

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE
CATHOLIC (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Litherland, Liverpool

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104935

Headteacher: Mr A Buckley

Reporting inspector: C D Loizou
18645

Dates of inspection: 11 – 14 September 2000

Inspection number: 225112

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: 3 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ford Close
Litherland
Liverpool

Postcode: L21 0EP

Telephone number: 0151 928 3676

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rev. Fr. F.W.Simpson

Date of previous inspection: 10 June, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. C.D.Loizou	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children under five Mathematics Music Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr. B. Eyre	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?
Mrs. S. Hall	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Science Art Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr. A. Portlock	Team inspector	English Information technology Design and technology	

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Litherland district of Liverpool. It serves the Ford Lane and Pendle Drive estates in Sefton which mainly consists of local authority housing. The school is an infant and junior Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided school. It has a nursery class which is housed in a self-contained building. There are 154 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 years which is below average.

The nursery is open in the mornings only and admits up to 30 part-time children (15 full-time equivalent) who are three years of age. Most of the children transfer from the nursery to the reception class.

The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is approximately 39%, which is above average. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There are 52 pupils on the special educational needs register (30%), which is above average. All of the children in the reception class are under five years of age. Their attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range of ability but is generally well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. Standards are below the national average overall, although in English they have improved and are average. The pupils make satisfactory progress. The pupils make good progress in speaking, listening, reading and number work. The teaching is satisfactory, it has improved since the last inspection with a significant proportion that is good. Relationships throughout the school are good. The school provides a very good moral code and the pupils are well managed. The school now needs to raise standards further in writing, in other aspects of mathematics apart from numeracy, and in science. Improvements are also needed in the information technology curriculum. The parents think highly of the school and believe it to be a caring and supportive school for their children. There is effective leadership and management. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress in the reception class, settling into routines and achieving well.
- The pupils make good progress in speaking, listening, reading, numeracy, geography and history.
- The pupils' personal development is good and relationships are good throughout the school.
- The pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good.
- Attendance rates have improved significantly because the school monitors this very well.
- The teachers manage the pupils well and teach the basic skills of reading and number work effectively.
- The school has established good links with parents and the local community.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities provided outside normal lessons.

What could be improved

- Attainment in mathematics and science with too few lessons where the pupils engage in practical investigations.
- The standard of independent and extended forms of writing.
- Standards in information technology and the use of computers to support the pupils' learning.
- The way that the curriculum, teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated.
- Assessment procedures. These do not help teachers track the pupils' progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. It has maintained the positive and caring ethos recognised in the last inspection but there is still insufficient attention given to developing a greater understanding of different cultures and life-styles. The school has worked hard to introduce school policies and curriculum schemes of work but the art and information technology curriculum are still in need of further improvement. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality have improved considerably resulting in improved attendance rates. School routines are well managed by the headteacher. The school has introduced assessment folders and has begun to measure the progress that the pupils make but these procedures do not sufficiently inform teacher's planning so that the work provided for the pupils is more closely matched to their abilities.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	D	D	A
Mathematics	C	D	E	C
Science	C	E	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

The results of the 1999 end of key stage national tests for eleven year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in English was below the national average but compared to similar schools, it was well above average. In mathematics and science, the results show that attainment was well below the national average, however, in mathematics, it was average compared to similar schools. In science, attainment was below average compared to similar schools. The results in all three subjects were close to the school's own targets. The trend in attainment over the last four years shows improvement in English, mathematics and science in line with the national trend. Attainment in the national tests last year was below average for all three subjects because no pupils achieved higher standards than expected for their age. Although scores vary from year to year, on average over the last three years, boys and girls have achieved similar results in national tests. Thirty five percent of pupils taking the Key Stage 2 tests in 1999, which is above average, were on the school's special educational needs register and this depresses the results.

Inspection evidence indicates that too few pupils are achieving the higher level (Level 5) of attainment in writing, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. In English lessons, the opportunities for the pupils to complete their written work, particularly extended and independent writing, are limited, resulting in the pupils achieving lower standards in writing than in reading. In mathematics and science lessons the pupils are not being sufficiently challenged through open-ended investigations and practical tasks. At the time of the inspection, the unverified 2000 tests results show an improvement in

standards in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence reflects this, as attainment in English is broadly average. Reading standards are higher than in writing. The pupils make satisfactory progress in some aspects of their writing, for example, punctuation and spelling, but unsatisfactory progress in the development of extended and independent writing. Attainment in mathematics and science is below average, although the 2000 test results show a significant improvement in standards achieved. The school has not improved its information technology curriculum resulting in the pupils achieving below average standards. The pupils make good progress in geography and history where they achieve the standards expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in music and physical education with good standards achieved in swimming. In art and design and technology the pupils make unsatisfactory progress and standards are below those expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils try hard, are interested in what they do and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils are polite to each other and to adults. They respect the views of others and co-operate well in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	There are good relationships throughout the school. There is a positive and supportive atmosphere where the pupils' personal development is encouraged.
Attendance	Satisfactory. This has improved significantly since the last inspection.

