

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JUDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 130384

Headteacher: Mrs. J Booth

Reporting inspector: Mr Jean-Pierre Kirkland
4483

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th December 2000

Inspection number: 224855

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tyrer Avenue Worsley Mesnes Wigan
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Father P J MacNally
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Jude's Catholic Primary School is voluntary aided and has 206 pupils on roll, which is slightly below average in comparison to all primary schools. Governors are currently applying to reduce the standard admission number to 30 per year, since numbers have been declining steadily during the past few years. Surplus space has been used to accommodate an independent pre-school group, which benefits children starting school. The school is housed on two sites separated by spacious playing fields with plans to move to one site in the near future. The school is located just over a mile from Wigan town centre and the pupils come from houses which are largely for rent from the local authority, as well as from owner-occupied homes. Initial assessment shows that attainment on entry to the Reception class is below average, especially in the skills of literacy and numeracy. Approximately ten per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure well below the national average. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is also below average, at around 15 per cent. There is currently one statemented pupil, with two others awaiting assessment. The school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Religious education and the Catholic ethos of the school are to be inspected and reported on separately. The headteacher is new in post, having commenced duties in September 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory level of education for its pupils overall, with many strong features, but also a number of weaknesses. The new headteacher, with full support from governors, provides good leadership and is in the process of tackling the weaknesses successfully, and inspectors found a number of improvements, especially in the standards at Key Stage 2. Attainment on entry is below average but rises to above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Given the below average standards at the end of Key Stage 2, set against good teaching in most lessons, improving progress in lessons and above average costs per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables pupils to achieve well above average standards in reading and writing, and very high standards in mathematics in the most recent end-of-Key-Stage-1 national tests.
- Provides a very good start to children's learning in the Foundation Stage.
- Good, or better than good, teaching in the majority of lessons enables pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress.
- Ensures good behaviour from its pupils, who have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Encourages very good levels of social interaction within an effective caring framework.
- Provides good leadership and secure management with a very good vision for future development and improvement.

What could be improved

- Standards which are currently below average in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Provision and learning in information and communication technology (ICT) at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The quality of medium and long-term planning at both key stages.
- The use of assessment, so that it becomes an instrument for raising standards, especially at Key Stage 2 and, in particular, for higher attaining pupils.
- The role of co-ordinators, most of whom have had insufficient experience or have insufficient understanding of how to develop their subject areas further.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. A minor point for consideration is the lack of outdoor play facilities and large-scale toys for the Foundation Stage children.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection in 1997, although some of the key issues have only recently begun to be addressed with the appointment of the new headteacher. Short-term planning includes learning objectives and assessment procedures are good. With a large number of newly appointed co-ordinators, there is still work to be done on developing their roles further. The governing body now has a sharper focus to its work, with effective committees and procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. There has been a significant improvement in the standards at the end of Key Stage 1, which are above average overall, but there

has been a decline in standards at Key Stage 2. With new management, the school is in a very favourable position to improve further.

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	C	C	E	E
Mathematics	C	C	D	D
Science	B	C	D	E

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

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in English were well below average in the Year 2000 national tests, with below average standards in mathematics and science. Current standards from inspection findings show some improvement, with a rise to below average in English, particularly in writing, and a rise to bring standards in line with national averages in mathematics. Inspectors found standards in science similar to the results last year. Improvements are due to better teaching at the end of Key Stage 2, and the benefits of the National Numeracy Strategy showing in mathematics. Higher attaining pupils are now making better progress. Results have not improved as much as the trend nationally over the past four years, despite the encouraging signs in the current Year 6. Some of the lack of progress is due to insufficiently realistic challenges for all pupils. At Key Stage 1, results in the Year 2000 national tests were well above average in reading and writing, and very high in mathematics. Teacher assessment in science placed pupils well above average overall. Inspectors found standards somewhat lower in the current Year 2, due mainly to the larger proportion of lower attaining pupils in the current year group. Standards nevertheless are above average in science and English and well above average in mathematics. When pupils' performances are compared to pupils in similar schools, the school was well above average at Key Stage 1 overall, and well below average overall at Key Stage 2. Standards are above national expectations in history at Key Stage 1, in physical education at Key Stage 2, and in music throughout the school. Standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects at both key stages, barring ICT where they are below at Key Stage 2. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with levels below those expected nationally. They make good progress in basic literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills, resulting in standards rising to broadly average. Progress overall in lessons throughout the rest of the school is generally good, which accounts for the improved standards in Key Stage 2 and the above average standards at Key Stage 1. Across the school as a whole, progress over time is satisfactory in most subjects. It is good in mathematics, geography, music and physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good, pupils love coming to school to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall, pupil behaviour in lessons and at play is good, with respect shown for rules. There were no exclusions last year.
Personal development and relationships	Good, pupils form constructive relationships with one another and with staff. There are good examples of independent learning in the Foundation Stage and some other classes.
Attendance	Satisfactory with no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Satisfactory

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

Teaching overall is good. Seventeen per cent was judged very good during the inspection, 40 per cent was judged good, 40 per cent was judged satisfactory, with three per cent unsatisfactory. This is broadly similar to the teaching observed during the previous inspection, although there has been a reduction in the proportion of both very good teaching and unsatisfactory teaching. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is very good, with high challenges, very good management and organisation and very effective use of resources, with children learning basic skills very well. In most lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is good. There is a higher proportion of good teaching at Key Stage 1 where teachers challenge pupils more effectively and pupils' learning builds well on the secure foundations laid in the Reception class. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good and very good teaching, but a small percentage of unsatisfactory practice. Teaching is better when teachers have high expectations of pupils, when planning provides clear learning objectives and when pupils are well managed, so that they learn more effectively. Teaching is less good when the pace is slow, challenges are inappropriate for the group of pupils in the class, or there is restlessness and inattention. Higher attaining pupils have been insufficiently challenged at Key Stage 2 and they have not made the progress they should have, although the situation is improving with better learning of skills, especially in Year 6. Numeracy skills are generally well taught, resulting in improved standards in mathematics. The teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory overall. ICT skills are insufficiently well developed throughout the school and standards are below average. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and, for these pupils, progress towards their targets is good overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory and meeting statutory requirements in full. There is a sufficient number of extra-curricular activities to enhance the curriculum appropriately.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, through a mixture of in-class support, and special lessons when appropriate.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall, although the school has not got a clear overview of multicultural development through all subjects of the curriculum. However, provision for social development is very good, especially in the Foundation Stage and when teachers encourage pupils to work collaboratively in groups.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils.
Partnership with parents and carers	Links with, and involvement of, parents are satisfactory overall. Parents have a very positive view of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher has very clear vision for the school and she is sharing this effectively with colleagues. She is ably supported by the deputy and governing body in moving the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall. Many governors are new and take their responsibilities seriously in their committee work and support for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher, deputy and governors are now beginning to prioritise in planning and to evaluate outcomes. The school makes good financial decisions based on available evidence, seeking the best value for money.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall, but with a notable weakness in the use of ICT across the curriculum. Very good use is made of support assistants in all areas of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards and progress throughout the school. The Catholic ethos of the school, and its care of pupils. Good teaching and the approachability of staff. The way the school helps pupils become mature, succeed and do well. Leadership and management of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in the provision of extra-curricular activities.

Parents were very supportive of the school and its work at the evening meeting and in their responses to the questionnaires. Inspectors endorse the positive views of parents. It was judged that the school provided an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities for its pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below national averages in English and science. They are broadly average in mathematics. This is an improvement on the most recent national tests in 2000, when standards attained by pupils were well below average in English, below average in mathematics, and overall well below average in science, owing to the few pupils achieving the higher Level 5. When compared to similar schools, the results for 2000 show that pupils were below their peers in mathematics and well below in English and mathematics. The improvement on the previous year of the current Year 6 pupils is the result of:
 - Good teaching, especially in Year 6.
 - Better use being made of assessment information to set realistic targets for pupils.
 - Greater impact over time of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies.
 - However, standards in English and science are still below national averages, and need further improvement.
2. In English, standards of writing, including handwriting, are below average by the age of 11. In science, standards are below average largely because pupils do not make sufficient progress in investigative work. Although the assessment of pupils this year shows a likelihood of these pupils performing better, confirmed by inspection findings, the proportion of pupils in the higher achievement range is not as high as it was when these pupils entered the national tests at Key Stage 1 four years ago. The proportion of lower attaining pupils is being reduced each year, especially in mathematics, showing good progress for these pupils. The difference in achievements of boys and girls follows the national trend overall, with no major differences identifiable during the inspection. Levels of attainment at Key Stage 2 are not as good as those reported in the previous inspection.
3. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is above average in reading and writing, well above average in mathematics, and above average in science. These inspection findings are not as high as the most recent test results last summer. The well above average standards in reading, writing and science, and the very high standards in mathematics have not been sustained this year. This is due largely to a greater proportion of pupils in the current Year 2 class experiencing learning difficulties. Although these pupils are making good progress towards their targets, having started from a much lower level originally, they are still below average for their age. However, standards are above average overall, and progress since starting the National Curriculum has been very good. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are significantly better than those reported in the previous inspection.
4. Children enter the school after their fourth birthday, and they are generally below the expected development level for their age. This is especially true in numeracy and expressive language. In the Foundation Stage, owing to very good teaching, very good use of resources and a clear understanding of how to enhance young children's learning well, very good progress is made overall. By the age of six, most pupils normally achieve the early learning goals, and this is most likely to be the case this year. Currently, attainment levels are broadly average. Personal, social and

emotional development is good, there is very good progress being made by many children in mathematical and English skills, and most children are developing an appropriate awareness of the world around them. Creative development is very good for the majority of children. Physical development is good, but some children suffer from a lack of access to large-scale toys and secure outdoor play facilities. In some cases this causes development to be slower than it should be, and it affects lower attaining children more, for they do not get sufficient opportunities to practise control, co-ordination and muscle-building activities. Given the very good provision and the very good progress being made, it is likely that the vast majority of children will achieve their early learning goals before embarking on the National Curriculum in Year 1. There have been changes very recently in this stage of education, and comparisons to the previous report are therefore less valid. However, the general high quality provision, very good progress in learning and at least average standards of attainment are better than those reported in the previous inspection.

