

INSPECTION REPORT

ST TERESA'S R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingsbury Drive

Aspley

Nottingham

NG8 3EP

LEA area: Nottingham City

Unique reference number: 122781

Headteacher: Mrs Jane Law

Reporting inspector: Mrs Eileen Parry
2615

Dates of inspection: 27 November to 1 December

Inspection number: 224789

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kingsbury Drive Aspley Nottingham Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG3 3EP
Telephone number:	0115 9155762
Fax number:	0115 9155761
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Andrew O'Dowd
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Eileen Parry 2615	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	Equal opportunities
			Special educational needs
			Teaching and learning
			The school's results and achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Dawn Lloyd 13448	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Nick Hardy 29262	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Physical education	
Jenny Kime 23801	Team inspector	History	Foundation Stage
		Music	
Alan McGregor 3533	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Geography	
Rosie Grant 16447	Team inspector	English	English as an additional language
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
Jan Gibson 18618	Team inspector	Art	
		Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

Peak Education Partnership
 19, Huddersfield Road
 Barnsley
 South Yorkshire

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 Inspection Quality Division
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 Alexandra House
 33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Teresa's is a large Catholic primary school near to the centre of Nottingham. Currently 373 children attend the school; 191 boys and 182 girls. The school serves four Catholic parishes and although many children live in homes close to the school, some travel from these neighbouring parishes. Unemployment in the area is broadly average. Sixty five of the children, about 17 per cent, have free school meals. This is in line with the national average. Most of the children are from white British families. About a fifth are from white European families and these are the pupils whose families speak English as their second language. Four of these are at early stages of learning English and receive some support. A small number of pupils are from other ethnic minority groups.

One child has a statement of special educational needs and a further 66 are on the special educational needs register. This is lower than is found in most schools.

The school has no nursery but provides a pre-school class for four year olds in the term before they start full time education. Children attend either the morning or afternoon session. They come with a wide range of skills and abilities, from those with special educational needs to the more able but overall, attainment at intake is better than in most schools.

The school is oversubscribed and has recently had to build extra classrooms and has bought a mobile classroom to accommodate the increase in numbers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that provides children with a good education set very firmly within its Catholic mission statement. The Catholic faith forms the driving force for the very good ethos in the school, for the quality of relationships and for the pupils' very good behaviour. The school makes good provision for all the pupils in its care from those with special educational needs to those who have special educational gifts. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and this is reflected in the results of the national tests and assessments for seven and eleven year olds. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by governors. Staff support her very well through their teaching and pastoral roles but the management structure is weak. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Results in the national tests for infants are well above average and for juniors are well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science.
- Reading skills are particularly well developed throughout the school.
- Teaching is good overall for infants and juniors and very good for reception and pre-school children.
- Children have excellent attitudes to their work and behave very well in response to the school's expectations.
- Pupils' spiritual social and moral development are very well promoted.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

What could be improved

- The balance of management responsibilities that teachers carry.
- Standards in information and communication technology
- The use of data and assessment information to set targets and plan children's learning.

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 February 1997 and has made good progress on most of the issues it was given. Results in the national tests have improved. Standards in music and geography have both improved, but those in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory for juniors because the school has only recently acquired sufficient equipment for the full curriculum. Teaching has improved, helped by satisfactory improvements in the curriculum and assessment. The curriculum for the children in the reception class and pre-school is much stronger than at the last inspection. The headteacher has given the school a very clear lead in deciding what needs to be done to raise standards. Staff support her very well through their teaching and their commitment to the children's care. Whilst there are some good examples of management work from staff, on the whole there is not enough willingness to share in this aspect of the school. This leads to uneven management roles.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	B	B	B
Science	C	C	C	C

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

Eleven year olds have done well in the national tests in the Year 2000 in English with well above average results and above average results in mathematics. Standards are also well above average in English compared to schools where a similar percentage of pupils take free school meals, and are above average in mathematics. They have not been so good in science but still reach the national average for all schools and for similar schools. There were some weaknesses within the teaching for science that account for the standards being lower than those in English and mathematics. These have been addressed. The school is setting targets which aim to sustain the high standards it has achieved and are realistic because they take into account the different numbers of pupils who have special educational needs each year. Results for seven year olds in the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average for all schools and when compared to those of pupils from similar schools.

Inspection evidence finds that more pupils start the school with average or above skills and knowledge than is usually the case. They make good progress so that many are achieving higher standards for their age by the time they leave. Standards in English and mathematics are above the average for infants and juniors. In science, they are above average for infants and average for juniors. Reading is a particular strength throughout the school. By Year 6, there are many children who read a wide range of material with skill and pleasure. In information and communication technology, standards are average in what the children do but the school has only recently acquired sufficient computers and software, and there are areas of the information and communication technology curriculum (ICT) which pupils in the juniors have not yet experienced. In other subjects, pupils in all classes are reaching satisfactory standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Children enjoy coming to school and constantly try to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. This is strength of the school which means that teachers can concentrate on teaching and pupils on their work.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils take on responsibilities with pride. Good relationships help them to settle in when they start at the school and to grow in personal confidence in the school.
Attendance	Above the average and has improved much this last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching overall is good and has improved from the previous inspection. It is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons with 63 per cent of these being good. Teaching in about 29 per cent of lessons is very good and occasionally excellent. Teaching in 8 per cent of lessons is unsatisfactory. The teaching of the youngest children in the pre-school and reception classes is most consistent being very good overall. The greatest consistency in good teaching came from the school's experienced and permanent staff. In good teaching, lessons are well planned to stretch all of the children. Teachers create an expectation of quiet effort and response from pupils and pupils respond by doing their best. Lessons are brisk without being forced and the good relationships help teachers and pupils to share in lighter moments of humour as well as in the hard work. The unsatisfactory teaching occurred predominantly in classes taught by temporary or inexperienced teachers and most often related to weaknesses in planning and inexperience with the curriculum.

Reading skills are particularly well developed throughout the school with a number of parents giving good additional support in school. As a result, a significant proportion of children learn to read well and enjoy reading. Children write quite well by the time they leave the school but not at the same level as they read. Teachers provide some good opportunities for children to write in some subjects such as history but opportunities are also missed to stretch writing skills in other subjects. Throughout the school, children talk confidently and are able to discuss their work with teachers and with other pupils very capably. Children show that they can use their mathematical skills and knowledge effectively in other subjects, for example by taking measurements in design and technology and by using data to create graphs in science.

The school works hard and successfully to meet the needs of all its pupils. Children of all abilities, from those with special educational needs to those who have special educational gifts grow in confidence and skills and all do well. All children enjoy coming to school and work hard constantly. They settled down to their tasks with minimal fuss even on the few occasions when the teaching was unclear or unchallenging.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the pre-school and the reception class where adults work well together to put the new foundation curriculum in place. Satisfactory for infants and juniors but with some weaknesses for example, in the ICT content in juniors which does not meet what is expected. There is a very good range of extra curricular activities on offer.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school makes a strong commitment to all children recognising both those with special educational needs and the very able and providing appropriate support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Although a good number of children come from families of European origin, few children speak English as a second language; those who do need support are given it.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall especially in spiritual, social and moral skills. There is very good provision for pupils to learn about European cultures past and present but not enough is done to cover other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes good care of its pupils' health and welfare. Staff know pupils well. Assessment of pupils' learning is at a satisfactory level with more development work planned over the coming year.

The school values the efforts of parents to work in school and to support their children at home. There are many examples of profitable partnerships which support children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has provided a very strong lead in promoting higher standards but there is not enough support for her through the management responsibilities of senior and other staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors take a keen interest in the school and give good support to the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There has been some good work in raising standards. Evaluation has secured improvements in teaching and curriculum but there is still more work to be done, for example in using information from tests more fully.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The available budget is used fully to support current priorities. Monies for specific purpose such as special educational needs have been spent well. There is a good understanding of how to secure the best value in expenditure.

The school has sufficient teaching and support staff. There are enough classrooms and a number of small spaces used for different purposes. The school has no grassed area but can use the fields in the neighbouring secondary school. The library for juniors is pleasantly furnished and has a good selection of books but is too small. The one for infants is in an outside classroom so is not easily accessible. Resources for all subjects are broadly satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel that teaching is good • Children are expected to work hard • Children like coming to schools and are making good progress • The school helps children to grow in confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that children get. • More children being able to take part in the extra curricular activities. • Information about how well their children are getting on. • Working closely with parents.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. Homework seems to be at an acceptable level. A very good range of extra activities is provided by the staff. These are very popular and in some cases access has to be restricted. Good information is provided about how well the children are doing. The school welcomes parent help and a number do so regularly.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's results in English have improved markedly since the last inspection and are well above the national average for eleven year olds and much higher than those achieved by pupils in similar schools. All pupils achieve excellent results in reading, but their results in writing, though good, are not quite as high. In mathematics, results are above the average nationally and for similar schools. In contrast to the national picture, boys do better than girls in reaching the higher levels in mathematics. Science results are average. This is because although almost all pupils reached the expected level, too few pupils reached the higher one. Results are not as high as English and mathematics due to some weaknesses last year in the teaching of science from one teacher. This has now been resolved and results are now on course to match those in mathematics.

2. Test results have risen in English and mathematics and have been maintained in science. They exceeded the targets set by the school in all three subjects which were appropriately challenging. The school is likely to maintain good results although they may dip slightly in the next two years because of the greater number of pupils with special educational needs. Both boys and girls do equally well in reaching expected and higher levels, as do black pupils and those from other European backgrounds. The few pupils who are not fully fluent in English when they enter the school make rapid progress and achieve well.

