

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC (VOLUNTARY
AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Billingham

LEA area: Stockton on Tees

Unique reference number: 111677

Headteacher: Mrs C Connelly

Reporting inspector: Mr J Hagan
1065

Dates of inspection: 16th to 19th October 2000

Inspection number: 224966

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wolviston Mill Lane Billingham
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mary Ross
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

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Mrs J Overend OIN 13723	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs C McBride OIN 2810	Team inspector	English Information technology Music	Teaching and learning
Mr M Bowers OIN 17907	Team inspector	Science Art The foundation stage Special educational needs	
Mr S Rigby OIN 18154	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Paul's is a Catholic primary school with a Nursery. It serves pupils between 3 and 11 years. The school is smaller than most primary schools, with 167 pupils on roll. Thirty-three pupils attend part-time in the Nursery. The school has a designated special needs unit. Currently there are 10 pupils in this unit, all of whom have statements of special educational needs. They join the school in the junior department. Including these there are 14 pupils on the special needs register, all at Stage 3 or further of the code of practice and a further 13 at Stage 2. The school has identified 19 per cent of its pupils as having special needs and this is broadly in line with national averages. However, the percentage of pupils with statements (8.5 per cent) is well above the national average. There are no pupils speaking English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (3.5 per cent) is below the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is mostly average although more pupils are above average than below.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. Paul's is a good school. It is a caring community where relationships are excellent. Standards of reading, writing and mathematics in the infant classes are well above average. In the junior classes, standards are above average in mathematics and average in English and science. Teaching is particularly good in Key Stage 1. In the Nursery and Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She works very well with governors, staff and parents to ensure the school meets its aims. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the infant classes achieve high standards in reading and writing;
- Teaching and provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. It enables these pupils to make very good progress;
- The teaching is consistently good and at times very good in Key Stage 1;
- The school gets a very good response from its pupils; their attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships are excellent;
- The headteacher's leadership is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing at Key Stage 2. In particular spelling, handwriting and presentation and opportunities for children to practise writing skills in other subjects;
- Standards in information technology throughout the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. It has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified. Teaching quality has improved and the amount of good or better teaching has doubled. Unsatisfactory teaching has fallen by 11 per cent. The school has focused much of its efforts into raising standards in literacy and numeracy. These efforts have seen better success in mathematics where results have improved. English results have remained similar. The school improvement plan is more effective because it has a sharper focus on improving standards. The governors are now doing a better job. They are actively involved in formulating the school improvement plan. They are now checking how successfully the school is meeting its priorities and in challenging the school about its

performance. They are also meeting all their statutory requirements. The budget is more effectively managed and this is evident in the close links between financial spending and the school's priorities set out in the school improvement plan.

Subject leaders are more effective in developing the quality of teaching as they provide better guidance for staff about what should be taught and support them more closely with planning. The quality of the planning in the Nursery has improved and the independence of children is much stronger, in line with the better provision. They are now receiving appropriate provision in all the areas of learning with the exception of some aspects of physical development. This shortcoming occurs because the outdoor play area is so small that it is very difficult to increase the level of challenge in some activities.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	C	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	D	D	A	B	
Science	D	E	C	D	

Evaluation of pupils' work shows that children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly similar to that found nationally. They make steady progress in the Nursery. The rate of learning increases in Reception and children achieve really well. For seven year olds, results in national tests have been consistently good over the last four years. The school's performance in mathematics has been above average each year and for two of the last three years, very high results in writing have meant that the school has been in the top five per cent in the country. Inspection findings show these results to be good indicators of the standards achieved in Key Stage 1.

For eleven year olds, the school's results as reflected in national tests have not given an accurate picture of its actual achievements. The test score for the last few years has run below the national trend but results have been affected to varying degrees by the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 class. The school admits children with statements of special educational need into its resource unit in the junior department. When results dipped in 1999 four of these pupils with statements were included in the school's scores and the overall average score fell as a result. This was also a very small year group with only 19 pupils in it. Statemented pupils accounted for nearly 21 per cent of the total group.

Whilst results are affected by the varied abilities in different years, pupils' standards of work at age 11 are still not as good as might be expected given their high achievements at 7 years. This is most marked in English and science. The school's most recent results in 2000 are more reflective of its actual performance. Inspection findings indicate that standards are better in mathematics than they are in English and science. The school has taken decisive action to improve its results. The booster classes and appointment of an additional teacher to enable all juniors to be taught in the specific age related group for English and mathematics

are two good examples. The proportion of children achieving the national average Level 4 and the higher Level 5 increased significantly in the 2000 tests. The pupils with special needs are achieving really well but are just falling short of the national average.

In science, junior pupils' do not achieve as well in investigative work as they do in the infants because the teaching is not so good. Standards are particularly good in history in the infants and in music throughout the school. In all other subjects standards are typical of those seen in most schools with the exception of information technology where they are below average. The school has set itself challenging targets which it is largely meeting year on year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. They listen well and concentrate on their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are polite, kind and considerate of others. High standards of behaviour are evident both in class and out on the playground
Personal development and relationships	This is very good. They show respect, tolerance and consideration to one another. Relationships are excellent. They respond well to responsibilities that they are given,
Attendance	Levels of attendance are above the national average. Punctuality is very good and there is no authorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6 - 7 years	aged 7 - 11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Very 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.

Inspectors judged 6 per cent of teaching to be excellent, 30 per cent very good, 36 per cent good, 23 per cent satisfactory and 4 per cent unsatisfactory. Teaching in the school meets the needs of all pupils and all teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Discipline is maintained through humour and mutual respect. The rate of children's learning is closely related to the quality of teaching. It is particularly good for pupils with special educational needs in the resource unit. These pupils are learning at a very good pace because work is matched carefully to their identified needs and teachers work hard at boosting their skills and confidence in themselves. Throughout the rest of the school, the best teaching is in Key Stage 1 with high quality lessons also seen in the Year 4 English and mathematics groups and the mixed age Year 5/6 class. Pupils learn at a good rate in these classes because teachers set high expectations for what they will achieve; work is challenging and pupils rise to the challenge very well. Elsewhere, teaching tends to be more ordinary and of more variable quality, particularly in some lessons in the mixed age Year 3/4 classes. In some lessons the rate of learning slows because there is not a close enough link between what the teacher wants the class to learn and the activities they are undertaking. The pace of learning in some lessons also slows because the children's work is not helping them to build well enough on the skills or knowledge they already have.

The teaching of reading and writing is of consistently very high quality in Key Stage 1. Teachers are very skilled at developing children's range of vocabulary, including different ways of spelling. Children are motivated to write confidently. In the junior classes, these aspects of literacy are not taught as consistently well. Teachers' expectations about standards of neatness and presentation vary. The rate of learning slows in some lessons with junior classes but picks up rapidly again in Year 6. Here, as in the infants, pupils learn at a very good rate because the teacher sets her sights high and expects a great deal of the class. Numeracy is taught well throughout the school. Its strength is in the way teachers develop pupils' strategies for working out mental calculations and this is reflected in the pupils' confidence in working with numbers and the school's well above average test results in mathematics in Years 2 and 6.

Music teaching in the juniors is excellent and pupils rapidly acquire new musical skills, knowledge. They are highly motivated and show real enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons. Teaching of information technology is largely unsatisfactory and pupils do not acquire a wide enough range of skills at a good enough pace. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs (other than those supported by the special resource) is good. Work in lessons is matched well to their needs and teachers support them well in gaining confidence to participate fully in all lessons.

Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Reception year but more ordinary in the Nursery. In the Nursery sometimes opportunities are missed to heighten children's understanding in some activities. In Reception, activities are consistently well matched to specific learning objectives.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. It is broad and balanced. Good links with the community enhance the quality of the curriculum. Some weaknesses because not enough opportunities are given to pupils to extend their writing or use information technology to support learning in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good throughout the school. The provision fully meets the needs of these pupils and enables them to be fully included in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Spiritual, moral and social development is very good. A prayerful community. Cultural development is good. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school is a very caring community. Staff know their pupils well. There is very good practice in child protection and health and safety. Support and assessment for special needs is very good. The school promotes good behaviour and attendance really well.

The school has established a very effective partnership with its parents and they have great confidence in the school and the quality of education it provides.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She provides a very clear direction for the work of the school. The management of special needs and mathematics are particularly strong. All staff contribute to the quality of relationships, which promotes a very good atmosphere in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. A very supportive group who are very involved in discussing the school's performance and in the decision-making processes.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. It has identified the majority of the issues raised by inspection but needs to establish more effective ways to ensure that the rate of learning does not slow down in some lessons.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient resources. These are well used with the exception of information technology to support work in other subjects. Whilst accommodation is adequate, the outdoor play area for children under 6 is too small. The school takes care to get best value in all its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to and enjoy school; • They feel very comfortable in approaching the school; • That the school is well led; • Their children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are not enough extra curricular activities.

The parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and the inspection findings endorse the majority of their views. The inspectors consider that the school offers a satisfactory range of extra curricular opportunities and that it is not significantly different to that seen in most schools. Overall, children do make good progress but there are two areas where it could be better. These are information technology across the school and writing in Key Stage 2.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. By the end of Key stage 1 national test results indicate that standards are well above average when compared with all and similar schools in mathematics, reading and writing. In 1999 results were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics when compared with similar schools. The school's results for pupils aged 7 have been consistently good and for example in 1997 and 1998 writing standards were very high and in the top 5 per cent of all schools.
2. The school's test results for eleven year olds are not always an accurate reflection of pupils' attainment over the last four years. If taken at face value, a comparison of the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results shows dramatic fall in attainment by the time pupils leave the school. Results at Key Stage 2 appear to have been running below the national upward trend. The 1999 national test results were particularly bleak when compared with all and similar schools. In English and science results were well below the national average and were in the lowest five per cent when compared with similar schools. In mathematics they were below the national average and well below similar schools.
3. Results are affected by important contextual factors, namely that the school has a designated support unit for children with special educational needs. All of these pupils come to St. Paul's in the junior years and all of them have statements of special need. Whilst they make very good progress the majority of them do not reach the average level for children aged 11. Furthermore, the school is relatively small and there are on average between 20 and 25 per year group. So for example in 1999 when results were particularly low, there were only 19 pupils in the Year 6 group and 4 of these had statements of special educational needs. This equates to nearly a quarter of the group. For the purposes of national comparators however, they are included in the school's reported results.
4. The make up of year groups also changes over time. The influx of children with statements into the juniors is one variable factor. The 1999 Year 6 class is a good example of how things change between the infants and juniors. Only 11 of the 19 pupils who sat Year 6 national tests completed their Key Stage 1 experience in St Paul's. The other 8 joined at some stage during the junior years. Four of these entered the special needs support unit and of the other 4, one entered into Year 6 only 3 weeks before the national test.
5. The most recent results in 2000 are a closer reflection of attainment. Against the national picture they show the school to be keeping pace in English and science and to be well above average in mathematics. This year group did not have a large percentage of pupils with special needs. When compared with similar schools, the 2000 results are good in mathematics but are not high enough in English and science.
6. Judgements about pupils' work seen by the inspection team indicate that standards at age 7 are as good as the test results suggest but that standards are better at age 11 than shown in test scores.
7. However, inspection findings also indicate that the rate of learning overall in the junior classes is not as fast as it is in the infant classes and that in some subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as could be expected at 11 years given that such high standards

are reached by the end of the infants. In reading and writing for example, particularly high standards are achieved by Year 2. Pupils' work is characterised by the accuracy of spelling, punctuality and the quality of language used.

8. The standards seen in Year 6 are more average. Standards in spelling for instance, are weaker.
9. Boys have performed below average whilst girls' performance has been above average. There are more boys with statements in the special needs unit.
10. When children start in the Nursery, assessments show that the majority are average for their age and a significant minority are above average in all areas of learning. They achieve at a steady rate overall in the Nursery and this increases to a good pace in Reception. By the end of the Reception year, as they are entering Key Stage 1, all of them are likely to reach the expectations for children aged 6 and some will be more advanced.
11. Pupils' listening skills are exceptionally good throughout the school and they are confident speakers.
12. In mathematics attainment at the end of both key stages is above the national average. Pupils demonstrate very good skills in mental arithmetic and they show a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary.
13. In science standards are good in the infants and average in the juniors. In the infants children are making good gains in all aspects of their science work. In the juniors their achievement is more erratic. Best progress is made in the Year 5 and 6 mixed age class. In some classes too much emphasis is given to acquiring scientific knowledge and the teachers over direct investigations.
14. In information technology standards are below average for pupils at the end of both key stages. In the infants children are confident to use computers and have developed their skills to enter and present information but the range of work they cover is too limited and as result progress is uneven across different aspects of the subject. In the juniors not enough opportunities are given to them to develop their own ideas and present information in a variety of ways. There are not enough opportunities for children to use information technology to support work in other subjects
15. In most other subjects standards are typical of those seen in most schools. In history, whilst standards of work for older pupils are typical of those in most schools, for infant pupils they are better than normally seen. The infant children show a very good sense of chronology and their knowledge and understanding of topics studied is impressive. In the juniors there is too little emphasis given to researching and recording their own information. In music, standards are better than typical in other schools. Much of this success is due to the very good quality of teaching in this subject.
16. Children with special educational needs are doing very well given the nature of their difficulties. They are making very good progress towards the targets identified in their specific learning plans. By the time they are 11, many of them are attaining levels, which are only marginally below the national averages in the national tests

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. This is a real strength of the school which has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents are very pleased with this aspect. Pupils' have a positive attitude to school and are keen to attend. All the children are enthusiastic learners who are keen to be part of each lesson. They are very patient and show great perseverance even with more difficult tasks. Children under six are confident and well motivated. They respond well to the choices they are given and to adults and other children. They show marked willingness to share and take turns. For example, in a Nursery music lesson seen, one child gave up his instrument to another who had become upset.
18. Standards of behaviour at St. Paul's are very good. Children play well together in the playground and lunch is a pleasant occasion. They are kind, polite and respectful to other people and are careful to look after books and equipment. They clearly appreciate the efforts the school makes to provide an interesting and attractive environment. Many children spent a few peaceful moments admiring the plants and layout of a new Millennium Garden, which the school has installed in an outside courtyard area.
19. Pupils have a high degree of self-discipline and also show respect for conventions. They know the way to behave on different occasions, for example during assembly and prayers. They also have a strong sense of responsibility and on occasions will draw another child's attention to the fact that they are not behaving in an acceptable way. They show sensitivity to the feelings of others and respect one another's point of view. They are quick to praise and give credit to each other.
20. The quality of relationships throughout the school is excellent. Pupils get on well with each other and with all adults who work in the school. They are keen to offer help and are unafraid to ask for it when it is needed. This excellent atmosphere of trust and mutual reliance allows children to work together cooperatively and to collaborate effectively.
21. Pupils' personal development is actively promoted by the school and the children respond well to this provision. Older children take on useful responsibilities. For example, Year 6 children supervise play equipment at lunchtime by booking it out and logging its return. They respond well also to opportunities for reflection.
22. Attendance is very good with the attendance rate well above the national average. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils are punctual and the school gets off to a prompt and efficient start each day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Teaching is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. The percentage of very good or better teaching has doubled from 18 to 36 per cent. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced from 15 to 4 per cent. All teachers throughout the school manage pupils' behaviour very well. They have excellent relationships with their pupils.
24. Pupils' rate of learning throughout the school is directly linked to the quality of teaching. The pace of learning is fastest in Key stage 1, in the mixed age Year 5 and 6 class and for children in the special needs resource base. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Reception year but more ordinary in the Nursery. In the Nursery sometimes opportunities are missed to heighten

children's understanding in some activities. In Reception, activities are consistently well matched to specific learning objectives.

25. In Key Stage 1, all lessons are characterised by the high levels of challenge in the work pupils are given. The teachers have very good subject knowledge. For example they are very skilled at teaching reading and writing. They have high expectations of their pupils and as a result they make sure that all groups are highly challenged by the tasks they are set. They move lessons and learning on at fast pace. As a result of this children are well motivated, enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoying their learning.
26. In Key Stage 2 it is more variable ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory. In the juniors the best and most consistent teaching was seen in the mixed age Year 5 and 6 class and in the Year 4 group taken by a part-time teacher for mathematics and English. The teaching of music throughout the school is good overall. In the juniors where it is taught by a subject specialist, it is excellent. In these music lessons the teacher makes really good use of her own knowledge to enable pupils to make significant gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills. Lessons move at a rapid and lively pace. Children are highly motivated enjoy their sessions and are achieving standards that are better than those seen in most primary schools.
27. The teaching in the other junior classes is more ordinary. It is inconsistent and as a result of these inconsistencies the pace of learning slows in some lessons in these classes. The shortcomings occur for a number of reasons. Activities are not always suitable for getting across the main learning point of the lesson. For example, a group of children were being taught to develop skills of editing work on the computer by highlighting, cutting and pasting sections of the work. The teacher had a very clear understanding of what the children were to learn but the activity involved them in typing in a piece of work they had previously written in their exercise books. They took a long time to do this and therefore spent very little time on practising and improving the skills identified in the lesson plan. In some of these lessons teachers are not building well enough on what pupils already know and can do. As a result work is too easy for some pupils and these pupils therefore mark time and do not progress at a faster enough pace. For example in a mathematics lesson for Year 5 the higher attainers were given a task of completing some sums using short multiplication. These pupils could calculate the answers mentally and did not need to use paper and pencil methods for working it out. They needed a greater level of challenge to extend their knowledge, understanding and learning.
28. The teaching of reading and writing skills in the infants is very good and a real strength of the school. Pupils learn at a good rate because so much is expected of them. Teachers constantly introduce new and challenging vocabulary and help children to see the links between how they read and write words. They are taught ways to try out and attempt spellings of unfamiliar words and as a result, they are confident and have a good knowledge of how to go about writing. These aspects are not taught as consistently well in the juniors. Teacher expectations of acceptable standards of presentation of work vary. Having made a strong start in developing literacy skills, the pace of learning wavers in some Year 3 and 4 lessons. Skilled and enthusiastic teaching in Year 6 helps to pick up the pace again. Without a sustained or consistently good rate of learning, some pupils do not realise their full potential, particularly as writers, in Year 6.
29. Numeracy is taught well across the school. Teachers are very good at helping their pupils develop and improve their mental arithmetic skills and as a result children are able to complete mental calculations very quickly. They have for example, very good recall of multiplication tables. This is achieved in many lessons by good use of

resources and games to consolidate number facts. Children learn mathematical vocabulary at a good rate because teachers take care to use correct terms and reinforce new words successfully. Less attention is paid to presenting work carefully and neatly in the juniors and in this aspect, teaching in the infants is slightly better than it is in Key Stage 2.