5. Standards have been rising continuously at Key Stage 1 over the past four years. The most significant rise has been in mathematics, largely owing to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has increased teachers' confidence significantly, and equipped them with a more challenging range of good teaching strategies, which they use consistently well. In the most recent national test in the Year 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was two and a half times better than the national average. This is very good indeed. Number work and data handling stand out as significant strengths at this key stage. Standards are not so high this year, owing mainly to the higher proportion of lower attaining pupils in Year 2. Progress in numeracy since the start of the National Curriculum has been as good for this group as in the previous year, but the starting point was somewhat lower.
6. A similar situation exists in literacy. In reading and in writing, pupils' achievements have improved from above average to well above average during the last four years. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 last year was also well above average. Particular strengths lie in the high quality of reading displayed by pupils, good legible writing, and clear speaking skills. This year's group of pupils is unlikely to sustain the high standards achieved last year, for the same reasons as in mathematics, although there is a similar proportion of pupils likely to attain the higher Level 3.
7. In science, based on teacher assessment, standards for the Year 2000 were very high at Level 2 and above; however, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was below the national average. Historically, pupils at Key Stage 1 have been provided with insufficient opportunities for investigative work, and this has influenced standards adversely at the higher level. Currently, standards in science are above average, and with more emphasis now being placed on investigative work, inspectors noted better progress for higher attaining pupils.
8. When St. Jude's results for the Year 2000 are compared to pupils in similar schools on the basis of entitlement to free school meals, pupils' achievements at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above average in reading and writing, and very high in mathematics. At Key Stage 2, when compared to results achieved by pupils in 2000 in similar schools, standards are well below average in English and in science, and below average in mathematics. Despite improvements in all three subjects noted during the inspection, this is unsatisfactory and an issue for the school to address.
9. Progress across the school as a whole over time is generally satisfactory. In English, pupils enter the school with below average standards and currently are leaving with

similar standards. In science, a similar pattern emerges, with below average standards at the start and end of primary education. In mathematics, however, pupils are below average on entry to the school and inspection findings indicate average standards in Year 6. This shows good progress overall. The 2000 national test results were unduly influenced in a downward direction by the arrival during Key Stage 2 of three pupils with special educational needs, and the departure of four pupils who were on course to achieve Level 5. When these pupils are removed from the statistics, the position is healthier, but still not good enough. Pupils make good, and often very good, progress at Key Stage 1, and the results confirm this year on year. The rate of progress then slows. Inspectors found that this was due to a number of significant factors:

- Teachers at Key Stage 2 are not using prior assessment information on pupils when planning the next stages of learning.
 - The lack of coherent and structured schemes of work does not enable teachers to plan consistently and build pupils' skills progressively, especially in writing.
 - Insufficiently high challenges in some lessons for higher attaining pupils, especially in investigative work in science.
10. In the school development plan, there are strategic priorities to address all these issues. Already the new headteacher has moved some staff strategically, and this is having a positive effect on teaching and learning. Inspectors noted rising standards at Key Stage 2, especially in Year 6, where progress was good in most lessons. By analysing the assessment information and tracking individual pupils, realistic targets are now being set for Year 6 pupils. These are achievable and are leading to greater productivity in lessons and better motivation for the majority of pupils. Generally, pupils make good progress in mathematics, especially in number work and in mental arithmetic sessions. In English, progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs, most of whom have literacy targets on their excellent individual education plans, make good progress through a mixture of in-class support and specialised group work. This occurs in reading and in some aspects of writing, especially in spelling and punctuation. However, for all pupils, progress in improving the quality of writing, including handwriting, is not good enough, and this has an adverse effect in other subjects. The school is conscious of this, and has begun to provide pupils with more frequent opportunities to extend their writing skills, although there is no clear policy yet on how this is to be achieved. Progress in science, while largely satisfactory, is not good enough for the higher attaining pupils. This is largely the result of insufficient attention being paid to investigative work, which used appropriately can stretch the thinking skills of all pupils, and lead to higher attainment overall.
11. The skills of ICT are not given sufficient prominence throughout the school. In many lessons, inspectors noted little or no use of the computer. Some teachers have focused lessons which emphasise various aspects of ICT such as use of the mouse, saving work and editing passages of text. The overall approach, however, is inconsistent, and is largely due to a lack of appropriate software and no structured scheme of work for teachers to follow. This results in below expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2.
12. Owing largely to the differences in the quality of teaching between the key stages, progress is very good in many Key Stage 1 lessons, but satisfactory overall in most Key Stage 2 lessons. In music and physical education, progress overall is good, with good attention being placed on progressive skills development in both subjects, thereby improving the quality of learning. At Key Stage 1, there is good development in the understanding of time and things old and new in history. This leads to above

expected standards in history at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards are above expectations in music at both key stages, and in physical education at the end of Key Stage 2. In other subjects, progress is at least satisfactory overall and standards reach expected standards at the end of both key stages. In some lessons, where pupils are challenged to think or investigate, such as in Year 4 geography or Year 6 design and technology, progress is good. Progress is very good when teachers combine high challenges with a fast pace and use resources effectively, characteristic of many lessons at Key Stage 1. The skills developed early on are successfully built upon and developed further. Progress is rarely less than good and often better.

13. The targets set by the school in numeracy and literacy for the next two years are achievable and realistic. By carefully analysing the school's Key Stage 1 results, and using other assessment information, combined with tracking pupils' progress over the key stage, the school is now in a position to make more accurate predictions, with which inspectors agree. The school has also looked carefully at differences in achievements by boys and girls, which correspond to the national trend, and made some adjustments in teaching, largely through amending some resources and using different learning strategies. Inspectors noted that there was now little noticeable gender difference, except where potentially disruptive pupils could sometimes affect the learning of others. Mindful of this, the school has appropriate support strategies in place which are proving successful in minimising any negative effects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work, and come into school enthusiastically. They clearly enjoy the experience of school and the activities which it provides. The school has maintained the very good attitudes and behaviour seen at the last inspection. All parents say that their children like school and this is borne out by the inspection.
15. Children in the Foundation Stage love school, enjoy learning and settle down to tasks very quickly and without fuss. Joy is written on many of their faces. They are attentive, very well behaved, and are keen to share what they are doing with staff and visitors. The children learn very quickly to take charge of their own learning and behaviour. Staff provide ample opportunities for them to explore and investigate. When working independently in the 'home corner' or 'post office', or when using sand and water, children mix very well socially, organise themselves very well, and behave admirably. These aspects of early personal and social development, coupled with very good levels of early independence, are significant strengths of the school.
16. Older pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 like learning and love coming to school. They show the ability to work well independently when given appropriate opportunities. For example, in a Year 4 geography lesson, making good use of ICT for research into the physical features of India, the majority of pupils were very keen to try hard and persevere, and were keen to please their teacher. Many lessons were observed where pupils were seen to develop and maintain very good attitudes and good behaviour. This included a Year 1 mathematics lesson, when in recognising coins up to 50 pence, pupils settled down quickly and well to complete their tasks, showing good social behaviour.
17. Behaviour in and around the school is good, with children polite and well behaved. There were no exclusions last year. The pupils behave sensibly in both dining halls at lunchtime, and follow instructions from the caring mid-day staff. Lunch-times are social occasions and pupils use them as opportunities to explore their relationships with

others, with older pupils discussing the day's events with the younger ones. Pupils behave well in assemblies; they listen attentively and with good concentration when expected to do so.

18. Relationships are very good and this was seen in a very effective Year 5 lesson in personal and social development, where teamwork was the subject of the lesson. The pupils discuss very well the use of praise as part of teamwork, and relationships are very good in this and most other lessons. Generally, pupils' personal development is good. This was evident in the Infants, where pupils are given time to play mathematical games; where praise is used to produce good behaviour; and the house point system, presented at assemblies, is used to motivate them to achieve. Every pupil achieves in some way. Pupils respect one another's property and possessions. The use of initiative is good. Pupils research information in geography and science, tidy up effectively in music lessons and ensure their tables are kept neat and tidy. Pupils act as house captains, register monitors, computer monitors and table monitors, and are keen to do so. Each year the pupils "negotiate" the class rules with their teacher, and all pupils are happy to comply with them fully. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, pupils regularly choose their own activity and behave very well, without direct supervision, in a significant number of lessons. Overall, pupils' personal development is appropriate.
19. Attendance in the school is satisfactory and broadly corresponds to the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is very low, and is well below the national average.
20. The school is free from signs of vandalism or graffiti, and a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including art, drama, rugby, music and computer club, enhances pupils' personal development, especially in the case of older pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Teaching overall is good, although there are inconsistencies between key stages. Seventeen per cent was judged very good during the inspection, 40 per cent was judged good, 40 per cent was judged satisfactory, with three per cent unsatisfactory. This is broadly similar to the teaching observed during the previous inspection, although there has been a reduction in the proportion of both very good teaching and unsatisfactory teaching.
22. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good overall. Children learn basic skills, are industrious and alert, and make very good progress towards most of their early learning goals, and certainly good progress towards others. Teaching is very good because:
 - Staff know how young children learn, and provide them with challenging yet manageable activities. Early science investigations are of this nature, with children watching, experimenting and recording well.
 - Expectations for all children are high. Throughout lessons, staff question children and challenge their thinking. They match the style and difficulty of each question to what is known of each child's capabilities. This is especially effective in literacy when learning initial sounds, and in numeracy, when counting on. At each stage, the teacher questions fully in order to assess that the children have learnt the principle.
 - Staff have made very good use of their initial assessments, completed at the start of the term. They use this information very convincingly when planning activities

and designing worksheets or tasks. This is particularly effective when one group works with the teacher, a second with the nursery nurse, and the third is given 'free' activities, which are carefully structured. The ensuing rotation provides different challenges for all children across a range of learning experiences.

- Lessons are made very interesting, with a large number of different activities and tasks to be completed. The spacious accommodation is very well used to provide differing tasks in each area, so children have freedom to explore, not only physically, but mentally as well. Effective organisation occurred when using the programmable toy in an ICT lesson, or when children started to design and make their own Christmas cards.
 - Relationships are excellent. These are so important to children of this age, who need to feel secure and comfortable with adults, and they learn well in this harmonious setting. In all lessons, staff show a sincere, caring and sympathetic approach which encourages, motivates and enhances the learning process. Frequent rewards, such as stickers, take the process further to the delight of the children.
23. At Key Stage 1, teaching is good overall. There is one temporary teacher in this key stage, who is well supported by senior staff and her colleagues. The strengths of teaching are:
- Building successfully on the very good start made before children reach the age of six, especially in literacy and numeracy, where learning basic skills is good and often very good.
 - Sustaining successfully pupils' motivation and interest, illustrated well in a very good music lesson in Year 2 linked effectively to story-telling and literacy development.
 - Managing pupils well, so that they access the curriculum in English in Year 1, thereby consolidating writing skills effectively and, in another very good lesson, learn pronunciation of initial and end sounds very well.
 - Building well on active role play, learnt in the Foundation Stage in mathematics in Year 1. Pupils were eager to act out roles in a shop, buying and selling and giving appropriate money and receiving change, all helping to consolidate their understanding of number.
 - Involving pupils fully in the sharing of learning, as in Year 2 science, where pupils are encouraged to share reasons for their decisions, and to offer suggestions for criteria to enable objects to be sorted into groups.

24. Areas for improvement are:

- Developing ICT skills more effectively, by not focusing on too much in a short period of time.
- Insisting on pupils paying full attention when learning physical education skills and when watching other pupils demonstrate good practice, so that they are clear about how to improve and what is to be done.

25. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their learning. Essential skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught and standards at the end of the key stage are well above average. Planning is generally good, but, without coherent schemes of work, some elements, such as the development of ICT skills, are left too much to chance. Day-to-day assessment is satisfactory, and pupils' learning is enhanced at home with appropriate amounts of homework, mainly reading, spelling, mathematical tables and solving problems.

26. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, although there is too much variation, from unsatisfactory to very good. Teaching lacks consistency between years, and as a result, progress is more of a roller-coaster than it should be. The relative strengths of teaching are:

- Good focus on developing essential literacy and numeracy skills at the end of the key stage. Pupils are given good opportunities to form their own hypotheses when learning about main clauses in literacy, or challenged to think and to speed up in their mental calculations.
- Resources are very effectively used to enhance learning, as in musical composition and performance, when pupils were given a wide range of opportunities to experiment with sound and relate what they were doing to their history topic.

27. Weaknesses are present when:

- Teaching strategies do not focus sufficiently effectively on learning basic rules and skills, as in a literacy lesson on the appropriate use of adding 'ing', or in developing writing techniques, including handwriting.
- Insufficient assertiveness when giving instructions in physical education, and allowing the pace to become too slow.