3. Results in reading, writing and mathematics for seven year olds have also improved since the last inspection. They are well above the national average in the Year 2000 tests and assessments and are much higher than those achieved by pupils in similar schools.

4. The inspection findings largely reflect the test results in English. Pupils in Year 2 look set to continue the trend of high results with many already achieving at the expected level 2 and some at the higher level. Most seven year olds speak confidently, read well and write well structured pieces competently. The proficiency in reading continues through the school into Year 6 where most pupils read with accuracy, enthusiasm and interest. By Year 6 pupils, discuss work in their lessons with the teacher and with each other very capably. Writing develops well but not at the same rate as reading. Handwriting and the presentation of work vary, but are generally good by the time pupils reach their last year in the school.

5. By the age of seven, pupils have good recall of basic number facts and good knowledge of place value to 100. They know the names and some of the main properties of many two and three-dimensional shapes. Many pupils measure effectively using a range of standard units, although some are more accurate and use estimation more competently than others. Most are developing a good range of mathematical vocabulary. By the age of eleven, standards in mathematics are above the average. The majority of pupils are competent with all aspects of number. They can use different kinds of data and graphs and carry out mathematical investigations but have too few opportunities to do so. They use a variety of measures but sometimes lack accuracy with finer units such as millimetres.

6. Seven year olds do well in science. They have a good knowledge of scientific facts, use vocabulary appropriately and are developing secure ideas about what a fair test is. Eleven year olds are working at levels which are much closer to the average. They have a reasonable recall of information and use scientific vocabulary with knowledge and confidence. Their understanding of the conduct of a fair test includes notions about variables

and controls. Pupils show satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills in their science work when they write up their own experiments, take measurements or record data on graphs.

7. Pupils are working at satisfactory levels in information and communication technology in Key Stage 1 but, overall, standards for eleven year olds are below where they should be. This is because the equipment and programs are all relatively new and some aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum, such as data handling and spread sheets, have not previously been covered. In history, standards are average overall. Pupils do well in talking about the subject because they have above average conversation skills but their knowledge of the reliability of different types of historical evidence is less well developed.

8. In physical education, all pupils reach at least the national targets for swimming. In other aspects they work at average levels of skill and competence by the end of both Key Stages. In music, standards at the ends of both Key Stages and throughout the school are predominantly as expected. There are some pupils who will do better and a few who may not do as well. Standards in geography, art, and design and technology are in line with those expected by the end of each key stage.

9. The good progress that the youngest children make means that by the end of the reception year their attainment is above that expected for their age. Most recognise letter shapes and the sounds they make. They are beginning to read familiar words, can write their names correctly and attempt to write familiar words. Children show good awareness of the different aspects of mathematics, for instance learning about numbers and counting up to 30. Almost all children meet the targets set in the six areas of learning specified nationally, and many children exceed the targets.

10. Although a fairly high proportion of pupils are of Italian, Ukranian or Polish descent and are familiar with two languages, only three Italian pupils and one Polish pupil began school with little knowledge of English. These pupils have all made good progress and are able to take a full part in lessons. Staff are sensitive to their needs. Teaching assistants, for example, are often on hand to ensure pupils understand new or unfamiliar vocabulary. They are supported once a week by an Italian language student who can translate for them if the need arises.

11. Pupils with special educational needs are accepted by other children and fully integrated into the school. This helps to give them positive attitudes and to respond to the teaching support they are given. As a result, they make good progress in all aspects of their learning and life in school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Since the last inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved even further, so that now, they have excellent attitudes to learning, which are a strength of the school. Their behaviour, both in and outside lessons, their relationships with one another and with adults and their attendance are all very good. They respond very well to the school's provision for their personal development.

13. It is evident that children really enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above average and has improved over the last year. There is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection, with very few pupils now arriving late.

14. In lessons, children clearly enjoy their work. They apply themselves conscientiously to their tasks and try hard to do their best. Their written work is always carefully presented, which shows that they take their learning seriously and want to create the best impression they can. They are interested and enthusiastic in class, keen to answer questions to demonstrate what they have learned and remembered and eager to be involved in practical activities. They listen well and always concentrate throughout the lesson, even when sometimes the work is not sufficiently challenging. Pupils are confident to show and explain their work to visitors and to express their opinions.

15. Behaviour in lessons is often very good and sometimes excellent, for example, pupils behaved impeccably with the supply teacher assisting their regular class teacher, who was unfortunately losing her voice during the inspection. Around the school, behaviour is always orderly and sensible. In the dining hall which is cramped, in the corridors which are narrow, and in the cloakroom areas which are mostly small and congested, pupils conduct themselves very well. They do not push or shove, they show proper consideration for the needs of others. Good behaviour is one of a number of aspects of the school that parents feel is a strong feature. There have never been any exclusions, because, on the rare occasions that a child has shown behavioural difficulties, the school has always found effective methods of dealing with them.

16. Relationships throughout the school are particularly strong. Pupils support one another well in lessons, taking turns fairly and discussing ideas and decisions when asked to work in pairs or groups, for example, in a design and technology lesson, a girl in Year 1 twice explained patiently to her neighbour how to make a hole in a piece of card without hurting himself or causing damage to the table. They are polite, courteous and friendly to one another and to adults. Any visitors to the school are made welcome. Pupils and adult visitors from different cultural backgrounds are totally accepted and well integrated into the life of the school. There is no evidence of racism or sexism.

17. The children respond to the Catholic ethos of the school in their awareness of the importance of friendships and of the school as a community. They show thoughtful respect for the views and opinions of others, and for different beliefs and ways of life. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for by their classmates and totally accepted into all school activities.

18. Opportunities to take responsibility are plentiful and pupils accept these enthusiastically. Monitors undertake a variety of jobs around the school to help the teachers and the oldest pupils are proud to act as role models for the younger ones, for example, supervising them in environmental projects such as litter collecting. Volunteers help in the library, sometimes lead assembly and there is a school magazine whose editors are pupils in Year 6. Children are involved in fund-raising for a range of charities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It has significantly improved from the last inspection. For example, 92 per cent was satisfactory or better this time compared with 83 per cent previously. Twenty nine per cent was judged to be very good compared to 11 per cent previously. Some lessons were also judged to be excellent. Less than satisfactory teaching dropped from 17 per cent to 8 per cent. Whilst there have been some staff changes which might account for the differences, improvement has also occurred because of better planning and more careful monitoring and advice to teachers. Very good teaching occurred in all Key Stages. The greatest consistency in Key Stages 1 and 2 is from the school's

permanent and experienced staff. The most variation in teaching came from staff who are inexperienced or temporary. Teaching in reception and pre-school is very good.

20. All teachers have high expectations that pupils will work quietly and with minimal fuss so that classrooms have a purposeful working ethos. For example, in a Year 5/6 English lesson, pupils maintained a high level of involvement whether in the whole class parts of the lesson or in their work in pairs. Classrooms are orderly places where pupils expect to work hard and do their best. The positive attitudes that pupils bring to their work have a marked effect on their progress. In the best teaching, teachers make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn during the lesson, for example, targets are written up and shared with the pupils. This works best when the targets are expressed in simple language that all pupils can understand and when the targets are referred to again at the end of the lesson as happened in a Year 2 history lesson. Teachers also use questions effectively to draw out information from the pupils, to explain and to expand their ideas as in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson where the teacher made the pupils think really hard about the patterns that numbers make.

21. All of the five lessons where teaching was judged unsatisfactory had weaknesses related to their planning, for example an art lesson in Year 4 did not draw sufficiently on the good ideas in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance from which the task was taken. In some of these lessons, teachers' inexperience in dealing with literacy and numeracy strategies showed in the group work parts of lessons where there was too little difference in the level of tasks set especially for more able pupils. In physical education in Year 3, too little challenge came from the teacher giving the pupils answers rather than inviting them to think. A strength of the pupils' attitudes to learning shines through in these lessons because they continue to work steadily and quietly even when the work is unclear or too easy for them.

22. Teaching in English is good overall. Reading skills are taught very well and this assists pupils' learning in all other subjects. The careful teaching of letter sounds starts in the reception class and continues throughout the infants. Pupils have many opportunities to read and parents' support is harnessed well. Writing skills are developed very well in the infant classes. In junior classes, spelling and punctuation skills are taught thoroughly, but there is too little emphasis on helping pupils to learn from their own mistakes by careful marking and the correction of errors in books. There are good opportunities for writing in history but less in other subjects. This, together with the relative weakness in marking, leads to writing being at a slightly lower standard than reading.

23. Teaching in mathematics varied from very good to unsatisfactory but was good overall. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. In the most successful lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teaching is brisk and good use is made of questions. As a result pupils respond by trying their best, working hard and achieving much in a single lesson. In the least successful lessons, the work is insufficiently well matched to pupils' needs, there are inadequacies in the methods used and organisation of the lesson. Pupils are sometimes unclear about what they have to do as a result and learning and achievement are limited. Teachers use the range of strategies and approaches from the numeracy strategy effectively. Mental work and oral work at the start of lessons are often used well to improve numeracy skills. Plenary sessions at the end sometimes used well to tackle misconceptions and to consolidate and extend pupils' learning but are also sometimes less profitably used. Similarly, whilst group work is very well provided for in some lessons, it is much less well matched in other lessons, especially to stretch the more able pupils.

24. The quality of teaching in science varied from satisfactory to excellent but was good overall. Where teaching is of a high quality, teachers ensure that pupils know exactly what they are to learn, and the management and organisation of pupils is very good. Pupils are provided with interesting and stimulating work which requires them to think hard about their answers and to use the knowledge they have previously acquired. Marking is an area of inconsistency. It does not usually provide sufficient useful guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Whilst some teachers plan well, others do not always give sufficient detail of what is to be taught and sometimes lessons are not well linked to pupils' previous knowledge and understanding.

