicate their thoughts and feelings. The writing corner and the 'hospital' provide very good opportunities for children to imagine and recreate roles and experiences. They pretend to be doctors, nurses and patients and make early attempts at communicating by telephone, and writing down simple telephone messages. Children are taught to hold their pencils correctly, how to form their letters and to write their name and simple words and sentences. The high quality displays, for example the impressive picture of the rainbow fish, the good quality script in teachers' captions, together with the great care taken to display children's own work, promote good standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- 68 In the reception class, elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used imaginatively to help develop children's reading skills. Children enjoy having stories read to them and know that stories follow a sequence of events. Very effective questioning is used to develop further their speech and language skills and this results in children talking confidently with each other and adults about the content of stories and what will happen next. A good example of this was when sharing the story 'You Can't Catch Me' by John Prater. In both classes, the book corner is used well by children, who confidently share books with their friends. Each child has a homework bag containing their reading book which they are encouraged to take home to share. By the time children end reception year, most write simple sentences unaided and appropriately and are beginning to use capital letters and full stops.

Mathematical development

- 69 Teaching in this area of development is very good. In both classes, teachers, nursery nurses and support staff, who work closely as a team, demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn mathematics. There are carefully planned opportunities for children to develop their mathematical language and understanding of number through practical activities and daily routines. High quality displays, such as the number lines, are used well as teaching aids to assist children during counting activities. The children with English as an additional language receive good quality support to enable them to make good progress in the acquisition of early mathematical vocabulary through discussion about practical activities.
- 70 In the nursery, children using play dough to aid their development of mathematical skills identify bigger and smaller. Others successfully count the number of dolls and sort them according to the colour of their hair. Children playing with toy animals confidently count up to ten and some beyond. In the reception class when checking how many are present, many count to 25 with ease. Imaginative and exciting methods are used to maintain the children's interest and to enable them to make good progress in their skills and understanding. A small group of children working with

the teacher are beginning to show understanding of addition. Her excellent use of the elephant story to involve the class in adding on prepared them well for the more formal activity. Some lower attaining children played a rocket game where they learn to count to seven, well supported by the nursery nurse.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 71 When children enter the Year 1 class they have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Carefully planned activities encourage children to find out about, and identify features of, living things and to investigate and question why things happen. Adults support children well in investigating their surroundings and encourage them to find things out for themselves. In both classes teachers planning and earlier records show that children learn about their local area and grow in knowledge and understanding about festivals and celebrations.
- 72 In the nursery class, children learn about themselves. They look through mirrors and discuss the colour of their eyes and their hair with their friends. Use of rhymes and appropriate stories, for example the one about 'funny bones', are used well to extend their knowledge. The investigative area contains exciting items for observation and exploration such as the magnifying glass, plants and fish. Children are taught how to use the computer. For example, children whose first language is not English received bilingual tuition when learning how to control the computer 'mouse'.
- 73 In reception, when provided with exciting first hand experiences such as the visit of a new baby, children demonstrate good knowledge of the needs of babies, for example for them to be wrapped up warm. They compare the baby's size of hands with theirs and show understanding of some changes from when they were younger.

Physical education

- 74 Children are achieving the early learning goals in this area. In both classes there is a richly stimulating learning environment and wide variety of learning opportunities. Staff help children to use tools and modelling materials with increasing skill.
- 75 The good quality range of equipment, plus the spacious and well organised outside play area, enable children to practise their running, jumping, skipping and hopping skills. When riding their bicycles, they control their speed and avoid obstacles. There are appropriate physical challenges which enable children to grow in confidence, for example, to climb up steps, cross a bridge, jump, land carefully and do a forward roll. This activity gives them great pleasure and they show pride in their achievements. During all activities, staff ensure that children are well supported and that good attention is given to safety. Clear instructions and skilful questioning extend well children's understanding of what is required. Children in the reception class have less opportunity to use this space for prolonged sessions although staff do ensure regular access for short periods of time.

Creative development

- 76 Children are provided with carefully planned opportunities to explore colour and shape and to use their imagination through art, music, stories, dance and imaginative play. When experimenting with paint, children are taught in how to hold the paintbrush correctly in order to paint their hand and make a hand print. They are challenged to think about their work through skilful discussion and questioning about what they are doing and what they should do next. The detail in their paintings of daisies show that they have looked very carefully before recording what they have seen. Children sing

well together and can remember the words and tunes to simple rhymes for example 'Mary Mary Quite Contrary'. They are encouraged to clap in time to the music and are introduced to musical vocabulary such as rhythm. The taped accompaniment is rather fast and difficult for the children to keep up with therefore the teacher sensibly stops the tape to enable the children to practise repeating her clapping rhythms.

ENGLISH

- 77 Standards at the time of the last inspection were in line with the national average at the age of seven. There was a significant improvement in test results for seven year olds at the school in the two years following that inspection with attainment well above average two years ago, although standards in 1999 were similar to the national average. When compared with the results of schools with a similar intake performance was well above average last year.
- 78 At Key Stage 2, the picture in 1999 was less impressive, with attainment well below average, but in 2000 there was significant improvement in the English scores in reading. However, standards in writing were still below average. At the time of the inspection there were no national comparative figures available for the year 2000.
- 79 Work seen during the inspection indicates that at the age of seven, pupils' attainment overall in English is average with a minority of pupils attaining above what is usually expected of pupils at seven years of age. At age 11, work seen indicates an improvement, with a higher percentage of pupils than previously recorded achieving average levels of attainment. This is particularly so in reading, although standards in writing are below average. Overall, attainment in English remains below average. However, evidence indicates that pupils' standards are improving at a significant rate and that a higher number of pupils than in previous years are on track to achieve the level expected of eleven year olds. This is a positive picture given the high percentage of pupils in school who have English as an additional language and the complexity of difficulties of those pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. Some pupils move schools several times. Others do not attend school regularly enough or arrive at school late, often missing the start of lessons. This results in some pupils not always making the progress of which they are capable.
- 80 At the ages of seven and 11, the majority of pupils achieve standards in speaking and listening that are at least in line with the national average and a significant minority achieves above this level. There is a small minority of pupils at both key stages whose vocabulary is restricted when they try to explain their ideas or feelings. In both key stages most pupils of all ages and abilities listen carefully to their teachers and classmates, although a small number of pupils find it difficult to listen for sustained periods of time. Pupils whose first language is not English receive good support, enabling them to participate fully in lessons and to make satisfactory progress. Throughout the school, speaking skills are consistently well developed through carefully planned opportunities for pupils to express themselves through whole class and group discussion.
- 81 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in reading is average. A significant minority who attain particularly good standards clearly enjoy reading, and read with fluency, accuracy and understanding. The National Literacy Strategy is beginning to have a positive impact on standards in reading. Pupils take an active part in group and shared reading activities during the literacy hour. They demonstrate a growing knowledge of the alphabet and use their knowledge of letter sounds, pictures and

