

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY REDEEMER CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pershore

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116894

Headteacher: Mrs. H. Rowlands

Reporting inspector: Mr. I. Pratt
13626

Dates of inspection: 6 - 10 November 2000

Inspection number: 225005

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Priest Lane
Pershore
Worcestershire

Postcode: WR10 1EB

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. K. Walton

Date of previous inspection: 16 - 18 April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ian Pratt 13626	Registered inspector	Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How high are standards How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further
Ian Adams 13336	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
Val Emery 1497		Under fives English Art Design and technology Music Equality of opportunity	How good are curricular and other opportunities
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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary is a mixed school of smaller than average size, with 140 pupils aged between four and eleven years of age. The school serves the market town of Pershore and its surrounding villages. It has broadly equal numbers of boys and girls but the proportions vary greatly from class to class. A high percentage of pupils leave or join the school each year; a significant proportion of these are high attaining pupils in Year 5 who take up places in a local middle school. This is an increasing trend and adversely affects standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Children enter the reception class in the academic year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection 14 children were under the age of five. Standards on entry to the school are in line with those expected for children of this age, but have declined significantly each year since 1997.

Eligibility for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average; most have moderate or specific learning difficulties. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin, and very few pupils have English as an additional language. All of the full time teachers have been appointed within the last two years due mainly to promotion or leaving for family reasons.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Holy Redeemer is an effective school. It provides a sound, all-round education for its pupils. The quality of teaching is good overall, and this promotes learning at a good rate. Pupils have very good attitudes to work, behave very well and attend school regularly. The relationships between pupils and with staff are excellent. In relation to their attainments on entry to the school, the pupils achieve satisfactory standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management for the school and since her appointment eighteen months ago, the school has been effective in achieving the targets it sets itself. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school's strong Catholic Christian ethos provides a very caring and supportive atmosphere in which the pupils learn well.
- There is very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and the pupils' personal development is supported and monitored very well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and is often very good at Key Stage 2, and this enables the pupils to learn at a good rate.
- The pupils' enthusiasm for learning, very good behaviour and excellent relationships strongly support their learning.
- Attendance is well above the national average.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher is very effective, and has brought about many improvements in the schools' work during the last eighteen months.

What could be improved

- There is a downward trend in National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2, in English, mathematics and science.
- Strategic planning for school improvement is weak.
- The role and structure of the Governing Body does not sufficiently help the school in improving standards and the quality of education provided.
- The school does not implement the requirements of the National Curriculum for design and technology because it has inadequate resources.
- The unsatisfactory levels of resources for learning in the library adversely affects the pupils' learning.

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

Holy Redeemer is a school with many significant strengths that outweigh its weaknesses.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved satisfactorily since its last inspection in April 1996. Improvement has not been a steady and continual process, but has increased at a rapid rate since the appointment of the new headteacher. Previously little had been accomplished in tackling the key issues for improvement identified by the last inspection. Curriculum planning has improved well, as has the quality and use of assessment. The subjects of the curriculum are now managed well, with suitable checks being made by the headteacher on standards and the quality of teaching. Whilst the school development plan now contains the features specified by the last

inspection report, it is still a weak document that has little impact on school improvement. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. Whilst the pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their attainments on entry to the school, there has been a marked deterioration in the results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 since 1996. This is not judged to be as significant as it might first appear because an increasing number of high attaining pupils leave in Year 5 when they transfer to middle school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. 1999 results are used because too few pupils sat the tests in 2000 for results to be statistically reliable.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	B	C	C
Mathematics	A	A	C	C
Science	A	A	B	B

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

By the end of the children's reception year they reach the national Early Learning Goals in all aspects of their learning and are ready to start National Curriculum work. They have particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development.

The 1999 National Curriculum assessments for seven year olds show that standards in reading are above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Results in writing are in line with the national and similar school average, but in mathematics they are below the national average and well below when compared to similar schools. The results of the 2000 assessments show that standards reached average levels in reading, but were below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. These results represent a decline relative to national standards. The school has compelling evidence that the standards of children on entry to the school have fallen significantly year on year since 1997.

The 1999 national tests for 11 year olds show that standards are above both the national average and the average for similar schools in science, and in line with the national and similar schools averages in English and mathematics. Too few pupils took the 2000 tests for their results to hold any statistical significance. From 1996 to 1999, however, there was a steady decline in the results in all three subjects. This is largely due to the increasing tendency of high attaining pupils leaving the school in Year 5 to take up places in middle schools. The school also accepts that there has been some underachievement in past years in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Work seen during the inspection shows that at the end of both key stages, standards are in line with those expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. The pupils are currently benefiting from mainly good teaching they receive, and this promotes learning at a good rate. Good teaching and learning has not been in place long enough to have an impact on standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school, are eager to learn, have very positive attitudes to school and act responsibly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. There is an absence of oppressive behaviour.

Personal development and relationships	Excellent relationships between pupils and with adults typify the very good personal development of the pupils. In their learning, however, they can be passive, showing little initiative and independence.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average.

The pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance are strengths of the school which contribute very well to learning and to the very positive atmosphere for learning

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, and the proportion of good and very good teaching has improved well since the last inspection. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons, good or better in 65 per cent of lessons and very good in 20 per cent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in five per cent of lessons. There was some good teaching at Key Stage 1, however, teaching was satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 2 and in the reception class teaching is good. All of the very good teaching seen during the inspection occurred in Key Stage 2.

In the reception class, particular strengths in the teaching include well planned purposeful and imaginative practical activities and a calm and effective approach. At Key Stages 1 and 2 strengths of teaching include planning, the management of pupils, the use of support staff and resources and the quality of ongoing assessment. At Key Stage 2, the teachers have consistently high expectations and provide consistently challenging work for all pupils. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is good, and the pupils' learning progresses at a good rate. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in these subjects and pupils learn mainly at a steady rate. In some lessons in Year 2, however, not enough is expected of the pupils and their rate of learning is unsatisfactory. Literacy is taught well across the subjects of the curriculum and the pupils' numeracy skills are developed effectively. Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support from their teachers, learning support assistants and volunteers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory overall; the school provides a generally rich curriculum for all pupils, but does not implement the National Curriculum for design and technology because of lack of resources.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The pupils receive good quality support from teachers and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	No specific provision is made or needed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very effective provision is made for the pupils' personal development. The school's provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very happy, caring and supportive learning environment. Excellent promotion of good behaviour contributes strongly to the calm and respectful atmosphere of the school.

The school's caring Catholic Christian ethos pervades all aspects of its work, creating an environment that promotes the pupils' learning well. This positive ethos is promoted well by strong provision for spiritual, moral and social development. The only weakness in the curriculum is design and technology which does not meet

statutory requirements. The very good range of extra-curricular activities includes sporting, musical and other cultural opportunities. The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management for the school and is ably supported by other staff in posts of responsibility. Much has been accomplished since her appointment.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are interested in the work of the school, but their role in planning, monitoring and evaluating its work is weak.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory; the headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but this is not reflected in the priorities of the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory, but because the school does not have clearly stated priorities, funds are not always targeted where they are needed most.

The headteacher has established a clear educational direction for the school. Teamwork amongst the staff is strong. Good progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses in the school since the appointment of the headteacher. Long term strategic planning for school improvement is a significant weakness, and as a result, the governors and staff do not have a shared vision of what needs to be improved or how success will be measured. Governors are diligent in monitoring the school's finances, but they are not sufficiently involved in strategic planning or in rigorously monitoring and evaluating its work. The school ensures that it applies the principles of best value in its purchase of goods and services. All of the non-teaching staff make a very valuable contribution to the day-to-day running of the school and the maintenance of its caring atmosphere. Accommodation is adequate, although the library provides an unsatisfactory environment for the promotion of literacy and learning. The good number of teachers enables class sizes to be kept relatively small. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory, with weaknesses in design and technology, the library, the reception class and art.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like school and make good progress • Behaviour is good • The quality of teaching is good. • Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. • The school listens well to parents' concerns. • Teachers have high expectations of pupils. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effective use of homework to support work done in school. • The range of extra-curricular activities. • The way the school works with parents.

The inspection findings strongly support parents positive views about the school. Inspection evidence indicates that homework is generally used effectively to promote learning, but the school accepts that there has been some inconsistency in implementing its homework policy, particularly by temporary teachers. The school's provision of extra-curricular activities is very good for a school of this size, giving a good range of sporting, musical and other cultural opportunities. The school has strong and improving links with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When judging standards attained by pupils at Holy Redeemer Primary School, two very significant factors need to be born in mind. Firstly, the Local Education Authority has provided the school with clear evidence from baseline assessment, that the attainment of children on entry to the reception class has fallen significantly each year since 1997. In 1997, 90 per cent of pupils entering the school gained overall scores in the upper two quartiles for the county, whereas in 1998 only 70 per cent of children achieved these levels and this fell to 40 per cent in 1999. The second important factor relates to the standards attained at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has substantial and convincing evidence that a significant and increasing number of high attaining pupils leave in Year 5 to take up places in a local middle school, because their parents want them to eventually move to a nearby high school, rather than to transfer to the partner Catholic secondary school in Worcester at the age of eleven. The significance of this trend is, that on average, the pupils that leave have performed much better in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessments than the pupils that remain in Holy Redeemer School. The leavers, for example, gained an average National Curriculum level of 2.2 in English and 2.4 in mathematics, whilst the remaining pupils gained an average level of 1.7 in both English and mathematics. The school's monitoring procedures also confirm that these pupils go on to reach much higher National Curriculum levels at the end of Key Stage 2, as for example an average level of 4.4 in English compared with 3.8 for those remaining in the school. A very similar picture is seen in the mathematics and science results for these pupils.