30. The teaching of information technology is generally unsatisfactory. Weaknesses occur because teachers are not successful enough in teaching children skills they need to enable them to learn at a fast pace. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support and develop work in other subjects.
31. The teaching of pupils with in the special needs resource unit is of very high quality. Teachers have a very good understanding of each child's needs and the targets they have been set. Work in lessons is matched well to achieving these targets. Teachers and support staff are very skilled at maintaining pupils' interest levels and in boosting their confidence so that they cope well when they are part of their larger class group.
32. Teaching of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs who are not part of the resource unit is of good quality. Teachers match work well to their needs and pay particular attention to making sure that they are challenged. For example, in whole class lessons, teachers will often ask a direct question of them which may be phrased so that they are able to respond. They are given time to answer and in this way they gain confidence to contribute to the general discussion.
33. Teachers make good use of homework to support children's learning. Work done at home often consolidates the skills or knowledge, which pupils have learned in lessons. Older pupils are also expected to search at home for information as part of a topic they are studying.

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

34. The school curriculum is of a satisfactory quality, with some good features. The school offers a good range of learning opportunities for its all pupils. At Key Stage 1 and 2, the school has generally effective strategies in place for teaching literacy and numeracy. The school has picked up on the need to provide more time for extended writing and has adjusted its timetable accordingly.
35. Curriculum planning is of good quality overall and teachers are clear about the skills and key learning points for each term's work with their class. There is room for improvement however in the way that pupils' learning in important areas is reinforced through work in other subjects. For example, there are weaknesses in the way the school plans for pupils to practise their writing skills through using them in other subjects. Information technology is not developed well through other subjects. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to record data or report results in science investigations.
36. Curriculum provision for pupils with special needs is of high quality. Those who are receiving support in the special needs resource unit receive their full entitlement to a broad and balanced range of planned activities in all National Curriculum subjects. These pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Their statements identify precise learning areas in English and mathematics where they require careful teaching to attain clearly identified programmes of learning. Support for pupils with special needs who are not part of the resource unit in class lessons is also good. Each pupil

- has clear targets that are outlined in their specific learning plan. These form the basis for their learning. They are accurately written and directly guide lesson planning.
37. The curriculum is enriched through contact with the community and other institutions such as work with the local secondary school and Beacon school. For example, work with the local secondary school is extending pupils' knowledge and understanding in science. The school draws much support for its work in developing pupils' spiritual awareness through its close links with local church in its parish.
 38. A firm foundation for pupils' personal and social development is quickly established on entry into the school that develops as the child moves from year to year. St. Paul's prepares its children well to cope with the problems they will encounter as young adults. A thorough programme of drug education and a healthy living programme are offered. The school is part of a national programme, which provides training for children in coping with emergencies or life-threatening situations.
 39. The school has maintained its very high standard of provision for spiritual development. Religious education forms a valuable part of the overall curriculum. There is a Christian ethos within the school that links strongly with the schools mission statement. This is a prayerful community. Pupils write their own prayers and pray several times a day. The daily collective acts of worship are also times when collective learning takes place and pupils' learning is celebrated and shared. The school successfully promotes awe and wonder and an appreciation of the natural world. In one writing lesson in Year 6 for example, the class were preparing to write reports on arachnids. The teacher pointed out the beauty of the spiders' webs on the hedges surrounding the school, which the children themselves had also noticed. Together they admired the strength and precision of the spiders' work.
 40. The school places a high emphasis on its provision for pupils' moral development. There are clear written codes of conduct in evidence around the school. Everyone in the school uses these as a reference point and makes sure that children understand the acceptable parameters for behaviour and what is right and wrong.
 41. The school sees itself as a social community and encourages its pupils to see their role both in the small community of each classroom, the larger school community and the world at large. All adults have very good relationships with the children and children are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Children are taught to work and play collaboratively developing self-confidence and respect for others. During lunchtimes games are well organised and monitored with positive play being encouraged. The school offers the same range and quantity of extra curricular activities as seen in most schools and pupils particularly enjoy the social aspect of these. Musical activities in particular offer many pupils the opportunity to improve their own skills and standards of performance. This has a positive effect in lifting the quality of work seen in music lessons as they transfer their knowledge to class work.
 42. The school is good at promoting the pupils' appreciation of their own culture. Visits are made to sites of local cultural heritage and they are made aware of the historical significance of their part of the world. Awareness of other cultural traditions is not promoted as strongly but some opportunities are taken to develop pupils' understanding. For example, the school cultivated a link with a school in Malaysia having exchanged letters, photographs and artefacts. Music from other cultures, such as Africa and India is played and performed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school is a very caring community. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and with the close links with parents this helps to provide educational and personal support and guidance of a very high quality. Children in the foundation stage are well supported. There are good working links with external agencies and pupils with special needs receive a very high level of support.
44. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. These have ensured that pupils' very good standards of behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection. A consistent approach has been achieved through staff training and close communication with parents so that the school's aims are promoted by the whole community. The school also monitors and promotes attendance very well. Procedures ensure parents are very quick to inform the school of any absence.
45. All staff have received child protection training and the coordinator promotes high levels of awareness and vigilance for the children's welfare. The school is also very active in working to secure pupils health and safety. Pupils are well supervised at all times . First aid has been carefully considered and many staff have received a first aid qualification. The school uses expert advice for example to complete health and safety audits to ensure the buildings and procedures are safe. The health and safety committee also makes regular checks and reports back findings. Children with medical needs such as asthma are carefully monitored and staff are aware of their needs.
46. Assessment of pupils' progress has been improved since the last inspection but is still not rigorous enough in some subjects to pinpoint where pupils need to improve or which skills they need to acquire next.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The quality of the school's partnership with parents is very good overall. Parental satisfaction with all that the school provides, plus their confidence in the work and aims of the school are all very strong. The parents are fully supportive of the school's ethos and mission statement. They find the school approachable if they have any concerns or suggestions. A minority of parents would like the school to provide a wider range of extra curricular activities though the school's provision is in line with other schools.
48. Good information is provided for parents. This includes the two parents evenings each year at which the children's targets are shared with parents. Day to day communication with home is also good and parents believe this has improved over time. Parents are pleased with the end of year reports. These provide detailed information on the work covered and progress made but don't always indicate areas for development.
49. Pre-school links with parents are good. They receive good information to help them prepare their children for starting school. The quality of links with parents of children with special needs is of a very high standard and this helps to promote their children's progress.
50. Parents help out in the school in classrooms, with reading, in the library and with visits and special events. Parents receive good curriculum and policy information so they can help with the homework and very good use is made of this to support the learning.