basic key words to establish the meaning of the text they are reading. Younger pupils hold reading books correctly, know how to read from left to right and retell stories using pictures. Older pupils demonstrate good progress and an increasing knowledge of strategies used to assist them in reading words they are not sure of. Most pupils are able to explain the difference between an author and an illustrator and are gaining an appreciation of the different types of books that exist. When reading the story, they show that they are beginning to take account of capital letters, full stops and speech marks and can locate and read key words and simple sentences from the text.

- 82 By the age of 11, pupils' attainment in reading is average. When reading text in whole class shared reading sessions, most lower attaining pupils read accurately although a minority are unable to read with appropriate pace and expression or to show an acceptable level of understanding. Higher attaining pupils are keen to read. They enjoy reading for pleasure and are able to discuss books and authors they know, for example Roald Dahl and Jacqueline Wilson. Most pupils show good understanding of the difference between fact and fiction. Pupils' skills in using a dictionary and a thesaurus are developing satisfactorily. The more advanced skills to enable pupils to undertake independent study or research are not yet sufficiently advanced for some pupils although average and high attainers research information competently. At present there is no school library and this impedes the development of the skills of researching information. However, plans to create this facility are being developed and the school is developing a scheme of work for information skills. In the meantime, the school is sensibly making good use of the local public library. Throughout the school, pupils take reading books home. There is good support from those parents and carers who regularly hear their child read at home. This helps pupils' develop enthusiasm for reading.
- 83 By the age of seven, pupils' standards in writing are average. However, the quality of presentation, the amount of work and the standards attained vary between classes of similar pupils in the same year group. Most pupils are beginning to write independently and show understanding that a story should have a beginning, a middle and an end. However, a small minority of pupils hold their pencil incorrectly and therefore have insufficient control to form their letters as they should. Higher attaining pupils write news and stories using complete sentences. They use capital letters and full stops accurately.
- 84 At the age of 11, standards in writing are below the level usually expected of pupils this age and some high attaining pupils do not yet achieve the levels they should. Pupils are, however, writing for a good range of purposes, which includes letters, stories, poetry, news reports and some interesting extended pieces of writing resulting from research of life in Roman times. The work in lessons observed clearly demonstrates that pupils' grammatical skills are improving, for example their knowledge and understanding of synonyms and adjectival clauses. Work seen in pupils' books shows too much completion of exercises which promote repetition of skills learnt earlier, for example identification of nouns and adjectives, story planning and use of commas, rather than an increase in pupils' writing capabilities. The more recent interesting work linked to writing a biography, and the work on using words to extend their sentences and to make them more interesting, is of a more appropriate level of attainment. The majority of pupils are not at this level and there are insufficient examples of longer pieces of writing resulting from pupils finding things out for themselves. Although most high and average attaining pupils are writing consistently in a joined-up style of handwriting, too many pupils within the key stage are still printing and completing their work in pencil. The school has recently introduced a structured system to support the teaching of spelling and handwriting. Where this

has been implemented, pupils' handwriting and spelling skills are improving. Information and computer technology is not yet being used sufficiently as an alternative form of writing down ideas.

- 85 At Key Stage 1, all but one lesson observed in the inspection week were of a satisfactory standard. In the one good lesson, methods used were interesting and therefore pupils enjoyed the lesson and were eager to participate. Skilful questioning extended their understanding of when to use punctuation and clarified their knowledge of the sequence of a story. Good management of behaviour ensured that children were able to think about and get on with their work without being interrupted. Imaginative use of resources engaged the interest of pupils, motivated them to think, work hard and to make good gain in understanding, knowledge and skills.
- 86 At Key Stage 2, teaching is more variable in quality but is always at least satisfactory. In the classes with the younger pupils, teaching is generally satisfactory with one lesson judged to be good. In this lesson, effective team work with a qualified assistant ensured that a pupil with behavioural difficulties concentrated on the task set, and work was well matched to all the pupils learning needs, for example the challenging work in the use of a thesaurus for the higher attaining pupils. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are grouped according to their ability for English. Teaching in these groups is at least of good quality and at times it is very good. Work challenges and motivates pupils to persevere. Questions used are well focused, allowing pupils to deepen their understanding of the story being studied. Pupils are confident and their positive attitudes and good behaviour make an important contribution to their progress. Pupils are eager to learn and their high level of concentration is promoted by the good choice of the text. In one lesson the story of 'Perseus' encouraged interest in reading and stimulated learning. In another very good lesson, the teacher's creative approach to the shared writing task encouraged pupils to research information about Nelson Mandela. Groups of pupils researched co-operatively and effectively to produce useful notes.

- 87 At both key stages, where teaching is effective, planning is detailed, teachers ensure that pupils are quite clear what they are to learn in the course of lessons, grammatical skills are taught effectively and records of pupils' progress are well maintained. Occasionally, however, when the pace of a lesson slows and the organisation of pupils into their learning groups takes too long, a minority of pupils become distracted and misbehave.
- 88 Occasionally when teachers' questions are targeted to the higher attaining pupils, they move on too quickly to the next teaching point. This means that the average and lower attaining pupils do not get the opportunity to contribute. Analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers are inconsistent in their expectations of presentation and in marking. There are plenty of positive comments. Although there is some very effective marking, not all teachers help pupils to identify what they are doing wrong and how to improve their work.
- 89 Individual education plans for the pupils with special educational needs are in an early stage of development. At times the work given to these pupils is at the wrong level and therefore pupils are insufficiently motivated to complete the task and fail to make satisfactory progress. A small minority of pupils have particular behavioural difficulties. Not all staff have sufficient knowledge in how to teach these pupils and are often without appropriate adult assistance to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Although at both key stages there is some effective support for pupils with special educational needs from the staff who support pupils for whom English is not their first language, there is insufficient specific support for pupils with special educational needs.
- 90 There have been some important initiatives since the last inspection with the clear intention of raising standards. There is now a consistent approach to the teaching of reading throughout the school. All pupils have a reading file and regular assessments linked to the levels of the National Curriculum. The coordinator and the headteacher have started monitoring teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning within classes across the school. However, the impact of recent developments is only just becoming evident.
- 91 The school is now making satisfactory analysis of the National Curriculum assessment results. These assessments are beginning to be used well in the identification of weaknesses and for setting school and individual pupil targets. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is beginning to be effective in raising standards. It has provided a more structured approach to planning the lessons but is not yet being used sufficiently well to enable all pupils to make good progress in their writing skills as they move from class to class. Additional literacy support in Years 3 and 4 is being given although the full impact of this is not yet evident. Plans are in hand for a school library and computer suite to enable pupils to enable pupils to develop the necessary skills in independent learning.