2. Children enter the reception class at the age of four, and although there is a wide range of attainment, the majority have levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly in line with the expectations for children of this age. Their progress is good, in response to the good teaching they receive, and by the time they enter Key Stage 1, they reach the national Early Learning Goals in all aspects of their learning, and are ready to start National Curriculum work. They have particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development.

3. In judging the standards attained by pupils in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, the school's average National Curriculum points scores are used. These provide a more accurate picture of the pupils' attainments than simply calculating the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 and Level

4. In a school of this size, however, caution is needed when looking at statistical evidence, because there are often relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group, and the results of one pupil represent a relatively high proportion of the cohort.

4. The grades and descriptions used in this report to compare Holy Redeemer with similar schools, differ from those suggested by OFSTED. This is because significantly more pupils are eligible for free school meals than that reported annually to the Department for Education and Employment. The grades that compare attainments in this school with similar schools have been upgraded by the Registered Inspector, to give a more accurate picture of the standards achieved.

5. The 1999 National Curriculum assessments for seven year olds show standards in reading to be above both the national and similar schools' averages. In writing, the results reach both the national and similar schools average. The mathematics results are below the national average, and well below the average for similar schools. Over the last four years standards in reading have risen faster than the national trend whilst in writing and mathematics standards have fallen at the same time that national standards rose. The results of the 2000 assessments show that standards reached both national and similar schools averages in reading, but were below both averages in writing and well below in mathematics. These results represent a decline relative to national standards. The school also accepts that some underachievement has taken place.

6. The work seen during the inspection confirms that at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations for their age in English, mathematics and science. There is substantial evidence that the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies are improving the rate of pupils' learning, although the level of challenge provided for pupils in Year 2 sometimes falls below the pupils' capability. The attainments of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are also in line with age expectations in art, geography, history, information and communications technology, music and physical education.

7. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds indicate that standards are above both the national and similar schools averages in science, and in line with the averages in English and mathematics. When the performance of these pupils is compared with how well they did in the 1995 Key Stage 1 tests, in other words when the 'value added' from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is looked at, their attainment is average in English and mathematics but above average in science. Since the last inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science have fallen steadily at a time when national standards have risen. The results of the 2000 tests cannot be reported in detail because only 10 pupils were involved, and this makes the use of statistical evidence unreliable. In overall terms, however, these pupils, including a significant proportion with special educational needs, achieved appropriate standards in English, but there is evidence that some pupils underachieved in mathematics and science. The headteacher recognises that there has been some underachievement, and gives the example of a pupil who attained Level 5 in English yet only achieved Level 3 in science.

8. The increasing number of high attainers that leave the school in Year 5 provides part of the reason why standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been falling, but does not fully explain the circumstances in the school. Another factor is that the school has been through a period of great instability. All but one member of the full time teaching staff has been appointed in the last four terms. In addition, little action was taken by the previous management of the school to address the key issues that were identified by the last inspection team. Only since the appointment of the new headteacher have significant improvements been made to curriculum planning, assessment procedures, target setting and the monitoring and evaluation of academic standards. This action has not had time to have a positive impact on the test results, but there is substantial evidence in the pupils' work that their rate of learning is now good. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils are currently benefiting from mainly good teaching, good curriculum planning and effective assessment, and are now achieving standards that are appropriate in relation to their attainment on entry to the school, and in relation to their previous performance.

9. The school's targets for improvement in English and mathematics over the next two years are suitably challenging.

10. Work seen during the inspection indicates that at the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age in English, mathematics, science, information and communications technology, art, geography, history, music and physical education.

11. No definitive judgement can be made regarding standards in design and technology at the end of each key stage because very little evidence was seen during the inspection. The school does, however, accept that it does not fully implement the National Curriculum for the subject, and it follows that standards are very unlikely to be appropriate.

12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall, because of the good quality support they receive from teachers, classroom assistants and parent volunteers. The very few pupils who come from homes where English is an additional language make progress in learning equal to their peers. In almost all classes, high attaining pupils are given sufficiently challenging work to enable them to attain the standards of which they are capable. Boys and girls attain broadly similar standards.

13. Standards in literacy and numeracy reach expected levels and the rate of pupils' learning is improving due to the developments in teaching and curriculum planning that have stemmed from the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Literacy standards are promoted well across the subjects of the curriculum. Writing is used effectively in many subjects. In history, for example, high attaining pupils in Year 2 write letters from Florence Nightingale describing the conditions in a hospital in the Crimea. Reading skills develop well within literacy lessons, but the paucity of challenging fiction in the library hinders the development of reading for older and high attaining pupils. Pupils develop their research skills satisfactorily, for example, through their study of rivers in geography. Numeracy skills are promoted well in science and geography, through the use of tables and graphs. The mental mathematics sessions within numeracy lessons are promoting the quick recall of number facts, and are giving the pupils increased confidence in manipulating numbers in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' positive attitudes recorded at the time of the last inspection are still very much in evidence today, and are an outstanding strength of the school. The very positive attitudes and values of the school's Catholic

Christian foundation pervade all aspects of the school's work, and result in high standards of care, respect and behaviour in the pupils. Over 96 per cent of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children liked coming to school, and that the school is helping their child become mature and responsible. Inspection findings confirm this. Pupils are enthusiastic about school, and are quickly and positively involved in a wide range of activities. All pupils, including those in the reception class, confidently share the playground area happily. At the start of sessions, including registration, there is a settled, purposeful atmosphere which demonstrates the excellent relationships between pupils and teachers.

15. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting, and a very high proportion of those returning the questionnaire, believe that the pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils behave very well in and around the school, and work constructively and co-operatively in groups, and productively on their own. The weekly "merit" assemblies foster the pupils' development of trustworthiness, and respect of others and of property. No pupil has been excluded from the school in the last two years. The good standard of care and high level of expectation shown by adults fosters a courteous and purposeful response from the pupils, and the maintenance of a very calm, well ordered community.

16. The personal development of the pupils is very good. They have excellent relationships with fellow pupils and adults. Pupils show very responsible attitudes when they are placed in positions of responsibility. A recent traffic survey concluded with a presentation of the issues by the pupils at County Hall. The oldest pupils help run the daily routines, such as lining up in the playground, taking visitors round, and preparation for assembly and music lessons. Pupils notice what needs to be done, for example tidying the hall after lunch, and without being asked, volunteer to help. In their learning, however, the pupils are rather passive, waiting for direction instead of taking responsibility for their own development, for example, in using the library and other resources to pursue their own lines of inquiry.

17. The most recent attendance figures for the school show a further improvement from the time of the last inspection, to around 97 per cent, which is well above the national average. The pupils are punctual and are eager to start learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good overall, and the proportion of good and very good teaching has improved well since the last inspection. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons, good or better in 65 per cent of lessons and very good in 20 per cent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in five per cent of lessons. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, and the quality of some lessons is good. At Key Stage 2 and in the reception class teaching is of good quality overall. All of the very good teaching seen during the inspection occurred in Key Stage 2.

19. With such a large proportion of good or better teaching, it is surprising that levels of attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are not higher. This is because there has been insufficient time for this quality of teaching to have a noticeable impact on standards, despite the currently good learning that takes place in these good lessons. Two of the class teachers have been in post for less than four terms, and two teachers have been in post for less than a term. Another factor that hampers the achievement of higher standards at the end of Key Stage 2 is the loss of significant numbers of high attaining pupils to middle school in Year 5.

20. The good teaching in the reception class is having a positive impact on the children's learning. Particular strengths in the teaching include well planned purposeful and imaginative practical activities and a calm and effective approach. The teacher knows exactly what she expects the children to learn or experience within each of the activities provided, and the interventions of the teacher and learning support assistant are very effective in extending the children's learning. This was illustrated well in an activity to develop the children's knowledge of shapes: as children took turns sorting these, there was clear reinforcement from the teacher concerning the attributes of each shape. Very good relationships are established between the teacher and the class. This creates a happy and secure atmosphere where children enjoy being at school and want to learn. It is because of these strengths that children settle quickly and progress in their learning at a good rate.

21. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting and returning the questionnaire, expressed considerable satisfaction with the quality of teaching. A few were critical of the consistency with which homework is set and the level of challenge it presents. A few were also sceptical about whether high attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged by the school to attain the standards of which they are capable. The inspection findings support the parents' positive views about teaching, but find that during the inspection homework was mainly used effectively to

extend the pupils' learning. The school accepts that its homework policy has not always been consistently implemented in the past, particularly by temporary teachers, and that the level of challenge presented by some homework tasks has been too low. In general terms, the level of challenge provided for all pupils in the school, including high attainers is good. In almost all instances, teachers have suitably high expectations of the pupils, although in a small minority of lessons in Year 2, unacceptably low demands are being made of the pupils. For example, mediocre work is praised, sloppy handwriting is not commented upon and the pupils are provided with far too long to complete relatively straightforward tasks.

22. Throughout the school the management of the pupils is good. Teachers have clearly established routines at the start of each session, are generally explicit about how they expect the pupils to behave, and as a result, settle their classes quickly so that learning can start almost immediately. Almost all teachers are highly skilled at 'catching the children being good', and this positive reinforcement of good behaviour sets the standard for all to emulate and contributes strongly to the positive, friendly, respectful and calm atmosphere that is present in the classes.

23. Teachers use effective methods and strategies in lessons. Numeracy lessons, for example, start with a lively mental mathematics session, which engages all pupils in answering questions, memorising facts and practising their numeracy skills. This regular and interesting work improves their confidence in handling number well. Other effective methods used across the curriculum are: clear explanations, timely demonstrations in science and physical education, for example, and good use of the board to organise ideas. Teachers use whole class teaching very effectively in most subjects.