51. The school offers very good support to the parents of pupils with special educational needs. A pre-induction stage enables parents to gain a full understanding of the importance of the Code of Practice, and how it is used to ensure that pupils who require extra support receive the help they need. This supports them in making an informed decision regarding the placement of their child on the register.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school has made a good response and brought about some significant improvements since the last inspection. It has also maintained many of the positive elements identified for example the strong sense of community, parental commitment and quality of relationships. It has built on some strengths and made them better; for example, the provision for special needs which is now excellent. The budget carry forward figure had been substantially reduced from 9 per cent to less than 5 per cent. Whilst there has been some progress with aspects of subject leadership roles there is still some way to go.
53. The head teacher provides very good leadership and management. She has a very clear and strong vision of what the school should do for its pupils. This is clearly set out in the school's mission and aims. These aims are successfully achieved and they are evident in the school's work. She leads by example, being responsible for both the special needs provision and mathematics across the school. In both these areas the quality of the school's work is very high. She has played a major role in establishing the very good climate, with which the parents are extremely happy.
54. The school development plan is better than previously judged. It now identifies key areas for development and links spending to these priorities. It also sets out the criteria for checking how successful the school is in achieving these priorities. Whilst some of the criteria are very sharply defined others are too general. There are effective systems in place for comparing the school's overall performance against the national picture and that of schools with a similar pupil intake. This data is well used by the school to question its own performance and to set targets for specific year groups in English, mathematics and science.
55. The governors provide good leadership and are actively supportive of the head and her staff. They have a good understanding of the school's performance. They fulfil their role of critical friendship very well because they ask searching questions of the head and her staff about the school's results and standards. Decisions are made based on this information. For example, after analysis of test results it was decided to employ an additional part-time teacher. This enabled the junior classes to be taught in single age groups for English and mathematics. This has resulted in high quality teaching for pupils and a very good rate of learning in a smaller group of Year 4 pupils.
56. Whilst the accommodation is adequate and well maintained there is a shortcoming, which is restricting the progress of children in the Nursery in some aspects of their physical development. The outside play space designated for their use is very small. As a result it is difficult for the teachers to increase the degree of challenge for example when children are using wheeled vehicles. The information technology suite provides a good level of resource but it is not yet used to its best advantage in developing pupils' skills. The school's resources are sufficient in both quantity and quality. There is a good level of staffing. Support staff are used effectively and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

57. The budget is well managed. Funding for specific purposes is used very well. A very good example is the use of funds to support pupils with special educational needs. The provision for them is excellent and they make good gains in their learning. The school pays good attention to the principles of best value. It consults with its parents about the work of the school and checks that it is getting best value for the money it spends.
58. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall. It is particularly strong in mathematics and music. All teachers with subject responsibilities play an active role in supporting and advising their colleagues. However only a few of them are involved in checking on the standards of teaching and learning in their subjects. Whilst the school is aware of the need to develop this aspect of the role they made a decision to focus initially on two of the core subjects. This is having a positive influence in identifying issues and bringing about improvements in aspects of English and mathematics.
59. The management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Issues identified in the previous inspection report have been addressed.
60. The management of special needs provision is excellent. A particular strength is the way in which pupils joining the schools special needs unit are successfully integrated. Very effective systems are in place to check on how these pupils are doing. This enables staff to have a very clear knowledge and understanding of these pupils and their needs. They are fully involved in all aspects of school life and are receiving a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets their needs. The success of the unit is such that other pupils benefit from it. For example, two pupils are currently joining mainstream lessons for English and mathematics. This enables two pupils from the mainstream classes to benefit from the small group teaching in the unit.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to further improve, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (1) raise standards in writing at Key Stage 2 by:

- providing more opportunities for children to practise writing skills in other subjects;
- improving the teaching of spelling;
- placing a higher emphasis on the teaching of handwriting and neat presentation of work;
- providing more opportunities to undertake extended writing;
- providing more opportunities to record work independently.

(Paragraph numbers 5, 7, 8, 15, 29, 30, 35, 36, 99 – 101, 106, 107, 148)

- (2) raise standards in information technology across the school by:

- increasing the range of work pupils undertake;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop skills of information technology in other subjects.

(Paragraph numbers 14, 27, 31, 36, 57, 105, 126, 143, 152, 154, 155, 157, 158)

The following issues, whilst not key issues for action, should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- i) to reinforce children's learning through other subjects;

(Paragraph numbers 36, 101, 107, 126, 140, 143, 155)

- ii) to develop pupils' independence in identifying their own starting point for investigations in science;
(Paragraph numbers 13, 122, 129)
- iii) to improve the provision for physical development in the Foundation Stage.
(Paragraph numbers 57, 87)

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS RESOURCE UNIT

- 62. The provision for up to ten pupils with statements of special educational needs is based within a small classroom. A teacher and a learning support assistant teach pupils in this resource unit during the morning sessions. During this time they are taught English and mathematics and receive carefully modified literacy and numeracy lessons. During afternoon sessions these pupils are fully included in all subject lessons for their age group. Through this form of organisation the school successfully meets the general objectives of the pupils' statements. They receive a full programme of National Curriculum subjects, which are modified to meet their particular needs through the provision of specifically adjusted work and individual support. These pupils are chosen to attend the school by the local education authority and many do not reside in the community that is served by the school.
- 63. Each pupil has a specific learning plan that includes carefully prepared targets to identify precise and measurable advances in their learning. Careful examination of pupils' work enables teachers to judge their rate of progress before preparing further targets. Pupils' skill development is recorded on their individual record of achievement and selected pieces of work are included.
- 64. The liaison between the designated teacher and class teachers is recorded through the use of specific folders where key information is exchanged.
- 65. In English, mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is below the national averages, but they make very good progress towards the targets identified in their specific learning plans. Many attain levels in English, mathematics and science which are marginally below the national averages in the national tests at age eleven.
- 66. All pupils work hard showing good levels of concentration when working in the special needs resource class unit. They enjoy their work and continue to concentrate until their tasks are complete. Although pupils work individually there are very good relationships between them. They listen to the comments of their classmates and they do not interrupt or talk over each other. The work of other pupils is readily and spontaneously appreciated. Their experience of success effectively enhances their own self-esteem. This enables them to be enthusiastic and active class members, taking part fully in the planned activities. During the inspection, although there were often two groups working in the small classroom, this did not affect their levels of concentration.
- 67. The quality of teaching in the special needs resource unit is outstanding. Careful and accurate assessment of pupils' earlier attainment is used effectively to identify appropriate targets in their specific learning plans and forms the basis of the high quality lesson preparation. Very good use is made of the literacy and numeracy strategies that are carefully adapted to meet the needs of these pupils. Both the

teacher and the learning support assistant are highly skilled in presenting lessons in an exciting and challenging way. In one lesson seen, both adults were teaching a group each. Such was the quality of the teaching, neither group of children was distracted by what was going on in the other group. They were totally engrossed in their own activity. A variety of teaching equipment is available and is used well to help pupils gain insights into the role of language and mathematical patterns and relationships.

68. Teachers in the special needs unit make very good use of information technology to enable pupils to reinforce a spelling rule or experiment with number patterns, addition facts and the relationship between tens and units. In English there are excellent links between the early part of the lesson, when all the pupils work with the same 'shared text', and the 'guided reading' with small groups where the work to build phrases into sentences is continued. In mathematics, pupils' interests are held by the availability of 'digit cards' that help them to organise number sentences such as $3+10=13$, $10-3=7$, $13-10=3$ and $7+3=10$.
69. Adults value the pupils' work. There is very good use of praise and, for example, the use of special bound books challenges the pupils to produce their best work. They skim and scan text in information books to produce their own key sentences and sketches of minibeasts. There is excellent demarcation of time for both whole class and individual work. Learning support assistants are effectively directed and deployed to work with specific pupils and this extra help enables them to make good progress in their lessons.
70. At the end of lessons, teachers ensure that pupils share their work with the whole group. This increases their confidence for the time when they are taught as part of a whole class.
71. There are very good links with the representatives of outside agencies who visit the school regularly to help and support pupils who require their assistance. These agencies also give advice to the school to help its understanding of the nature of each pupils' learning difficulty. They give advice to the teachers. Regular contact is made with other schools that have a special needs resource facility. There is an on-going action plan that is currently examining the styles of teaching to develop multi-sensory techniques.
72. Regular preliminary meetings are held with parents to help them understand the aims and purpose of the special needs resource facility and to acquire their confidence and support in an atmosphere of partnership. A friendly, informative and well-written booklet, which identifies possible concerns and answers questions, is given to all families. Parents have sight of specific learning plans and are invited to all meetings and statutory reviews.
73. The headteacher, who is the special needs co-ordinator, has outstanding vision. She works very effectively with the designated teacher to provide an education that gives statemented pupils the individual support they require. There is a total commitment to include the pupils in the daily life of the school. All of these pupils are members of mainstream classes where they receive effective adult support to ensure they make the progress they should.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	25	38	27	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	138
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	27

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	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	12	11	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	21	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	21	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	19	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	23	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (58)	86 (68)	89 (68)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (58)	86 (68)	86 (68)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	155
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	83

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	327714
Total expenditure	316785
Expenditure per pupil	2200
Balance brought forward from previous year	16623
Balance carried forward to next year	27552

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	155
Number of questionnaires returned	113

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	30	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	31	10	0	6
The teaching is good.	64	35	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	33	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	18	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	27	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	58	36	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	29	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	33	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	28	22	2	19

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

74. At the time of the inspection all the children attending the Nursery and the Reception year were under the age of five. When the children start in the Nursery their knowledge, skills and understanding vary and are generally in line with what is expected for their age. There is a small but significant minority of children who are advanced for their age. A small number have some speech delay. All children make steady progress in the Nursery due to the caring and supportive nature of the adults. As they move into the Reception year, pupils make good progress to reach the expected standards for their age in the six areas of learning. Many are already beginning to work at the expected standard. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Reception but more ordinary in some areas of learning in the Nursery.