MATHEMATICS

- 92 Pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is average and standards are improving. There is a clear trend of rising standards. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for 11 year olds in mathematics were well below the national average and below the average for schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests was also well below the national average. Taken over the last four years, attainment at the age of 11 was below the national average. Inspection findings show standards now match the last inspection report when standards were judged to be in line with the national average. Most teachers are developing successfully their expertise in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and the benefit to pupils is evident in the good rate of learning in most lessons. In addition, the analysis of test results and the strengths and weaknesses identified are shared with the staff resulting in more realistic and challenging targets being set for all pupils. The dips in attainment evident at Key Stage 2 in recent years following pupils' good progress at Key Stage 1 are now being arrested with pupils at both key stages now achieving well. This all amounts to good improvement since the last inspection.
- 93 The 1999 test and assessment results at age seven, indicate that pupils' attainment was well above the national average and very high in comparison with similar schools. National results have been steady over the past four years. The attainment of a significant majority of pupils currently in Year 2 is above average and standards are being maintained.
- 94 By the age of seven, almost all pupils add and subtract accurately and many also understand multiplication and division. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a sound knowledge of number facts to 20. They can identify tens and units and can arrange numbers to 100 in order. They have a good understanding that addition can be done in any order but not subtraction. Higher attainers recognise simple number patterns and relationships between numbers and use this understanding when carrying out calculations. For example, a pupil quickly worked out $51 - 25 = 26$ because he knew that $25 + 25 = 50$, showing clear understanding that subtraction reverses addition. They are developing the confidence to predict simple number relationships. In problem solving standards vary. The higher attainers are beginning to use mental strategies in solving problems, for example, when working out how many tubes of sweets I can buy for a £1 they used the principle of doubling. They are able to read simple problems and use appropriate number operations. The lower attainers are more reliant on practical resources to support their learning. Most pupils recognise and describe the names of common shapes such as rectangles, circles and triangles. The higher attainers are able to identify the more complex shapes such as cylinders, pyramids and cuboids. The large majority has a good knowledge of their tables, counting in multiples of 5,6,8 and 10 with real skill. They use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and symbols. Progress is good in mental mathematics sessions. However, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is variable and sometimes insufficient, limited by weaknesses in provision which mean that pupils sometimes do not receive work that matches their needs. Pupils with English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress.
- 95 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils understand place value to 1,000. They multiply whole numbers by 10 and multiples of 10. Most pupils add and subtract numbers to one decimal place, writing their calculations on paper. Higher attaining pupils use all four rules of number to work with numbers containing two decimal places and can calculate fractions and percentages of numbers and quantities. They understand that multiplication is the inverse of division and use this to check results. Pupils carry out calculations involving multiplication using two digit numbers but only a minority of the

higher attainers shows ease with multiplication, ably demonstrating skills in splitting numbers. For example, in Year 6, pupils multiplied two digit numbers together correctly by a process of breaking these numbers down into sets for easier calculations. In data handling, pupils interpret accurately 'pie chart' information and record their results in fractions and decimal fractions. They are developing strategies for solving problems, identifying the important parts of the information, using approximation and rounding to estimate the answer, although, using and applying mathematics is not a strong feature in their work. As they move through the key stage, pupils build on their previous learning and develop a sound understanding of shape and space, learning to recognise reflective symmetry in two-dimensional shapes. Pupils' progress in Years 5 and 6 is being significantly accelerated in numeracy through more rigorous teaching of mental skills and the grouping of pupils according to their ability.

- 96 The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented effectively throughout the school. Pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary is well developed mainly because it is used to good effect by teachers in lesson introductions. However, there are still too few opportunities throughout both key stages for pupils' to solve mathematical problems. Also, most pupils rarely have the opportunity to plan own learning. The presentation of pupils' work is satisfactory overall and is good in those lessons where teachers have high expectations of this aspect of work.
- 97 The progress made in lessons by most pupils in Key Stage1 is largely satisfactory, with good progress in some classes. The good rate of progress relates directly to challenging questioning and responding to pupils' ideas, and to vigorous pace and activities which are well matched to pupils' abilities. At Key Stage 2, progress made in lessons is good. In Year 4, very good use of support staff for pupils learning English as an additional language and good quality interaction between teacher and pupils greatly assists pupils' progress. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are given demanding tasks and the quality of questioning results in pupils extending their knowledge and understanding of mathematical processes. Throughout both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set for them.
- 98 In 70 per cent of all lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was at least good. In all other lessons observed teaching was satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, 50 percent of lessons were good with the rest being satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, 80 percent of teaching was at least good, with the rest being satisfactory. Where teaching is very good, as in a lesson with the higher attaining Year 6 pupils, the teacher provides the pupils with thinking time, explaining methods of calculation and involving pupils in mathematical dialogue. This resulted in very good progress. In a good lesson in Year 6, the teacher evaluated the pupils' work from the previous day on multiplication and division, identified their mistakes and used them effectively as teaching points to improve their understanding of multiplication as the inversion of division. As a result, pupils made good progress during this lesson. Common features of the better teaching were good subject knowledge and high expectations, giving pupils the confidence and time to think and to talk through their ideas. Teachers also use assessment effectively to help them in their lesson planning. Good questioning techniques are used to support and extend pupils' learning. The session at the end of the numeracy lesson is generally well used to assess the learning and point up future leaning goals. Where teaching has weaknesses, questioning and discussion are too brief, with pupils moving on too quickly to completing worksheets. On these few occasions, some pupils are insufficiently challenged and their progress is limited.