24. The quality of the teachers' planning is consistently good. Teachers are clear about what they expect the pupils to learn, and invariably share this information with the pupils. This stimulates the pupils' interest, enables them to understand what they are trying to achieve and motivates them to learn what is intended. In the best lessons, teachers refer back to their intended learning objectives both during and at the end of the lesson, enabling the pupils to understand how much they have learned, and what they still need to learn.

25. Assessment information is used well to plan what the pupils will learn next. Teachers frequently identify in their planning how they will meet the needs of low, middle and high attaining pupils, and this enables them to consistently challenge all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. This is not always the case in Year 2, where the level of challenge is set too low in some lessons. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' recorded work is satisfactory. Work is regularly marked, but the quality and frequency of constructive comments to aid pupils' progress is unduly variable.

26. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach, and this, linked with their enthusiasm, results in interesting and lively lessons, in which pupils are eager to learn, and make good gains in knowledge, understanding and skill.

27. The quality of teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, science, art, geography, history, music and physical education. Teaching is satisfactory overall in information and communications technology. Insufficient work was seen in design and technology, therefore no overall judgement regarding teaching can be made.

28. The teaching of literacy is effective. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy successfully, and the well-planned lessons are starting to improve the rate at which the pupils learn. Literacy is taught well across the subjects of the curriculum. The teaching of numeracy is also effective. The school has implemented all parts of the National Numeracy Strategy, and the quick-fire questions and other mental mathematics tasks are particularly effective in helping to give the pupils more confidence with numbers. Whilst subjects, such as science, contribute to the development of mathematical skills, some opportunities are missed in other subjects, for example, the use of a time line in a history lesson to help the pupils understand chronology.

29. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language receive good quality support from their teachers and classroom assistants, and volunteers are deployed effectively to help the pupils in their learning.

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

30. The curriculum provided by the school does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for design and technology, and is therefore unsatisfactory. The lack of provision adversely affects the standards attained by pupils in the subject. In all other areas, however, there is good breadth and balance, and good provision for children who are in the foundation stage. The main reason for the school being unable to meet the national requirements to teach design and technology, is the lack of resources. The subject manager has undertaken good training and a plan for the delivery of the subject has been set out. It is her planned intention to resource each module of this work as it is due to be taught, but resources are as yet unavailable.

31. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been improved well by better planning in music, information technology, physical education and aspects in mathematics. These were identified as areas of weakness where there was lack of progression in the learning opportunities provided. The new head teacher has made significant improvements in all levels of planning, and there are now clearly identified learning outcomes for all lessons in short term planning.

32. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting expressed concerns about the effectiveness of mixed year classes. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is successful in its efforts to ensure that pupils in mixed year classes are provided with an appropriately challenging curriculum which does not replicate or miss out any elements.

33. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced and rightly, there is a good emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. The inclusion of additional literacy support lessons in Years 3 and 4 reflects positively on the school's aims to raise standards.

34. Equality of access for all pupils is fundamental to the ethos of the school. The school is vigilant about organising opportunities fairly. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. The provision made for these pupils is satisfactory overall, enabling them to make gains in learning that are appropriate in relation to their difficulties. Learning support assistants provide good quality support. Through close liaison with class teachers, careful consideration of the lesson content and skillful teaching of the pupils, much learning occurs. Individual education plans are used effectively to guide the planning of work for these pupils, and by regularly reviewing the pupils' progress towards their learning targets, the school successfully monitors their rate of learning. No specific provision is made, or needed, for the few pupils with English as an additional language.

35. The programme of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is very good. It contains a wide range of sporting, musical and other cultural activities, and includes such activities as Italian and French, and drama for pupils in Year 2. A residential visit is also arranged for older pupils. Altogether this is very good provision, which makes a strong contribution to the breadth of the curriculum and the standards achieved. A small number of parents felt that more extra-curricular activities should be provided, but the inspection team judges provision to be very good.

36. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. It is carefully planned and delivered through the caring Christian ethos of the school. Overall, the curriculum is designed to develop a broad range of skills.

37. The school enjoys good links, and a mutually supportive partnership with the local community. A particularly strong element of this is the church, with which there is regular involvement. The local environment is used well as a context for work in history, geography and science. The local police and community nurse make good contributions through offering their expertise and experience to the pupils' drugs, health and sex education.

38. The school has established constructive links with local play groups, enabling their children to transfer to the school with confidence. A good partnership has been established with other local Catholic schools, who meet on a termly basis to discuss common issues and interests. This partnership gives pupils good access to annual sporting events such as swimming, football, netball and athletics competitions.

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

39. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development continues to be very good. Particularly effective contributions come from the strong Christian Catholic values which pervade the work of the

school, and are encapsulated well in the school's mission statement. All adults provide very positive role models through the way they relate to each other and to all pupils.

40. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Particularly strong contributions come from assemblies and religious education lessons. All assemblies contain a relevant act of collective worship and reinforce the school's belief that we are all part of God's family and as such are special and unique. A single candle is used effectively to symbolise Christ, and a circle of candles to represent the classes in the school. A real sense of warmth and caring is promoted from those leading the assembly, and the pupils are involved well. Teachers provide the pupils with good opportunities to reflect on their beliefs and on how they feel about themselves and one another. In a religious education lesson, for example, pupils were asked to reflect and recall on the qualities of friendship.

41. Provision for moral development is very good. The very good ethos of the school promotes strong moral awareness, and there are clear codes of behaviour in the school. In whole school and class assemblies, pupils discuss rules for behaviour and broader moral issues. In one assembly, for example, the theme was 'You must like yourself before you learn to love other people'. The school's behavioural policy is strong, consistently applied and very effective. It is well founded on a policy of positive affirmation, reflecting the theory of 'Catch them whilst they are good'. Rewards are given for both academic achievement and consistently good behaviour, as was noted in the school's achievement assembly.

42. Provision for the pupils' social development is also very good. Pupils are encouraged to involve themselves in a wide range of community activities. These include raising sums of money for charities, and such activities as sending Christmas boxes to children in Bosnia. The school provides well for social development through its very good extra-curricular programme, its visits both day and residential, and through good links with the church and community. Events such as pupils' participation in the Worcestershire Children's Parliament, for example, make a strong contribution to social development. Pupils researched into a traffic problem outside the school, put forward a balanced account with possible solutions and presented findings in the debating chamber at County Hall. Very good opportunities for all Year 6 pupils to act as prefects in their final year in school, provide a wide range of responsibilities in helping to care for the school and its pupils.

43. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, successful efforts have been made to increase the pupils' knowledge about other cultures, and the school has taken positive steps to support this. For example, a Japanese student stayed in the school for 3 months, during which time pupils gained knowledge and understanding of Japanese festivals and the Buddhist religion. Contributions to cultural development are also made through a wide range of out of school visits to places of local interest and through participation of a number of musical productions. At present the school is establishing links with Kenya, representing another positive step to raise the pupils' awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Good quality care is provided for all pupils who feel happy and secure, and enjoy coming in to this well located small school in the heart of the town of Pershore. Teachers know individual pupils very well, and by their good example and high expectations, respond to them in a positive and supportive way. The school's behaviour policy is implemented with a high degree of consistency, and the pervading Catholic Christian ethos of the school results in the promotion of very good behaviour and the elimination of oppressive behaviour.

45. There are well-established and effective procedures for play and lunchtime supervision: a playground accident requiring a hospital check was particularly well handled. Sufficient, qualified first-aiders are on hand to cope with such situations. Arrangement to ensure the pupils' health and safety are satisfactory. Regular maintenance and risk assessment audits are carried out jointly by the headteacher and responsible member of the Governing Body. However, during the inspection, two potentially hazardous features of the playground were brought to the attention of the school. The nominated staff member for child protection is the headteacher, who has attended relevant training courses. Procedures are satisfactory and reflect local guidelines, but these are not formed into a written policy that is accessible to ensure all staff, especially new and temporary teachers, are consistent in their approach.

46. Procedures for acknowledging and celebrating individual achievement are very effective at, for example, the weekly "merit assembly". At this time, ten or so pupils are presented with certificates in recognition of good work or an action inside or outside school, and this very effectively encourages pupils to achieve more.

47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory overall. Registers are completed efficiently and politely before their prompt return to the school office.

48. A key issue from the last inspection related to the need to increase the influence of assessment on the planning of future learning. Good progress has been made, and the procedures for assessing and monitoring academic progress are now good. The school keeps detailed records of pupils' attainments, including baseline assessment on entry, results of National Curriculum tests, voluntary tests for non-statutory years and a series of tests covering basic skills. Individual pupil 'evidence books' are effectively completed every half-term. They are well monitored by the headteacher and constructive feedback is discussed with teachers and consideration given to future lesson planning. Pupils complete a self-assessment sheet every half-term and agree future learning targets. These are very effectively discussed with parents at termly parents evenings, and form the basis of future learning.

49. The headteacher, in conjunction with core subject co-ordinators, has very effectively undertaken an analysis of the results of pupil tests, highlighting particular areas of strength and weakness. Teachers are able to use the analysis as an aid to their planning, as they strive to raise standards. The school is fully aware that the next stage of development is to monitor the outcomes of their planning, to determine whether they have overcome weaknesses and developed strengths. As a result of these actions, the use of assessment data in planning the curriculum is generally good. The quality of planning for pupils with special educational needs is good, with appropriate detail and clarity of focus.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school has a good range of productive and consistent links with parents and carers that help pupils to learn. These extend from involvement in hearing individual pupils read, to helping take residential trips, and with extra-curricular activities, for example, trampoline club, which is organised by a suitably qualified parent .