28. Teaching at Key Stage 2 suffers overall from a lack of consistent planning, building year on year to ensure the progressive development of skills. Individual lessons are well planned, however, but the wider context of such planning is lacking. This means that continuity of learning across the whole key stage is not assured. Historically, this has led to insufficient progress being made, especially for higher attaining pupils. The headteacher and deputy are now encouraging co-ordinators to develop appropriate schemes of work in order to build upon the levels pupils have already reached when they enter Year 3, and which will then develop learning progressively beyond that. At the time of the inspection, such schemes were in their infancy and were having an impact at the very end of the key stage only. However, good progress was being made in a significant number of lessons where teachers were successfully using assessment information in their planning, so that learning of basic skills was good. Although this is also relatively new, and not yet taken on board by all staff, where it is happening, largely in Year 6, learning is accelerated and better progress is made. Already, standards in Year 6 are above those recorded in the previous year's national tests in

English, mathematics and science, showing the success of the consistently good planning.

29. Throughout the school, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are provided with appropriate work which matches the requirements of the excellent targets on the individual education plans. Teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills to these pupils is good overall, and the progress in their learning is equally good.
30. The teaching of basic skills follows the same pattern as teaching for the school. These are very well taught at Key Stage 1, and to a satisfactory extent overall at Key Stage 2, where, nevertheless, elements of good and very good practice exist. Numeracy skills are generally taught better than literacy skills. This is partly due to better initial training, and partly due to teachers having more confidence in themselves. Some lessons in literacy suffer from being too routine, without the exciting challenges prevalent in many mathematics lessons. This fails to inspire the higher attaining pupils especially, whose progress is not as good as it should be. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have both been successfully introduced, with more effective results so far in numeracy, where standards are higher, particularly at Key Stage 2. The teaching and learning of the basic skills of investigation and recording is a relative weakness in science at Key Stage 1 and a more significant weakness at Key Stage 2.
31. Teachers set sufficient homework for pupils, and marking is adequate overall, although it is inadequate in English and science. Work is often discussed with individual pupils upon completion, so that pupils are made aware of how to improve. The homework set includes reading, spelling, learning mathematical tables and solving problems, and, increasingly in Key Stage 2, the use of research for projects. Inspectors felt that this was sufficient preparation for transfer to the high school.

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

32. Overall, curriculum provision is satisfactory in breadth and balance, and it meets statutory requirements fully. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught appropriately. In the Foundation Stage, a very good curriculum has been developed which provides very good learning activities for children under the age of six. Taking full account of the new early learning goals, the curriculum offers a wide range of very good quality experiences, giving children a secure foundation for future development. The school has carried out an audit of teaching time, and the time allocated to literacy and numeracy reflects the needs of the pupils, and is significantly and appropriately greater than that allocated to other subjects. The time provision for religious education reflects the aims and values of the school and the remaining time is divided between the other subjects, with a larger allocation for science and ICT.
33. The school has sound strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and good strategies for numeracy. These strategies are evident during the specific teaching of English and mathematics and other opportunities are provided to extend literacy and numeracy skills in other curriculum subjects, for example in history, science and religious education. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school.
34. A suitable range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils participate in inter-school sports competitions in rugby, cricket and netball. Other opportunities are provided to enrich the curriculum through cultural development,

particularly in art and drama; provision is also made to develop skills in ICT. These activities are well supported by pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in a variety of activities. These include visits to local social and business centres, for example the local health centre and a leading supermarket chain, environmental centres, such as Three Sisters nature area; and cultural visits to the theatre in Manchester and the waxworks museum in Blackpool. Many of these visits link in well to subjects of the curriculum such as English, science and geography, and enhance the lessons appropriately.

35. The school has an effective policy to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to study the whole curriculum, including those with special educational needs. These pupils are supported well in many lessons when the need arises, with some special group work, which follows similar provision to the main class. The school has good policies for sex and drugs education, which are integrated well into the school's scheme of work for personal, social and moral education.
36. The school enjoys constructive relationships with other local primary schools: staff work with colleagues in the cluster group, occasionally sharing professional development and expertise. This is especially effective when dealing, for example, with special educational needs issues. The school has positive links with the local Catholic secondary school, the head of Year 7 working closely with teachers and pupils in Year 6 to ensure smooth transfer.
37. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and similar to that of the previous inspection. The school's commitment to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of pupils is based on good relationships. Pupils are taught about relationships and the value to be placed on each individual. They are also taught the difference between right and wrong. Social development is a strength of the school, with moral development also being well provided for. Spiritual and cultural development are less well developed, although still satisfactory overall.
38. An excellent start to all areas of development is made in the Reception class. Children are encouraged to share and to take turns; they are encouraged to think about what they are learning, when prompted by appropriate questions from the staff. Children are left to investigate and explore, often unaided. They achieve their group or individual tasks well, learning the essential skills of self-discipline, sharing, self-control and safety. Children gasp in amazement when magnets pick up large quantities of paper clips or 'spiders' move across paper, being directed by the magnets beneath.
39. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Regular assemblies and acts of collective worship are held which reinforce the spiritual message of the school. In some lessons, pupils are given time to reflect on what they are learning, and, in others, pupils gasp in amazement when they are shown specific things, such as the flooding of a drawing with colour in art and ICT.
40. Moral education is good, and many facets of moral behaviour were seen and taught across the curriculum. In circle time, pupils are taught to share, and time is devoted to teaching them the correct approach to bullying, sexism and racism. The assembly focusing on good achievement is used to reward those who produce good work, make a special effort or show signs of improvement. Pupils are taught to value one another, and are taught also to be caring and to know right from wrong as an integral part of many lessons and registrations.
41. The provision for raising social awareness is very good. Adults present very good role models in their behaviour and respect for each other. Pupils, as a result, show care

and sensitivity toward each other. They negotiate class rules at the beginning of the year and can quote the effect of breaching these. In music lessons, time is given for pupils to reflect on each other's performance. In geography and art, for example, pupils co-operate very well with one another, and continue to build well on the skills of sharing learnt in the Foundation Stage. They help one another instinctively and everyone feels valued. Pupils with special educational needs mix very well socially and take a full and active part in lessons. Teachers encourage them to speak up in class, so that their self-esteem is improved.

42. Pupils' cultural development is sound overall. They go on visits into the immediate and wider community; they learn, through geography, to care for the environment; and there are other opportunities in music, history and English to learn about their own heritage and its importance. The school has begun to celebrate other cultures through its work in religious education, notably on Judaism. However, the attention paid to this aspect of pupils' development is not consistent across the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The provision for the pastoral care of pupils is good. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. The school has good procedures in place for ensuring pupils' health and welfare. Pastoral care is well managed by caring staff. Parents are very pleased with the care their children receive. Pupils say they feel comfortable and confident in approaching their teacher or any other member of staff when troubled. Teachers know their pupils well and are a good example to pupils in their behaviour. The school follows the guidelines of the local area child protection committee, and the headteacher has received appropriate training in child protection as the designated person. Staff are vigilant and aware of the correct procedures to be followed if they have concerns.
44. The school has an effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures for fire, first aid and medicines. Risk assessments are carried out appropriately by the governors' health and safety committee which is part of the premises sub-committee. There are sufficient first-aiders in the school and procedures for notifying parents of any medical or injury-type problems are good. Bullying is discussed with pupils in both personal and social education lessons and assemblies. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and that they are confident that the staff would respond and deal effectively with their concerns.
45. There is a clear and effective behaviour policy, with clear rules, which pupils understand. The rewards associated with this policy are well used to raise pupils' self-esteem. This was demonstrated most effectively in achievement assemblies, where both awards were given for work, effort and attitude, and certificates obtained outside the school, were presented to pupils. The use of rewards and sanctions is consistent across the school, and is well used to maintain the ethos of the school. There is an effective home-school behaviour monitoring system in place for persistent offenders. This is occasionally used but is generally a sufficient deterrent. An overwhelming number of parents felt that the school helps their child to become mature and responsible.
46. Attendance is well monitored by the headteacher and class teachers, with the assistance of the secretary, and the need for good attendance is reinforced at every opportunity. There are procedures in place for reminding parents of the need for good attendance, and parents have to fill in a form to obtain permission to take holidays in term time. There is a "late book" for recording any lateness. The Education Welfare

Officer is available to deal with the few instances of poor attendance. The school actively discourages poor attendance, through the newsletter, and occasionally through specific letters home.

47. Assessment procedures are good. The headteacher and deputy have worked very hard to put in place a good range of strategies for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic attainment and progress. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. In addition to the national tests at the end of both key stages, there are also tests and assessments in English, mathematics and science at the end of each school year. The youngest pupils are tested at the beginning of their school life across a range of understanding and skills, which enables forecasts to be made of their later performance. There is early identification of pupils with special educational needs and statutory assessments are carried out effectively and efficiently, with full parental co-operation and involvement. The results of tests and assessments in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science are analysed thoroughly. The evidence gleaned enables the school to follow the progress of pupils to a satisfactory extent at present. Although targets are being set for individual pupils, they are only just sharing in the process of setting and knowing their own individual targets. The analyses of results also provide information which can be used to match planning of the curriculum accurately, so that pupils' knowledge and understanding can be built upon progressively. This is not being carried out effectively as yet, since much of this work has been undertaken since the appointment of the new headteacher. Historically, the lack of procedures such as these has impeded the progress of some pupils, especially the higher attainers. However, the situation is changing for the better, and progress is improving, especially in Year 6. There are currently few effective assessment procedures in other subjects. The newly appointed co-ordinators recognise this as one of their priorities, and plan to link such assessments when new schemes of work are introduced.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school works satisfactorily in partnership with its parents. Parents are generally very pleased with the education and care their child receive from the school.
49. The school's information for parents is good. There are good quality termly newsletters and specific letters home from teachers. The annual pupil reports are good: they clearly state what pupils have done, as well as identifying areas where improvements can be made. Staff meet every child new to the school before formal education starts, and regular meetings are arranged beyond that. Formal discussion on pupils' progress is held in June for all pupils with a "settling in" evening held in October for every child in the school. In the spring term, a formal parents' evening is held for Years 2 and 6. A half-termly "Parents Profile" is sent out each half-term giving curriculum topic and homework information for parents. This is a good initiative. Parents can also see class teachers at almost any time to discuss concerns. Parents visit to see the work of the school at Christmas and other special occasions, and there has been a series of literacy courses run in conjunction with Wigan and Leigh College. Some parents assist regularly with reading. A number of parents came into school on similar courses last year for numeracy. Parents also accompany the children on trips, such as a recent excursion to Delamere Forest in Key Stage 1, and a number of parents have come in to assist with the mathematics club.
50. Parents raise money for the school and are very supportive of their children. A good number of them help their children at home by listening to reading or with research homework, and their involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. Parents are

given a very useful document before starting school – “Preparing for School”, which gives them appropriate information for the Foundation Stage, and suggests how they can assist their children in the early years.