- 99 Where teaching is good pupils' attitudes to mathematics are also good. They work with commitment and enthusiasm and respond well to questions that engage their thinking. They work independently without the need for adult supervision, working co-operatively in pairs and groups. Relationships are generally good and set a positive atmosphere where pupils can join in class discussions with confidence. Most pupils behave well during lessons. These features contribute to the good progress. The few instances where behaviour was inappropriate directly related to tasks being insufficiently well matched to pupils' ability, resulting in some restlessness.
- 100 Observations during the inspection indicate that the setting of pupils in Key Stage 2 is a successful strategy. All pupils are making better progress. The grouping of pupils by ability for mathematics lessons in Years 5 and 6 results in more effective teaching for all pupils. The higher and average attainers are now being challenged appropriately. Lower attaining pupils are more responsive, confident and really enjoy demonstrating their numeracy skills to the class. Pupils with special educational needs are more effectively supported. Pupils who have English as an additional language also make good progress resulting from teachers' awareness and skills in ensuring these pupils understand the key language and concepts. There is flexibility in the system allowing pupils to move within the settings. Target setting is an effective feature in helping to raise standards. Most lessons are suitably planned and include specific objectives. Teachers meet in year groups to ensure consistency of planning between classes.
- 101 Where homework' is given it is effectively reinforcing learning. However, the use of homework throughout the school is still inconsistent although improving. Marking of the work of higher attaining pupils is of good quality, with constructive comments but the school's strategies are not always applied equally rigorously to the marking of the work of average and below average attaining pupils.
- 102 Informative displays of mathematical work have a high profile in the school. They are present in all classes and circulating areas. Pupils develop their skills of numeracy in other subjects satisfactorily at both key stages. There are examples of work on data handling in science and geography, also in art and religious education, symmetry and tessellation work. A limited amount of evidence is available to show that pupils are using information technology to help them develop their mathematical skills, for example in presenting and interpreting data at Key Stage 2.

- 103 Comprehensive planning helps pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The two recently appointed, temporary coordinators work closely together. The school's numeracy action plan outlines future priorities. They indicate a school that knows its strengths and weaknesses in numeracy and are constantly re-assessing their standards. For example, they have just revised their targets for the year 2001 for the end of Key Stage 2, increasing significantly their expectations of higher scores in National Curriculum tests. These coordinators are knowledgeable and keen to share their vision and enthusiasm for mathematics with colleagues. There is a good range of resources, which are well-organised and easily accessible.

SCIENCE

- 104 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in science is average, as it was in the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, teachers judged that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels was well below the national average and below that for similar schools. However, the proportion reaching the higher level was very high in comparison to the national figures. Inspection findings are that attainment has improved and most pupils are on target to achieve the expected levels by the time they are seven years old. This improvement follows the strong and effective emphasis on teaching scientific enquiry skills, in common with the teaching at Key Stage 2.
- 105 By the time pupils are 11 years old, most reach the expected level of attainment in the subject. The proportion reaching the higher level is similar to that found nationally. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 showed that the number of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the average for schools nationally and below the average for schools in similar areas. In the same tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was about the same as that nationally, and above average for similar schools. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, the overwhelming majority of 11year olds reached the expected levels. Inspection findings support this picture of improvement, showing that the upward trend in results seen each year since the previous inspection is continuing. Much of this improvement is due to the good work done since that time, including a strong and effective focus on teaching skills in scientific enquiry. The school has revised the targets for attainment next year to take account of this continued improvement. The forecast that all pupils will reach at least the required level at the end of the key stage is challenging yet achievable.
- 106 Pupils start Key Stage 1 with a good knowledge and understanding of the world about them and make satisfactory progress. They build soundly on these skills through effectively planned units of work and use their investigative skills to extend their scientific understanding. Pupils carry out investigations competently. They carefully explore objects through direct observation and record their findings in words and pictures, sometimes with the aid of useful planning forms. Pupils are beginning to understand the idea of conducting a fair test. For example, when finding out which orange is the juiciest, Year 2 pupils tried to keep as many conditions as possible the same, changing only the orange. Pupils learn the importance of eating healthy foods and that different types of food help us to stay healthy. This is a useful link to health education. Pupils efficiently classify materials according to their properties, for example whether they are shiny or dull, or compare the bounciness of balls. However, sometimes there is insufficient work on explaining these differences or in following the implications through. For example, Year 2 pupils last year investigated how bouncy different balls were but did not then discuss why different balls were made of different materials.

- 107 Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school, they have a sound grounding in the range of scientific knowledge and understanding required by the National Curriculum. They carry out a range of activities that are very effective in helping them to develop their understanding of scientific enquiry, and learn more about the world around them. Pupils ask questions, such as what happens when light is reflected? They make predictions and carry out investigations to find the answers. They record their results, using measurements when appropriate, and record and display them clearly using tables and graphs. Pupils in Year 6 last year predicted which factors might affect the solubility of different substances and designed useful ways of testing their ideas. They considered their findings carefully and answered their own questions with understanding and honesty, thus realising that an inaccurate prediction also has value in this type of enquiry. Pupils have a balanced knowledge of those concepts and facts covered by the National Curriculum. They have a sound understanding of the processes common to all living things and investigate the properties of different materials. They know that these properties have an impact on their uses, explaining for example, why it is not a good idea to make spoons out of jelly. Pupils know that forces are pushes and pulls, and have a firm understanding of basic concepts of light, realising, for example, that we see objects because light is reflected from them into our eyes.
- 108 At both key stages, higher attaining pupils, as well as those for whom English is an additional language, make similar progress to other pupils. All make sound use of their literacy skills in writing reports, for example of how the heart works, and when recording the work they do. Pupils deploy their numeracy skills effectively, making appropriate measurements, for example of length, weight or volume, and display these in graphical form. However, they make insufficient use of information and communications technology in the subject, as reported in the previous inspection.
- 109 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The effect of this is to provide pupils with a satisfactory quality of learning. However, teaching of the skills of scientific enquiry is very effective. Teachers' planning for series of lessons is detailed and effectively covers the range of knowledge and understanding required at both key stages. This is aided by the thoughtful use of a commercial scheme, supported by effective materials prepared by the teachers themselves, such as the 'investigation planners' that guide pupils through the process of asking and answering scientific questions. Teachers plan lessons that have clear and attainable objectives and share these objectives with the pupils. Consequently, pupils understand the purpose behind their work and recognise its relevance. Teachers' explanations are clear. This improves the quality of pupils' learning and gives them a clear illustration of the concept. Often, teachers make effective use of teaching resources, as in Year 6, when the teacher used an overhead projector to good effect to explain how a mirror reflects rays of light. As a result, pupils settle quickly to productive work, for example, when Year 4 produced bar charts of the lengths of arms and feet of the tallest children in classes throughout the school. Teachers' plans include a good mix of scientific enquiry and knowledge. The quality of teaching scientific enquiry is a strength throughout the school. This aspect is taught well and is a significant factor in the good degree of improvement in standards in science since the previous inspection and in helping pupils to learn well.
- 110 Pupils are interested in their work. They work hard during lessons and there is a buzz of excitement and interest during practical sessions. There was only one lesson observed in which the teaching was unsatisfactory, another improvement in the provision for science teaching since the last inspection. This was the effect of unsound techniques for managing pupils' behaviour. The noise level in the class