51. Links with parents are good and contribute strongly to the school's ethos and to the pupils' learning. The pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting indicate that parents are pleased with most aspects of the school, in particular, the attitudes and values promoted; the pupils' progress; expectations of the pupils; behaviour; teaching; leadership and management; the promotion of maturity and responsibility, and the amount and quality of information provided. Parents at the meeting were particularly pleased with the way that links with parents have improved since the appointment of the new headteacher. A minority of parents returning the questionnaire expressed concerns about homework, the way the school works closely with parents and the provision of extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings do not support these minority views.

52. Inspectors find that the quality of information the school provides for parents is good. Parents find the termly consultation evenings with teachers extremely valuable, and are particularly pleased with the discussions about individual targets for learning. Reports are informative and thorough. The prospectus welcomes parental interest and involvement, and this is fostered by an "open door " policy for any concerns. Curriculum information is provided termly, and parents have found evenings to discuss literacy and numeracy valuable. The school has already been notified of some minor non-compliance aspects of the Governing Body annual report and prospectus. The new home school agreement and homework policy are now established, following consultation with parents. The active Parents Association raises valuable sums of money to support the school for specific targets such as, purchasing early years play equipment and computers. In these ways, links with parents are a strength of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The quality of management and leadership in the school as a whole is satisfactory, a similar position to that reported by the last inspection. There is, however, a very mixed picture which indicates significant strengths in the work of the headteacher and other staff, whilst at the same time marked weaknesses in strategic planning for school improvement, and the role and effectiveness of the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors, who has been in post for a year, and the headteacher who has been in post for eighteen months, both fully accept these weaknesses in the school's leadership and management, and have already started to discuss how to address the issues.

54. The headteacher provides very effective all round leadership for the school, and is ably supported by other staff in posts of responsibility, such as the subject co-ordinators and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The headteacher has successfully established a clear educational direction for the school that is

firmly focused on raising standards, improving the quality of education provided, and maintaining its very positive Catholic Christian ethos. The headteacher has also been successful in gaining shared commitment for her vision from all staff, and this creates a sense of cohesion and purpose in their work. A very strong sense of teamwork exists amongst the staff, all of whom work hard to bring about improvements in the school's work. The school achieves a large degree of success in meeting its declared aims, although those related to the attainment of the highest academic standards are not fully achieved. Co-ordinators, almost all of whom have been appointed in the last 2 years, manage their areas of responsibility well. Strengths and weaknesses in standards and provision are identified accurately, and much good work has been carried out, for example, to implement the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, to develop detailed and useful schemes of work, to develop assessment procedures and to support the planning and work of other teachers. Many co-ordinators have identified the need to enhance the range, quantity and quality of resources in their subjects, but have been frustrated in their efforts by the lack of available funds, or a timescale within which funding will be made available. The role of co-ordinators, in monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of provision, is developed satisfactorily in literacy and numeracy, but is largely under-developed in other subjects.

55. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection, but almost all of the action taken to address the previously identified weaknesses has been taken in the last year and a half, since the appointment of the new headteacher. The previous headteacher and the Governing Body adopted an action plan to tackle the issues, but little effective action was taken. Weaknesses in the governors' monitoring and evaluation procedures resulted in them failing to check that appropriate improvements were made. Of the 'key issues' identified by the last inspection, the curriculum is now well planned and gives teachers good guidance in planning work for the pupils; assessment procedures have improved well and the use of assessment is now satisfactory; the subjects of the curriculum are now co-ordinated well and the headteacher monitors standards effectively; the school development plan now extends beyond the current year, has a wider range of contributors and has some financial information included, all of which were features specified by the previous report.

56. The Governing Body is interested in the work of the school and is generally supportive of it, but the governors are not fully effective in fulfilling their responsibilities. The last inspection reported that the Governing Body had recently reviewed its role and structure, including the formation of working parties and a policies and finance committee, although it stated that it was too soon to judge the effect on standards and the quality of education provided. The current inspection finds that whilst the monitoring of financial matters continues to be diligent, the structure of the governing body is cumbersome, and this not only slows the decision making process but also hinders the governors' understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and priorities of the school. Governors reported to inspectors that small working groups meet to discuss issues, but because the groups do not have clear and published terms of reference and responsibilities, no action can be taken until the issue has been discussed at length at the meeting of the full board. At times, these groups do not take formal minutes, so therefore their work is not able to be scrutinised by others. As a result of this structure, the governing body takes little responsibility for shaping the direction of the school, for strategic planning for school improvement, for ensuring that timely action is taken to address areas of weakness and for monitoring and evaluating the school's work effectively. These weaknesses are clearly demonstrated in the governors' failure to halt the steady slide in standards at the end of Key Stage 2, the slow response to the previous OFSTED action plan and the severe lack of resources that prevents the National Curriculum for design and technology from being implemented.

57. Strategic planning for the school's improvement is poor, with the current school development plan being described by some governors as little more than a 'wish list' or 'shopping list'. Some improvements have been made since the new headteacher took up post. The staff are now involved in defining what action should be taken within each subject of the curriculum, but the scope of the plan remains very narrow. The plan is not closely aligned to the school's mission statement or aims, is not based on an audit of progress towards the plans of the previous year and does not stem from an audit of strengths and weaknesses in standards and the quality of education provided. It simply lists a series of actions to be taken. The plan does not clearly identify specific targets for improvement, does not specify clear criteria against which success can be rigorously measured, does not state how progress will be monitored, does not identify the timescale for the achievement of targets and has only notional costings. As such, it is of little use as a tool for school improvement.

58. Having stated these weaknesses in planning, the school has made significant progress since the appointment of the new headteacher. Priorities for improvement and development, such as the Numeracy Strategy, assessment and curriculum planning, have been identified accurately, and appropriate action has been taken to enable successful change to occur.

59. Provision for children in the foundation stage is managed well, and results in good opportunities for learning. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well.

60. The quality of financial planning is unsatisfactory because there is little or no link to the school development plan which in itself is a weak document. Weaknesses in planning have resulted in unsatisfactory resources for learning in the reception class, English and art. Resources for the library and design and technology are poor and inhibit learning. Resources are so poor in design and technology that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum cannot be implemented, and thus, pupils do not reach the standards expected of them at the end of each key stage. The library provides a poor, uninviting environment for learning, has a very limited stock of challenging fiction, and does little to contribute to literacy levels in the school, at the same time that standards in reading have fallen. The school partially overcomes the deficits in its stock of non-fiction books by borrowing from the County Loans Service. In art, there is a narrow range of materials for the pupils to use and not all pupils have a sketch book, a resource that would encourage drawing and experimentation, and provide teachers with a way of monitoring the pupils' progress. Geography resources are adequate but dated, and in physical education there are insufficient large balls and gymnastics mats. In other subjects the level of resources is satisfactory and promotes learning soundly. The number of computers in the school has been increased significantly during recent months and these are being used effectively to promote learning. Overall, however, resources for learning in the school as a whole are unsatisfactory.

61. The funds received by the school, including specific grants are used to promote good teaching and learning. The headteacher and governors monitor the school's spending closely against the planned budget, and keep a reasonable surplus. Through the diligent and effective work of the school secretary, the school purchases its goods at highly competitive rates, and applies the principles of 'best value'. These principles are also applied well by the governors when making major decisions about improving the fabric of the building, for example the refurbishment of the toilets used by children in the reception class. All of the non-teaching staff, make a very valuable contribution to the day-to-day running of the school and the maintenance of its warm, caring, friendly atmosphere. The school makes good use of new technology in its administration. In relation to the standards attained, the quality of education provided and the income per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

62. The school has sufficient teachers to keep class sizes relatively small and to maintain single age classes in most instances. Due to promotion, maternity breaks and family illness, almost all of the existing staff, including the headteacher, have been appointed during the last two years. The school's policy has been to appoint newly qualified teachers to most posts, and this has proved highly successful in establishing good quality teaching and good quality co-ordination for the subjects of the curriculum, by subject specialists. Basic staffing is enhanced very well by the provision of a part-time music specialist, and this promotes good standards in singing. There is an adequate supply of learning support staff who work in close co-operation with the teaching staff and provide good quality support for the pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school's induction of new staff is good. They settle quickly into the life of the school, are supported well and provided with considerable responsibility to foster their professional development, for example, by co-ordinating one or more subjects. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory overall, achieving a sound balance between individual development needs and the needs of the school as a whole. Quite reasonably, staff appraisal has been suspended at present whilst the procedures for performance management are introduced. The school is in a good position to introduce procedures for performance management of teaching staff.