51. Parents are very supportive of the school when responding to the questionnaires. They approve strongly of the quality of leadership and management of the school, the way in which the school helps their child become mature and responsible and the expectation of their child working hard and achieving his or her best. They also liked the way the school made them welcome when they visited to discuss problems. Almost all the questions were answered very positively with the exception of extra-curricular activities and the provision of homework. However, these were minor criticisms and the inspection findings do not bear them out.
52. The governors’ annual report to parents and the school prospectus provide good and useful information for parents, and meet all statutory requirements. The findings of this inspection are similar to the findings of the last inspection, with parental links being satisfactory overall.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. Leadership and management of the school are good and an improvement since the previous inspection. The lead given by the newly appointed headteacher and her very supportive acting deputy is a strength. There is very clear perception of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a sharp awareness of the positive steps needed to move the school forward. The school improvement plan is of high quality and gives very clear educational direction to all staff and governors. The school's mission statement was recently appraised and rewritten as a result of shared discussion by the governing body and the whole staff. It encapsulates the governors’ commitment to the school. The headteacher's vision for the school is very clear and she is sharing this effectively with all her colleagues. All the teachers have had an opportunity to discuss their roles and what they see as their needs for further development. As a result of these discussions various roles have changed. Many of the curriculum co-ordinators are new to their posts. A number of them are still unclear about the most effective way of fulfilling these roles and this is an issue for the school to address. With an awareness of the need to raise standards in Key Stage 2, a number of teachers have been moved within this area of the school, resulting in noted improvement in some areas, especially in the current achievement of pupils in Year 6. Other decisions taken in order to meet targets at Key Stage 2 include some teaching of English and mathematics in ability groups, improved assessment of attainment and progress, and analysis of this information. This has resulted in some improvement in performance in English and particularly in mathematics, two of the school's main priorities. Subject co-ordinators have had some opportunity to visit lessons in English, mathematics and science, but only to look at subject standards rather than teaching and the curriculum. The headteacher has not yet had time to monitor the quality of teaching overall. Plans are well in hand to do so, as part of the drive to raise standards. This is satisfactory overall.
54. Governors are fully supportive of the headteacher and recognise her worth. Although a number of them are new, they are all anxious to play as full a part as possible in order to fulfil their roles effectively. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are committed to raising standards. They now are more aware of the need to assess the outcomes of any decisions that they make. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and, where possible, take an active part in school. They take on key roles as link governors in the areas of literacy,

numeracy and for pupils with special educational needs. There is good knowledge of the school's financial situation. The governors receive very clear information and advice from the very effective bursar, which allows them to ensure that all income is spent in accordance with educational priorities. This is very good. Specific grants are successfully targeted at raising attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and at the whole-school provision for ICT. The school improvement plan evolves after a whole-school evaluation, which highlights the problems. Action to be taken is set down clearly and identifies the personnel involved, time and cost implications and success criteria. It is appropriately matched to the school's budget and additional grants.

55. Staff are suitably qualified to teach the range of subjects and have shared curriculum training days. Personal development needs have been discussed with the headteacher. All have received training in literacy and numeracy, and this is reflected in the improving standards in these subjects. Teachers new to the school receive good support. Newly qualified teachers are given time for work preparation and opportunities to observe good classroom practice of colleagues. There are weekly meetings with the mentor and the present newly qualified teacher feels well supported. Staff are committed to raising standards but this has not yet extended to all teachers sharing their expertise with each other, particularly in the area of curriculum planning. Support staff play an important role in the school. They work very effectively with small groups of pupils both within and out of the classrooms. Particularly good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. In class lessons this often involves sitting with them to keep them on task and to ensure that they make similar progress to all other pupils. Class teachers, who are supported in this way, value highly the contribution that they make. The school has an effective policy to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal opportunities for study of the whole curriculum.
56. The accommodation is very good, with many strengths. The school is split into infant and junior buildings, separated by some 200 metres on the same site. Each has its own toilets, spacious halls and good dining areas. The classrooms are spacious with some having additional library recesses. Good displays in both buildings contribute well to the overall learning environment. The good-sized, well-equipped halls provide very good facilities for physical education, and there are separate libraries, and rooms for special groups, as well as areas for resources and other storage. The premises are clean and well maintained, setting good standards for pupils to follow. There is a large playing field in addition to hard standing playgrounds and these are used effectively, according to the season. It is a pleasant learning environment, which provides for effective teaching of the full curriculum. There is no separate, secure outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage children, and a lack of appropriate climbing equipment. The imaginative use of accommodation to enhance teaching and learning is an improvement since the school was previously inspected.
57. Resources in the school are good, particularly for mathematics, science, music, geography, art and physical education. In the Foundation Stage they are very good except for the provision of large apparatus for outdoor physical activities. Computer technology is used effectively for school administration purposes. The use of computers to support pupils' education is unsatisfactory. They are not being used to support and enhance the teaching of other areas of the curriculum sufficiently well.
58. Taking into account the below average levels of attainment on entry, good teaching and overall good progress made by pupils, improvements in some subjects and good leadership and management, coupled with the slightly above average costs, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to raise standards further, and to improve the level of education, the school should now work upon the following issues which it has already highlighted in its development planning:

(1) Improve the provision in English by:

- Ensuring the role of the co-ordinator includes addressing the ongoing evaluation of pupils' progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- Developing the existing tracking system into teacher assessment to inform both teachers and pupils of the next steps in learning.
- Improving medium term planning to demonstrate continuity and progression of skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of English. Developing specific learning objectives to guide pupils, especially higher attainers, in their learning.
- Ensuring that teachers address the development of writing skills, including handwriting, more consistently at both key stages.
(Paragraphs 2, 27, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 84, 87, 88.)

(2) Raise standards in science by:

- Ensuring that lessons involve pupils in more practical and investigative activities.
- Planning for pupils to record these activities in a clear and structured form.
- Ensuring that work is planned to build effectively on pupils' previously acquired knowledge and understanding.
- Monitoring pupils' work to ensure that teachers are challenging all pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, to their full capacity.
(Paragraphs 1, 99, 100, 102, 103, 105.)

- (3) Extend the use of ICT across the whole curriculum and drive standards up further by:
- Ensuring all staff have raised awareness of how to use ICT to enhance learning in all subjects of the curriculum.
 - Planning a coherent and structured scheme of work for ICT in order to develop pupils' skills across the key stages continuously and progressively.
 - Introducing more and better quality software where appropriate. (Paragraphs 11, 25, 90, 131, 132, 134, 143.)
- (4) Review the current medium and long-term planning in order to develop structured schemes of work to reflect the changes in the National Curriculum, and to ensure that pupils' learning is built upon progressively across both key stages (paragraphs 28, 74, 107, 114, 121, 126, 132).
- (5) Use assessment knowledge and information more effectively so that all pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2 and especially higher attainers, are set work that challenges them more effectively (paragraphs 47, 126, 132, 145).
- (6) Ensure that there is a structured plan to enable all co-ordinators to:
- Improve their knowledge and understanding of their subjects.
 - Monitor teaching and the curriculum within their areas of expertise.
 - Set targets for improvement linked to the whole-school improvement plan. (Paragraphs 53, 74, 88, 100, 105, 112, 118, 121, 132, 139.)
- (7) In addition, the governing body should include the following minor point for consideration in its action plan:
- Improve the very good facilities for children in the Foundation Stage by providing a suitably surface-secure outdoor play area, and a range of large-scale toys in order to aid physical development further (paragraphs 64 and 71).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	27	27	3	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	206
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	6	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	16	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	94 (92)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (90)	100 (92)	100 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year; * insufficient numbers for publication purposes.

- Insufficient numbers to merit publication.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	18
	Girls	16	17	20
	Total	27	31	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (61)	69 (64)	84 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	17
	Girls	15	17	19
	Total	25	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (67)	69 (67)	80 (73)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	205
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.2
Average class size	23

FTE = full time equivalent

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	439,172
Total expenditure	449,420
Expenditure per pupil	1,896
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,310
Balance carried forward to next year	41,062

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	206
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	34	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	30	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	42	16	1	1
The teaching is good.	69	30	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	52	7	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	26	0	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	21	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	46	6	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	19	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	26	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	36	16	1	7

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 enter the Reception class in the year during which they will reach the age of five. Currently, 24 pupils attend full time. The majority of children have not yet reached their fifth birthdays. The class is staffed by a full-time teacher and a nursery nurse, who works very effectively alongside the teacher for most of the week. The class is housed in two spacious classrooms, with excellent adjoining areas, used very imaginatively for personal development, sand and water play. The majority of children benefit from pre-school experience on the same site. A starter group operates within the building, but is independent of the school. Liaison between the two areas is very good, with a continual dialogue which, for example, helps to inform planning and identify any early weaknesses in ability. There is good informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of each day.
61. The high standards reported in the previous inspection have been sustained. The Foundation Stage is a great strength of the school, and has many very positive features. These include:
- Very good teaching, which challenges children to make very good progress in all aspects of their learning.
 - A very good curriculum with creative and imaginative planning, based on the recommended early learning goals.
 - Very good use made of the support assistant, who works very effectively with the teacher, or on her own with small groups of children.
 - Very good use of resources and space, so that most areas of development are successfully and continuously addressed.
 - Very good use made of assessment information to track individual children and ensure that they make the best possible progress.

Attainment overall

62. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is below expected levels overall. Children have benefited from their pre-school experience, and their personal and social skills are generally in line with the level expected at this age. However, their expressive language and numeracy skills are usually below the expected level when they enter the Reception class. Their knowledge and understanding of the world varies from below expected levels to broadly average, depending on the year. Children currently in the Reception class entered this year with broadly average levels of knowledge and understanding of the world. Creative and physical development are usually in line with expected levels, and this is the case currently. Children overall make very good progress towards their early learning goals, so that the majority will reach the expected levels by their fifth birthday, and some will exceed them. In the current year, some children, about ten per cent, are already approaching a level of learning that will equip them appropriately for starting the National Curriculum. The remainder are on course to achieve their goals appropriately, although a further ten per cent are currently finding some of the language development and literacy work hard.