became too high, resulting in unsatisfactory quality of learning for most pupils in the class.

- 111 Since the last inspection, the school has introduced government recommended guidelines for teaching, supported by a commercial scheme. Teachers have undergone good in-service training to help to remedy the previously reported lack of subject confidence. Planning now means that pupils build on the work they have done before and that those in different classes in the same year group are taught equally effectively. This all adds up to good improvement.

ART

- 112 At the ages of seven and 11, pupils' standards of work match the levels expected nationally. Standards attained in the previous report have been maintained.
- 113 Knowledge of how to mix colours and print is well developed in the reception class and this is successfully extended in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils carefully represent what they observe, using pencil and paint to good effect. An example of this occurred in Year 1 when pupils were given the opportunity to use a good selection of media including charcoal and crayons to record their observations of their partner's eye.
- 114 Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 collect and record visual images of pattern from first hand observation of their school environment. Higher attaining pupils pay good attention to detail and shade their work to satisfactory effect. However, the majority have not yet developed skills in recording finer detail. During a visit to Longford Park, older pupils have explored the natural environment as a starting point for their practical work. Work in sketch books shows that they have carefully made recordings to use at a future date in their own landscapes. Previously there have been planned opportunities for the discussion of the difference between man-made and natural materials. In the lesson observed, discussion focused on the difference between urban and rural landscapes. Pupils compare ideas about the methods and approaches of a range of artists. They share ideas about the similarities and difference in styles of a range of artists including Monet and Van Gogh.
- 115 Most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move throughout the school. There has been some interesting cross curricular work, for example in Year 1 on investigation of forces in science, where pupils experimented to find out which straw would push paint the furthest. At Key Stage 2 pupils have been involved in imaginative painting, collage and print making. Previous work displayed in the hall includes accurate use of prints from the National Portrait Gallery to assist them in their Tudor portraits. Pupils in Year 4 made colourful prayer mats which reflect the practices of other world faiths. Carefully presented symmetry designs support work in mathematics.
- 116 Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported to take part in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs do not always receive the support they require. This was evident in one lesson when pupils were unable to concentrate and their behaviour required constant attention from the class teacher. Most pupils, however, show good attitudes to their work. They are enthusiastic, help each other and complete work carefully.
- 117 Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Lessons are carefully prepared and tasks are usually interesting. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently and in pairs. The school is just beginning to use a published scheme of work. The pupils are taught skills effectively and opportunities are provided for

them to experiment using a satisfactory range of tools, media and techniques. In the lessons observed, teachers used questioning effectively to encourage pupils to review and improve their work. Occasionally the work is too challenging, not yet being matched carefully enough to the age range and capabilities of the pupils.

- 118 The curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. Pupils are introduced to an appropriate and broad range of activities. The coordinator, together with other teachers, has produced a useful policy document for the subject. The scheme of work which has recently been introduced is helpful to teachers in their planning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 119 Only one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection. Such judgements that can be made are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and information from the subjects' coordinator. There was only a limited amount of work from Key Stage 2 available for scrutiny, as much had been destroyed in a fire.
- 120 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment matches the levels expected nationally, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Their quality of learning is satisfactory, and they make sound progress as they work on tasks based on the government's recommended guidelines for the subject. Year 1 pupils made fruit kebabs, first drawing what they proposed to make, based on available fruits. They made and tested them effectively by eating them and then talked about what they had done. They work with a range of materials and design, plan and build artefacts such as finger puppets. They build soundly on what they have learned. Year 2 pupils plan and make model fire engines, following a careful design process that includes working out the materials they need and the techniques, such as cutting and pasting, that they will use when making the object. The fire engines that they make showed that they follow their designs carefully and finish them to a satisfactory standard. They make sound evaluations of the finished products, saying what they like or don't like, and how they would approach the task next time.
- 121 There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the standards attained by the age of 11, for the reasons stated above. Consequently, it is not possible to make comparisons with the findings of the previous inspection, when standards attained at age 11 were identified as a weakness. From the limited evidence available, pupils in Years 3 and 4 soundly develop the skills learned at Key Stage 1 and progress is satisfactory in these two years. Year 3 pupils analyse packaging thoroughly, examining how the packaging for different products are designed and made, including its construction and the use of words and pictures on the final product. They plan and make their own packages, carefully following the design process, including making preliminary models with construction kits. They are beginning to incorporate features such as pneumatic control (using balloons) in some of their work. Year 4 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress as they design and make purses and picture frames, learning to use design elements such as strengthened wooden frames.
- 122 There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning overall. However, the evidence available suggests that it is at least satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and in the earlier part of Key Stage 2, in that pupils are making satisfactory progress and cover the required elements of the National Curriculum. In the lesson that was observed during the inspection, the organisation of

the lesson meant that the majority of pupils did not make enough progress in the time available. They spent too much time waiting for their turns in carrying out the next part of the lesson. This limited the quality of learning.