63. The school has adequate accommodation to meet the needs of the pupils and the curriculum. Little indoor teaching accommodation exists beyond the six classrooms, the hall and the library, which is cluttered and uninviting. Outdoor accommodation is again adequate. The playground, which is used at break times as well as for physical education, has two potential hazards to the pupils' health and safety. The paved 'patio' area encroaches onto the usable playing area and has a sharp edge, and the large kerb stones around a bed of gravel presents a hazard when pupils are being taught football. Standards in physical education suffer on afternoons when Key Stage 2 lessons coincide with Key Stage 1 playtime. The younger pupils, quite properly, 'let off steam' in the same area that the older pupils are learning. The arrangement is satisfactory for neither group of pupils. The condition of the building has improved significantly since the last inspection and there are plans for further enhancement, for example by replacing the windows. The caretaker and cleaner work hard to keep the building in good condition. Further minor hazards to the health and safety of the staff were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection, but the school has no power to address these because they are on property belonging to the adjacent church.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In their work to further raise standards and improve the quality of education at the school, the governors and staff should now consider the following key issues, which relate to the areas for improvement identified in the report paragraphs shown:

- Halt the decline in National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science by: (paragraphs: 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 18, 21, 33, 54, 56, 60, 63, 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 87)
 - ensuring that the good quality of teaching and learning at this key stage continues in order to have a positive impact on standards;
 - consider grouping pupils by their attainment level for teaching;
 - rigorously and regularly evaluating the standards attained by pupils in order to ensure that individuals are attaining to the limits of their capability;
 - rigorously and regularly evaluating the quality of teaching in each subject to ensure that teacher expectations and the level of work set are sufficiently high to enable the pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable;
 - extending the existing strategies for additional literacy support more widely throughout the school;
 - developing the environment and resources of the library, particularly the range of challenging fiction books for older and high attaining pupils.
- Significantly improve strategic planning for school improvement by: (paragraphs: 53, 55, 57, 58, 60)
 - involving all staff and governors in auditing existing strengths and weaknesses in all aspects of the school's work, as a starting point for identifying the school's improvement priorities;
 - involving all staff and governors in clearly identifying and defining targets for school improvement over at least a three year period;
 - developing rigorous criteria against which the school's performance in meeting its targets can be measured ;
 - developing detailed action plans for each priority, including exactly what is to be done, the timescale for the action, responsibilities, resource requirements, strategies for monitoring and evaluating the achievement of the priority;
 - identifying action to be taken to maintain existing strengths of the school;
 - involving senior managers and members of the Governing Body in regular and rigorous reviews of the improvement plan to evaluate progress.
- Develop the role and structure of the Governing Body so that it supports the work of the school more effectively in strategic improvement planning and in monitoring and evaluating its work by: (paragraphs: 53, 55, 56, 60)
 - providing the governors with appropriate training and development so that they have the knowledge, understanding and skills to play a more central role in the management and leadership of the school;
 - providing governors with regular opportunities to participate effectively in the management and leadership of the school, including planning its development and rigorously monitoring and evaluating its work;
- Fully implement the National Curriculum for design and technology by: (paragraphs: 10, 30, 60, 97, 98)

- providing sufficient resources to enable all aspects of the curriculum to be taught;
- ensuring that teachers have the skills and understanding to teach the subject with at least satisfactory quality;

Other points to consider for inclusion in the governors' action plan:

- Increase the extent to which pupils develop independence and initiative in their learning. (paragraph: 16)
- Provide all staff with a written policy and guidelines for child protection. (paragraph: 45)
- Resolve the potential health and safety issues in the playground. (paragraphs: 63, 116)
- Improve the quality and frequency of written comments on the pupils' work to help them make progress. (paragraph: 25)
- Improve resources in the reception class, and for teaching art, geography and physical education. (paragraphs: 60, 72, 95, 96, 102, 116)
- Provide opportunities for curriculum co-ordinators to monitor standards and the quality of teaching in their subjects. (paragraph: 54)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	20	45	30	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	140
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	27

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3
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
	1999	12	7	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	7	7	6
	Total	16	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84	79	79
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	16	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84	84	89
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	12	6	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	11
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72	67	83
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	11
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72	67	83
	National	68	69	75

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	100
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	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6
Average class size	22.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	236947
Total expenditure	233868
Expenditure per pupil	1708
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 2494 *
Balance carried forward to next year	585 *

* Please note that these figures do not include the 'Governors' Fund' of approximately £8000

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Number of questionnaires sent out:

137

Number of questionnaires returned:

81

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes the school	74	23	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school	47	47	4	0	2
Behaviour in school is good	63	33	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	33	52	11	0	4
The teaching is good	44	50	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	47	46	5	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems	72	25	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	58	38	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents	42	42	12	0	4
The school is well led and managed	49	43	0	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	54	42	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	51	31	11	1	5

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

PROVISION FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE

65. Children in the foundation stage in the reception class are provided with a well balanced practical curriculum, which is appropriate in meeting the needs of young children. The good teaching in the reception class is having a positive impact on the children's learning. Particular strengths in the teaching include well planned purposeful and imaginative practical activities and a calm and effective approach. Very good relationships are established between the teacher and the class. This creates a happy and secure atmosphere where children enjoy being at school and want to learn. It is because of these strengths that children settle quickly, resulting in a good rate of learning.

66. After a good range of induction procedures, children enter the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Although there is a wide range of attainment, a majority of the children enter the reception class with average attainment. There is, however, substantial, clear evidence provided by the Local Education Authority that the attainment levels of children entering the reception class have fallen significantly each year since 1997. In that year, the overall performance of around 90 per cent of children and was in the upper two quartiles of the county, but this fell to 70 per cent in 1998 and to 40 per cent in 1999. The children make generally good progress in learning in response to the good teaching they receive, and by the time they enter Key Stage 1, they are reaching all the required early learning goals and have particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development. Provision for children under the age of five years, and the standards they achieved was not reported in detail by the last inspection, therefore it is not possible to judge improvement.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Children make good gains in this area of learning because of the skilful teaching they receive. Children are encouraged by all adults to play together sociably and develop their own personal independence and confidence. For example, children sign their own name on the white board first thing in the morning and are learning to undress independently for physical play. All adults provide very good role models for the children, always treating each other with quiet respect and courtesy. This results in a good level of trust in a peaceful learning environment, helping children to develop good social skills. Planning and routines in the foundation stage promote good personal, social and emotional development and the teaching in this area of learning is good.

Communication, language and literacy

68. As a result of the good teaching, children achieve well, and by the time they reach the end of the foundation stage most attain in line with the recommended outcomes for children of this age in communication, language and literacy. Children enjoy listening to stories. In particular they enjoy talking about the pictures in their 'big books' in their classroom. They understand that text conveys meaning. All adults use talk effectively to extend the children's play and are good listeners. When the children enter school in the morning, the teacher talks with the children and children use this time to write, to look at books and understand that writing is part of communication. For example, children are encouraged to write appointments in the diary in their hairdresser's role play. Children enjoy using sounds and learning the meaning of new words. One group of children, for example, during water play fished for letter sounds to match on their key words for their reading books. Elements of the National Literacy Framework are used effectively by the teacher. The use of 'big books', for example, enables the children to develop their understanding of stories and books.

69. From an early age, teachers encourage children to think of themselves as readers and writers. Play and practical activities are focused well on the development of basic skills such as phonics and word recognition. By the end of the foundation stage, children have made a sound start at communicating through writing. They are taught to form their letters correctly and how to write words.

Mathematical development

70. This area of learning is taught well and attainment in mathematics is likely to meet the early learning goals at the end of the foundation stage. Evidence from the current five year olds shows that they can deal with 'one more than', 'one less than', can combine two groups of numbers together and can solve simple practical problems. They identify shapes such as squares, triangles, rectangles and circles, knowing how many corners and sides that they each have. The good teaching provides practical tasks, and there is good reinforcement in a variety of ways to ensure children have a good grasp of what they are learning. For example, in whole class

activity, children were asked to put a variety of shapes of various sizes into the correct hoop. As children took turns sorting these, there was clear reinforcement from the teacher concerning the attributes of each shape. Additionally children were asked to check each other's decisions. Children develop their counting skills through singing number rhymes. All adults help children to see the mathematics all around them and encourage them to act as mathematicians. In an activity, when children were making Elmer's birthday cake, for example, the whole group carefully counted the number of spoonfuls to make the mixture.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Through good teaching, children achieve soundly and are helped to develop this area of learning, and reach the early learning goal by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Scrutiny of planning and previous work indicates that children learn about the place where they live and what has happened to them since they were born. They learn about the past through events and artefacts associated with their own families. They learn about the place where they live by walks in the local environment where they identify, for example, the local church and the types of houses in which they live. Through religious education, they learn the well known stories of the Bible, such as Noah and the Three Wise Men. They learn how they are special to God through the frequent reinforcement of the school's Catholic Christian ethos during assemblies and in class. Children learn how things grow when they plant seeds and when they watch tadpoles change into young frogs.

Physical development

72. Good access to the large hall in the school and to an outdoor play area, together with the good teaching are major factors which contribute to the satisfactory development of children's learning in physical development. These facilities are used as well as they can be, but resources for these areas are limited, and the outdoor area would benefit from an enclosed fence to make it safe and secure without constant supervision. Additionally there is no climbing apparatus, nor are there any wheeled vehicles for children to use. Children's fine manipulative skills are not developed sufficiently because there is a lack of large construction equipment. With the limited equipment available, the good teaching provides a sound range of experiences. For example, children were observed gaining control of their movements and improving their awareness of space in a dance lesson. They made good progress in learning to match their movements to those suggested by the teacher, for example, by taking large, slow, heavy steps when moving like a giant. Overall, satisfactory learning takes place and the goals for this area of learning are met by the end of the foundation stage.

Creative development

73. The teaching in this area of learning is good. As a result of this, the children make good progress, and by the end of the foundation stage, the early learning goal is met. The children use a variety of materials which fire their imagination. They use fabric paint, for example, to paint pictures of 'Elmer the elephant' on pillowcases they have brought from home. The children have regular access to the role play area, which at present is a hairdressers. Here, there is a good variety of resources to interact with in their play, such as appointment and receipt books, a hairdryer and a variety of pretend lotions and sprays. There is a good level of interaction between the children in this area, and it is regularly supported by the teacher who frequently makes appointments to have her haircut or the colour changed.