Provision

63. Teaching is consistently of a very good standard. All sessions are very well planned, with clear objectives for the children to reach. Work is very well matched to what is known of children's capabilities through the use of assessment information when planning lessons. This ensures that the best progress can be made. Resources are very well prepared by both staff, so no time is wasted. The staff have very good relationships with children, who acquire a love of learning from the outset. The curriculum is broad and interesting. Tasks are challenging for children of all levels of capability. The staff continuously use assessment techniques very well, ensuring children are doing the level of work which meets their needs. Staff monitor any problems carefully and keep appropriately detailed records. Resources are very well used in all areas of learning. Especially effective are the use of basic scientific materials and magnets, play areas, literacy resources and counting resources for numeracy. Displays throughout the Reception area are of a consistently high quality. They contain large amounts of children's early work, serving to affirm the very good progress being made. Other displays contain key words in literacy, initial sounds of words, mathematical ideas and numbers as well as some scientific and design work. These serve as a constant reminder to children of their learning objectives as well reinforcing the learning taking place.
64. The weaknesses in provision are the lack of appropriately surfaced outdoor play areas and the lack of large-scale moving toys such as trucks and tricycles. Although progress in physical development has been good so far, staff need to rely on the resources for physical education in the hall, some of which are designed for older pupils. Staff make appropriate allowances for this, and, using soft mats and bean bags, provide some effective activities for developing physical skills. However, some children's development in areas such as developing muscles through pedalling, or improving balance and control through climbing is held back by the lack of resources.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. Personal, social and emotional development is broadly average when children enter the school. They are encouraged at all times to take responsibility for aspects of their learning and their behaviour. Staff constantly reinforce, through effective questioning and simple discussion, the need for listening carefully, moving sensibly around the rooms, lining up at play times and lunchtimes, and not disturbing the children on either side. This is effective for all children, who listen attentively and well, respect one another's space and sit calmly on the carpet at the start and end of sessions. When undertaking tasks in a relatively unsupervised way, they organise themselves well. They dress up, act out the role of postman and householder, and communicate effectively using appropriate language. Progress is very good, with many having matured very well in their methods of communication and response to instructions since they entered the school. The vast majority see to their own personal needs, and take a minimum of time when dressing after physical education. Most tie their shoe laces and do up their buttons with very little, if any, assistance from the adults. There is no fuss, and pupils behave in an excellent manner at all times, both when supervised and when left to complete tasks on their own. Children concentrate well on their tasks, and seek help when unsure. They are confident with adults and develop very good relationships with staff and visitors. Staff provide plenty of opportunities throughout the day for this kind of development, and reinforce simple messages at every opportunity. This very good informal teaching constantly raises awareness levels and improves learning effectively. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goal by the age of six.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Children enter the school with below average levels of communication and expressive language. However, progress has been very good in this area. Children are now beginning to imitate the teacher well and repeat accurately words such as 'sweater', 'grinned' and 'floated'. They are beginning to recognise words in the text of the 'big book', and the majority locate 'this', 'is' and 'the', for example. Lower attaining children are beginning to recognise initial sounds such as 'l' and are able, with help, to pronounce 'in' by adding the 'n' sound. More alert children list words beginning with 'b', related to their story of a bunny, already knowing and understanding words such as 'bushes' and 'burrow', and using them correctly. This is above average for their age. Children are able to follow the text well with the teacher when reading aloud in group sessions. Reading comprehension levels are average. For example, some children know that the picture in the text refers to a rabbit and not a radio by identifying its long floppy ears. Just under half the group was able to make some sensible prediction about what might happen next in the story. Children generally speak clearly, although a small minority are not yet pronouncing all their words distinctly, and it is sometimes difficult to identify particular words. However, most speak with clear voices, and use their fingers to point to objects when they are unsure of specific words. Work in books and folders shows higher attaining children making very good progress, with some able to write their own name clearly and correctly. Others still have difficulty in pencil control, and letters are weakly formed and occasionally illegible, noticeable when lower attaining children begin to try to copy-write.
67. The teacher plans the literacy work very well, based on the National Literacy Strategy, but aimed at the early learning goal. Appropriate focus is given to guided reading, to text-level work, and to sentence construction. All children rotate groups, thereby ensuring that each child gets adequate coverage and practice in all areas of literacy learning. Resources are very well used, including the nursery assistant. She takes individual groups under guidance from the teacher, and is very competent, in approach and manner, in helping children learn effectively. The teacher has a confident approach to literacy teaching, using a wide range of effective strategies which engage and interest children. Her questioning to test understanding and comprehension after reading passages is especially effective. Most children have reached average levels in literacy development and are likely to reach the early learning goal by the age of six.

Mathematical development

68. Mathematical development is below average on entry to the school. Children count readily up to ten for the most part, but they are unable to distinguish one number from another initially. The very good progress made has eradicated most of this, with at least 60 per cent of the class now able to count to ten and point to individual numbers when asked. Most children write numbers clearly, although a few lower attainers are writing five and seven the wrong way round. Children have learnt to count forwards and backwards appropriately. The majority shows the appropriate number of fingers when numbers are called out, although about a quarter of the group gets confused when asked to show six or seven fingers. Most children recognise shapes well, and they sort objects into pairs appropriately, and all children recognise an 'odd one out' in a series of shapes or drawings. Most children develop a good mathematical language, and recognise the major coins used in shopping. They use the correct names for two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, such as square or cube. Teaching is very good, with clear links to the National Numeracy Strategy. Staff use a wide range of resources such as number tables, counting blocks, large shapes and very large reproduction coins to help children gain an understanding of number and shape. Staff use technical language well in their questioning, such as, "What is one more than...?",

or “Count each spot carefully”. They ensure children have plenty of opportunities for investigation and experimentation, such as pegging up large-scale dominoes on a ‘clothes-line’, or using large dice to recognise and count numbers. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goal in numeracy by the age of six and a significant minority is likely to exceed it.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children enter the school with average understanding of the world around them. They make good progress in this area. Currently, children are able to describe the properties of materials such as metal, rubber and plastic, naming them as hard, bendy or smooth. When given investigative tasks to complete, children work hard, experimenting with magnets, and record appropriately, through drawing or words, the outcomes of their efforts. Higher attaining children are able to decide that metals are attracted generally, and non-metals are not, showing well above average attainment and understanding. About half the group is able to predict accurately which materials will be attracted to magnets. Higher attaining pupils also learnt the word ‘attract’, and were able to use it orally later in the lesson, showing very good grasp of higher level language. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to understand the differences between the various materials they are given. Children work unsupervised and show good levels of collaboration. They carry on with their work without fuss and show real interest, such as when a cluster of paper-clips stuck to their magnets. Many are fascinated and are keen to find out more. All children are likely to reach the early learning goal by the age of six and many are likely to exceed it.
70. When undertaking design, pupils are imaginative and creative. They copy designs on professional Christmas cards as they design their own, following simple plans and experimenting with colour. They work comfortably with a wide range of resources, such as glue, paper and card, plastic bottles and metal bottle tops. Staff allow plenty of scope for creativity and experimentation, so that children learn for themselves, in more detail, other aspects of properties, such as how hard it is to join a curved surface to a flat surface using runny glue. Children are also fascinated when using the programmable toy in ICT. They enjoy working the controls, having been introduced to the idea through a large-scale robot model ably demonstrated by the teacher. And what a calamity when one child presses the 8 twice by mistake, and the robot sets off seemingly interminably when it should have travelled only a short distance! However, with careful explanation, children learn to use steady fingers to control their programming, learning well from the incident. Understanding of the functions of the ‘roamer’, moving forwards and backwards, and estimating distance, is above average for their age. A very good start is made in developing control skills in ICT.

Physical development

71. Children’s physical development is generally at an average level, with good progress made since they entered the school. Children have developed an adequate understanding of the functions of their own bodies. Teacher assessment shows that most are able to use low-level apparatus safely and appropriately. Children climb safely and use appropriate strategies for this. They balance well and most show good co-ordination skills. They follow instructions well and pay good attention to health and safety issues. All children, including the lowest attainers, are able to hop and jump, although the co-ordination skills of this latter group are not fully developed. This has a knock-on effect, in that in music, when following a beat, these children lose the rhythm and their lack of control shows below average co-ordination skills development. Lower attaining pupils, however, need more practice, and the lack of large indoor and outdoor

moving toys, such as trucks and trikes, is holding back their development. Similarly, all children are denied safe outdoor climbing and secure play areas. This again does not ensure that the early good progress can be sustained as children grow physically and begin to need more challenging activities. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goal by the age of six, although few are likely to exceed it.

Creative development

72. The children love to sing! And how they love to tap and stamp out simple rhythms and musical patterns with their hands and feet! Most have made very good progress in this area since they entered the school four months ago with average levels. The majority are highly creative and unafraid of 'having a go' and showing staff and peers what they can do. Musically, children have learnt a lot in a short time. Most are able to distinguish between high and low notes. They love to practise this in groups, with one of them acting out the role of conductor, the rest following the baton up and down as the sounds rise and fall with the baton appropriately. They control their actions and sounds very well. In the hall, with older pupils from Key Stage 1, children join in the rehearsal of Christmas music with gusto and feeling, showing an advanced maturity when singing alongside their elders. Behaviour is faultless. When given paints and creative materials such as glue, scissors and brushes, they are able to copy pictures well, selecting appropriate colours and following patterns. They show very good levels of control, taking great care not to smudge the Christmas cards they are finishing, and taking great pride in the end product, which they are eager to share with staff and visitors. Teaching and learning are very good and all children are likely to exceed the early learning goal by the age of six.

ENGLISH

73. Overall standards at the age of 11 are below the national average. These findings are lower than those reported in the previous inspection. Standards at Key Stage 1 are above national averages and have improved since the school was last inspected. The main strengths are:
- Above average standards achieved by pupils in 2000 national tests at Key Stage 1.
 - Very good levels of reading at Key Stage 1 with improving reading standards at Key Stage 2.
 - Good teaching of literacy in Key Stages 1 and 2 with some very good practice in the upper end of Key Stage 2 resulting in improved progress.
 - Good attitudes to learning by the majority of pupils.
74. The areas for improvement in English are:
- Below average standards by Year 6, especially in writing and handwriting.
 - High attaining pupils not making enough progress.
 - Overall planning which does not take sufficient account of the prior knowledge of attainment levels and the future learning needs of pupils.
 - Weakness in the co-ordination of the subject, resulting in lack of clarity and emphasis on the evaluation of learning.
75. Inspection findings show work in the present Year 6 is below average overall, and especially in writing. The school has identified that provision for these pupils was unsatisfactory in Years 3, 4 and 5. The result is that pupil progress through the key stage has been unsatisfactory and pupils are now achieving at a lower level than expected in relation to their attainment on entry to the key stage. The school has

already begun to address this weakness by moving some teachers strategically. This is enabling the necessary challenges, inspiration and drive to take place towards the end of Key Stage 2, with the intention of improving standards, particularly in improving writing.

76. Progress at Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory, although some groups of pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, are not sustaining the levels they achieved when they took the national tests at Key Stage 1 four years earlier. The staff have begun to address this issue through the school assessment process which has developed from the school improvement plan. This plan, for both key stages, has a particular focus in reviewing the systems of assessing standards and progress, through pupil tracking, in literacy. It is planned that this will lead to pupils being assessed against National Curriculum levels and targets. This will enable teachers to plan more effectively for sustained and measurable progress.
77. In Key Stage 2, planning is based currently upon a historical document, which is linked to the National Literacy Strategy. The planning is based upon the detail in this document rather than building on the identified levels already achieved, and projected needs of the pupils. The school has already begun to address this weakness through the school improvement plan and the literacy intensive support from the local education authority (LEA). At Key Stage 2, progress in this area has been slow, and pupils are still not making sufficient progress.
78. Standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. By Year 2, pupils have developed speaking and listening skills that are above average. Pupils speak with a high degree of confidence, are able to ask specific questions about grammar and the meaning of words, for example, "What does pity mean?". They have learned to speak clearly through good practice in lessons, have a wide vocabulary and have a good grasp of its appropriate usage. Pupils listen carefully to each other when discussing the character and positioning of speech marks. Through good management of the pupils, they are encouraged to use expression when applying the examples.
79. By the end of Key Stage 2, speaking and listening skills are broadly average. In Year 3, pupils begin the key stage with average speaking and listening skills but some pupils lose concentration too easily and find it difficult to listen appropriately when others are speaking in the class. In one lesson, pupils lost interest in what other children were speaking about and therefore did not benefit from the experiences of other pupils. In Year 4, pupils' skills are a little more developed and they speak more clearly and are keen to contribute to whole-class discussions. For example, one boy brought his own newspaper article to the lesson and talked confidently through the methods he used to produce his newspaper report while the class listened attentively and applauded as he finished. In Years 5 and 6 pupils contribute confidently to discussions and are able to provide opinions drawn from personal experience.
80. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are well above average. Pupils are able to read fluently and with understanding and expression from different kinds of texts. Pupils are confident in their approach to reading and talk easily about reading at home and their use of books. Higher attainers become familiar with alphabetical order and are able to talk about authors. Pupils are encouraged to predict and understand what might happen in a book using the front cover. They have frequent opportunities to reflect on what actually happened in the story, as when exploring the book "A Quiet Night In". Pupils explained that the quiet night that really happened was not what they had predicted at the beginning.
81. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are average. High attainers read fluently, with good expression, discuss key features and hold informed views and

opinions about literacy. Lower attainers read reasonably confidently and work hard on conveying meaning and expressions whilst reading their chosen books. In the lower end of the key stage, two pupils demonstrated a range of strategies, using sound and picture cues to help build words. Punctuation is not always recognised and some pupils have difficulty in recognising the implications of question marks. At the upper end of Key Stage 2, a small number of pupils attain very well and are very secure in their reading and understanding of text. Most pupils are within the expected range of reading. Through good teaching, pupils show sound practice of reviewing books, and use a range of appropriate strategies to assist in their reading and understanding of text.