- 123 The school has adopted the government's recommended guidelines for the subject and planning shows that these are now central to the teaching of design and technology throughout the school. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

- 124 By the ages of seven and 11, standards of work seen matches the levels expected nationally. They make satisfactory progress in the development of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make similar satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Improvements have been made in the teaching of geographical skills and ensuring that all pupils receive a consistent curriculum.
- 125 By the age of seven, pupils are able to identify objects, features and activities that can be found at a seaside locality. They make clear comparisons with their own immediate area. The majority of pupils in a Year 2 class know that France is the nearest country to England and are able to identify methods of transport to travel there. Some pupils know that travelling to destinations in Greece or Spain involves long journeys by aeroplane, coach or car. They express views about places and recognise differences; for example, pupils know that currency usually has to be changed when abroad. Most pupils are able to state that the currency in France is the franc and the capital of France is Paris. Geographical skills develop satisfactorily as pupils follow and give directions around the school using a simple plan and give written directions outside the locality of the school. Local geographical features are studied, developing pupils' skills as they visit areas in and around Chorlton. Geographical vocabulary develops as pupils understand the differences between immigration, migration, emigration, settlement and refugee.
- 126 At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 4 look carefully at the school environment noting aspects about their school building which they like or dislike. They think about wider environmental issues as they look at aspects of recycling and undertake litter surveys. Skills in map reading are developed satisfactorily as pupils investigate why settlements are located in particular areas. Pupils understand that village life in India is very different from life in Chorlton, but that there are also similarities; for example, children still have to go to school. In Year 6, pupils look at how rivers produce particular landscape features. When using a map of the British Isles, they can identify Manchester and local features in Chorlton, for example the River Mersey and Chorlton Brook. Pupils use correct geographical vocabulary to describe how river erosion can change the landscape over a period of time.
- 127 In the majority of lessons, pupils are attentive and enjoy their activities. Pupils' relationships in classrooms are usually positive and helpful, particularly when working in pairs. Pupils are generally keen to talk about their work and the behaviour of the majority of pupils is good. There are occasions however when isolated incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour in class hinder the otherwise sound progress that pupils make.

- 128 Most teaching is satisfactory, with some good and very good teaching observed during the inspection. Very good teaching is illustrated by very carefully planned lessons, with activities correctly matched to the different ability levels within the class. Resources are used effectively to further develop the knowledge, understanding and geographical skills of the pupils. In very good lessons, pupils make good progress because the pace of learning is lively, with pupils carried along by the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm. In less successful lessons, although activities are still carefully planned, strategies to manage behaviour are not secure or successful enough to ensure that pupils make progress at a satisfactory pace. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in their lessons because teachers ensure that learning opportunities are well planned and interesting, with appropriate emphasis placed on the development of skills. Pupils are given the opportunity to visit Linnet Clough in Derbyshire in Year 2 and Year 6 to develop their skills in comparing and contrasting rural and urban localities, and to develop their social skills in working with others in an environment different from school.
- 129 The subject is well led by a coordinator who works hard to help all staff become confident in teaching geography effectively. New schemes of work and staff curriculum guidelines are useful documents in ensuring that there is a clear progression in skills and knowledge throughout both key stages. The coordinator is aware of the need to further develop the use of information technology in the geography curriculum as school resources are increased. Resources for the subject are generally satisfactory.

HISTORY

- 130 During the inspection, it was not possible to observe any history lessons but discussions with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of plans, work and display provided sufficient evidence to make judgements. Pupils' standards of work in history at ages seven and 11 match the levels expected nationally and they make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and improvements have been made both in the quality and extent of pupils' writing in history.
- 131 By the age of seven, pupils have begun to develop simple historical research skills as they use dictionaries to find the differences between *to invade* and *to settle* for their work on early Invaders and Settlers. Pupils make thoughtful comparisons between Celts and Romans about their homes, clothes and weaponry. Pupils give clear answers to questions relating to Boudica and her battle with the Romans, using non-fiction books to research their work. Pupils have a sound understanding of the work of archaeologists. For example, they know that when excavating human remains and other historical objects, radio carbon dating can be used to estimate the age of such items. Pupils know that excavations at Sutton Hoo and Snape led to interesting historical finds and an increase in knowledge and understanding of past lives. Research skills and links with other curriculum areas have included pupils using chronological time-lines with correctly written dates and mapping skills to show the extent of the Roman Empire. A variety of resources are used effectively. These include diagrams, atlases, videos, artefacts and books.
- 132 Pupils in Year 4 understand the sequence of major events and key figures in the Tudor Age. In their work, pupils show that they understand the differences between fact and opinion. They use time-lines appropriately to illustrate the chronology of events. Thoughtful pieces of writing compare the life and experiences of rich and poor children in Tudor times, with relevant comparisons made with the life of children

today. Pupils use evidence from which to draw conclusions. For example, pictures, artefacts and contemporary articles are used to develop knowledge and understanding about the sinking of the *Mary Rose*. By the age of 11, pupils can make comparisons between ancient and modern Greece. Pupils display a developing understanding of chronological events and a sound base of factual knowledge. For example, they write accounts comparing and contrasting the political and social structures within Athens and Sparta. Historical skills develop further as pupils look at artefacts to research early civilisation in the Indus Valley.