ENGLISH

74. Standards in English are in line with the national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The judgements of the last inspection found standards to be above average at the end of both key stages. The apparent decline in standards is explained by conclusive evidence provided by the school that the intake, indicated by the assessments on entry to school, has shown a marked decline in standards since 1997. Additionally, standards are adversely affected at the end of Key Stage 2, by the increasing trend of a significant number of pupils leaving the school in Years 5 to take up places in the local middle school. Tracking of these pupils by the school indicates that these are mainly high attaining pupils.

75. When the school's results are compared with schools nationally and with similar schools, standards are average. Over the last four years, results in national tests indicate a trend of falling standards at a time when national standards are rising. Currently, however, because of the overall good teaching in the school, and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, pupils are now making good gains in their learning. At present, it is too early in the term for this to have had sufficient impact to raise standards significantly.

76. The pupils' ability to communicate through speaking and listening at the end of Year 6 is at a higher level than expected for pupils of their age, and is a particular strength in English. At the age of eleven, good numbers of pupils talk in extended sentences and make good use of descriptive words. At the foundation stage, pupils

are provided with a good basis for work in the National Curriculum. In all year groups, speaking and listening skills are developed well through well planned discussion activities. Most pupils are able to speak confidently to adults, their class and in whole school assemblies. Pupils gain in the clarity of their speech, and use an increasing vocabulary as they go through the school. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of technical vocabulary. Grammatical terms in English are a good example of this: in the Year 3/4 class, the terms simile and metaphor were discussed thoroughly when writing poetry. Regular opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are provided by teachers in question and answer sessions, and in plenaries at the end of literacy lessons. It is then that pupils have opportunities to explain their views and to talk about their work. A good example of further extension of speaking is the pupils' participation in the Children's Parliament where there is good provision for interviewing people and debating issues with other schools.

77. Standards in reading meet the expected levels at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The teaching of reading is a strong feature of daily literacy lessons throughout the school. Parents, and a range of other adults within the school, give good support to hearing individual and group reading. Such an example is a friend of the school who hears reading regularly, in particular Year 2 readers, because this was a weakness identified by the school in the last year's assessment tasks. Most pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. The majority of younger readers use a variety of strategies to support their reading including the use of phonics and picture cues. The school uses a structured reading scheme, but the pupils are encouraged to read a variety of other books to match their likes and interests. Careful monitoring of the home school reading system ensures that pupils make progress. A weakness exists in the progress in personal reading at the top end of the school. The challenging level of the children's classical fiction that is studied in the literacy hour in Year 6, for example, does not match the personal reading of pupils. Some Year 6 pupils report reading the same authors and books as those lower down in the school. Additionally, the school's library is not well organised, is not used well and does not provide an appropriate environment to browse, research or enjoy books. Overall it does not promote literature well. Pupils' reading records simply record which books have been read conscientiously and generally contain comments which are encouraging and give praise. Only a few contain comments that would help both pupil and parent to know how to improve their reading.

78. Standards in writing meet the expected levels at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Writing is a particular focus for development within the school because it was identified as an area of weakness following the last National Curriculum assessments. A close eye is kept on the pupils' progress through regularly assessed tasks in pupils' evidence books. The pupils' work is closely scrutinised by the teachers who set good written targets for improvement so that the pupils know what they have to do next to improve their writing. In addition to this, there are good opportunities to write regularly both during the literacy hour and in other subjects of the curriculum, such as religious education, history and geography. In a Year 2 history lesson, for example, the pupils wrote interesting letters showing empathy with Florence Nightingale, indicating their understanding of the conditions of the time in a hospital in the Crimea.

79. The satisfactory introduction of the national literacy strategy has provided a good framework for teachers to plan structured opportunities for pupils to improve their writing and knowledge of sounds, spelling and spelling rules. Good examples of this are found in almost all lessons. Well focused teaching occurred in a lesson where pupils were learning about word families which make the same sound but are spelt differently, such as the word families ir,er,or and ur. Pupils identified words in these families and made good gains in their phonic understanding and spelling.

80. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. There is good teaching at both key stages, and some very good teaching at Key Stage 2. The main differences between the satisfactory teaching and the good and very good teaching are the pace of the lesson and the challenge both in the whole class and group activities. In the best quality teaching, the level of challenge is high. 'Imagery in classic fiction', when studying David Copperfield, was the very high expectation for older pupils in a lesson. Pupils receive praise for their efforts, which is genuine, but they are pushed still further with remarks such as 'Good, well done, but do it again and read more clearly', to raise their expectations still further. A weakness occurred in some teaching at Key Stage 1, where the tasks set in group work were not sufficiently challenging and the pace of working was slow. The management of pupils is mainly strong, and it is because of this that lessons start quickly and the work planned is completed. All teachers have good knowledge of the subject and basic skills are taught thoroughly and regularly reinforced. Good attention is paid to the neat setting out of work. Written work is assessed regularly in pupils' 'evidence books' with individual targets being set. Additionally, there are some examples of excellent, perceptive and helpful marking, which gives pupils a very clear idea of how to improve. The pupils are well behaved, show an interest in their work and are generally well motivated to improve.

81. The management of English is satisfactory. Monitoring of both teaching and learning has been undertaken during the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Although the school has resourced the introduction of the strategy appropriately, resources for the subject are unsatisfactory overall. The library contains an inadequate number of books and there are shortages in the provision of more challenging fiction books, particularly for older and high attaining pupils.

MATHEMATICS

82. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 tests and assessments showed that the standards of attainment were below the national average and well below that for similar schools. The pattern of performance over a three year period reveals a trend of falling standards whilst national standards are rising. At Key Stage 2 performance in the 1999 tests shows that the school was at the national average and at a similar level when compared to similar schools. Over the same three-year period there has been a trend of falling standards at a time when national standards are rising. However, the current performance of pupils in Years 2 and 6 reveals that these pupils are achieving higher standards, and at the end of both key stages their performance is at the nationally expected level. Standards of achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 have been adversely affected over recent years by the increasing trend of a significant number of pupils leaving the school in Years 5 to take up places in one of the local middle schools. The school has undertaken an analysis of the value added to the performance of the pupils who left and compared it to those who remained. Those who left the school were, on average, higher attaining pupils, and the lower performance of pupils who remained was related to their ability and not to any loss in the value added by the school. Over the same three year period there has been a marked decline in the level of attainment of pupils entering the reception class. Nevertheless, it does not explain fully the decline in standards: it is evident that there has been some underachievement over the last two years, and this is acknowledged by the school. The school has recognised the need to raise standards, carefully analysing the results of annual tests and introducing personal learning targets for all its pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy is providing a clear structure for the teaching of the subject and this is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and on the rate at which the pupils are learning. It is, however, too early to see a rise in standards. Over the past few years the performance of girls has been better than that of boys. There is no obvious reason why this should be the case, but the size of the cohorts has been small, and the proportions of boys and girls in each year group fluctuates widely.

83. The evidence of inspection shows that the quality of learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Pupils receive a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that covers the required elements of the National Curriculum. Pupils recognise numbers and place them in the correct order. Most show that they recognise the largest number in a set of numbers, partition numbers into tens and units and recognise that multiplication is repeated addition. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a sound understanding of number and a good recall of addition and subtraction facts. Pupils name common two and three dimensional shapes and most describe their properties well, using the correct mathematical vocabulary. Appropriate mathematics words are displayed in all the classrooms and the subject makes a good contribution to literacy development. Pupils recognise simple fractions, such as one half and one quarter but they are not so good at solving simple word problems, including problems related to money. Whilst information and communications technology is used to support pupils' work in mathematics it needs to be applied more consistently. The use of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory: it has strengths and weaknesses. Good examples of counting and classifying were seen in science and the interpretation of data in history. However, opportunities to measure and time performances, and to interpret local surveys are missed in physical education and history. More use could be made of mathematics software in both mathematics and information and communications technology. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Teachers usually plan work that is well matched to the range of attainment within their class enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding appropriately.

84. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment are confident with number. A strong factor accounting for progress is the consistency of the teaching, which is never less than satisfactory and very often is good or very good. The school has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy successfully, and this increases pupils' skills and confidence in tackling problems. In particular, it has placed a greater reliance on mental calculation, a weakness identified by the school, and so improved the quality of the pupils' learning. The pupils develop a good mathematical vocabulary and are confident in using it to describe what they are doing. They have a good understanding of place value and most older pupils know their multiplication tables. Whilst emphasis is placed upon number, work is appropriately planned across the subject with a particularly good example involving the application of skills to solve problems in relation to ratio and

proportion, seen in Year 6. On leaving the school, almost all pupils can order a set of numbers with one or two decimal places, add and subtract fractions by changing the original fractions to ones with common denominators, recognise squares of numbers to at least 12x12 and can draw and measure angles with a protractor. High attainers calculate numbers mentally, with speed and dexterity, applying established patterns and applying the patterns to larger numbers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and is good at Key Stage 2. Appropriate emphasis is placed upon the teaching of mathematical vocabulary, supporting pupils' acquisition of literacy skills. In the main, teachers have a good understanding and knowledge of the subject. They are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy, which forms the basis of their planning, and the use of mental mathematics sessions at the start of most lessons is developing the pupils' confidence in manipulating number well. Learning objectives for the pupils are clearly established and often referred to during lessons. In good lessons, time is used well with clear indications of what is expected and by when. Teachers mark work regularly, but its effectiveness is variable, depending upon whether teachers provide the pupils with advice about how to improve their work. Most teachers record the progress of pupils well and take opportunities during lessons to focus upon the assessment of particular pupils, setting learning targets for future development. Whilst some parents are concerned about homework, it is set regularly and related to the work in class. The pupils' quality of learning benefits from effective planning, an emphasis on mental mathematics strategies and good pupil management. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, in Year 2, expectations are unclear to pupils, there is a lack of challenge and sometimes an acceptance of work that is of an unsatisfactory standard. Most teachers often use humour to enthuse and motivate pupils into working hard, and give recognition for good achievement.