82. Throughout the school, parents support pupils' reading at home through the home reading system. Pupils enjoy reading and discuss their favourite authors readily. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have insufficiently well-developed information-retrieval skills, as the school library is not used effectively enough for promoting research strategies.
83. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in writing are above average. The Literacy Hour is effective in developing the range of, and purpose for, writing. Pupils write stories about their imagined adventures, poems, news in Year 2 and personal accounts of their visit to Delamere Forest in Year 1. Higher attainers are able to use paragraphs and punctuation marks well, as was evident in Year 2 work on speech marks. Average attainers develop their ideas imaginatively into a sequence of sentences, as was clear from the pupils' work on "This is Me". Although most pupils at the end of this key stage are not yet joining letters, handwriting is satisfactorily formed and legible.
84. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are below average. Based upon national test information at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils in the current Year 6 should be achieving a higher standard in writing than they are currently. The school is aware of this, and the teachers in this particular year are working hard to make up for the lack of progress over the last three years. They are providing a wealth of opportunities for the pupils to develop their writing. The higher attainers are writing letters, diaries, time events, stories, reports, biographies and providing facts and information as a result of research into dolphins. Their writing is structured, uses a satisfactory range of vocabulary overall, and is purposeful, as demonstrated in writing in history, religious education and science. However, writing is not as creative as it might be for higher attaining pupils, and it does not show sufficient use of imagination and development of ideas. These are skills that need continuous emphasis and development across the whole key stage. Average attainers show similar skills to the high attaining pupils. However, their writing is less well sustained and ideas are not developed into complex sentences. They write for specific purposes, such as descriptions of objects, newspaper reports and autobiographies. Lower attainers show their ability to write for a variety of purposes such as conveying information about plants, book reviews, (for example of 'Oliver Twist'), prayers in religious education and providing information about instruments in music. Writing by these pupils does not show the development of ideas and information sufficiently well, nor use a wide enough range of vocabulary. Words are often selected for basic meaning rather than for added effect, and punctuation is used only to structure writing rather than to develop interest. Handwriting is joined and legible but overall standards are below average. Some lower attaining pupils still use a mixture of print and joined script towards the end of Key Stage 2, spelling is sometimes unsatisfactory and not all pupils, especially higher attainers, are showing the fluency in style that they should. The school is aware of these relative weaknesses and is already embarking on strategies to overcome them.

85. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by additional help and suitably adapted work to help develop pupils' areas of weakness. They make good progress in developing initial and end sounds, begin to write in logical sentences, and develop a wider vocabulary, with appropriate understanding.
86. Teaching in English overall is good, with some examples of good and very good teaching in Years 2 and 6, which ensures the learning of basic skills takes place effectively. During the inspection, only one example of unsatisfactory teaching was seen, when the strategies used for teaching a specific piece of grammar were not effective. In other lessons, pupils are often inspired by good and very good teaching and they acquire new knowledge, using their own experiences and knowledge effectively. Learning in these lessons is fun and lively, even when acquiring knowledge of basic grammar. Pupils learn that not only do speech marks go at the beginning and end of words that are spoken, but also that they go outside other punctuation. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers have secure subject knowledge that enables questioning to be used well to extend and consolidate pupils' learning. In Year 4, pupils were challenged well through appropriate questioning at the end of the lesson in considering the sequence of sentences and in recognising the reasons why they had chosen certain paragraphs for writing their newspaper report. Such strategies consolidate learning well and enable pupils to extend their thinking skills effectively. Good use is also made of 'games' to enable pupils to choose and use homophones correctly, such as 'muscle' and 'mussel'. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall, and behaviour is often very good. Teachers manage their classes well, and structure their lessons along the recommended lines of the National Literacy Strategy.
87. There is sufficient use made of literacy across the curriculum. Teachers in other subjects often put key words up on the board, or emphasise them appropriately in discussion. Good examples occur in Year 2 and Year 6 music, Year 4 geography and Year 3 science. The school is beginning to encourage the use of extensive writing in subjects across the curriculum, with good examples occurring in project-type work in geography and when recording in some science investigations.

88. Weaknesses in the subject co-ordination are not helping to raise standards. The appointment of a senior teacher to this strategic position in a temporary capacity at the beginning of the term has had little impact on improving learning so far, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers have not been provided with guidance, support or information regarding the progress of pupils. Marking is inconsistent and, while it is encouraging and positive, too little guidance is given to pupils on how they might improve. There has been no rigorous monitoring of the standards pupils achieve in lessons or the progress made by pupils over time and this is unsatisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

89. Overall standards in mathematics at the age of 11 are broadly in line with national averages. These findings indicate a lower level of achievement than that reported in the previous inspection. However, standards in the current Year 6 are higher than those recorded in the national tests last year and at the time of the previous inspection. The strengths in mathematics are:
- Very high standards achieved by pupils in the 2000 national tests at Key Stage 1.
 - Good levels of numeracy competence shown by pupils at both key stages.
 - Good teaching throughout the school resulting in improved progress.
 - Good attitudes to learning shown by the majority of pupils.
 - Good use of assessment methods and analysis of test results which inform planning and targeting.
 - Effective monitoring and evaluation by the subject co-ordinator.
90. Areas for improvement in mathematics are:
- The teaching of space and shape and the handling of data at Key Stage 2.
 - The extent to which ICT is used.
 - The challenge offered to pupils of higher ability.
91. In the 2000 national tests, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above at the end of Key Stage 1 maintained the high standards of the previous year, showing very good progress over time. Standards at Key Stage 2 in 2000 were below average, but progress over time was good, with the number of pupils at the lower levels halved. The range of abilities changed during the key stage, with the loss of some higher attaining pupils and the addition of some pupils with special educational needs. The progress is good when compared with the achievements of the same group of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, four years earlier.
92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils cover all strands of the curriculum and are developing their mathematical vocabulary well. Simple calculations are carried out satisfactorily and pupils are able to add and subtract single figures to tens and units, and count on and back in tens. Pupils in Year 2 identify multiples of two and five and add on in patterns of two, three, five and ten. They use doubling successfully and adding ten and plus or minus one for operations involving 11 and nine respectively. They count up to 20 objects and beyond and are able to tell the time by half and quarter hours, reinforcing other activities in simple fractions. They study number patterns and sequences and can readily identify odd and even numbers. They name regular two and three-dimensional shapes and are familiar with corners and faces, for example. There are strong links with art through the creation of pictures using geometrical shapes. Tallying activities lead to some good work in data handling. Work in problem solving and investigations is well developed and there is good use of

mathematical language. The strength is in number work, which is reinforced by a variety of activities.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a good knowledge of multiplication tables and are making good progress in number. In oral and mental activities, pupils develop good strategies for calculations. They order four-digit numbers and count on and back in variable amounts through zero. They are familiar with different ways of adding large numbers, including partitioning, where they demonstrate a good understanding of place value. They are able to use multiplication grids successfully and calculate in short multiplication and division. Most pupils work successfully with vulgar and decimal fractions and understand ratio and proportion. They use standard and non-standard units effectively and measure and calculate perimeters. Pupils work well in problem-solving activities and investigations and know the names and properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. Opportunities for using data-handling skills and statistical calculations, such as different kinds of average, are insufficient. Pupils are familiar with the need to represent information in graphs but do not use co-ordinates nor are they given opportunities to use computer software to extract data and make comparisons of graphical displays.
94. Progress in the lessons is good and the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is now at the expected levels, showing an improvement on pupils' performance at this stage last year. There is no marked difference in the performance of girls and boys. The progress in the pupils' learning is good overall, particularly in the development of number skills and the use of key vocabulary at Key Stage 1. The daily class sessions of mental arithmetic and problem-solving activities are effective in helping all pupils to rehearse and apply knowledge. The grouping of pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 promotes opportunities for further differentiation of tasks. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress, with the support of classroom assistants, and are integrated into the activities of the class as appropriate.
95. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages with no unsatisfactory lessons observed. All teachers are observing the structure, content and principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. The more successful lessons have greater pace and the attention of the teacher is more equally divided between ability groups in the group tasks. There is a strong emphasis on promoting investigative methods of learning with work matched to the different needs of pupils, and, as a result, pupils generally acquire new knowledge and skills at an appropriate rate and consolidate these by completing relevant examples. Good use is made of plenary sessions to review progress and reinforce learning objectives. Targets are set and displayed in each classroom. Homework is planned to supplement class activities and usually given over a weekly period, recorded in diaries and marked and signed by the class teacher. At Key Stage 2, teachers do not use ICT sufficiently well to enhance learning in mathematics. Most classrooms do not have a computer readily available and the quality of the software is poor.
96. The teaching of numeracy in other subjects is satisfactory. Appropriate measuring or counting opportunities are successfully employed in lessons at both key stages in science, physical education and design and technology, for example. In geography, pupils develop a good awareness of distance through studying maps, and timing through precise counting is well rehearsed in singing in music.
97. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good. They work well individually and are eager to answer questions in oral and mental sessions. At Key Stage 1, they enjoy using their 'banana' fans to display their answers in oral and mental activities. When

called upon, they work collaboratively and take turns. They are polite in their behaviour with adults and take responsibility for handing out books and equipment when asked.

98. The subject is well managed by an efficient co-ordinator who has given considerable time to incorporating the Numeracy Strategy and planning appropriate activities for the age groups in the school and monitoring teaching. Assessments are analysed in detail and targets set which are then displayed in each classroom. Lesson planning in the parallel groups at Year 4 and Year 6 is carefully co-ordinated to ensure corporate development and allow flexibility of movement between sets. Resources are satisfactory at Key Stage 2 but, at Key Stage 1, pupils are very well provided for with a room set aside to provide a mathematics base available to pupils and parents.

SCIENCE

99. Standards in science at the age of 11 are below average. This reflects a deterioration in standards since the previous inspection. Standards in recent national tests show attainment to be well below average. Standards assessed for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were well above average, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The current Year 2 has a larger proportion of lower attaining pupils than last year but standards are still above average. The strengths of the subject are:

- The above average standard at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The teaching at Key Stage 1.
- Action taken by the school to address low standards at Key Stage 2.

100. Areas for improvement are:

- The use of scientific enquiry and investigation at Key Stage 2.
- The need to match assessment to curriculum planning, particularly to challenge higher attaining pupil.
- Monitoring of the planning and teaching of the subject to ensure that all pupils in all classes in Key Stage 2 are being challenged effectively.
- The way in which pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to record any investigations.
- Marking of pupils' work so that scientific thinking is questioned.

101. Key Stage 1 pupils achieve above the level seen in the majority of schools. This stems from good teaching. Pupils are given opportunities to handle materials. Year 1 pupils explore a range of different materials and develop their vocabulary related to it in an enjoyable 'guessing game'. A very good lesson with Year 2 pupils required them to think about the different properties of materials and then about their origins, natural or man-made. The pupils were required to observe and handle the materials, sharing ideas with their classmates. The teacher maintained a good pace to the lesson by 'ringing the changes', with a mixture of whole-class and group activities, observation, discussion and recording. This fostered a very good pace to learning. It reflected the teacher's high expectations and firm management to ensure a very productive lesson.

102. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have insufficient opportunities to investigate and too often they have been expected to learn by listening and writing only. Action has been taken to improve standards. Tests of attainment have been set for each year group and results have been analysed to identify where there are weaknesses. The school is fully aware of the need to use a more practical and challenging approach to the teaching of the subject. The deputy head, who was previously instrumental in raising standards at Key Stage 1, has recently moved to a Year 6 class. The two Year 6 teachers are collaborating in their planning in order to provide similar challenge across the whole

year group. This good practice is not happening throughout the key stage so that lessons are not always building on previous learning. Year 3 pupils' work on materials reinforces what they have learned in Year 2 but does not move them on sufficiently. There is variation in the quality and amount of work that Key Stage 2 pupils do. For example, in Year 4, pupils in one class produce more work, and of different content, than the parallel class. Marking of work throughout the key stage provides little guidance for pupils to make better progress and to think more deeply about what they observe or conclude. One or two teachers pose questions to pupils on occasions but there is no evident response or follow-up from the pupils. Most marking is merely acknowledgement of tasks completed and, in some cases, grammatical correction only. Investigative opportunities through the key stage are spasmodic. When these activities take place pupils record them. There is, however, no common format or structure to the recordings so that pupils' ability to do such activities is not growing. Insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils' consideration of evidence and writing about their conclusions. Progress at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory over time.

103. Some teachers in Key Stage 2 are aware of the need to change their approach and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen in lessons. Year 6 pupils worked at reinforcing and developing their understanding of electricity. They were involved practically and shared learning with each other. Teachers laid strong emphasis on the appropriate vocabulary and frequently asked pupils to explain 'why things happened as they did'. This was particularly effective when an additional teacher supported in one of the lessons. Good reinforcement of prior learning took place but the lack of awareness of the levels of pupils' prior experiences and understanding meant that there was some lack of challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils. The lack of structure to the whole-school planning, and ineffective links to the assessment information now available have a negative impact.
104. In lessons, pupils apply themselves well to their tasks. They work sensibly when they are given opportunities to discuss with others and their behaviour is always good. They enjoy practical work and relish opportunities to use their knowledge to apply to challenges. Year 6 pupils feel sufficiently confident in their knowledge of electricity to use it in a challenging real-life task. Pupils do not enthuse sufficiently about the subject, offering comments such as "We did a lot of copying from the board or from books".
105. Pupils learn well at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, they learn satisfactorily in some lessons. However, over time, they are not learning as much as they are capable of and the pace of learning is unsatisfactory. There is little rigour to the monitoring of planning so that progression in learning is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Assessment procedures are in place and information has been analysed. It must now be matched to planning and much more use should be made of the good resources available. The subject has made unsatisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Some good reinforcement of literacy skills takes place when teachers emphasise the correct use and understanding of specific vocabulary. Insufficient use is made of ICT to increase and extend pupils' use and understanding of data handling.

ART AND DESIGN

106. The overall standards of attainment by the age of 11 are in line with national expectations. The relative strengths in art are:
- Teaching which encourages pupils to use a wide range of media and to experiment.

- Encouraging good collaborative skills, which contribute to the overall social development of pupils.

107. Areas for improvement are:

- The development of a scheme of work to ensure the consistent building of skills in the subject, related to the needs of pupils.
- The development of co-ordination of the subject so that support and guidance is provided for staff in order to develop confidence and skills in teaching the subject.

108. Standards are below those reported in the previous inspection. Progress overall for all pupils is satisfactory at both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils have the opportunity to investigate through looking at and touching the qualities of materials. They are keen to talk about the elements of colour, texture, pattern, line, shape and form when they investigate types of paper, including corrugated, foil-backed and tissue. They discuss the changes that occur when they apply the processes of scrunching, folding, cutting and tearing. They explore colour well and use tools appropriately.

109. In Key Stage 2, pupils have ample opportunities to evaluate and develop patterns through individual and good levels of collaborative work, for example with the focus on printing and making curtains for the classroom. They have the chance to use their imagination in relation to a theme of 'Dreams' to make stencils and printing blocks whilst developing skills of the use of tools, mixing colours and designing stencils. The pupils further develop their designing skills when they use the focus of natural forms and modify and refine patterns to decorate clay pots. Pupils develop the theme of 'People in Action' through good-quality collage and colour work, where they investigate methods to convey meaning to their creations.

110. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is well prepared and teaching objectives are identified and introduced at appropriate times during lessons in order to move the pupils forward in their learning. The progressive development of skills is evident as pupils move through the school. Overall, there is satisfactory use of resources, but insufficient independent choice of tools and equipment. Learning of basic skills of mixing colour, blending and developing appropriate perspectives is satisfactory. Teachers manage resources and their pupils well so that the quality of learning is enhanced with little wasted time and immediate access to paints, paper and reference materials.

111. Pupils are keen and eager to talk about art and their creations. Their behaviour is good, they concentrate on activities and use available resources as effectively as possible. Pupils support each other positively and share equipment, tools and resources fairly. Good levels of collaboration in some lessons help to promote pupils' social skills well.

112. The subject is managed by a recently appointed non-specialist co-ordinator who introduced the new national planning document for trial this year. There has been no opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of this planning and the co-ordinator has little evidence of the development of skills, knowledge or understanding of pupils as they progress through the school. The impact of this is that teachers are planning activities on an ad hoc basis rather than building a programme to develop those aspects for pupils over time. Currently curriculum plans are taken directly from the published national document and the subject leader has not yet been able to provide much support to colleagues to help develop further opportunities in the classroom. The subject is enhanced by an art club, which is managed by an experienced art teacher.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. The overall standards of attainment by age 11 are in line with expectations. The relative strengths in design and technology are:

- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work independently, and to explore their creativity.
- Good relationships in lessons, thereby motivating pupils well.

114. Areas for improvement are:

- The development of a scheme of work to ensure the consistent development of skills at both key stages.
- The development of co-ordination of the subject, so that support and guidance are provided for staff, in order to develop confidence in teaching the subject.

115. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Progress overall for all pupils is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to explore the taste and texture of fruits and to explore their creativity in making a fruit salad. In Key Stage 2, pupils have the opportunity to generate, clarify and apply ideas and try them out as they design and make models of musical instruments and slippers, developing further their creativity. Pupils are encouraged successfully to review products at different stages to identify features that need improvement, for example the space that is needed between the insole and the upper of a slipper to accommodate the foot. This work shows an appropriate use of tools and equipment and appropriate accuracy in shaping and joining materials. Pupils' work shows evidence of planning their own designs effectively. However, owing to the pupils' lack of skills in the use of tools, there is an inconsistency of continued development of skills throughout the school, despite expected levels of attainment being reached.

116. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is strong, as observed in Year 6, there is a good balance between instruction and activities in which pupils are positively engaged, planning addresses the specified criteria, and objectives are introduced as the lessons unfold. Teachers adapt their teaching strategy and lesson timing in order to address the needs of the pupils, particularly in relation to the lack of skills and understanding of the pupils. Teachers sustain good relationships with pupils and maintain suitable levels of discipline, thereby creating a good climate for learning where good progress is made.

117. Pupils are keen and eager to talk about the subject. Their behaviour is good, concentrating on tasks and using materials carefully, taking note of all safety aspects. Pupils enjoy the subject and support each other positively and share equipment fairly.

118. The subject is managed by an experienced co-ordinator. However, planning is not monitored on a regular basis and identification of specific skills to aid teaching and learning is ineffective. The co-ordinator has no records of sustained development of skills, knowledge and understanding of pupils as they move through the school, and sustained progress is not therefore assured. Curriculum plans are taken directly from a published national document rather than the school's own scheme of work. This is not satisfactory, as it does not take into account the building of knowledge and skills based on prior attainment and understanding.

119. Resources are good. All the work observed during the inspection used fabrics, paper, card glue, paste and paint, but there was no evidence of any use made of plastic, wood, or moving parts such as pulleys and axles.

GEOGRAPHY

120. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. These are similar standards to those reported in the previous inspection. Strengths within geography include:

- Good teaching in the few lessons seen, engaging pupils' interests well.
- Good progress over time.
- Secure planning for the teaching of basic skills at Key Stage 1.

121. Areas for improvement within the subject include:

- Extending the use of ICT throughout the whole subject.
- Developing a progressive scheme of work to ensure pupils' skills are continuously developed.
- Enhancing the role of the co-ordinator so that targets for improvement are set, based on monitoring and evaluation.

122. The small amount of teaching observed at Key Stage 2 during the inspection was good and resulted in good progress by pupils. Teachers use a wide range of resources in lessons, and, in one, the teacher made very good use of ICT to enable pupils to undertake some independent research on India through focusing on maps and an information fact-file. In another, the teacher made good use of appropriate photographs and different scale maps to ensure pupils gathered evidence to support their work. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives, providing an effective focus, which enables pupils to become aware of what they are learning and why. In lessons, Year 4 pupils acquire an understanding of lifestyles in an Indian village. They are fascinated by life in India, and tackle their investigations with enthusiasm and interest, eager to discover more facts about Chanda and her long working day. They begin to learn why life is harder there, and how farming techniques have been modified to account for the climate. Pupils describe the onset of the monsoons very vividly, and higher attaining pupils recognise some comparisons with recent weather patterns in this country. Attitudes to learning and behaviour in class are of a very good standard. Pupils collaborate when working in groups and enjoy the freedom of being able to discuss and talk together in a constructive and task-orientated way.

123. Pupils learn appropriate knowledge and understanding of basic geographical facts, concepts and ideas at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, where evidence was gathered from pupils' work, teachers' planning and talking to pupils, standards meet national expectations. Pupils make good progress in developing an awareness of space. They learn to distinguish left from right and they understand the points of the compass. Higher attaining pupils talk confidently about the local area, naming places they have visited and how to get there, using appropriate language. Lower attaining pupils understand simple pictorial symbols on maps, and know that red lines are used for roads and green shading indicates grassland or trees. Pupils are taught basic geographical skills such as scale and direction from an early age. This enables them to develop an understanding of their own locality, leading to them being able to draw comparisons and to notice differences between it and rural locations such as the 'Isle of Struay'. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress alongside the

rest of the class. They take an active part in debate, and their oral contributions are valued by friends and by teachers.

124. There are some areas where the subject could be improved. Good use of ICT was seen in one lesson, but no example of the use of technology was found elsewhere in pupils' work. There is currently no coherent scheme of work in place. Teachers follow a series of topic headings, but this does not ensure that skills are progressively developed over time. The new co-ordinator has not yet had time to develop her role, so that there is currently no monitoring of teaching or the curriculum. Therefore, no realistic improvement targets can be set. Apart from ICT throughout the school, the subject is well resourced with such items as globes, atlases, maps and appropriate worksheets. Geography is in a good position for future development.

HISTORY

125. Overall the standards at the age of 11 are satisfactory. These findings are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. The strengths in history are:

- Links with other curriculum areas.
- Good attitudes to learning, promoting satisfactory progress in lessons.

126. Areas for improvement in history are:

- Planning a coherent and structured scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression.
- Assessment and recording of pupils' progress.
- Greater use of information technology to enhance learning and develop research skills further.