Personal and social development

75. The children make good progress due largely to the staff expecting that all will get on with each other. The staff ensure that children learn to organise themselves and, as a result, they become increasingly independent and self-confident. The quality of teaching and provision is good overall.
76. In the Nursery the children come into the school happily. They choose what they wish to do and enjoy working alongside an adult. The children learn to share, to take turns and to play with others. For example, four children involved themselves productively using construction kits to assemble imaginary aeroplanes, buildings and vehicles. Whilst they worked independently they shared out the components fairly and any disputes were settled quickly with minimum intervention required by the nursery nurse. The youngest pupils are beginning to follow routines and are being taught to listen during 'quiet time'.
77. In the Reception class, the children develop their concentration further and work hard at the activities. They form good relationships with adults and work collaboratively to create patterns using glues, paints and everyday objects. Many children are able to fasten their coats before they go out to play, change into their physical education kit and wash their hands before they eat their lunch.

Communication, language and literacy

78. The sound quality of the teaching and the provision in the Nursery ensures that the children get off to a steady start in reading and writing. Many children in the Nursery are beginning to recognise their name, know letters of the alphabet and have a go at writing. Older children write their names and are beginning to spell words independently. In the Reception year children make good progress where teaching is good. They identify initial sounds and write letters. They are introduced to reading books and can tell the story accurately from the pictures. Some are beginning to read without help and use their knowledge of the letter sounds to work out new words. Many write their full names and are beginning to write for themselves whilst others copy an adult's writing.
79. A high emphasis is placed by staff on developing the children's speech and many achieve well. Adults continually engage children in conversation, encouraging them to talk about what they are doing. They use every opportunity to introduce new vocabulary. Children in the Nursery have a good attitude towards books. They know

the correct way to hold a book and adults use books skilfully to draw children into conversations, encouraging them to comment and answer questions. Children in Reception are taken regularly to the library where they eagerly seek out familiar texts and retell their favourite stories. The teacher uses the library session well to enhance their interest in books, encourage their conversation and explain how books can be found. The staff tell stories well and children develop their listening skills. They learn to recite rhymes and remember the stories they have heard. Parents help their children at home to learn new words and practise their reading.

80. The children learn to form letters and how to write lists, postcards and captions. However, in the Nursery, not enough is done to ensure that all children make sufficient progress in writing. Although there are writing materials in the post office role-play area, staff do not develop its use to encourage the older children to write. In Reception, all pupils are keen to write letters with the large felt pens on their white boards and many are accurately identifying initial sounds. They use the computer confidently to reinforce this work.

Mathematics

81. The children make good progress overall in counting, recognising number shapes and patterns. Much is done through everyday experiences such as counting how many children are in the group. Adults expertly introduce mathematical language such as 'heavier than' and 'lighter than', giving the children good opportunities to learn how to operate balance scales. They enthusiastically join in singing rhymes that introduce them to the process of subtraction. In the Reception class the daily numeracy session builds on this and sharpens the children's awareness of number. Children are beginning to recognise the value of number digits and count to ten and beyond. Some are starting to double numbers and know that numbers such as 4 and 6 and 5 and 5 make 10.
82. The quality of teaching is good in Reception but more ordinary in the Nursery. As a result, the provision is richer in the Reception class than in the Nursery where opportunities are missed to heighten the children's awareness of number through practical activities. They are not sorting or matching items as part of their everyday play. For example, they do not sort the items of bedding, clothing or crockery into matching colours or shapes. In the Reception class children confidently create patterns using shape patterns on the computer. They begin to recognise the attributes of shapes; that a triangle has three sides and a circle has a curved edge. However, practical tasks such as creating pictures using squares, circles, rectangles and triangles is restricted by the activity being set up in a cramped space.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Children make good progress overall and many are already showing the standard expected for their age in the Reception class where the teaching is good. They investigate magnets and quickly realise where the force lies, carefully constructing imaginative models of buildings by using magnetised dowelling and blocks. They confidently change the pattern of dowelling to ensure that the ends hold together rather than push each other away. They check items in the classroom to see if they are magnetic by holding a magnet to them, carefully recording their results. Children show an early understanding of maps and recognise key buildings and local physical features of the area that are marked on a large-scale map produced by the teacher using the children's sketches

84. In the Nursery children construct maps of imaginary locations. They observe the living materials, leaves, berries and seeds, displayed in the natural area to give them an initial understanding of the changing seasons and the life cycle of plants and trees. Photographs of the recent extension to the Nursery building give children initial ideas about historical events. Children confidently use computers and listening tapes. They know to operate this machinery. Throughout the Foundation Stage all children soundly develop their cutting, folding and joining skills. They manipulate recyclable material, construction kits, card, straws and other commercial materials to assemble models of what they see around them or what they imagine.
85. The quality of teaching in the Nursery is satisfactory. Although the Nursery accommodation has recently been extended space is still limited and often the organisation in the area being given to an activity restricts children as they work. This is also evidenced in the case of the water play tray that was filled with water during the whole of the inspection and also contained a construction kit, making it difficult for the children to use it. Other activities designed to stimulate children's imaginative play are not set up in such a way as to give them ideas. Both the teacher and the nursery nurse are suitably skilled to circulate the room to make suggestions and encourage the children. However, on many occasions both are involved in direct teaching activities and this prevents one person from supporting the children in their independent work. A group of children had discovered a 'hole in the pavement' and were constructively involved in repairing it, writing out a 'danger' sign. When they looked for a way to fasten this sign to the 'barrier' no suitable material was readily available. This affected the pace of the activity.

Physical development

86. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory. The outside play area is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient hard play area to enable the children to develop their gross motor skills by using cars, scooters or tricycles. Over half the enclosed area is grassed which during most of the year is wet, preventing the children from using it. There is no provision for climbing equipment. During the afternoon session, although there are only thirteen children in the class, the presence of only one adult makes it difficult to supervise both the outside area and the general activities taking place inside the accommodation. The Reception class do not use this part of the provision for the Foundation Stage. The hall is used effectively to teach children to develop control as they initiate movements. The larger space helps them to improve their spatial awareness as they travel around the room. In Reception nearly all children effectively use small tools such as pencils, scissors and construction kits effectively. They assemble models, create patterns and mould dough, using cutters safely to stamp out mathematical shapes. Adults ensure that a satisfactory variety of tools, materials and equipment are available to enable children to develop a full range of skills.

Creative development

87. The children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception. There are strengths in the way the teachers, learning support assistant and nursery nurse teach such skills as drawing from observation, experiment with colour mixing and printing techniques. There are good examples of creativity in the Nursery where children extend the 'post office' environment to include repair work to the 'outside pavement'. They improvise to construct safety barriers digging and clearing tasks with one child ringing in orders for materials. There are good examples of children layering different colours of paint onto porous paper to observe the effect of the colours merging into each other. Children in the Reception class are

totally involved in imaginative play, for example, as they recount and interact with the story of Little Red Riding Hood. They reorganise the sand tray to create the route to her Grand Mother's house and locate the lair where the wolf can be found. Children also use their imaginations and initiative to select materials. This was seen as they enhanced their sketches of the houses built by the Three Little pigs, effectively using straw, lollipop sticks and cloth to represent the building materials.

ENGLISH

88. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its high standards in reading and writing at Key Stage 1. Results in statutory tests for seven year olds have shown pupils' achievements to be consistently very high compared to all other schools nationally. They are above average compared to those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
89. The test results for eleven year olds show an overall pattern of average attainment compared to schools nationally. In some years there have been exceptions when a larger number of pupils with special educational needs have been represented in the Year 6 group. This was the case in 1999 when the school's results fell well below the national average and were in the lowest five per cent when compared to similar schools.
90. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
91. Inspection findings confirm that very high standards are achieved at Key Stage 1 but that they are more average at Key Stage 2. Teaching is of high quality in the infants and pupils are given a very good grounding in reading and writing. Teaching in the juniors is of more variable quality and pupils learn at a faster rate in some classes than in others.
92. In speaking, pupils at both key stages achieve average standards for their age but show exceptionally good listening skills. By Year 2, children speak clearly and are confident to speak in front of larger groups, for example during assemblies. Year 6 pupils are keen to comment during class discussions and can explain their ideas well. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively. They pay attention to each other and do not interrupt when someone else is speaking. Teachers at both key stages develop pupils listening skills well. In the infant classes, they encourage children to take turns to speak and to give others a chance to respond. In the juniors, teachers prompt pupils to listen carefully by asking them to evaluate what others have said and justify their opinions.
93. Standards in reading at Key Stage 1 are above average and by the start of Year 2, many pupils are on course to exceed the average for seven year olds. During Key Stage 1, they develop a very good basis from which to build much higher than average reading skills. However, pupils' standards of reading at eleven could be higher, given their starting point.
94. At Key Stage 1, teaching of reading is consistently very good in both classes and this enables pupils to build effectively on what they have learned. Teachers are skilled at sharing books with children and developing their ability to read fluently, tackle unknown words in different ways and make sense of what they read. Pupils show a keen interest in books and careful selections by the teachers mean that they are motivated and enjoy what they read. As a result, they clearly remember details and events from stories and key facts from non-fiction books. Teachers are good at reinforcing the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. In a Year 1 lesson for example, the

teacher explained to the class that the title of a book was often a good clue. "This book is called 'Once Upon a Time', so what kind of book do you think it might be?" she asked. One girl said that a lot of stories started with those words so it was probably a storybook. Most Year 2 children are careful, accurate readers. Higher and most average attainers in Year 2 know basic book conventions such as titles, authors and illustrators. They are able to read books for information and higher attainers are skilled at finding answers in the text.