25. Little direct teaching of ICT was observed but planning and pupils' work show that an appropriate programme of activities is taking place. Most, but not all, teachers feel confident to deliver ICT. Teaching in music is good although this was taken by the music specialist and there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on whether staff as a whole are secure in their subject knowledge and confident in teaching music. Teaching in history and physical education is satisfactory. There were few lessons seen in art, design and technology and geography but pupils' work and their knowledge, ascertained through discussions, suggest that teaching must be satisfactory in these subjects.

26. Reception and pre-school are taught well. All of the teaching was either good or very good. The adults work well together showing a good awareness of the needs of young children. Children are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them in a positive way, through praise and encouragement. For example, the reception teacher manages the potentially disruptive behaviour of a child with special educational needs effectively helping all the children to accept that child's behaviour. A good range of high quality practical learning experiences are provided which ensure that children are interested, involved and enthusiastic learners. Planning takes good account of the new curriculum guidance although staff are still trying out different ways to plan all areas of learning effectively.

27. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by teaching assistants who help to carry out special programs such as physiotherapy. A wider group of pupils are also helped by teaching assistants for example, through classroom support in the infants and in small groups for additional literacy work in juniors. Good preparation between teachers and assistants ensures that pupils make good progress in all their work. Teaching assistants give sensitive support to pupils which gives them the confidence to answer and to concentrate even when they find this difficult.

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

28. The curriculum has several areas of strength but some areas where the depth of coverage of the curriculum is more limited. All subjects are covered but with varying amounts of time and emphasis. Pupils, especially those in Key Stage 2, have not previously experienced the full information and communication technology curriculum with gaps in their experience of data handling and spreadsheets. The English curriculum is well established with particular strengths in reading. This helps pupils not only to read for their own enjoyment but also to become independent learners. The delivery of mathematics has been improved through the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and criticisms contained in the previous report relating to using and applying mathematics have now been remedied. Guidance in all other subjects is either in place or under review. Where teachers follow the guidance and use it to aid planning, their lessons are well focused on teaching important skills. However, not all schemes of work are sufficiently well established to guarantee this. Some teachers' planning lacks detail about what pupils are actually going to learn and this

results in subjects such as history and geography where skills and knowledge are inconsistently taught.

29. The National Literacy Strategy is fully in place and implemented well in most classes in the school. The Numeracy Strategy is also in place and being established. Both national strategies and the structures they provide are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The Additional Literacy Strategy has been successful in increasing the skills of lower ability pupils giving them a greater degree of confidence and greater capacity to contribute to lessons.

30. The curriculum for the children in the reception class and in pre-school group is good and skilfully planned to ensure that they make a positive start to school. A wide range of exciting and purposeful activities is provided to run alongside the learning of basic skills in English and mathematics. These provide children with many practical, first hand experiences and leads to the great majority working within the National Curriculum programmes of study by the time they enter Year 1.

31. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs including those who are gifted or talented is very good. The commitment demonstrated by the school to those who are either physically or educationally disadvantaged is good. The identification of gifted and talented pupils and the challenge provided for these children provides further good examples of the desire of the school to serve the needs of all its pupils well. Most additional support for pupils is undertaken within classrooms. Individual education plans for these pupils are of good quality and contain clear guidance on areas of specific learning. Occasionally, difficulties arise with the school's timetabling arrangements and pupils are withdrawn from lessons to take part in other activities, for example the school choir. This results in some pupils not receiving their full curriculum entitlement.

32. The school's curriculum is extended very well through the commitment of teaching staff to providing extra curricular activities. Sporting, linguistic, musical and creative after school activities attract large groups of pupils with a choice of activities taking place on several evenings each week. The school also enters a variety of inter school competitions, both sporting and educational for example mathematics and road safety which add to the variety of education on offer.

33. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is given priority throughout the school and reflects very well the overall Catholic ethos within the school. Sex education is provided through the science curriculum and through the involvement of the community nursing service. Good procedures are in place to inform pupils of the misuse of drugs mainly through the D.A.R.E. scheme in which the school are aided by the police.

34. The wider community supports the school well through the guidance provided by the Catholic Church with the local priests taking an active part in the spiritual life of the school. There are close links with the local special school which enable groups of pupils from the schools to work together. Links with local colleges of further education are well established and the school and pupils benefit from this. The school's links with local industry are satisfactory and produce some useful sponsorship from some local firms. Liaison between both local authority and private nurseries has been established and helps pupils to move into full time education with as little difficulty as possible. Although there are links with the local secondary school these could be developed more to ensure that pupils have a greater knowledge and understanding of their education after transfer to secondary school.

35. The school actively promotes pupils' personal development. Provision for their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good overall and a significant strength of the curriculum. This represents an improvement on the judgement made at the time of the last inspection.

36. A very caring Christian ethos is evident within the school. Assemblies foster pupils' spiritual awareness. Together with the provision of time for prayer in class, they give pupils a very good understanding and awareness of Christian values and beliefs, such as the significance of Advent, the importance of friendship and personal qualities such as patience and thoughtfulness. The especially calm and reflective atmosphere of assemblies, created in part by well chosen music and features such as a burning candle or flowers, helps pupils to think about their own values and attitudes and consider their own contribution to school and home life, and their place in the wider world. This was seen in an assembly where older pupils were encouraged to follow the example of Jesus by demonstrating positive qualities of leadership. The school plans well for such qualities to be demonstrated through, for example, the Environmental Club where older pupils support the younger pupils in their 'litter picker' work around the school. A particularly thought provoking assembly taken by a disabled and regular visitor to the school provided an excellent role model for pupils to reflect on very positive and optimistic approaches to life's challenges.

37. The strong emphasis on pupils' development as a whole is embedded in the religious, personal and social education programme 'Here I Am'. Moral and social values are promoted consistently and effectively through assemblies and lessons, and are reflected in the daily life of the school through the high quality of relationships. Younger pupils share their ideas and feelings openly with their teacher and class when they talk about the moral and social issues implied in the story of Florence Nightingale. Staff model values such as courtesy and respect; this is demonstrated in the way that pupils welcome visitors to the school.

38. A positive school community spirit is emphasised and promoted through for example, the Year 6 annual residential visit to a faith centre, the Breakfast Club, and the many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for looking after their classrooms and friends. This community spirit is reflected in the respect that everyone has for each other. A good example of this is from a group of Year 3 pupils who talked positively about helping pupils at a local special school in a design and technology project. Pupils are encouraged to show initiative and take responsibility for planning and presenting their work in assemblies and class, as in a planned Year 5/6 class presentation of their work in history. Opportunities for pupils to develop understanding of living in a local and global community are provided through environmental and conservation projects, such as recycling, planting and fund raising. The comprehensive drugs awareness programme helps the older pupils to understand and develop awareness of advertising pressures on young people and of peer pressure in relation to health issues such as smoking.

39. The school gives pupils a good sense of Western cultural heritage through the study of different subjects, the variety of extra-curricular activities, visits and visiting speakers. Experiences include working with a professional painter, singing traditional songs and learning French and Italian languages. The study of other faiths in Key Stage 2 gives some insight into non-Western culture but the development of pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the rich diversity of other cultures is not co-ordinated effectively across the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school has made improvements to its pastoral care arrangements which take account of the minor weaknesses that were identified in the last inspection report. It has good procedures for looking after the general welfare, health and safety of its pupils and these are followed consistently by all staff. Because a genuinely caring ethos pervades every aspect of school life, children feel secure and happy. Staff know pupils very well and keep a close watch on their personal development, ensuring that any problems can be quickly identified and appropriate action taken.

41. There are very good arrangements for first aid and routine medical care. Staff qualified in first aid are on hand to treat the minor injuries that occur in the playground. These are always properly documented. Details of pupils with medical conditions, such as asthma, are available to staff, so that they know what to do in emergency. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through participation in sport and through the science curriculum. They are supervised well at all times and staff are careful to observe safe practices in lessons such as physical education (PE), design and technology and science. There is an appropriate health and safety policy which is strictly implemented throughout the school. There are some minor concerns related to accommodation, but the school is very aware of potential hazards and takes careful action to minimise risks.

42. Policies covering behaviour and attendance give clear details of the school's expectations. Teachers provide good role models, and through the good relationships they have with the children, as well as their insistence on good behaviour as the norm, they succeed in creating a productive, happy working atmosphere. Children respond well to receiving awards for effort and behaviour, and there is little need for the use of sanctions. Procedures for monitoring attendance are thorough and effective. The school has succeeded in making a significant improvement to the overall attendance figure, which is now above the national average. There has also been some improvement in punctuality as a result of careful monitoring.

43. Personal and social education is included in the curriculum, mainly through the "Here I am" programme, which covers sensitive issues sympathetically and effectively. The important areas of relationships, sex education and drugs awareness are taught as part of this scheme and there is useful additional support from the school nurse and the community police service. Appropriate procedures are in place for child protection and pupils are confident to approach staff with problems of any kind, knowing that help will be there for them.

44. Arrangements to assess pupils' attainments and progress have also improved since the last inspection, and are now satisfactory. Pupils' basic skills are tested annually, using a range of national tests, and this information is available for discussion with parents during parents' meetings. Good procedures are also in place for identifying pupils with special educational needs, and for assessing their progress. Assessment information gathered for these pupils is used well to set the targets in their individual education plans. Other assessment information is used less well. A start has been made by analysing national test results for 11-year-olds. From this analysis, staff have found, for example, that one or two pupils who gained the higher level 5 in reading, only reached the lower level 3 in writing. As a result, they are beginning to look carefully at how writing is taught. Much more could be made, however, of the wealth of data collected: to compare the standards achieved by pupils from different ethnic groups; to fine tune the curriculum and to set individual targets for pupils in both English and mathematics, in order to raise attainment still further.