- 133 Pupils enjoy their history studies, particularly when having “history days”, when dressing-up and when opportunities to act out parts were used during their visits to Chester to develop knowledge and understanding of the Romans and Tatton Park to learn about the Tudors. Work is generally presented well in books, with careful drawings made to illustrate their answers. Pupils show an interest in their work and there is evidence that pupils have a deepening understanding of how people, places and attitudes change over time.
- 134 Although a judgement on the quality of teaching cannot be made as no lessons were observed, scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that learning opportunities are carefully planned to build upon pupils' knowledge and understanding of the key events and characters in history. Appropriate emphasis has been placed upon developing sound historical research skills. Pupils have been given the opportunity to use a variety of interesting resources, but information technology skills have not been sufficiently developed and the lack of a school library inhibits the development of the skills of independent learning. Work in books has been carefully marked and assessment is used effectively to help teachers plan work for different groups of pupils within the classroom. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
- 135 The subject coordinator provides good leadership. A new scheme of work and curriculum guidelines have been written to take into account new government guidance and these are very useful documents to assist in planning lessons. Resources for the subject are presently satisfactory, apart from information technology resources which require updating, and are being further extended to take into account the new guidance.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 136 Standards at age seven and age 11 are below the levels expected nationally and pupils do not achieve well enough. This represents unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The main reasons for the unsatisfactory improvement lie in a lack of systematic learning opportunities being provided for pupils until recently and to the unsatisfactory quality of some computers being used. However, this state of affairs is now beginning to improve as the school implements its thorough action plan and begins to use national guidelines effectively.
- 137 By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how to enter and modify text into a word processing program. They know how to alter the size of print and how to print out their work. They describe accurately how to control a moving device in order to make it travel in particular directions. Last year, pupils in Year 2 produced graphs to present information about minibeasts, as part of their work in science. However, pupils' knowledge of how to store and retrieve work is uncertain and very limited. They are keen to work on computers and concentrate well when given the opportunity to do so.
- 138 By the age of 11, pupils use the word processor well, for example in order to write up their findings following scientific enquiry. Some high attaining pupils in Year 6 produced good quality written work about reflection as a result of their ability to use the word processor. Pupils also use CD-roms to help them research, for example finding information to help them write biographies, but the poor quality of some machines makes the retrieval of information a slow and sometimes frustrating process. Even high attaining pupils who use computers at home have uncertain understanding of control technology and of how to use spreadsheets or to present data. Pupils generally show interest in using computers but high attainers are occasionally frustrated by the slow response of some machines and decide to do some other work.
- 139 Learning in lessons observed was satisfactory, with pupils working effectively to develop their understanding at an appropriate level. Teachers are now using national guidelines to help them plan work that matches pupils' learning needs. This was particularly evident in Years 1 and 2 when teachers were developing pupils' understanding that sounds convey information. They did this effectively, following the guidelines. As a result, pupils increased their awareness and were keen to learn. Very little teaching of information technology was seen from Years 3 to 6 although this was partly due to the fact that information technology is mostly taught in a half hour period on a Monday morning and inspection priorities meant that inspectors could not visit these lessons. However, teachers' planning, especially in Year 6, shows that a systematic approach is now being taken to developing pupils' understanding and skills although this at an early stage and has not yet had a significant impact on standards. Teachers are hindered in their work by the lack of an Internet connection (although the cabling for such a connection is now in place). This means that they have to print off and photocopy pictures of pages from the World Wide Web in order to meet the requirements of the curriculum. This enterprising approach is much better than nothing but loses the excitement of designing and interacting with a real web page. Teachers make satisfactory use of information technology to support work in some lessons, as noted in some of the examples above. Pupils in Year 1 use a 'paint' program to help them develop their artistic skills. But information technology is not used sufficiently in science, geography, history and music in order to help pupils develop their skills. Very little was seen of pupils working together at computers in order to develop the skills of collaborative learning. Some opportunities to do this were missed. Little use is made yet of assessing pupils' skills to help teachers plan future

work. The development of assessment procedures is only in its early stages.

- 140 The coordinator, working closely with senior management and governors, has written a comprehensive action plan and this is beginning to be implemented. It is evidence of the school's will to improve and, if implemented in full, will certainly have a positive effect on standards achieved. The governing body has made a significant extra investment in financial resources in order to give an extra boost to spending. The school's financial plans for the subject are good and include wise use of national grants. A new computer suite is being developed and better quality machines have been ordered.

MUSIC

- 141 Standards at the ages of seven and 11 match the levels expected nationally. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment make satisfactory progress overall and standards have been generally maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make a similar rate of progress to others in their year groups.
- 142 By the age of seven, pupils sing clearly and in tune. They perform well together in singing practice. By Year 2, pupils sing simple songs with changes in pitch and tempo. For example, in their singing practice they sang a range of songs, from memory, keeping good time, and remembering that the chorus is repeated after each verse. They are developing an awareness of patterns in music. The majority of pupils can remember and repeat a simple pattern by clapping correctly and keeping to the beat. Using untuned percussion instruments, they make up their own short rhythm and sound patterns, these being successfully repeated by the rest of the class. However, composing is at an early stage of development. Pupils listen to a wide variety of music, which includes music from other cultures and times. They talk in simple terms about the sounds they hear. They know that different instruments make different sounds. For example, pupils in Year 2, listening to Saint-Saens 'Carnival of the Animals' fantasy, identified that the slow low sound represented the elephants.
- 143 Pupils in Key Stage 2 listen to and respond to music from different times and places. They are introduced to Western classical composers, for example, Mozart, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, Afro-Caribbean and music from other traditions. They are developing satisfactory listening skills, being able to identify some of the instruments being played in an orchestral arrangement. They perform their own rhythmic patterns using a range of percussion instruments but the quality of sounds lack detail. Progress is limited to making loud and low sounds. No composition work was seen during the inspection and there is no recording of previous compositions so early in the year. As a result, judgements cannot be made about this aspect. However, in singing, progress is satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils sing songs in two parts with good expression, clear diction and improved voice control. For example, in a Key Stage 2 assembly, pupils sang unaccompanied, but tunefully, the Hebrew song 'Shalom'. A minority of boys and girls, from Years 4 to 6, learn woodwind and string instruments. Their attainment is good. They sight read formal notation and confidently play their chosen instrument with a degree of competence.
- 144 Pupils are well behaved and generally attentive. Their attitude to music, across the key stages, is satisfactory. They persevere to improve both their individual and group performances. The pupils are confident when performing in front of an audience knowing that their contribution is valued. They generally select and handle instruments with care.

- 145 The quality of teaching in lessons observed was satisfactory. Lessons are planned with learning objectives and teaching points clearly identified. Pupils' previous knowledge and understanding are used effectively to help them develop their skills of performing music. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were able to tap out on their percussion instruments the rhythmic pattern of their name responding correctly to the teachers' signals. There is a satisfactory pace to lessons, helping to maintain pupils' interest, and good practical opportunities are provided for pupil involvement. Some teachers evaluate skillfully what the pupils are able to do and provide more challenging activities. For example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils singing an African lullaby, 'Yo MamanaYo' involving metro and rhythm, refined their performance, eventually singing the song with sensitive intonation. Good relationships with pupils and encouragement of pupils to evaluate their work were features of the lessons observed.
- 146 The previous inspection identified significant weaknesses in the organisation of the curriculum resulting in a lack of continuity and progression in the subject. It also highlighted teachers' general lack of competence in developing the creative aspects of the subject. There is now a whole school scheme of work in place which will ensure that opportunities for performing, composing, listening and appraising are provided. This addresses a criticism raised in the last inspection. However there are still no assessment procedures to ensure that pupils' learning is both continuous and progressive and there has been little professional development for the staff to improve their skills in the subject.
- 147 Leadership of the subject is under-developed. There is no development plan and the coordinator is not clear about what goes on in the school or the best way to take the subject forward. Resources are satisfactory and are used well in lessons although there is insufficient attention given to the range of information technology available for use in this subject, including pupils' use of tape recorders to record their work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 148 By the ages of seven and 11, pupils' attainment matches the levels expected nationally. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress as the result of effective teaching that covers the appropriate skills and understanding. Pupils develop physical control and coordination through a series of lessons that soundly develops their gymnastics skills, using a range of apparatus. They enjoy the activities that have been planned for them. Consequently, most are enthusiastic and try hard during the lesson. They have good attitudes to their work. Older pupils make satisfactory progress. They know the importance of warming up before physical exercise. They move confidently, balance and roll but are sometimes a little heavy on their feet. A pupil with physical special educational needs makes good progress with the help and support of the teacher and the positive attitudes of the other children in the class.