95. Pupils learn at a steady rate in Key Stage 2 and by the time they are eleven, most are competent readers, showing average skills for their age. By Year 6, most children choose books which reflect their interests, are able to discuss the major themes or ideas in a book and talk about why characters act as they do. Whilst pupils are able to locate words in dictionaries speedily, they are not as secure in locating information in reference books, for example through the use of an index.
96. Work in some junior classes does not always push pupils hard enough in building on the very good standards reached in the infants. Teachers records of children's attainment at the start of Key Stage 2 are not detailed enough to pinpoint how each child can improve further. Consequently, work does not always take each child on from what they achieved in the infants.
97. Standards in writing are above average in Key Stage 1. Particular strengths are the accuracy of spelling and punctuation achieved by the greater majority of pupils and the quality of language they use. Their rate of progress is consistently high in both Years 1 and 2. Children write well-ordered, well-sequenced stories and thoughtful poetry using a good choice of phrases and vocabulary. Teachers develop pupils' confidence to write and try out their ideas well. Both classrooms have plenty of stimulating displays that reinforce vocabulary and children are encouraged to see the relationship between words and to look for spelling patterns or note irregular ones. In a Year 2 lesson for example, the teacher pointed out the word 'floor' to the class and explained that the 'oo' letters in the middle made a different sound to the one they would expect.
98. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to show flair and imagination in their writing and the quality of their ideas is maintained. However, teachers show differing levels of expectation about acceptable standards of presentation and handwriting and spelling is not taught as consistently well as in the infants. This results in a slower rate of learning in the younger junior groups in these two aspects. Although they move on very rapidly again in Year 6 due to very good teaching, pupils' standards of work in writing are more average than better at the end of Key Stage 2.
99. Further reasons for this steady rather than good progress at Key Stage 2 are that pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to extend their work. They have been producing fewer of the more lengthy pieces of narrative writing, which are typical of good writing development. The school has recognised this problem and has rearranged its timetable this year to allow for a longer writing session each week.
100. Although pupils learn a full range of writing types in English lessons, they are not given enough opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects. For example, history and geography are particularly neglected. Here, chances to record their own thoughts are too often set aside in favour of using worksheets.
101. Pupils with special educational needs achieve particularly well. As a result of the high quality teaching they receive in small groups, they make good gains in reading and writing skills. They are supported well when they are part of the whole class and cope well with their work.

102. The rate at which pupils learn is closely connected to the quality of teaching. This is very good in the Key Stage 1 classes where it is characterised by high expectations and levels of challenge during lessons. Both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are working a year in advance of expectations in some aspects. For example, Year 1 pupils are already recognising and understanding how to use speech marks and Year 2 pupils are being introduced to the use of commas in lists. Teachers are particularly good at extending children's vocabulary and reinforcing new or important words through classroom displays.
103. At Key Stage 2, pupils are sometimes taught in different groups according to age. The best teaching is seen with the Year 4 and Year 6 groups where teachers demand a great deal and pupils respond accordingly. In these high quality lessons, a great deal of ground is covered and teachers plan activities which are exactly right for getting the key learning points of the lesson across. In a Year 6 lesson for example, the class worked together to brainstorm the features of arachnids before beginning to write their own reports on spiders. This activity helped them to order their thoughts and they made a fast start once they went to work on their own. In other groups, teaching is more ordinary and pupils are not fired with as much enthusiasm, for example, when sharing books or poetry.
104. There is insufficient use of information technology to improve pupils' work. There are some examples of older pupils developing their writing by producing for example, newspaper reports. However, in general, most pupils have not built up enough speed in entering work and they produce much less than they would when handwriting pieces.
105. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall but there are more strengths than weaknesses. Recent national initiatives have been carefully adopted and have resulted in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve even further. The quality of teaching has been checked and teachers have improved lessons and gained confidence. For example, in teaching different types of writing. There has been an accurate analysis of some of the aspects of the subject which need to be improved, such as the time allowed for pupils to practise their writing.
106. However, two issues have not been evaluated rigorously enough. These are the reasons for the slower pace of learning in some Key Stage 2 groups and the weak development of pupils' writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

107. Attainment is above the national average at the end of both key stages. In the most recently published national tests (1999) all pupils in Key Stage 1 attained the national average with the number of pupils reaching higher levels also above the national expectation. In Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils attaining the national expectation was just below the national average. However, the number of pupils reaching the higher levels continued to be above the national average.
108. At the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are confident in mental and oral calculation, having a firm grasp of number bonds and place value up to 100. Children work confidently and solve simple addition and subtraction of money problems that require change. They use a range of different strategies to support their learning. For example, they use number lines and 100's squares effectively when using dice to make their own sums. They can recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and many pupils can talk about the qualities of these shapes. They also have a wide mathematical

vocabulary using words such as digits, multiples and sequencing appropriately. This continues to be developed well in Key Stage 2 with pupils appropriately using such terms as prime number, factor, percentages, numerator and denominator.

109. By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils work with confidence with mental calculations and can use calculators appropriately. However, too little use is made of computers to support pupils' work in mathematics. Pupils' numeracy skills are well developed and they have a good knowledge of their multiplication tables. They can handle large numbers and handle decimals with understanding. They have a good knowledge of angles and shapes accurately drawing and identifying acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They have also a firm grasp of the different types of triangles and their properties such as scalene, equilateral and right-angled. Highest attainers have a grasp of negative number and fractions. They can reduce fractions, identify equivalent fractions and understand the concept of mixed numbers. Pupils have a good knowledge of different graph types. Their work includes the use of Venn diagrams and bar graphs which are used to record data on probability accurately.
110. Baseline data shows that pupils' attainment on entry into the school is close to the national average. All pupils learn at a good rate in Key Stage 1. However in Key Stage 2, although their rate of learning is steady overall, it is more erratic than in the infants. The most consistently good progress in lessons is being made in the Year 6 class. The booster classes make a significant contribution to pupils' success rate because they are well organised. Pupils with special needs and other low attaining pupils also make very good progress throughout the juniors.
111. The results of the most recent national tests (2000) show that a large proportion of pupils across the ability range make more than two whole National Curriculum levels of progress from the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2. This is helped because the staff have good subject knowledge and in the best lessons because there is a good pace and high expectations of the pupils.
112. Positive relationships and interaction with teachers make a significant contribution to developing the pupils' confidence and enthusiasm. As a result, pupil's response to mathematics is good throughout the school. In the classroom they are attentive and listen carefully to instructions from the teacher. They show interest often checking their work and persevering when faced with a difficult task. There is always a willingness to contribute to lesson introductions during question and answer sessions. Children work as happily when they are required to collaborate as they do when working independently. They show respect for and support one another when needed. Presentation of work is generally satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but varied in lower juniors. Here teachers do not consistently demand good standards of neatness or insist on a general style. Marking tends to be variable, particularly in Key Stage 2, and there is a range of teachers' individual commentary and styles without a consistent way of giving feedback to pupils about their work.
113. The quality of teaching in the majority of mathematics lessons is mostly good or better with a few lessons of more ordinary quality. All teaching staff have a secure knowledge of the subject. Work is well matched to the needs of the pupils, with the needs of high attainers generally well catered for. The quality of planning is good although teachers are not always making perceptive enough evaluations of the work undertaken to be able to shape future lessons. All staff have a very positive relationship with pupils and this enhances both pupils' confidence and children's enthusiasm for the subject. In the best lessons, questioning is of a high quality and pupils are required to provide either specific answers or express their own opinions or ideas. In most lessons, previous

learning is recapped well and teachers make good links with what pupils already know and can do.

114. Teachers carefully explain to the class what they expect them to learn with the result that children are usually clear about what they are doing. Teachers use appropriate technical language and this pays off in the generally good knowledge which pupils have of correct terms. Resources are carefully selected and support learning effectively. For example, pupils particularly enjoy using the number cards and the concept board in the oral mental sessions. Throughout the inspection, good use of games was seen. Games such as bingo were used to reinforce multiplication tables and counting sticks supported pupils' understanding of number sequencing.
115. Pupils' learning is enhanced through good use of homework to reinforce what they have learned in class. Some pupils undertake independent research tasks at home or bring items of mathematical interest into school.
116. The teaching of number is very good. It is a strength within the subject that pupils build on, as they are being encouraged to develop a wide range of strategies to improve speed of calculations and self-checking processes. Staff teach the oral and mental part of the daily numeracy lesson consistently well. They always use correct technical vocabulary, give pace to the lesson and generate enthusiasm amongst the children through good questioning skills.
117. Leadership of the subject by the coordinator is very good and effective in improving teaching and learning. The curriculum is well organised and directed. The coordinator is very knowledgeable about the subject and the mathematics within the school is supported well by a scheme of work and policy statement. These are used well by teachers to guide and support their planning of lessons.
118. The subject has been monitored closely with all staff being observed teaching and lesson plans being regularly checked. A comprehensive analysis of the progress of each year has also been made but the school is not yet able to pinpoint the precise targets, which individual pupils should next meet.