45. Class teachers keep their own records of pupils' attainment and progress, but these vary in range and quality. The best reading records, for example, include detailed comments about pupils' developing skills and pointers for improvement. Records for subjects, including science and information and communication technology, are still being developed. All pupils have a work profile, in which samples of work and other evidence of achievement are kept. Again, the quality, and hence the usefulness of these, varies. For instance some include helpful evaluations of topic work and self-evaluations completed by pupils; only occasionally is the standard of work indicated by the inclusion of a national curriculum level. The assessment co-ordinator, who has only recently taken on this area of development, is aware that the systems in use need streamlining to make them more consistent and purposeful.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its positive partnership with parents. Parents are very happy with the school's provision and achievements and make valuable contributions to pupils' learning through their practical involvement and fund raising.

47. It is very clear from the pre-inspection survey and the additional comments and letters received from parents that the majority are very satisfied with what the school offers to pupils. The fact that the school is oversubscribed is also a good indication of parental views. Parents agree that their children enjoy school and are making good progress. They think that teaching is good and that the school has high expectations. They are particularly happy with the school's caring ethos and with the commitment of staff. They believe that the school achieves high standards of work and makes good provision for pupils' personal development. A very small number of parents do not feel that children get the right amount of work, think that they do not get enough information about children's progress, do not feel that the school works closely with parents or that it provides an interesting range of extra activities. The inspection found little to justify these concerns. Homework is set flexibly, according to the timetable included in the home school agreement, and amounts are generally appropriate. There are good opportunities for parents to learn about pupils' progress through the three formal parents' consultation meetings held annually. The school has a clear commitment to working with parents and involving them in their children's education and the range of extra-curricular activities is very good.

48. The school provides a range of written information for parents that extends from day-to-day practical arrangements to developments in the curriculum. Newsletters and the prospectus are written in a slightly formal style, but information for prospective parents about the foundation stage is friendly and helpful and includes suggestions on how parents can help children learn. The governors' annual report to parents is very detailed and informative. Specially arranged meetings for parents on aspects of the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy, supplement the written information and parents are encouraged to attend presentations where they can see for themselves what their children have been studying, for example, at the end of the DARE drugs education programme. In addition to the termly consultation meetings, parents may make appointments to see class teachers throughout the year if they wish to discuss concerns. School reports are helpful and informative. In response to the previous inspection, they now comment on individual strengths and weaknesses, set targets for improvement and include space for parents to add their own comments.

49. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education and their response is impressive. Many parents help in classrooms, listening to readers, baking and sewing or working in the background making attractive "story sacks" for the younger children.

Others accompany children on trips. At home, the majority of parents listen to their children read, completing reading records and showing a high degree of interest and encouragement, which has a considerable impact on the reading standards achieved throughout the school. Parents also show their support by their attendance at school events and special assemblies, such as the Advent service.

50. The recently formalised Parent Teacher Association is very active in arranging fund raising and social events. These are well supported and have raised remarkable sums for the school, enabling the purchase of an electric piano, helping with major repairs and maintenance to the fabric of the building and with the purchase of the mobile classroom. A concert involving staff, children and parents was very successful, both in raising money and in demonstrating how well the school works as a community. This is to be repeated.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher has given a strong and successful lead to the school in responding to the issues from the inspection and in raising standards. This is an improvement on the judgement of the previous inspection when her leadership was found to be sound. Overall though, leadership and management remain satisfactory. The deputy headteacher gives strong support in the pastoral area of the school's life but his contribution to wider school management issues has not moved on sufficiently. For a variety of reasons, other teachers have been unwilling to take on management responsibilities or have given up responsibilities they have held. This has led to a structure which has many anomalies. For example, the deputy carries a similar whole school responsibility to one of the teachers with a point for management; responsibility for mathematics was given to a temporary teacher. Management is held together not by a coherent structure but by the strength of the headteacher's leadership and the general commitment of staff to teaching children and to their pastoral care.

52. The school has a planned programme for teachers with management responsibilities to be released from their class commitments, for example, for monitoring what is happening in their subject. This is leading to greater knowledge about strengths and weaknesses in subjects and leading to improvements as co-ordinators plan what needs to be done next in their subjects.

53. The school makes good use of available funding, relating expenditure to defined educational priorities and monitoring its spending carefully. The principles of best value are understood and consistently applied, and the school provides good value for money.

54. Since the last inspection the governors have become more involved in the preparation of the school improvement plan and in setting the budget. Their overriding priority in allocating resources is the education of the children, so every decision is taken with this in mind. Through examination of performance data, the headteacher and governors have set appropriate priorities for development and have allocated funding accordingly. There is little flexibility in the money available to the school once essential costs have been met. Savings are made wherever possible without affecting overall provision for the children, for example, last year the amount of swimming tuition was cut, but national curriculum requirements were still met. Specific grant, mainly from the Standards Fund and for the support of special educational needs, is used appropriately for its designated purpose. The budget is supplemented by the thoughtful use of any extra grants that can be found, for example, for installation of fire sprinklers in the Hallam block, and by generous support from the parents,

whose contributions enable the school to maintain the building and make extra purchases that could not otherwise be afforded.

55. The use of resources is carefully monitored to ensure that spending is on target. A conscious decision has been taken to manage finances within the budget, but to utilise as much of the available money as possible, rather than carry a large contingency fund. Governors regularly visit the school to see at first hand the results of their spending decisions and that best value for money is being achieved. They compare the school's performance with similar schools, discuss issues in detail before making changes, consult with staff and parents and make sure that supplies and services are purchased at the right price.

56. New technology is used appropriately to support day-to-day financial control and school administration, which is efficient and effective. The recommendations of last year's audit report have now been implemented.

57. There are sufficient teaching and support staff for the numbers of pupils who come to the school. The school has been oversubscribed and has had two new classrooms built and is buying a mobile classroom to accommodate the increased numbers. There are now sufficient classrooms and most are of an adequate size. One Year 4 classroom is cramped and this is made worse by the size of the furniture. Pupils in this class find it difficult to sit comfortably which has an adverse effect on the quality of their handwriting and presentation of work.

58. There is a number of additional small rooms that are used flexibly, for example as medical rooms, special educational needs and parents' rooms. There are two libraries. The one for Key Stage 2 is pleasantly furnished but too small for the size of the school and the one for Key Stage 1 is not in a good position being in the mobile classroom, but it is used regularly. The building is in poor condition in some areas but there are plans for improvement. The school has no grassed area. Currently there is access to playing fields in the neighbouring secondary school. However, plans for building, if carried out, will make this access much more difficult. Resources for all subjects are broadly satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. To ensure the continued success of the school's work, the headteacher, staff and governors should address the issues below. The first is new to the school's improvement programme, the second two are issues which the school has already identified as areas for development.

1. Improve the management structure and management skills of staff by:-
 - i) deciding firstly what structure best suits the school;
 - ii) deciding what responsibilities fit the particular posts;
 - iii) negotiate and reallocate the roles and responsibilities in line with the above decisions;
 - iv) seek to develop teachers' management skills in line with their responsibilities.
paragraph 51/2;

2. Raise standards in information and communication technology by:-
 - i) implementing the current development plan for ICT;
 - ii) checking the success of the plan through teachers' planning and pupils' work;
 - iii) providing staff development to raise teachers' confidence and skill in using the equipment.
Paragraph 116-119

3. Make better use of assessment data to:-
 - i) build up a more detailed picture of pupils' performance, for example of differences between classes in the same year group or of differences between groups of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Take steps to address any differences identified;
 - ii) identify and address any weaker areas in the curriculum;
 - iii) set targets for individuals and groups, particularly in writing and mathematics, in order to raise their attainment further.
Paragraph 44

There are a number of minor issues which the governors should consider in their action plan which can be found in the following paragraphs; 22; 24; 39; 61; 87.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	26	34	29	8	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	R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	373
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	R– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	67

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.1

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
		00 (99)	29 (28)	31 (23)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	26	26
	Girls	30	30	27
	Total	57	56	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (90)	93 (92)	88 (84)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	24	25
	Girls	29	27	26
	Total	54	51	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (90)	85 (82)	85 (90)
	National	84 (82)	82 (80)	88 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		00 (99)	26 (17)	26 (20)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	22	25
	Girls	23	23	25
	Total	48	45	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (84)	87 (92)	96 (86)
	National	75 (71)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	22
	Girls	21	20	19
	Total	43	43	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (81)	83 (84)	79 (86)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	27
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	335
Any other minority ethnic group	0
<i>This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.</i>	

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: R – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: R – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	214

Qualified teachers and support staff: pre school

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	667464
Total expenditure	654160
Expenditure per pupil	1754
Balance brought forward from previous year	-13261
Balance carried forward to next year	43

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	357
Number of questionnaires returned	250

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	37	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	34	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	50	9	2	2
The teaching is good.	62	35	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	33	7	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	24	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	48	10	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	52	40	4	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	38	8	1	6

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

60. Children start in the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five years old. At the time of the inspection there was one reception class; during the year a second reception class is formed. Children's attainment on entry to school is above that expected for this age, particularly in their speaking and listening skills and their personal, social and emotional development. Most children have one term part-time in the small pre-school class before they start school. This is taken by a trained nursery nurse. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning, both in the pre-school class and in the reception class. This is due to the good provision for this age group and the very good quality of teaching; during the inspection, the teaching seen was consistently either good or very good. The good progress that children make means that by the end of the reception year their attainment is above that expected for their age. Almost all children meet the targets set in the six areas of learning specified nationally, and many children exceed the targets.

61. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection in the provision for reception aged children. The quality of teaching has been raised and this has resulted in a better rate of progress and higher standards by the end of the reception year. There are now separate reception classes and an improved system of assessing children's attainment and progress. The outdoor area has been made secure with a fence and new equipment such as wheeled toys has been provided. Staff show a good awareness of the needs of young children and provide a good range of high quality practical learning experiences that interest and involve children well. Planning of the curriculum has become more structured though staff are still trying out different ways to plan all areas of learning effectively. At present the curriculum planning is repetitive and not always sufficiently focused on what exactly is to be taught and learnt.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children settle quickly into their class and show an increasing maturity in managing the routines and conventions of school life, such as waiting their turn to speak and joining in assemblies. Children's personal, social and emotional development is supported well both through the general ethos of the school and through the high quality of teaching and learning in both the pre-school and reception classes. Children are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them in a positive way, through praise and encouragement, and their behaviour is very good. The reception teacher manages the potentially disruptive behaviour of a child with special educational needs in a very calm, positive and sensitive manner, helping all the children to accept that child's behaviour.

63. Many situations are provided to enable children to learn to co-operate, for example, through acting out the story of Goldilocks in the class area that is the Three Bears House. They confidently organise themselves in the different characters. Stories such as the Rainbow Fish are used effectively to help children think of how to be kind to each other. Children are encouraged to use activities independently and staff make sensitive interventions to support their learning. This was seen, for example, when a small group of children needed guidance in how to organise a puppet show. This high quality of teaching results in children making good progress and they are likely to exceed the expectations of this age group by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

64. The high quality of teaching in both the pre-school and reception classes results in good progress being made and almost all children are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the year, with many exceeding them. The interesting classroom displays and the organisation of many practical activities that are introduced in a lively way really involves children and promotes their communication, language and literacy skills well. Children respond excitedly, for example, to a trail of written clues around the school and grounds, working out words and following directions well. Staff are aware of the national guidelines for teaching literacy and gradually introduce the suggested framework of lessons through the year. There is a good balance between teaching specific skills, such as the sounds and shapes of letters, and encouraging children to see themselves as writers and make their own little books. Most reception children recognise letter shapes and the sounds they make, write their names correctly and attempt to write familiar words. They read several familiar words such as the names of characters in the early reading books.

65. Occasionally, opportunities to extend children's writing skills are missed. This was seen, for example, when children copied words written by the teacher but were not helped to learn where to start on the page and in which direction to write. Staff read stories with considerable expression and this captivates children's attention. There is a good use of questioning to assess children's understanding and extend their learning. Staff encourage all children to contribute to discussions and value each child's efforts. This results, in both the pre-school and reception class, in most children confidently speaking to the whole group, expressing themselves well. Occasionally, especially when the pre-school and reception classes combine, the listening-to-each-other sessions go on too long, many younger children become restless and higher attaining children are not given sufficiently challenging speaking activities. The 'story sacks', with books and resources to support reading, are made and maintained by parents and are lent to parents to work with their children at home. This, combined with the daily reading expected at home, provides good support to children's learning.

Mathematical development

66. Staff make many opportunities to extend children's understanding of number, shape, weight and size in practical meaningful situations. In a topic on babies last half term, reception children watched a health visitor weigh and measure a baby, then weighed and measured dolls. Concepts of large, small and medium are reinforced well using the Three Bears story and the imaginative play areas. Children are generally challenged well, such as in the pre-school group when a picture of only one of the Three Bears' chairs was held up and the children were asked to predict which one it was and show what size the others would then need to be. Reception children can print patterns of two of each size of bear. They make advent calendars, reinforcing the order of numbers in a seasonal way. They are confident in making sets of objects and writing the correct number up to five and many are already working beyond this, though the activities seen limited their recognition of numbers as they were based on the three bears.

67. Children show good awareness of larger numbers, counting up to 30. The class 'shoe shop' is used well for matching pairs of shoes and measuring the sizes of shoes and children's feet. Staff appropriately gradually introduce the methods of teaching numeracy outlined in national guidance. The high quality of teaching, in both the pre-school and reception classes, results in good progress being made and almost all children are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the year, with several exceeding them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world in practical ways. Children learn to use the computer and type their names, though many lack confidence when using the newly introduced program. Children concentrate for extended periods when using water, sand and malleable materials, exploring their properties intently. In a very well planned pre-school session on making porridge, children were encouraged see the changes as it cooked and to taste porridge with the addition of salt, sugar and sultanas and describe the differences.

69. Children learn to sequence events, such as pictures showing a baby, toddler, small child and older child. They also sequence events when they retell familiar stories such as Little Red Hen, learning at the same time how bread is made. They investigate different shoes for different people and attempt to design shoes. They follow arrow directions and are beginning to recognise left and right turns as part of the clues on the trail through school. This good provision results in pupils making good progress and their understanding is above average; they are likely to exceed the standards expected by the end of the year, supported well by their speaking and listening skills.

Physical development

70. Children's physical skills are developed well though good teaching. Reception and pre-school children have a separate outside area with a variety of equipment, including climbing apparatus and wheeled toys, set out each day, to be used in the short 'playtimes'. Children show average skills in pedalling the toys and rolling and catching hoops. They use the hoops well in a jumping game, after the careful intervention of staff to extend the activity. The reception teacher's very good relationships with children and positive strategies to manage them result in a good pace during physical education lessons in the hall. Children move imaginatively in response to the three bears story, bouncing, hopping and skipping appropriately. They bounce and catch balls in different ways and use the space in the hall well. The teacher uses praise and demonstration effectively to encourage children to improve their skills.

71. Staff also support children's increasing manipulative skills in the classroom, with activities such as threading laces, cutting with scissors and careful pencil drawings. Most children show above average control of their movements by the high quality of their drawings. Children make good progress as a result of the good teaching and almost all children are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the year, with many exceeding them in the fine control of pencils and other similar media.

Creative development

72. Good opportunities are made for children to explore and experiment creatively while structuring the teaching of skills. For example, in the pre-school class, children at first carried out the prepared activity of printing in rows with different sizes of sponge bear shapes. Two children became fascinated with the colours of the paint, first mixing the colours by printing on top of another print, then abandoning the sponges and doing enthusiastic prints with their hands. This was used effectively by the nursery nurse, who questioned the children about how they had made the orange and the green colours and extended their understanding well. The reception teacher questioned children well to focus on the detail seen while observing a teddy bear toy, then asked individual children to try and sketch it. The teacher's interventions were sensitive, encouraging children with good skills to draw very carefully while praising the efforts of children who experimented by covering the whole paper with pastel colours.

73. Imaginative play is supported well with puppets, dressing-up clothes and areas such as the class 'shoe shop'. Children are given good opportunities to experiment with loud and quiet sounds on percussion instruments. The reception teacher, for example, introduced one music session very effectively by asking children to pass a tambourine round the circle without a sound. The children listened engrossed and put a tremendous effort into passing the instrument silently. Opportunities were missed, however, to extend the understanding of higher attaining children who demonstrated they were able to play an instrument in time to a regular beat during the singing. Children enjoy singing and most enthusiastically join in action songs such as Hokey Cokey. The high quality of teaching results in children making good progress and most are likely to meet the expected standards by the end of the reception year, with many exceeding them.

ENGLISH

74. Standards have improved markedly since the last inspection and are now very good for seven-year-olds and good for 11 year olds. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards are well above the national average and much higher than those achieved by pupils in similar schools at ages seven and 11. Seven year olds do very well in both reading and writing. Eleven year olds achieve excellent results in reading, but their results in writing, though good, are not quite as high. Test results have risen continuously to 1999 and have been maintained in 2000, when they exceeded the targets set by the school. Both boys and girls do equally well, as do black pupils and those from other European backgrounds. The few pupils who are not fully fluent in English when they enter the school make rapid progress and achieve well. The inspection findings largely reflect the test results.

75. The profile of pupils entering the reception class is above average, but the range of attainment is wide and includes a minority of pupils who find learning difficult and a few very bright children. Many speak and listen well for their age. They already have an interest in books, a capacity to learn and good support from home. This is built on by good teaching, which helps all pupils to achieve well. The needs of pupils who find learning difficult and the very able are met well, both through classroom work and additional support.

76. Pupils are encouraged to extend their use of vocabulary during discussions, both in English and in other subjects. They listen very well to their teachers and reply confidently. They are not afraid to add their own comments. During shared reading of 'Cinderella', a Year 2 pupil points out that 'it's got rhythm'. When they come across the word 'immediately' an able black girl says 'I've already used that word in my writing today.' Teachers use technical language consistently, so that pupils in Year 2 understand terms like anthology, author and illustrator. By Year 6, pupils know how to use dictionaries and thesaurus and have a good grasp of the meaning of unusual words. A very able pupil, for example, remembered the meaning of precipitation from a previous lesson. They express their ideas vividly. One boy described C S Lewis's Narnia as 'the secret world beyond the wardrobe'.

77. Reading skills are taught very well, and pupils' achievement is high throughout the school. This assists their learning in all other subjects. The careful teaching of letter sounds starts in the reception class and continues throughout the infants. This helps pupils to attempt words that they do not recognise straight away. Pupils have many opportunities to read and parents' support is harnessed well. Pupils are expected to read often and widely. In a Year 5 and 6 class, for example, pupils are given a target of 40 books to read during the year, roughly one for each school week. Pupils' interest in books is stimulated well by much of the work done during the literacy hour. During the inspection, pupils in Year 4 were disappointed when that they couldn't continue the text from their Roald Dahl book.