127. Progress at both key stages is satisfactory and levels of attainment have been maintained over time. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above national expectations. Pupils develop an understanding of past events and the changes that have taken place since. They develop an understanding of the passage of time and discuss changes from their observations of pictures and films. A study of the role of Mary Seacole illustrates the pupils' ability to understand the changes in transport and the standards of medical care when compared with the present day.

128. Standards at Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with national expectations. Chronological understanding is developed in the early years of Key Stage 2 with pupils able to place events on a time scale. Pupils study the life of the Roman soldier and learn about the conditions in which he lived and fought. Older pupils show empathy with the sailor in Tudor times in letters composed by the pupils and written home to their families. In Year 6, pupils show their ability to pursue historical enquiry through a study of Pheidippides and the Battle of Marathon, linking it to the Olympic games. Further work on this subject led to the writing and performance of plays based on Greek drama. Links with English, music and art are well established. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils show good skills in independent research and extended writing. Often, however, pupils produce only short sentences or fill in missing words on work sheets with little differentiation in difficulty.
129. Teaching overall is satisfactory with some good teaching in Key Stage 1. Individual lesson plans are well prepared with clear objectives and delivered at a good pace, but planning is unsatisfactory in the long and medium terms. Assessment techniques are insufficiently well used and there are no formal procedures for recording pupils' progress. In some lessons there is an imbalance between time spent on oral delivery and that on written exercise, so that pupils are not always consolidating their learning sufficiently well. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They show enthusiasm in discussions and are eager to express opinions and ideas. They show interest in historical research and work collaboratively in preparing and producing Greek plays. This is good practice, and helps to consolidate learning well.
130. Little improvement has been made to the school's history resources since the previous inspection, although the school makes good use of loan services and visits to sites of historical interest. Good quality displays challenging pupils' thinking enhance the teaching areas. The co-ordinator has recently been appointed and she has clear objectives for the development of history in the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131. Overall, the standards in ICT at the age of 11 are below average. These findings indicate a lower level of achievement than that indicated in the previous report at the end of Key Stage 2. The strengths in ICT are:
- Good curriculum support in KS1.
 - A computer suite available for class instruction in Key Stage 2.
 - Good attitudes to learning promoting at least satisfactory progress in lessons.
132. Areas for improvement are:
- Below average standards by Y6 especially in data handling, control and modelling.
 - Insufficient planning of a coherent and structured scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression.
 - Insufficient use made of ICT across the curriculum to enhance learning.
 - Insufficient training for staff.
 - Lack of continual assessment and recording of pupils' progress.
 - Lack of appropriate quality software to develop skills and provide opportunities for research.
133. The standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils use the computer in their classrooms to reinforce learning and are gaining in knowledge of the keyboard and in skill in controlling the mouse. The

standards of attainment in Key Stage 2 are below expectations, particularly in the older classes. At Key Stage 2, all work takes place in the computer suite, which allows the whole class to receive appropriate tuition in basic skills. The progress in lessons is satisfactory, but over time it is unsatisfactory. The school has only recently taken steps to meet the greater learning and teaching demands placed on this subject in the last few years. Pupils with special educational needs do not make sufficient progress over time.

134. Teaching in the lessons observed in both key stages is satisfactory. Subject knowledge is satisfactory, although teachers have not yet acquired the wider skills of using ICT in other subjects consistently. Pupils are well managed so that each gets a turn appropriately on the computer. Teachers support pupils' learning by intervening and helping if difficulties arise. This minimises waste of time and enables pupils to correct their mistakes, improving the learning process. Teachers follow the recommended programmes of study in text and graphics up to the level of Year 4, supported by a published scheme of work. However, the standard of work will not rise from this level for older pupils until the scheme has been developed further. Consequently, there is no continuity and progression beyond this level and other programmes of study, such as control and modelling, are not being delivered as widely as they could. Many of the staff lack the necessary expertise to promote the subject and would benefit from a programme of in-service training.
135. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are able to control the mouse and select tools from the appropriate menu. They know how to select colours from the displayed palette and are developing the control to fill prepared shapes with colour on the screen. At Key Stage 2, pupils are able to use the word processor with a range of different letter styles, colours and highlights. They can adjust the spacing of lines and columns successfully importing pictures from other programs to illustrate their work. Further examples of importing pictures occurs in work in the design of wrapping paper which requires skills in adjusting the size of the picture and copying it across the screen. Some pupils were able to reverse the picture to make mirror images, showing a link with symmetry in mathematics. Work in data handling is in the early stages in Year 4 but there was no evidence of work in control or modelling at Key Stage 2. Links with art were observed in Year 6 when pupils were able to use the brush tool to explore the work of artists such as Seurat.
136. Pupils show enthusiasm for their computer work and demonstrate increasing skills as they move through the school. They work with enjoyment and collaborate well when working in pairs or small groups sharing a computer. Pupils in Key Stage 1 could not resist expressing wonder at the sight of bright colours filling the screen at the press of a button.
137. A new policy and scheme of work is in preparation incorporating a published course in information technology. At present there are no assessment procedures in operation and there are no records of the progress of pupils. Cross-curricular use of the computer is poor at Key Stage 2 with an inadequate selection of software available.

MUSIC

138. Music is a strength of the school, with above expected standards being reached at the end of both key stages. This confirms the standards reported in the previous inspection. Particular strengths include:

- Good teaching at both key stages and good progress being made throughout the school.
- Good understanding of musical terms and their meaning.
- The quality of singing throughout the school.
- Well-motivated, keen and enthusiastic pupils who enjoy their lessons and give of their best.
- Good use made of resources and accommodation.
- Good use of specialist teaching.

139. Area for improvement include:

- Making more use of ICT, especially in composition.
- Developing the role of the co-ordinator more fully in order to monitor, evaluate and set improvement targets.

140. Teaching is good at both key stages. As a result, learning is enhanced and good progress is made. Teachers are confident in their approach to music. They plan effective lessons based on the LEA's curriculum pack, which provides a good basis for skills development and continuous learning. The specialist part-time teacher has good subject knowledge and understands well how pupils acquire their musical skills. They learn to sing well at Key Stage 1, with clear diction and good phrasing. Sounds are sweet, and, in rehearsal for Christmas presentations, they quickly learn how to sing loud and soft passages, without overdoing the loud by shouting, and without losing the clarity in the softer sections. Pupils make good progress in acquiring a basic musical vocabulary consisting of words such as 'rhythm', 'pulse' and 'beat'. In a Year 2 lesson with good links to literacy through a story, pupils use a range of tuned and untuned instruments to 'flavour' the story appropriately. As a result, they experiment well with sounds and rhythms. The very good quality approach also enables pupils to extend their vocabulary well as they learn above average levels of musical terminology.

141. The good progress made in singing continues in Key Stage 2, where older pupils sing appropriately in rehearsal, while learning the nature and purpose of the song, emphasised appropriately from the teacher's questioning. At Key Stage 2 in composition, the teacher gives pupils sufficient space for creativity by linking music effectively to history lessons on the early Greek civilisation. Pupils are able to experiment with musical patterns similar in design to artistic patterns of the period. One pupil was inventive enough to decorate his Greek vase with notes which he then played as a tune on the melodica. Others used symbolic notation to present varying rhythms to the rest of the class.

142. Attitudes to learning in music, and behaviour in lessons, are very good overall. Pupils enjoy their music making. At both key stages pupils treat the instruments carefully when sorting them out prior to performances. They learn to listen well, and begin to develop a good level of critical awareness and appraisal, being able to evaluate their own performances, as well as those of others. Lessons benefit from the good use made of resources, but more so from the very good use made of accommodation. Lessons at both key stages are often transferred from the classroom to more open areas such as the two halls. Here, pupils spread out when composing and rehearsing

in groups, so that their practice does not interfere too much with the sounds being rehearsed elsewhere. When singing, pupils have plenty of freedom to find their own space, and they develop a good sense of projecting their voices ready for performances during the festive season in larger venues. The teaching benefits greatly from the use of a specialist part-time teacher, who does much to encourage an increased interest in the subject through her good subject knowledge and inventive approaches. This also influences in a positive manner other teachers, who gain in confidence as a result. Pupils also benefit from additional lessons during the lunch hour from a specialist teacher of the keyboard and guitar. Lessons are carefully structured to build skills gradually, as well as getting pupils started quickly on playing simple melodies they know, thus helping to sustain interest. Overall, the lessons give pupils good cultural experiences, with frequent references to great composers, and through the use of a wide range of instruments from different countries.

143. No use of ICT was seen during the inspection, and opportunities for composition using technology are missed. The co-ordinator, who is new in post, is at the early stages of developing her role and recognises there is much to be done. She is awaiting opportunities to monitor the teaching and curriculum in more detail, but has begun to look at the syllabus critically with a view to developing a skills- based approach in the future.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. Overall standards in physical education by the age of 11 are above average. This reflects satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. The strengths of the subject are:

- Standards in swimming are well above those seen in the majority of schools.
- Good teaching of games skills and above average skills shown by pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' movement in response to stimuli is good in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.
- The contribution made to pupils' personal and social development.
- Good accommodation and resources.

145. Areas for improvement are:

- Some unsatisfactory teaching.
- Opportunities for pupils to comment on the performances of others.
- Assessment and recording.

146. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1, where standards were at least satisfactory. The Year 1 teacher motivates the pupils well, motivating them to think about their movements and how to improve them. The pupils respond well to her active lead and most try hard, showing satisfactory control. At times they crowd together and show too little awareness of space. They enjoy their lesson.

147. Swimming standards are very good. All pupils generally swim in excess of the standard set down in the National Curriculum, many of them well beyond. Already Year 6 pupils, who have not yet had swimming time this year, talk of swimming 1,000 metres and more, and working on survival skills.
148. In dance lessons, pupils concentrate very hard on trying to move in an appropriate way. Year 3 pupils show good imagination about how newly hatched dinosaurs might move. When they observe others, they are polite and attentive. Most are sensible when they perform for an audience, although one or two are self-conscious and silly. The pupils learn satisfactorily as teaching is thorough with good observation and guidance by the teacher. Standards are generally above average. Discussion is somewhat drawn-out so that the pace is rather slow at times and some pupils are restless when the teacher is talking. The variety of dance makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' cultural development.
149. The teaching of games is good and pupils learn the basic skills well with above expected standards in the lessons seen. Teachers use good subject knowledge and plan effectively so that pupils learn progressively and apply their skills in game situations. A very good Year 4 lesson was based on high expectations that the pupils would respond quickly and work hard. The pupils respect the teacher's knowledge of the subject, respond quickly to instructions and listen very attentively. Consequently there is a very good pace to the lesson, which results in very good learning. Pupils learn the correct way to perform a chest pass and practise it effectively in small groups, some with increasing speed. When they play small-sided games they play fairly and show a growing sense of teamwork. In most lessons pupils show a lot of enthusiasm and enjoyment. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. However, some pupils are dressed inappropriately on occasions.
150. Not all teachers are as assured. An unsatisfactory lesson for Year 5 pupils reflected insecure subject knowledge. The type of lesson planned was based on challenging the pupils to develop team skills. This was good. However, the organisation of the lesson, with a great lack of pace and far too little activity for the pupils, led them lose interest and some unsatisfactory behaviour ensued. Little learning took place. In a number of lessons, teachers asked pupils to observe others, either individuals or groups. Inevitably the teacher commented on the quality of performance, so that pupils were not assessing and, where possible, praising their peers.
151. Accommodation and resources for the subject are good and teachers use them well. There is no recording of assessment of pupils' performance at present and no swimming records are kept. The new co-ordinator already has ideas about strategies to assess basic games skills so that pupils have their own targets.