SCIENCE

119. Standards at the end of the infants are above average. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report when they were judged to be average. For most pupils they are average by the end of Key Stage 2. Test results are not always a good reflection of attainment as they tend to fluctuate depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. For example, in the 1999 national tests, Year 6 pupils achieved below average results when compared with all school across the country because of the high numbers of these pupils who were included in the school's figures. The most recent results in 2000 show the school's performance to be average compared to all schools and not as good as schools with a similar pupil intake. These are a more accurate reflection of the standards achieved
120. Inspection evidence shows that pupils learn at a good rate in the infants and they achieve well, gaining a good level of scientific knowledge for their age. The achievements of more able pupils are better than they were at the time of the last inspection because they are now making progress that is appropriate to their abilities.
121. In Key Stage 2 the best rate of learning is in Year 6 where it is particularly good. All pupils, including those with special needs and the higher attainers are working at the expected levels. In other junior classes, emphasis is placed on the acquisition of

scientific knowledge at the expense of investigations, which are sometimes over complex and over-directed by adults. During the inspection, many Year 4 and Year 5 pupils were not learning at a fast enough pace.

122. The school now gives better guidance to teachers on what they need to teach. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report. A scheme of work has been carefully introduced which ensures that the subject is covered at the right depth of scientific knowledge as pupils move through the school. However, the school's methods for assessing progress still do not provide accurate enough information to identify the next steps which need to be taken by pupils.
123. In the infants the pupils experience all aspects of the science curriculum. They carry out investigations into the magnetic properties of materials, organising and recording their results by constructing sets of materials that are attracted to magnets and those which are not. They quickly make generalisations about most metal objects being magnetic. Year 2 pupils know how to construct a basic electrical circuit using batteries, bulbs and wires. They increase their knowledge of materials by testing them to discover whether they will allow electricity to pass through to complete a circuit and light the bulb. More able pupils have a good scientific vocabulary, confidently including words such as condensation and evaporation as they describe reversible change when water is heated or cooled.
124. The youngest pupils in the juniors build on the knowledge and skills learned in the infants. They successfully apply their knowledge about conductivity to construct switches from drawing pins and paper clips that they use to control a bulb in a battery powered circuit.
125. Year 6 pupils achieve well in investigative work. They hang weights from straws as they organise fair tests to determine the strongest structures. They set the gaps that the straws will be tested across and they cut the straw samples to be tested to the same lengths. They recognise that the variable factors are the material that the straw is constructed from and its circumference. The testing is completed when the pupils carefully increase the load on the straws by ten gramme increments until such time as the straw bends past its elastic limit. Records are kept and entered onto tables to be evaluated through pupils' work in the next lesson. Pupils do not make enough use of computers or the data handling aspect of information technology to analyse or record their results.
126. Although teaching in the juniors is satisfactory overall, it is too ordinary or unsatisfactory in some Year 4 and Year 5 lessons to support pupils in learning at a fast enough rate. In one lesson seen, teaching did not identify the scientific potential of an activity and it was more relevant to a focused task in design and technology. The set task was to construct a cotton reel machine powered by energy stored in an elastic band but this did not include any scientific references. In constructing the machine they did not gain any insight into how it would overcome friction and how the balance of forces involved changes to enable the machine to gain momentum. All pupils listened carefully and followed instructions to assemble the vehicle. Few pupils were successful in making it move because there were design faults that had not been highlighted by the teacher and were not discovered by the pupils.
127. The quality of the teaching is very good in the infants. Careful planning in the Year 1 class enables pupils to investigate magnetism and many are involved in practical investigations to form ideas about which objects are magnetic. In one lesson seen, the teacher skilfully introduced an aluminium can that all pupils predicted would stick to a magnet. There was a moment of stunned silence when it didn't and pupils immediately

tested other parts of the can and the magnet to check that it was still working. This was a unique moment of 'Eureka' where very good quality planning for experimentation resulted in pupils refining their scientific knowledge. Pupils were totally immersed in the activity and were keen to share their discovery with others.

128. In Year 3, effective planning ensures that pupils increase their knowledge of electrical circuitry. However, some of the practical investigations are over complex and pupils have difficulty in completing the task that involves the identification of which wires will complete a circuit. Other investigations are over-controlled by adults and pupils do not benefit from a 'hands on' activity.
129. The oldest pupils are very well supported by pupils and teachers from the secondary school as part of their preparation for secondary education. However, in one lesson seen, this valuable and effective initiative was affected by the overcrowding of the room. Although the teacher had very good control and there were very good relationships, experiments were disturbed and results were affected. The activity was too complex for a small number of Year 5 pupils who were part of the class.
130. Throughout the school pupils show very good attitudes towards the subject. They listen attentively, follow instructions carefully and work well together to complete their tasks, even when they are over complex. There are very good relationships between adults and pupils, and work is marked consistently and positively.
131. There is satisfactory leadership of the subject. Although the scheme of work is now fully in place, adjustments have not been made to enable the highest attainers to work in the next years programme of study if they complete the allocated work for their own year. There are no systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the teaching. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and health education through the study of food and balanced diet, investigations into the function of the heart and lungs and need for regular exercise.

ART

132. Standards in art are similar to those found in most schools. By the end of the Infants most pupils have developed sound skills in drawing, pattern making and printing. Effective use is made of everyday materials to create aesthetic patterns. Pupils systematically and accurately 'print' using wooden blocks to form the texture of the front of a house, carefully arranging and overlapping the bricks to create a realistic image. The older pupils effectively link their artwork with their historical studies working collaboratively to create a large three-dimensional scene of the Great Fire of London.
133. In the juniors pupils' observational skills have developed in the control and detail of their work. Their skills and experience in the techniques of printing include a good range of media such as block and press printing with the oldest pupils successfully fashioning print blocks from lino tiles. Pupils paint portraits of characters studied during their literacy work. Portraits of Scrooge and Oliver Twist displayed in the dining areas are detailed showing good brush control and use of colour. The oldest pupils apply the subject effectively to explore the Aztec Civilisation, using paint and collage to represent masks and patterns. Pupils' have appropriate skills in working clay using 'coil' and finger skills to create replicas of Aztec pots. During the inspection pupils were learning how to paint in the style of Lowry.
134. Few lessons were observed during the inspection, but from scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' work outcomes the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory. In one lesson observed, pupils were effectively taught how to mix colours to create

camouflage effects. The lesson was resourced well, enabling pupils to mix paint in pallets to experiment and gain understanding about how to lighten and darken the colours. Support staff were well deployed giving individual pupils help as they developed their fine brush control. Pupils enjoyed their lesson. They worked hard, readily sharing resources and completed their work within the allocated time.

135. The subject is satisfactorily managed with clear documentation to ensure that pupils receive a full range of challenging activities and projects. Good use is made of community initiatives. Recently pupils worked with local artists to create large models of everyday objects such as hairbrushes and matchboxes indicating the good range of experiences available to them. The co-ordinator is currently compiling a portfolio of work. However, pupils' work is not evaluated closely enough and a full range of media, tools and equipment is not always available to enable them to make choices.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

136. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology. However, using evidence gathered from viewing pupil's work, teacher's planning, and discussion with the subject coordinator, standards are judged to be similar to those seen in most schools.
137. Pupils in Key Stage 1 experience a broad range of activities. There are good examples of paper engineering in the making of castles, weaving with card and making a model of a fish aquarium out of card and fabric. Pupils also undertake work in a wide range of other materials, such as clay, with children making and decorating spiral clay pots. Work of good quality is also undertaken with a range of construction kits in making moving models. Children are supported in their tasks with work cards that explain the need to plan, design, make and reflect on the outcome of their work.
138. For older pupils the strength of their work is in the different techniques they learn in making products. They have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills. For example, they learn how to make various hinges and linkages, along with how to strengthen paper by folding. Whilst they are also secure in drafting designs, they are less accomplished in evaluating their finished products with a view to improving them. For example, in Year 6 pupils had put together a design proposal to construct a toy using softwood and card. Some models had been made, with skills such as drilling, cutting and appropriate joining techniques in evidence. However, none of the finished models worked effectively and design evaluation had not improved the end product.
139. Throughout the school there are one or two examples of pupils having opportunities to consolidate their skills through their work in other subjects. For example, in Key Stage 2, science work in the making and designing of elastic propelled boats allowed pupils to test and record the effects of different bow shapes. This produced models of a good design that worked successfully. These are, however, too rare and many other opportunities to integrate design and technology with pupils' other work are missed.
140. There is little opportunity for the coordinator to monitor teaching as the school has allocated priority time to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in other high priority subjects. At present, the school's arrangements for checking on pupils' progress are not rigorous enough to ensure that they acquire skills in a systematic or ordered way.