78. Writing skills develop very well in the infant classes. In Year 2, even at this early stage of the year, the highest attaining pupils write lengthy pieces accurately. Some exceptional pieces of writing are produced by pupils of this age, including one about Helen Keller that was written in a very mature style. Pupils of all ability levels are encouraged to write independently and are willing to have a go. Pupils with special educational needs are often given good support by teaching assistants, and this assists their learning.

79. The writing of the 11 year olds is of a good standard generally, with the most able pupils writing well organised and accurate pieces. Opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects is good in history, but inconsistent in other subjects. In science, it is good in some classes, but in others there is too much copying. Some of the best writing is based on texts studied in the literacy hour. Pupils are able to adopt different styles, as when a Year 6 pupil wrote a journalistic piece, using the headline 'Misti left in disastrous flood' and continuing 'Deserted dog, Misti, was left stranded in its owner's home'. High attaining pupils spell and punctuate their work well. Pupils of other ability levels do so satisfactorily. Spelling and punctuation skills are taught thoroughly, but there is too little emphasis on helping pupils to learn from their own mistakes by careful marking and the correction of errors in books. In this respect, these pupils could do better. This relative weakness in writing is recognised by staff, who intend to address it through more careful target setting. Handwriting and the presentation of work vary, but are generally good by the time pupils reach Year 6.

80. Teaching is good, overall. It is more consistently good in the infant classes, where one excellent lesson was seen in Year 2. In this lesson, the teacher's high expectations and very good planning, with particularly well thought out support for pupils with special educational needs, ensured that all pupils made very good progress. Teaching is more variable in the junior classes. It is mainly good, though one unsatisfactory lesson was seen.

81. All teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well. Classrooms are orderly places where pupils expect to work hard and do their best. The positive attitudes that pupils bring to their work have a marked effect on their progress. Most teachers make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn during the lesson. Targets are written up and shared with the pupils. This works best when the targets are expressed in simple language that all pupils can understand and referred to again at the end of the lesson. Most teachers make learning interesting. In a good Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher used a variety of techniques to make learning fun. These included an opportunity for pupils to discuss in pairs and a folded paper 'game' to help pupils build up words from their syllables. Just occasionally, lessons are dull, and succeed mainly because the school's ethos promotes and rewards effort. Very good teaching was seen in the combined Year 5/6 class. The teacher's good subject knowledge and very good questioning skills ensured that the pupils' thinking was challenged and they made maximum effort. The good relationships allowed the teacher to use humour and the pupils to respond without taking advantage. In the unsatisfactory lesson, work was too hard for some pupils. Although they tried their best, they lost heart by the end of the lesson and didn't make enough progress.

82. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education plans that are used well, and ensure that teaching meets their needs. Teaching assistants provide very good individual support in lessons. They intervene sensitively during the teaching directed at the whole class, to make sure that the pupils are keeping up, as well as helping them with their individual work. Additional literacy support provided for pupils who need extra help in Years 5 and 6 is of good quality and is beneficial.

83. Management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The literacy hour has been implemented well, though the use of information and communication technology is not as full as it could be. Teaching is monitored, but there is a need to provide more support for new and inexperienced teachers. Target setting to bring pupils' attainment in writing up to the same standard as their reading is still at the planning stage. The school's marking policy is not being implemented effectively. Accommodation is tight, and has an impact on the size of the libraries, particularly for the infant pupils. Most classrooms are big enough, but one Year 4 classroom is cramped and this is made worse by the size of the furniture. This makes it difficult for all pupils to sit comfortably, and has an adverse effect on the quality of their handwriting and presentation of work.

MATHEMATICS

84. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards above that expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and handling data). However, more can be done to improve the range of opportunities for several aspects, such as investigations and data handling. Sometimes, pupils with special mathematical abilities achieve very high standards of attainment. Nevertheless, the inspection also found that on occasions these pupils, together with other higher attaining pupils, could be stretched even further, especially in the juniors. Sometimes not enough is expected of higher attaining pupils who could achieve more. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are well supported, make good progress and achieve, at least, appropriate levels.

85. The 2000 national test results, analysed to take account of the range of pupils' attainment compared with all and similar schools, show that last year's 7-year-olds attained standards well above average in both respects, with a large number of pupils reaching the highest levels. The equivalent results for 11-year-olds were above average in both contexts, although a somewhat lower proportion reached the higher grades. In contrast to the national picture, boys do better than girls in reaching the higher levels at the end of each key stage, particularly at the end of the juniors. Although slightly more girls than boys attained average grades in the 2000 results for Year 6, the reverse was true for Year 2 pupils.

86. By the age of seven, most pupils are able to use a good recall of basic number facts and have a good knowledge of place value to 100. The majority can recognise different sequences of numbers, including odd and even numbers, can count forwards and backwards using small numbers and are able to complete missing numbers in a simple sequence. They know the names and some of the main properties of many two and three-dimensional shapes. Many pupils can use simple measuring instruments effectively using a range of standard units, although some are more accurate and use estimation more competently than others. Most are developing a good range of mathematical vocabulary and language.

87. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils can work out calculations in their heads quickly, often using a range of different strategies such as doubling, halving, splitting numbers and to a lesser extent rounding, to rapidly work out their answers. Most have a good grasp of fractions and decimals, as seen in pupils' work and lessons such as that of an upper junior class where many pupils were able to convert rapidly fractions to decimals and percentages. Given the opportunity, many pupils can use relevant diagrams, arrays of data and graphs, but more attention needs to be given to this area. The majority of pupils use mathematical language well and are increasingly competent in working out real-life problems in the subject. However, more opportunities now need to be provided for pupils to carry out investigations in

mathematics, to make a range of estimations, to check their results and to be more precise and accurate in their measurements.

88. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good, overall; on rare occasions, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory, but frequently they are good and sometimes very good. Teachers often have a good knowledge of the subject in lessons, expectations of behaviour and pupils' learning are high, the pace is rapid and good use is made of questions. They plan and organise their lessons with care and make increasingly effective use of national numeracy approaches and strategies. In the best lessons, learning objectives are precise, clearly stated and communicated with pupils and carefully targeted to raise levels of achievement of pupils; including those aspiring to higher levels and areas of underachievement in the subject. Teachers make rigorous demands on the pupils, in such lessons, who respond well, make rapid progress and much is achieved in a single lesson, as seen particularly in several lessons involving Year 5/6 pupils and one with Year 2 pupils. In the least successful lessons, the work was insufficiently well matched to pupils' needs, there were inadequacies in the methods used and organisation of the lesson, pupils were sometimes unclear about what they had to do as a result of which learning and achievement were limited.

89. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy into the curriculum and is making effective use of the range of strategies and approaches. Attention has been focused strongly and to good effect on raising standards of oral and mental work, developing the range and use of appropriate mathematical language and vocabulary, together with other key aspects. Although the plenary session at the end of each lesson was seen to be well used on a number of occasions, it is recognised by the school that much more can be made of these valuable opportunities, overall, to tackle misconceptions, consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Similarly, whilst group work was very well provided for in some lessons, it was much less well matched in other lessons, especially to stretch the more able pupils. Identifying what is to be learnt in a lesson is very often clearly defined in the planning, however, much less often is it shared with pupils when the lesson begins. Good quality planning is often in evidence, but there is now a need to draw this together to create a common format, including clearly identified learning objectives for each of the group tasks, as part of each lesson.

90. Pupils use mathematics appropriately to help learning in other subjects such as science, geography, history, design and technology but the school appreciates that such opportunities can usefully be developed further not least, as part of a developing range of investigative work. Most pupils have good attitudes to the subject; they often enjoy the activities, work hard and take pride in their achievements. They listen attentively, sometimes with rapt attention, behave well and often see a number of activities as fun, especially mental and oral work, number games and challenging practical activities.

91. The arrangements for assessment are satisfactory with some aspects developing well and others less advanced. Valuable analysis of assessment results from a variety of sources is carried out, although it is recognised that further useful evaluations can be made from this information. Increasingly effective use of continuous assessment is being made to guide teachers' planning, although there are still some inconsistencies, such as in marking where wide variations were seen in the quality of guidance for pupils on how they could improve. Some variations were also noted in the effectiveness with which assessment information was used to guide teachers' planning, especially in relation to the match of work for different group tasks. Assessment is used appropriately to set sufficiently challenging targets for pupils in Years 2 and 6, although this is less effective in other year groups and personal targets for individual pupils are, similarly, inconsistently developed. The school is adequately resourced for the subject and it is recognised that further items are needed to

keep pace with developments, such as additional practical classroom equipment to enhance pupils' learning in numeracy, use of information and communication technology, and replacement of worn or outdated equipment.

92. The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection which are clearly reflected in the significant gains made in successive national curriculum test results. Arrangements for the co-ordination of the subject, in the absence of the co-ordinator, are being reviewed. Effective use is being made of national numeracy strategies and approaches which are now well established in the curriculum of the school. The school is strongly committed to the development of mathematics and all the staff are working very hard to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning, to good effect. Appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategies are being developed to ensure that the good progress which the school is making, can be further improved.

SCIENCE

93. Results achieved by pupils in science are noticeably better than those found nationally in 2000 and have continued to rise at rates comparable to those seen in other schools in recent years. Ninety six per cent of pupils achieve the expected average level 4. However, the number of pupils achieving the more difficult level 5 was below expectations and this results in a fall when pupils' attainment is measured against pupils from similar schools. This has been identified as the result of some weak teaching in a previous year group, a problem that has now been remedied by the school. Teacher assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are below the test results, an indication that assessment systems were not well enough developed within science.

94. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a good knowledge of several areas of scientific study. They look at a variety of materials, both man made and natural and can tell the difference between the two. They classify materials by their properties, for example fabric or metal. They have a good understanding of different food groups and are developing clear ideas about foods that are healthy or unhealthy. In a very interesting lesson in Year 2, pupils were beginning to classify foods into fats, sugars and proteins and many pupils could apply this information when creating a healthy "lunch box". Teachers extend pupils' vocabulary very well so that, for example, many pupils know that foods rich in calcium help to make strong teeth and bones. In an equally good lesson in a parallel Year 2 class, many pupils knew and could name the five senses. They applied their knowledge well to work on taste and understood that taste and smell are closely linked. Pupils understand how to conduct a "fair test" and did so in an experiment, which required them to taste different flavours of crisps - much enjoyed by the children. They used mature descriptive vocabulary to describe what they found; for example pupils described the crisps as "tangy, tasting sharp and strong on your taste buds". Ideas on smell and taste were appropriately linked to environmental issues when they discussed their taste likes and dislikes.

95. At Key Stage 2 the quality and quantity of work are more variable. Pupils continue to conduct simple scientific experiments as well as to acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding needed. Pupils' writing skills are developed well for example when they write up an account of a visit to the Geological Survey Centre. There are, however, too many occasions in lower Key Stage 2 where pupils copy work rather than write in their own words. By Year 5 pupils have a secure grasp of scientific vocabulary and can understand and use words such as insulator, conductor and sedimentary. Their understanding of the conduct of a "fair test" is extended and pupils can talk about variables and controls. While the work in one Year 5 class from the previous year provides consistently good challenges with work finished and appropriately marked, the opposite is true of the parallel class. This illustrates an

inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the year group and is one reason for a lower level of higher attaining pupils in the tests taken in 2000. By Year 6 children show a sound knowledge of changes which are reversible or irreversible and use vocabulary such as permeable and impermeable with knowledge and confidence. Knowledge from other subjects is incorporated to help pupils to record results for example graphical skills from mathematics. Experimental science continues to be an appropriate part of the curriculum.

96. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from satisfactory to excellent and was good overall. Where teaching is of a high quality the teacher ensures that pupils know exactly what they are to learn, the management and organisation of pupils is very good and the pace of working is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are provided with interesting and stimulating work which requires them to think hard about their answers and to use the knowledge they have previously acquired. This was particularly noticeable in a lesson on micro-organisms that created a very high level of interest and learning amongst the pupils. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking. While most pupils' work is marked, marking usually does not provide sufficient useful guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. The absence of this advice sometimes leads to standards that are not sufficiently high. The detail contained in some teachers' planning does not always provide sufficient guidance on exactly what is to be taught and sometimes results in lessons are not well linked to pupils' previous knowledge and understanding.

97. Pupils usually enjoy science. They are eager to answer questions, work well in pairs and groups, and complete and present their work carefully. Their behaviour is very good and sometimes excellent even when the quality of teaching is of less good quality. Work is usually very well presented with care being taken with spellings and punctuation.

98. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on the role but already has a clear idea of the aspects of the subject that need improvement. A curriculum audit has been recently completed and this reveals that clear guidance is needed on the extent and quality of teachers' planning, the analysis and recording of science results and the time spent on teaching science. An appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils is also viewed as a priority.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. Attainment in both subjects is in line with the national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Although very little art and design technology was timetabled during the inspection, examples of this year's and past work show that satisfactory progress has been made but that achievement for the older pupils could be higher in both subjects.

100. By Year 2, pupils have opportunities to work with a range of materials in art such as soft pastels and charcoal, collage materials and 'paint' software on the computer. Their soft-sculpture faces are very expressive. There is very little difference, however, between the style of portraits in Years 1 and 2, and the stimulus for work limits pupils' ideas. In a well-planned design and technology lesson, Year 1 pupils made effective hinges by using different methods to attach windows and doors to their houses. The good range of resources helped build on previous investigations, created much interest and motivated pupils to answer questions eagerly. Year 2 pupils are limited in their ideas for money containers by the one example provided for investigation.

101. In art, the work of lower junior pupils is often too directed and leaves little scope for them to use and develop their ideas creatively. Year 5 pupils are motivated to work

purposefully by the interesting range and variety of fruits and vegetables provided. They understand and use colour, tone, texture and shape in their observational drawings. Year 6 pupils paint on silk using paper outlines based on the shape of their cut fruit. Opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding are sometimes missed, for example, investigations of the still-life pictures of fruits by Cézanne have not been used to develop and extend pupils' understanding of depth and distance by composing their own still-life pictures. In another class, opportunities to work with a visiting artist have resulted in sensitively observed watercolour paintings by Year 5 and 6 pupils but this work has not been developed further.

102. In design and technology, work in Year 4 shows a good evaluation of different money containers and some imaginative ideas for designs. Pupils talk confidently about their intentions and are proud of their work. Learning experiences for the older pupils in design and technology are variable in quality. In a predominantly Year 5 lesson, effective planning with clear objectives helped pupils to evaluate how different sounds were made in their investigations of musical instruments. Current Year 5/6 work linked to history does not fulfil the design and technology curriculum requirements. Past projects involving designing and making a shoe includes evaluating products and the use of textiles and other materials in the finished work. There is little evidence of work using mechanisms and control.

103. There is evidence of underachievement by Year 6 pupils in both subjects but particularly in design and technology. Neither subject has been a focus for development for some time. The school has recently adopted national planning guidance for a scheme of work but often teachers' planning is modified and does not always reflect sound knowledge of both subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

104. During the inspection, only three lessons were seen in geography, but a range of evidence was available including pupils' work, teachers' planning, records and discussions with pupils about their work. On the basis of this evidence, appropriate opportunities are being provided for pupils to develop in the subject and attainment at the end of both Key Stages is in line with national expectations. This represents an improvement on the last inspection where the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 was found to be below national expectations. At Key Stage 2, satisfactory standards have been maintained.

105. By the age of seven, pupils know about their own locality and can talk confidently about significant features of a walk or journey they have made, including such things as the range of amenities, traffic, land use, types of houses and many other aspects. Most pupils are able to make simple comparisons between localities such as Aspley, Nottingham city centre and a rural community. Many know about some of the key people in the local community, know their own address, use appropriate geographical vocabulary and can talk in simple terms about changes which are taking place in the area. Many can draw simple plans and routes and are developing appropriate map skills.

106. By the age of eleven, most pupils have an appropriate range of geographical skills for their age. Many can use relevant keys and some scale and grid references and understand how to interpret maps. They have carried out a range of geographical work and have a sound understanding of their own locality and places further afield. Many understand how settlements differ and change. The quality of work seen in a Year 4 lesson on issues related to pollution and the recycling of waste was above expectations, and much of the work seen in older pupils' work on rivers and a few other aspects was also of good quality. Most pupils can identify and name an appropriate range of different capitals and countries on a globe or

world map. Most pupils recognise the importance of location in understanding places and have an appropriate range of geographical vocabulary and language.

107. Pupils frequently have good attitudes towards the subject; they work hard, behave well and take a pride in their work. Many clearly enjoy their work in the subject especially that relating to visits they have made, such as Perlethorpe during and following which they carried out valuable practical surveys and tasks related to litter and other forms of pollution, later extended to study recycling and other important environmental issues. Pupils talk about their work with confidence and are able to make some useful links with other subjects such as science, mathematics and English. Many pupils are often fascinated by maps, such as those seen in Year 3, particularly in one class where they worked extremely well together in pairs identifying features and interpreting geographical details on a local map using simple grid references.

108. The quality of teaching and learning is sound in both Key Stages overall; on occasions teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons, the work is challenging, interesting, well planned and organised and builds effectively on previous learning. Such lessons are characterised by good quality direct teaching which makes effective use of first hand experiences for pupils and where worksheets are used, they are effectively matched to pupils' understanding and knowledge to consolidate and extend their learning. On occasions, lessons are less effective where the work occupies rather than challenges the pupils and insufficiently builds upon pupils' previous learning in the subject.

109. The new national guidelines for geography are being appropriately used to assist teachers' planning and the school is in the process of reviewing and upgrading schemes, organisation and other documentation to provide much needed support for teachers. The new co-ordinator is aware of the priorities for development in the subject, and in the short time since the appointment, has made a positive start in tackling several of the main issues. Resources for the subject are barely adequate and will need to be extended to include new themes and to link closely with planned developments in the subject. As yet, monitoring and evaluation is insufficiently developed.

HISTORY

110. By the end of both the infants and the juniors, standards are in line with what is normally seen. Pupils make steady progress through the school as a result of the satisfactory quality of teaching, and their achievements are satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

111. By the age of seven, pupils show an average understanding of aspects of the past and how they differ from today. They learn about the lives of some famous people and are beginning to find reasons for these people's actions. In Year 1, pupils enjoy using old washday implements such as a dolly tub and a flat iron in structured play situations. A majority of pupils in Year 2 know something of the lives of Florence Nightingale and Helen Keller. They can describe the state of the hospitals, why many soldiers in hospitals died and what difference Florence Nightingale made. This is partly the result of the good relationships established and the focused questioning by the teacher, which means pupils are keen to contribute their opinions and their own questions. Pupils in Year 3 recall past work in the infants on the Great Fire of London and show a clear understanding of how the fire started and the reasons it spread so quickly. The way teachers ask pupils to record their learning sometimes restricts them, as was seen in one Year 1 class when pupils were confused by the worksheets given them, though they could speak clearly about their work. It was also

seen in a Year 2 class, where all pupils were asked to use the same worksheet and higher attaining pupils were not given the opportunity to present their findings independently.