86. The management of mathematics is good, especially in evaluating the performance of pupils, analysing the outcomes of tests, to establish strengths and weaknesses and in providing new resources for the subject. The school tracks the performance of pupils over their years in school, establishing reasonable and challenging targets and predicting future pupil performance. Whilst there is evidence of standards falling, the school is addressing those areas identified as weak, addressing planning issues and beginning to monitor its progress. The selection of pupils for booster classes in Years 5 and 6, results in pupils increasing their knowledge, understanding and skills to that of the average. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, the subject has improved noticeably recently.

SCIENCE

87. In 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, assessments showed that the standards of attainment were at the national average and average in comparison with similar schools. At Key Stage 2 the performance in science was above the national average and above the average of similar schools. Whilst the performance over the last three years was well above the national average the trend is downward, whilst the national trend is rising. The performance of boys and girls is similar, both being well above the national average over the same three-year period. The results of the tests undertaken at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 show that the downward trend is continuing, although the cohort of pupils was very small. The school has carried out considerable analysis of pupil performance and compared the performance of pupils who leave the school, in Year 5, to go to middle school, and those pupils who remain. The evidence indicates that the school loses a significant number of high attaining pupils each year, adversely affecting test results at the end of Key Stage 2. This partially explains the fall in standards, but the school acknowledges that there has been some underachievement in past years. In addition, the school recognised the downward trend in its performance and has appointed a science specialist to the staff from September 2000. The previous inspection found that the attainment of most pupils was above national expectations by the end of both key stages. The evidence of this inspection indicates that standards are at the national average level, but with clear indications that they are rising. Good quality teaching is having a particular impact upon standards.

88. Work seen during the inspection shows that at Key Stage 1, the pupils achieve satisfactory levels of knowledge and skills. Pupils in Year 2 identify some naturally occurring materials and sort and classify them accurately, recording their observations in diagrams. They describe the dangers associated with mains electricity and construct and make drawings of simple working circuits. They have observed whether a bulb will light or not, and tested whether their predictions were correct. Attainment in science is helped by the breadth of the pupils' vocabulary. Pupils know that senses are used to aid accurate observation and deduction in science. They investigate sensibly, although this aspect of the subject has been underdeveloped. The planning for, and the support given to, pupils with special educational needs ensure that they extend their knowledge satisfactorily.

89. During Key Stage 2, pupils achieve satisfactory levels of knowledge, understanding and skills. They make good progress because lessons are often presented in an enthusiastic and challenging way. For example, in Year 6, the importance of the food chain and the interdependence and adaptation of animals and plants was undertaken in a way that involved pupils in high level interactions, investigating the place of plants, insects and animals in the food chain. Pupils made good predictions and recorded their results well so that they can present their information to others. In other classes in Key Stage 2, pupils predict accurately which solids will and will not dissolve in water. They record their work well and summarise the outcomes. Pupils understand the water cycle and its effects upon the environment, using and understanding appropriate vocabulary. They identify correctly the potential safety hazards which could arise during their work. For example, how they must take care when using hot water to study the effects of evaporation in the water cycle. Their scientific knowledge expands rapidly through interesting teaching and good explanations. Standards of investigative work are improving after being identified by the school as in need of development.

90. Pupils' attitudes to science are good and are illustrated by their commitment to their learning in lessons. Behaviour is also good in both whole class and group activities. The majority of pupils are keen to answer questions, make suggestions and carry out investigations. The good standards of behaviour and attitudes, coupled with very good relationships, help develop the quality of learning well.

91. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. Teaching helps to promote good learning by pupils, often because of the interest generated. The best teaching is exciting and reflects good subject knowledge and the provision of work that is suitable for pupils of all levels of prior attainment. Teachers' knowledge of science is generally sound or better. Sometimes the needs of all pupils in mixed age classes are not fully met because teachers do not always use the information from assessment to move on to work which is challenging for all pupils. Teachers throughout the school make particularly good use of pupils' literacy skills, as evidenced by good quality displays of science work in classrooms, for example in relation to the effects of local rivers in flood. Information and communications technology skills are developed in word processing to contribute to the displays. Science makes a good contribution to the development of numeracy, mainly when pupils weigh and measure but also in their calculations. Pupils are managed well, and teachers organise and use resources effectively. Pupils' work is marked regularly and, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, it is annotated with comments that encourage pupils to tackle key learning targets.

92. The pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum, as set out in the curriculum document of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This helps to ensure a good balance between the development of pupils' knowledge and their application of skills. This effectively promotes pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the subject co-ordinator has moved the subject on very successfully in a relatively short period of time, establishing the need to develop resources for the subject. A careful analysis of the standards of attainment established the need to improve opportunities for investigative work and to improve the quality of resources. With continued leadership of the existing high quality there is likely to be a sustained impact upon the standards pupils achieve.

ART

93. Pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of art soundly across both key stages. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' standards are as expected for their ages, with some good standards in particular aspects of art at Key Stage 2. This is a small improvement on the judgements of the last inspection.

94. At Key Stage 1, evidence from previous work and classroom display shows that an appropriate range of work is covered. Good emphasis is given to developing the early skills of colour mixing. A good example of this was the 'Portrait Gallery' in Year 2, where pupils clearly tried to replicate their skin tones. Art is linked soundly with other areas of the curriculum as the Year 1 pictures of 'Love and your neighbour' exemplify. Other areas, such as block printing, pattern work and work with other mediums such as chalk, have suitable coverage. At Key Stage 2, art continues to be developed systematically. For example, printing is now carried out using a string print. A particular strength of work at Key Stage 2 is the large scale, three dimensional chairs which are being made successfully using a wire frame and 'modroc', which were being designed for famous people. Pupils compare and commented on each other's work. The works of William Morris and Charles Rennie Macintosh are profitably studied to increase the pupils' understanding of different designs.

95. The quality of the teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. It is not possible to make a judgement about the teaching at Key Stage 1 because of insufficient evidence. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and

take great care in planning a curriculum which excites and interests pupils. This is in spite of the fact that the school is inadequately resourced, both in the range and quality of resources. For example, because the school has few resources to support the teaching of the knowledge of famous artists, teachers have to use their own illustrations to make sure that this element is covered. The art co-ordinator does her best to buy in resources on a limited budget to meet the needs of current projects. For example, fabric paint for the reception class and 'modroc' for the three dimensional sculptures. Currently there is a very limited stock on which to plan work. A strong feature of the lessons seen is the clear and direct teaching of art skills, and good individual supportive interaction from the class teacher, enabling pupils to know how to improve their work. Consequently, pupils show enthusiasm and interest in their work and make good gains in their learning. It is because of the good teaching that these good gains are made, but the present good teaching has not had sufficient time to impact on standards.

96. The art co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and has a range of other major responsibilities which have needed her immediate attention for development. She provides effective leadership, but is hampered by lack of resources and a limited budget. For example, sketch books, which have long been a requirement for Key Stage 2, have not yet been provided for all pupils. This limits her ability to monitor standards and the effective delivery of the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. There was little evidence of any design and technology during the inspection and no lessons were taking place. The school has taken little action in response to weakness in resource provision pointed out in the last report, and as a result, the school is not able to deliver the full curriculum. Discussions with the new, enthusiastic co-ordinator, indicates that the pupils have not received the curriculum to which they are entitled and at present no budget is allocated to provide essential resources. In the one project for which there is evidence, discussions with the teacher indicated that pupils need considerable support, but are only able to reach low levels of attainment. Pupils are able to produce a plan and have suitable ideas about what to do next, but have very little knowledge of a range of materials and skills.

98. The newly appointed co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership, She is currently taking training so that she may help to train teachers to deliver the National Curriculum requirements. She has also identified further professional support from the Local Education Authority and has made an appropriate plan to provide resources for units of work on a rolling basis, when they become available.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Standards are at the expected levels by the time pupils reach the end of each key stage, and they achieve satisfactorily in relation to their attainments on entry to the school. By the age of seven, pupils study their classroom, the school and its immediate environment, and have some understanding of locations further afield. They use a geographical vocabulary accurately, for example when referring the links between the weather and the clothes that people wear. They know that food is produced in different parts of the country and that it can be transported to other countries. The pupils are currently involved in a project to collect items for children in Rumania, and have a good understanding of how that country compares with where they live.

100. As a result of good teaching, pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress, extend their understanding and develop a good sense of localities within the United Kingdom. However, good progress has not been in place long enough to raise standards at the end of the key stage. Pupils have a secure understanding of the water cycle, and can apply that understanding to the relationship between parts of a river, for example, how the source, tributaries and basin are linked. Pupils also effectively study maps to research their work on rivers. They have a good knowledge and understanding of environmental changes, and recognise the way in which people can improve or damage the environment. Pupils have been involved in a campaign to improve the road system around the school, effectively surveying local people and presenting their findings to members of the County Council. There is appropriate provision for fieldwork; pupils visit Aberley Farm, Sudeley Castle and Avoncroft, to study buildings and materials. In Years 5 and 6, pupils visit a residential centre at Alton Castle.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2, good teaching leads to good learning. When teaching is at its best, planning is very effective and a range of teaching methods employed to encourage an interest in the subject. Whilst teachers use the resources available well, they often provide materials of their own to support their teaching. The management of pupils is good, and this leads to well behaved classes where pupils focus well upon their work. Teachers constantly check pupil understanding,

before moving on and effectively involve support staff in the planned activities. A very effective demonstration about rivers, in Years 4 and 5, successfully used a computer program and the objectives of lessons are continuously returned to. Teachers use questions well and often probe to encourage pupils to develop their answer.