GEOGRAPHY

141. Standards of work are typical of those in most schools. Younger pupils have a sound foundation of geographical skills. Infant pupils investigate features of their local surroundings. Through studying the local area they develop mapping skills and a good awareness of building type and its use. They are able to give simple directions, with the most able being able to identify the cardinal points of a compass and locate themselves on a map of the United Kingdom, as well as being able to name the nearest city and river. They also learn about the seasons and how changes in the seasons affect their environment and the people of their community.
142. Older pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed further. Pupils have a sound understanding of physical geography, understanding the water cycle and the characteristics of mountain ranges and deserts. Pupils understand the use of coordinates and are able to locate detail on a map. They acquire a growing awareness of the local environment and are able to identify local major employers and environmental issues that affect them and their families. Visits to Beamish and the power station at Hartlepool enrich the curriculum and give pupils a greater understanding of social change and energy needs. However, there are too few opportunities to develop and integrate the subject with other subjects in the curriculum, such as information technology and history.
143. The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory in both key stages, with some good lessons. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, good control and a sound knowledge of the subject. In some lessons good questioning skills extend the children's thinking by requiring fuller answers. Teachers do not always have a clear enough view of pupils' prior knowledge.
144. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Whilst there is little monitoring of teaching and learning because the school has focused its efforts in higher priority areas, the problem of covering a topic twice with mixed age classes has been identified and is being addressed.

HISTORY

145. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence has been drawn from samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Whilst standards for pupils aged 11 are typical of those seen in most primary schools they are better for pupils aged 7. Overall pupils' rate of learning is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors.
146. Younger pupils show a good sense of chronology and understanding about changes over time. They have good knowledge and understanding about famous people and events they have studied. They know how to find out about the past and can discuss cause and effect related for example, to the Great Fire of London.
147. Older pupils have satisfactory recall of the most recent topics but are less secure on periods studied in other year groups. Not enough emphasis is given to children researching and recording their own information. For example, there is little evidence of children writing their own accounts or using a variety of sources to extract information.
148. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen in the junior class containing Year 3 and 4 pupils was good and it was very good in the Year 2 class lesson,
149. Particular strengths of the teaching were the effective use of questioning and good use of resources. Through skilled questioning and good use of resources the teachers

engaged their pupils in purposeful discussions, which helped them to learn. For example in the junior class lesson the teacher showed them a gas mask and encouraged them to express their feelings on how evacuees would have felt during World War 2.

150. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has done some significant work on updating the policy and scheme. This is helping teachers to plan their work. However there are no opportunities for checks to be made on the quality of teaching and its impact upon learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

151. Standards in information technology are below those expected for pupils at the end of both key stages. Since the school was last inspected it has increased the number and quality of computers available to pupils. However, the rate of learning in the different uses of information technology is not fast enough for most pupils. It is not successful enough in building on the skills which pupils bring from home.
152. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils reach average standards in organising and presenting their work on computers, for example through word processing. They show a good awareness of the needs of the audience they are presenting their work to and make it interesting by adding graphics or changing letter size and colour. Most have too little experience in developing their own ideas and presenting them in different ways. For example through recording their work in science or mathematics as tables of results or in using spreadsheets and databases. Some pupils bring a good level of skill from home. For example, they are able to use the internet or have built up a good level of knowledge about different ways to use computers. Currently there are no opportunities for them to send or receive messages by email or share their knowledge to support other pupils.
153. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident to use computers. They have developed sufficient skills to enter information and can present their work effectively. However, the range of their work is too limited and they have insufficient experience in other aspects. For example in planning and giving instructions or in storing information in different forms such as databases.
154. Throughout the school, information technology is not developed well enough through use with other subjects. There are one or two examples of where this is happening. For example, Year 6 pupils present newspaper reports, but overall, these opportunities are too limited.
155. Teachers have gained more confidence and expertise. They stimulate pupils' interest by using computer made labels for display in classrooms or encouraging pupils to undertake homework on computers. They have gained in confidence in using computers and other technology such as digital cameras. Very little teaching was observed during the inspection but scrutiny of planning for the subject and examination of pupils' work shows it to be generally unsatisfactory.
156. Teachers are unsure of how to make the best use of computers or which is the most appropriate software for pupils to use. They are not successful enough in teaching the skills necessary for pupils to learn at a good pace. When pupils are assigned to work on computers, time is not used productively enough. In a Year 3 lesson for example, they were attempting to use a CD Rom to find information about Britain since 1930. The material presented was too difficult and too diverse for them to access without a carefully planned route through the programme. They learned little in the session about

the topic they were studying or the ways in which they could efficiently draw information from a computer programme. Year 4 pupils used computerised encyclopaedias to research information for their geography topics, but again, the programme chosen offered too little scope for them to gain much new knowledge or learn how to put what they found to best use.

157. Management of the subject is satisfactory but it is not well led. A comprehensive plan for increasing and deploying resources is being implemented. Specific grants and funds are managed efficiently to improve resources. However, some of the critical issues which affect overall standards are not being tackled. These are the narrow range of work undertaken by pupils and the development of information technology skills through other subjects. The quality of teaching has not been scrutinised carefully enough to pinpoint the reasons why pupils are not learning at a fast enough rate.

MUSIC

158. Pupils' achievements in music are better than those seen in most schools. Although standards were above average at the time of the last inspection, they have improved further and even more pupils now take part in musical tuition or outside school activities.
159. Older pupils have a good knowledge of different musical styles and traditions. They have many opportunities to listen to and perform a good range of music including pieces from Africa and India. Many play instruments themselves to a good standard. This enriches music lessons, as they are able to read music and give a good lead during composition or performance sessions. Younger children develop a good knowledge of famous composers and learn how different instruments are used to create musical effects and mood. All music sessions are characterised by pupils' confidence and enjoyment inspired by lively and enthusiastic teaching.
160. Much of the school' success and interest in music is due to the quality of teaching. This is generally good throughout the school although it is exceptional at Key Stage 2 and two excellent lessons were seen with older pupils. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are clear about the skills and knowledge which pupils are expected to acquire in each lesson. At Key Stage 2, where teaching is of especially high quality, lessons are conducted at a swift pace with a great many interesting activities and include valuable opportunities for practising new skills. At Key Stage 1, whilst still good, lessons are more leisurely and occasionally, too little time is allowed to reinforce skills well enough.
161. The quality of leadership and management is very high. Although the subject leader is employed part-time in the school, much is achieved. Planning for the subject is thorough and, as it is only taught by one person, pupils learn new skills in a systematic and well-ordered way. Their achievements in lessons are recorded and lessons build on previous learning. The subject leader's own enthusiasm and interest has proved infectious and has enriched the school's overall curriculum provision. In particular she has initiated a programme of teaching for pupils with special educational needs which has raised standards and confidence for these pupils in speaking and listening.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. Whilst the school covers the full range of activities no judgements can be made on gymnastics or dance standards because the main focus of activity during the inspection was on games skills.
163. Pupils aged 7 and 11 are achieving standards in games that are typical of those seen in most primary schools. Based on school records all but four of the present Year 6 have already met the expectation to be able to swim 25 metres by the age of 11.
164. Whilst only Year 3 have swimming lessons, the school provides well for the non swimmers in Year 6 because it gives them further opportunities to achieve the national expectation through attending some of the sessions for Year 3.
165. The teaching in Year 2 and 6 is good. A particular strength of this teaching seen in the lessons observed was the emphasis given by teachers to improving pupil skills and techniques. For example, Year 2 pupils were taught correctly how to make a shoulder pass. They were then given opportunities to practise the technique in a small-sided game.
166. Good use is made of demonstrations in lessons to support the coaching points that the teachers are trying to get over to their classes. All teachers present themselves as good role models by wearing appropriate clothing and all pupils respond to their example, wearing suitable kit for physical activity. Appropriate emphasis is given to warming up prior to starting physical activity and as a result children understand the importance of preparing themselves properly.
167. In one lesson, teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. A games lesson for Year 3 and 4 pupils held in the hall meant children were working in too small a space. This made it impossible for them to improve their skills of passing, control and dribbling or be sufficiently challenged by the tasks.
168. Pupils with special needs are well supported and as a result are able to be fully involved in all the lessons,
169. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes. Their behaviour is always very good. They persevere, concentrate and try hard to improve and this ensures a very positive atmosphere for learning to take place.
170. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers are given support and advice, which helps them to plan, lessons well. However there is no opportunity for teachers to have their work observed and receive views about what is working well and what they need to improve.
171. There is a satisfactory range of activities outside of normal school time. This gives children valuable opportunities to practise and develop skills, for example in netball and football.