112. In the juniors, pupils continue to build up a knowledge and understanding of the past, supported by the satisfactory quality of teaching. During the inspection, all four year groups in the juniors were studying ancient Egypt and were immersed in different aspects of life and beliefs of the ancient Egyptians. There was considerable overlap in what was learnt, though overall a greater depth of study was expected of older pupils.

113. Pupils have above average skills in discussing the past and in presenting evidence for their opinions, due to the high standards in speaking and listening and the strong emphasis on this in the school. A recent visit to a museum to handle Egyptian artefacts means that pupils are very aware of what can be learnt from the study of artefacts. They learn to use different sources of evidence, such as artefacts, pictures, books and information and communication technology. In one 5 and 6 Year class, a good focus on teaching pupils how to pick out the main points from a mass of evidence was seen during the inspection. This resulted in a good rate of learning during the lesson and pupils could give a clear brief description of different Egyptian gods and goddesses. In another class, pupils were given the responsibility of planning their own work, and while this supported their independence well and pupils were interested and concentrated hard, the teacher did not sufficiently check that all pupils had the necessary research skills to make progress. Those pupils trying to find information from information and communication technology were unable to use the programs and wasted time.

114. Pupils are encouraged to use and combine different sources of evidence, though they show little awareness that at times the evidence available can conflict or be dependent on people's different perspectives. This is because sometimes too little emphasis is given by teachers to discussing the quality of the different kinds of evidence and that there can be different interpretations of historical events and the importance of historical characters.

115. There has been some improvement in provision since the last inspection when the management and co-ordination of the subject was judged unsatisfactory. At present a temporary teacher is continuing the developments put in place by the co-ordinator and is keen to make the necessary changes and developments. It is planned to move to a two year cycle of topics for Years 3 and 4 and for Years 5 and 6, and to take note of national guidance for teaching the subject. Resources overall are adequate. Staff supplement these by providing a good range of interesting books and artefacts for the topics currently being studied, for example on ancient Egypt or Victorian life.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards for seven year olds are in line with what is expected. Eleven year olds also reach satisfactory standards in what they do. However, the school has only recently acquired sufficient computers and programs to cover the full curriculum at Key Stage 2 and therefore taken overall, standards are below where they should be because pupils have had little or no experience of some of the activities in the ICT curriculum. In that respect the, full statutory curriculum has not been delivered in the past. Planning is now based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance. New computers have been bought with further plans to increase these. There is a full range of software. These measures should ensure the full curriculum in the future.

117. In Year 2, pupils have produced some interesting computer art work where they have tried to produce similar effects using a computer to what they have seen from works such as

Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers'. Because they have good literacy skills, pupils' word processing looks quite sophisticated. They know about punctuation such as exclamation marks and apostrophes and find them on the computer to include on their work. Pupils' good attitudes and keen interest in finding out means that they learn quickly and are making rapid progress even with new programs. Year 1 pupils have used an art program to draw simple scenes such as one with a house, girl and flower showing that they have sufficient mouse skills.

118. Pupils in Year 6 have reasonable knowledge of how computers can be used, for example to speed up communication by e-mail or finding information on the internet. Their work shows that they have satisfactory skills in using text and combining pictures. They understand how to change size, colour or font. Within the key stage there are other examples of such skills and some pupils in earlier classes are working at a similar level in using effects to enhance their work, for example, the leaflets in Year 4 where pupils have provided information about the Egyptians. These are interestingly presented, colourful and show comparatively good skills for the age of the pupils. Year 3 pupils used a mathematics programme to reinforce learning about fractions and were able to complete the tasks finding out for themselves when they were not sure which symbol or icon to press to move the program on. An area of ICT which has only just begun is handling data and using spread sheets. Because the software has only just arrived, very few pupils have had any experience of this type of work. A computer club allows those with keener interest to have additional experience.

119. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. It has been held back by lack of computers and software. The co-ordinator has given a good lead in putting this right and everything is now in place to provide a full curriculum. The range of staff confidence and skill in computer use is recognised and staff development is planned to support those who do not feel as competent as they need to be to promote consistently good standards and progress throughout the school.

MUSIC

120. Standards are in line with those normally expected in both the infants and the juniors. There is steady progress through the school and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. There has been a big improvement since the last inspection, which found that standards were below average and identified raising attainment in music as a key area for the school to work on.

121. During the inspection, two lessons were seen in the infants and two in the juniors. Additional evidence comes from assemblies, extra-curricular choir and a recorder club. Almost all of the lessons seen were taken by the co-ordinator, who is a music specialist, and the quality of teaching observed was good. Year 1 pupils have average understanding of long and short sounds. They respond excitedly to the good resources of animal pictures used by the teacher as symbols for long sounds, hissing, mooing and miaouing appropriately. Year 2 pupils sing many songs tunefully and with due regard to the rhythms in different pieces of music. In one lesson, they described Bach's Air on a G string as 'peaceful', 'makes me feel sleepy'. They could compare it well with faster music such as Vivaldi's Four Seasons. The good organisation of the lesson and the interesting music and instruments used supported pupils' learning well. Individual pupils took turns to accompany the singing on the chime bars and pupils used hand signals correctly to signify higher and lower notes.

122. In Year 3, pupils copy rhythmic patterns well, and show above average understanding of musical terms such as 'ostinato'. This is due to the good subject knowledge and careful planning of the teacher, who chooses suitable pieces of music from different traditions, of

jazz and classical, to demonstrate ostinato patterns. Pupils respond with pleasure though not always accurately to musical activities. The teacher assesses pupils' efforts well and helps those who are having difficulty in order that they play instruments more effectively. By Year 6, pupils sing rounds such as 'London's burning' in two parts, singing tunefully and keeping to their parts well. Their efforts to compose their own rounds in small groups are hampered by the noise of other groups in a cramped space. The teacher gives good support to the groups, helping them to improve their work.

123. The co-ordinator has developed the subject well in response to the last report and is clear about further developments needed. The curriculum has been improved and pupils now adequately experience the different musical elements of performing, composing, appraising and listening and applying knowledge and understanding. The school appropriately uses national guidance as a basis for careful planning, with less emphasis on using radio and television broadcasts and more emphasis on active participation in music sessions. Assemblies provide good support to the music curriculum. Extra-curricular provision, however, has been curtailed, though that provided enriches the curriculum well for those pupils that participate. The junior choir now practises regularly, though during lesson time, which disrupts other curriculum areas. There is currently only one recorder group and no peripatetic instrumental tuition.

124. A key aspect of the low standards seen in the last inspection was the lack of subject knowledge and skills of several teachers. The school has worked hard to improve this with staff training. The co-ordinator takes all classes for music lessons on a rota basis over several weeks, and provides opportunities for staff to observe her teaching their classes. Staff take their own classes in the intervening weeks. The co-ordinator, however, is a part-time teacher and does not have the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching to see how effective the training is being in raising teachers' skills and confidence. Teaching seen was good but there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on whether staff as a whole are now secure in their subject knowledge and confident in teaching music. Resources have improved since the last inspection, though there is a lack of sufficient good quality percussion and few instruments from different cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. The previous inspection judged that the quality and standards of work in physical education were broadly satisfactory, a judgement that accords with that made on this occasion. Lessons in dance, gymnastics and swimming were observed, as was an extra curricular football session. These observations indicate that the quality of gymnastics work is satisfactory. In dance and swimming pupils demonstrate levels of skill and understanding above those normally seen in the age group. Teaching varied from very good to unsatisfactory but overall was satisfactory.

126. Pupils in Key Stage 1 used floor space well as they moved in different directions and at differing speeds. Teachers use pupils' demonstrations effectively to improve the quality of work. A lesson on throwing and catching was less successful because insufficient time was given to improving individual skills before moving on to paired work. The quality of work in a Year 2 dance lesson was good. Pupils used the idea of shadows to create movements linked to their own body shapes. They created stretched, twisted and curled movements of good quality linking them together thoughtfully with jumps and rolls. Pupils had ample time to practice and improve their movements before extending it into work in pairs and groups of four. The imaginative use of shape and body control together with their ability to discuss and decide upon sequences and repeated patterns of movement indicates levels of ability in dance above that normally seen for pupils in Year 2.

127. The quality of gymnastics is variable in Key Stage 2. This is largely dependent on how teachers extend the quality of pupils' work and motivate them to creatively explore their body movements. In one unsatisfactory lesson, there was a failure to help pupils extend what they knew because they were allowed insufficient time to practice and improve their movements and to learn from each other. On the other hand a lesson in Year 5/6 was purposeful with pupils moving from one activity to another quickly quietly and sensibly. They showed imagination and skill in mirroring the actions of others and were provided with time to improve quality. By the end of this lesson pupils had improved their skills in control and balance and the work completed in the initial warm-up session was continued as a focus throughout the lesson.

128. Pupils perform well in swimming and make good progress. They are well organised and receive good quality coaching from both the school and the staff from the swimming baths. During the lesson they improved their stroke techniques listening carefully to the advice they received from the knowledgeable staff. Most pupils can swim with many already attaining the minimum twenty five meters. They are confident in the water and swim using a variety of strokes.

129. Extra-curricular activities play an important part in the school's physical education programme with regular practices in netball and football. The school also provides opportunities to experience other more unusual outdoor activities such as abseiling and gorge walking when pupils are involved in residential visits.

130. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed to the role and developments in the subject are still at an early stage.