102. Whilst resources for the subject are adequate to enable National Curriculum requirements to be met, many are dated and their quality needs to be improved. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

HISTORY

103. The pupils' attainments are at the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages, and they achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their attainments on entry to the school. By the age of seven, pupils are starting to develop a sense of chronology. They understand some of the differences in conditions in hospitals between now and during the Crimean War. They identify that food, medicines, equipment, lighting and bedding are different and that conditions are much better now. Through the character of Florence Nightingale they establish empathy and an understanding of how things were different. Good writing skills are employed to explore their feelings and to interpret events. By the age of eleven pupils have further developed their sense of chronology and have a good grasp of the most important events and personalities of the period they are studying. They use secondary sources of evidence well, to research aspects of life in Victorian times and present the results of their research well, by presenting a talk to the class using an overhead slide to illustrate their points. They realise that the past can be interpreted in different ways and successfully convey their knowledge of the period. Data available on computer is beginning to be interrogated successfully as an aid to historical enquiry.

104. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers capture the attention of the pupils and help them to focus on the subject by outlining learning expectations very clearly and imposing a time limit on each section of the lesson. For example in Year 2, the teacher put on a shawl and told the pupils that she was now Florence Nightingale, and in doing so immediately captured their imagination which led to them asking a number of questions to find out what hospital conditions were like in the Crimea. In Year 6 pupils were given a specific time to prepare a talk about an aspect of Victorian life. Materials were readily at hand in both lessons, and the pupils were repeatedly encouraged to move ahead with their task. The well planned lessons enabled pupils to discuss the topic thoroughly and to put forward their point of view. Effective opportunities are provided to visit places of historical interest, such as Hartbury Castle, Ann Hathaway's House and Chedworth Roman Villa, and for a local historian and a parishioner with an interest in Egyptology, to visit the school. Pupils have good attitudes to their work, they complete the tasks they are set promptly and work sensibly in pairs and in groups when required to do so.

105. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be above national expectations. Whilst standards are now judged to be at the nationally expected level, the loss of the previous subject co-ordinator, considerable changes in teaching staff and the loss of pupils to the middle school result in the judgement that improvement in the subject has been satisfactory. The current quality of teaching is having a significant impact upon improving standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

106. Pupils' achievement by the end of both key stages is satisfactory and at levels expected nationally. During the inspection only one lesson of discreet teaching of information and communications technology was timetabled. Despite this, pupils do possess a satisfactory level of competence. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 confirmed their level of attainment. By the age of seven pupils are familiar with computers and understand basic keyboard functions. They enter words into a word processor to produce sentences, successfully use a graphics package to create a picture and follow straight-forward lines of enquiry when using a CD-ROM. They know that there are different programs for collecting data and ask questions in different ways to find things out. Pupils in Year 2 choose appropriate words from a word list and add them to sentences after considering a number of alternatives. Older Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to write stories using a word processor. By the age of eleven most pupils have suitably improved their achievements in word processing. They are able to modify the size of the font in order to enhance the appearance of their work, for example, when producing a newspaper page with headlines about local rivers. Older pupils know how to access information from a range of CD- ROMs and the Internet and are developing their skills of research through the use of "task" cards, which are also developing their independence. However, the use of control technology is underdeveloped.

Some pupils have experience of controlling a floor turtle, but this aspect of the subject needs to be further developed. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support and develop work in other subjects. It is used to improve the quality of displayed work around the school, in word processing to present pupils' writing in history and geography, and to display the relationship between numbers in mathematics.

107. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was good, with good learning by the pupils. Overall, however, the quality of teaching is satisfactory because teachers are only just starting to use the newly installed equipment on a regular basis. In the one lesson seen, the teacher showed good subject knowledge, demonstrated skills clearly and ensured, by effective questioning, that pupils understood what was required of them. Pupils then had the opportunity to practise the skills they had learned, well supported by a learning support assistant. The pupils responded with enthusiasm, showing interest in how to improve the accuracy of the presentation of their work. In other classes, the computer is used as an aid to learning, in particular it was used very effectively for two pupils with special educational needs exploring number bonds. The pupils had a clear understanding of their task and language skills were developed through interaction with the learning support assistant working with them. Pupils enjoy working on computers both individually and when working in pairs and groups. Relationships are excellent and the pupils are sensitive to the needs of others.

108. Over the last half-term considerable and successful efforts have been made by the headteacher and the recently appointed co-ordinator to ensure that new computers are provided for all classes. The machines all have the facility to e-mail and are connected, by network, to the Internet. This provision has made a positive impact on learning and has enabled standards to be raised. A draft policy and scheme of work are to be refined through whole staff involvement, and effective links have been established with the partner Catholic secondary school to develop a common approach to the development of a school web page. At the time of the previous inspection standards of attainment were in line with national expectations but the quality of equipment was of poor standard. Satisfactory progress has been made to improve resources and to maintain standards.

MUSIC

109. The provision for music in the school is good. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress through regular weekly teaching from a well qualified and enthusiastic part-time teacher. Standards reached are in line with expectations for pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, which is similar to the judgement made at the last inspection. However, particular strengths now exist in the standards and quality of singing. It was only possible to watch singing activities during the inspection, as the school was making preparations for Christmas activities. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing sweetly in tune and often with good expression. They have an appropriate sense of the melody's shape and know and enjoy a good range of songs. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of a range of complex musical terms and very good awareness of each other's performance. This was well illustrated in a lesson, when pupils were practising carols for their Christmas concert. Both boys and girls showed obvious pleasure and enjoyment in their singing, sang as 'one voice' and also achieved good standards in three part singing.

110. The teaching of music is good, and is well based on the teacher's very good knowledge of the subject. It is because of this, together with the enthusiasm generated and extra time given to extra-curricular activities, that the pupils make good progress and perform well in their singing. The teacher's expectation of pupils' performances is high, and lessons are delivered at a good pace to ensure that the standards aimed for are practised and reached. Pupils are aware of these high standards, and strive hard to meet the expectations of the teacher.

111. The curriculum in music covers all the elements required by the National Curriculum and is supported now by suitable guidance in planning, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The recorder club extends musical experiences, as does provision for instrumental music from peripatetic teachers. Hymn practice also benefits from the music teacher's expertise and makes a strong contribution to the good quality of whole school singing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are in line with those expected for pupils of these ages. Standards are very similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The achievements of pupils are satisfactory in relation to their previous learning.

113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show creative ways of moving in gymnastics. They run, jump, hop, roll and slide with suitable control and agility. When running, they change direction and speed with ease, start and stop quickly and move with appropriate pace and balance. When given the opportunity to evaluate the work of others, they do so accurately, and when asked to give feedback, use a good range of descriptive language, thereby reinforcing speaking skills well.

114. The pupils in Key Stage 2 build well on the skills started in Key Stage 1. In gymnastics, pupils in Years 3 and 4 devise, refine and perform interesting sequences of movement with confidence and control. They find a wide range of ways of moving, and the quality of their movement has improved greatly from Key Stage 1 because they perform with much greater attention to body tension and extension. This rapid improvement stems from very good teaching that enthuses pupils to perform well, and gives them highly specific feedback about what they are doing well and how to improve even further. By Year 6, the range of movements and the control with which the pupils perform has increased further. Pupils not only use tension and extension themselves, but they also make useful critical comments when watching others, to help them improve the presentation of their work. Standards attained in games activities are broadly in line with expectations. Whilst no swimming is currently taking place, due to the refurbishment of the local leisure centre, the school reports that almost all pupils reach the standard required by the National Curriculum by the end of the key stage.

115. The quality of teaching is good overall at Key Stage 2, but because only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 1, no overall judgement can be made. The one lesson was, however, of satisfactory quality. In all lessons, teachers plan a well structured sequence of tasks and activities that are matched well to the differing learning needs of the pupils, enabling them to make mainly good progress. Teachers know what they expect the pupils to learn in each lesson, and by sharing this with the pupils, motivate them well to learn what is planned. Teachers use a good range of teaching techniques, including explaining, demonstration and questioning, and this enables the pupils to know what is expected of them. Teacher demonstration was particularly well used in one lesson with pupils in Years 3 and 4. This enabled them to see the high quality of movement that they should be striving for, and improved the standard of their work. In Year 6, gymnastics skills were carefully taught and pupils consistently challenged to attain their best possible standards. This resulted in rapid gains in learning. Expectations of work and behaviour are high, and a very large majority of pupils respond well, with high levels of interest, enthusiasm and perseverance. Teachers provide many good opportunities for pupils to evaluate the work of others, providing valuable opportunities for them to develop their speaking skills whilst giving their peers constructive feedback. This aspect of teaching has improved well since the last inspection.

116. The school provides a well balanced, broad and interesting curriculum, that is enhanced very effectively by its very good programme of popular extra-curricular activities. The management and co-ordination of the subject is of high quality, and the co-ordinator has accomplished an enormous amount since her appointment just over a year ago. Teachers have experienced good opportunities to update their knowledge and skills by the provision of training, organised by the co-ordinator. The only aspect of management that still requires development is that of monitoring and evaluating standards and teaching in the subject. Resources were good at the time of the last inspection but they are now barely satisfactory, with shortages of gymnastics mats and large balls. The playground is used for some games teaching but is unsuitable when it has to be shared with Key Stage 1 pupils at afternoon playtimes. The area also has features that are potentially hazardous to health and safety; the sharp edge of the patio area and the high kerb stones surrounding the gravel bed. Overall, there has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection, but improvements have not been in place long enough to have a positive impact on standards.