- 149 At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. As a result of a series of effectively planned lessons, pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills in gymnastics, games and dance. Pupils develop a range of skills that are appropriate for their age. They find different ways of moving around the floor and on apparatus. Year 4 pupils make satisfactory progress when learning to use a racquet to hit a ball to a partner. Many Year 6 pupils make good progress as they devise and rehearse sequences of movement involving different rolls. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit the swimming baths regularly and Year 5 visit squash courts and a cricket ground as part of the physical education curriculum, and records show that they are reaching a satisfactory standard.
- 150 At the ages of seven and 11, pupils have the opportunity to take part in a short residential visit during which they take part in appropriate outdoor and adventurous activities. These visits make a positive contribution to their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar rates of progress to their classmates.
- 151 Teaching is mostly satisfactory and sometimes it is good. It is an important factor in pupils' achievements. Where teachers understand the subject and have the confidence to teach it well, pupils develop positive attitudes and display a good level of physical activity. Teachers mostly pay due attention to health and safety issues but in one or two cases, pupils exercise wearing inappropriate clothing and without due consideration for the school's policy for wearing suitable clothing and ensuring long hair is tied back. Where teaching is good, teachers work hard to establish a satisfactory level of control in the early part of the lesson. As a result, they are able to focus on teaching the skills and techniques that the pupils need in order to make good progress. This enhances their quality of learning and encourages pupils to participate fully. Teachers make satisfactory use of the available space. In part of one lesson, the teacher encouraged half of the pupils to watch and analyse the performance of the other half, thus improving their own evaluative skills. At the same time, the active group had a greater area in which to move and work. However, teachers do not always take sufficient opportunities to use pupils to demonstrate good technique or in encouraging evaluation of their own and others' performance. There has been an improvement since the previous inspection in that the management of pupils is now satisfactory so progress in lessons is not hampered by having to wait until inappropriate behaviour is dealt with. Pupils' attitudes to physical education and their behaviour during lessons are now generally good.
- 152 There is now less evidence of the disruption to lessons caused by the use of the two halls as thoroughfares, reported in the previous inspection. Before the inspection, parents raised some concerns that, in some cases, physical education lessons had been neglected. However, a satisfactory number of physical education lessons are timetabled for all pupils and all went ahead as planned during the inspection week.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 153 By the ages of seven and 11, standards in Religious Education are above those that are expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Scrutiny of work and discussions show that pupils in both key stages have an effective working knowledge of the themes of this syllabus.
- 154 By the age of seven, pupils understand that some places are special. They know that a church is a special place for Christians and that Muslims have a mosque as their special place. Pupils in Year 1 learn about family and community relationships,

relating the story of *The Good Samaritan* to how we all have a responsibility to care for others. They understand that all families are different and they talk happily about their own families.

- 155 By the age of 11, pupils show good knowledge and understanding of the Sikh religion. They are able to discuss, in depth, the difference between holy books, buildings and customs of the major world religions. All pupils visit local Christian churches in the area and, by the end of Key Stage 2 will have visited the place of worship for each major world faith at least once. Pupils have good knowledge of the correct vocabulary and pronunciation of Sikh religious artefacts. In one lesson, pupils made a model in the classroom of the Guru Granth Sahib, placing correct labels on their model. One Islamic pupil discussed his holy book, the Qur'an, and how it is kept in a special place, but at the same time, showed clear respect for the cultural traditions and holy books of the Sikhs and Christians.
- 156 Pupils enjoy their lessons and show a wide interest in their work. In their writing, they show a thoughtful attitude, for example, on their work on Hinduism, one pupil wrote, "How can we stop war and poverty?", whilst another asked; "How and why were we created?" Younger pupils in Year 2 thought carefully about places that are special to them. One pupil wrote, "Grandma's house is very special", whilst another wrote about worship: "I think in my bed, I do not worship in a special place". Pupils respond well to their teacher in classes and listen carefully to the views and opinions of others. In this, pupils display an admirable level of religious tolerance and awareness of the cultural traditions of major world faiths. Religious education therefore contributes significantly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- 157 Teaching in both key stages is always at least satisfactory and often it is good, especially at Key Stage 2. Very good teaching was also seen in both key stages. Teachers know the subject well and are confident and well prepared. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in lessons. Visits to churches, to other places of worship and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning. Celebrations with parents and carers at times of special festivals, for example at Christmas, Eid and Diwali, all help to foster the knowledge and understanding of faith communities. This helps to promote good levels of understanding and harmony between different groups of pupils. Teachers use pupils in class sensitively to support the learning of all; for example, to get the correct pronunciation for Sikh artefacts. All pupils make good progress in their learning because teachers use good skills of questioning to enable pupils to reflect on what they have learnt and how this affects the way people live their lives in the wider community.
- 158 The subject is well led by an enthusiastic coordinator who ensures that all staff are given clear teaching plans and curriculum guidelines. She monitors the work of all staff and has collected samples of work from each year group to check on standards. All staff have now started to assess the work of pupils so that lessons can be planned to provide activities to meet the needs of all. Resources are satisfactory for the needs of the curriculum.

- 159 Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection report. Standards are now above those usually found and the progress made by pupils is good. This represents good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Pupils' written work is often extensive and thoughtful, providing evidence of suitable activities and challenges. Daily lesson planning is now satisfactory throughout the school.