The pupils enjoy coming to school, they are punctual and attendance levels have improved year on year because the school has improved the way this is monitored. The pupils are polite, well behaved and friendly towards each other. Relationships are good and the pupils help each other when working in groups or with a partner. There are some opportunities for the pupils to take initiative and personal responsibility although they rely very much on the direction of teachers and adults.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is satisfactory with some good features throughout the school. In ninety-six percent of the lessons observed it was satisfactory or better and unsatisfactory in four percent. The teaching was good or very good in just over half of the lessons observed. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The teaching in the reception year is good, helping the children to improve their speaking and listening skills. Good teaching was seen in all year groups and there was some very good teaching observed in Years 3 and 6 where the expectations were high and the pace of the lessons were much more challenging. The teachers are particularly effective in teaching reading and numeracy, reflecting the improved standards in reading scores year on year and the effective methods the pupils use during mental arithmetic

sessions. The school is now well placed to target the pupils who have the potential to score higher than average scores in national tests. In the few unsatisfactory lessons, the teaching was ineffective resulting in the pupils marking time with the more able pupils not being sufficiently challenged.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is satisfactory overall but the school is not providing an adequate information technology curriculum. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well planned but there is insufficient practical and investigative work in mathematics and science. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities planned outside lesson times.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory provision overall and their progress is monitored well by the co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is very good moral development because the school sets high expectations. There is good spiritual and social development because of the good relationships fostered throughout the school. The cultural development of the pupils is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is satisfactory support and guidance offered to the pupils. The school is successful in promoting good behaviour and improving attendance. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress and using assessment information to inform teachers' planning are weaknesses which the school must now address.

The inspection took place in the first full week of the new school year and some of the nursery children

were in school for the very first time. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage in the nursery and reception class is satisfactory overall. Activities are well planned in the nursery but more attention should be given to the assessment of the children. In the reception class the teaching is much more aware of the need to assess the children's progress resulting in better planning. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well planned but the use of computers is limited because the information technology curriculum is unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and this makes it difficult for teachers and curriculum co-ordinators to monitor standards. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which includes sporting activities, music, drama and dance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides effective leadership and has developed good relationships with parents and the local community. He is supported by a core management team of staff. Monitoring procedures are unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. The governors have only recently been specifically linked to curriculum areas in order that they can start to monitor the work of the school more closely.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff have a large teaching commitment, with very little time to monitor planning, standards, teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. There is a good adult-pupil ratio. Support staff are well deployed. Computers are not being used sufficiently and more effective use could be made of the library.

The management of the school is satisfactory and routines are well established. The headteacher and staff work very hard to maintain a positive and supportive learning environment. They scrutinise planning and school routines but the overall effectiveness of monitoring in relation to teaching, learning, curriculum planning and standards is unsatisfactory. The headteacher teaches every day leaving little time to monitor the work of the school. Curriculum co-ordinators have little time to look at pupils' work or check that all aspects of the National Curriculum are being covered consistently. The governors actively support the work of the school but their monitoring role in terms of standards and quality is unclear. The headteacher, governors and staff are clearly committed to raising standards and to the needs of the pupils and their families. In this respect they are good role models for the pupils and as a result, relationships between staff, governors and the community are strong.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The behaviour of the pupils.• The quality of teaching.• The information provided by the school.• The school expects their children to work hard.• The school works closely with parents.• The management of the school.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision for homework.• The provision for extra-curricular activities.

The inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views although there are some shortcomings in the way that the school is monitored and its work evaluated. Homework was judged to be satisfactory overall, although inspectors agree that in some parts of the school there could be more consistent homework. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school at lunchtimes and after school hours.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the 1999 end of key stage national tests for eleven year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in English was below the national average but compared to similar schools, it was well above average. In mathematics and science, the results show that attainment was well below the national average, however, in mathematics, it was average compared to similar schools. In science, attainment was below average compared to similar schools. The results in all three subjects were close to the school's own targets. The trend in attainment over the last four years shows improvement in English, mathematics and science in line with the national trend. Attainment in the national tests last year was below average for all three subjects because no pupils achieved higher standards than expected for their age. The test results for 2000 show a significant improvement on 1999 because more pupils achieved the higher level of attainment (Level 5) in all three subjects. Although scores vary from year to year, on average over the last three years, boys and girls have achieved similar results in national tests. Thirty five percent of pupils taking the Key Stage 2 tests in 1999, which is above average, were on the school's special educational needs register and consequently, the overall standard of attainment for the school is depressed.
2. The results of the 1999 end of key stage tests for seven-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in reading was below the national average but compared with similar schools it was well above average. In writing and mathematics it was well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the standard achieved in writing was above average and in mathematics it was average. When comparing the pupils' performance with schools nationally the main reason for the below average and well below average scores is that too few pupils scored the higher level of attainment (Level 3) in the tests. When taking into account the very low baseline attainment when the pupils first start school and given that compared with similar schools attainment is above average in reading and writing, the pupils have made good progress in a very short space of time.
3. The attainment of children who enter the school in the nursery and reception class is well below average. They make satisfactory progress overall, with good progress in the reception year towards achieving the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. By the time they start Key Stage 1 in Year 1 their level of attainment is just below average.
4. The pupils in the reception class and throughout Key Stage 1 make good progress in speaking, listening and reading. They make satisfactory progress in writing. The pupils develop a good understanding of key words and have a good knowledge of letter sounds. Progress in writing is satisfactory but there too few opportunities for the pupils to practise writing independently with most of the writing done outside literacy lessons involving the completion of worksheets or filling in missing words. In mathematics the pupils make good progress in their understanding of number facts, often using these to work out number bonds mentally. In other areas of mathematics, that is, shapes, space, measures and data handling, progress is unsatisfactory because the pupils are not provided with enough practical investigations or opportunities to measure and record the properties of shapes, count and record data or measure time.

5. In Key Stage 2, English standards have improved and are average by the time the pupils leave the school. Too few more able pupils achieved the higher standard (Level 5) in national tests, however indications from the 2000 tests results show that this improved considerably with a large increase in the proportion of pupils achieving higher standards as a result of the implementation of the literacy strategy and the successful teaching strategies in reading. The pupils make good progress in reading and satisfactory progress in writing. Standards in reading are significantly higher than in writing. The pupils only use a limited range of writing although higher attaining pupils' spelling and punctuation is accurate. Speaking and listening skills are well developed with many opportunities for the pupils to role-play in drama lessons.
6. In mathematics, attainment at the end of both key stages is below average. Too few score higher standards than expected for their age in national tests. This is largely as a result of the few opportunities the pupils have to engage in practical and open-ended tasks. As a result the pupils find it difficult to plan and organise their thinking when faced with problems that involve a range of tasks. The pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of number facts but they find it difficult to apply this knowledge when trying to solve open-ended practical problems, especially if these include the measurement of time and shapes as well as recording data in graphs and tables. The pupils also struggle when attempting to draw conclusions from simple data presented in charts, graphs and tables. Indications are that standards are improving and this is reflected in the 2000 mathematics test results where more pupils achieved higher than expected standards for their age.
7. In science, attainment is below average at the end of both key stages. The pupils make satisfactory progress and during the last three years the trend is one of steadily rising standards. Similar to mathematics, the pupils make unsatisfactory progress in the practical and investigative aspects of the science curriculum. In the 1999 national tests no pupils achieved the higher level of attainment at Key Stage 2 but the indications from the 2000 tests shows a big improvement with a significant proportion of pupils exceeding the standard expected of eleven year-olds. Lower and average attaining pupils struggle to organise a simple review or test, for example, when describing which forces influence the movement of objects.
8. Standards in information technology are below average at the end of both key stages. The curriculum does not provide the pupils with enough opportunities to use computers. The pupils have had some experience of basic word processing and graphics but they have made unsatisfactory progress in all aspects of the information technology curriculum. There is very little direct teaching and sufficient expertise amongst the staff to adequately prepare the pupils for the full programme of information and communication technology.
9. The pupils make good progress in geography and history and as a result standard are in line with those expected for their age. The school provides a good range of topics and themes with a broad and balanced programme which enables the pupils to develop a good understanding of the subjects. The pupils make satisfactory progress in music although standards overall are below those expected for pupils' ages. There is a good range of music tuition after school hours and the school has successfully introduced a music scheme enabling the class teachers, who do not have expertise in music, to teach a balanced programme within the music curriculum. The pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education and good progress in swimming where standards are above average in Year 6. In art and design technology the pupils make unsatisfactory progress and achieve standards that are below those expected for their age at the end of both key stages.

10. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Individual education plans set out their specific learning needs and these are reviewed each term to ensure that the pupils are making progress. Some of these are not specific about the particular reading and writing targets set for the pupils and as a result some pupils could be making better progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils' attitudes to school, their interest in learning and behaviour are good. Most pupils are helpful and well mannered. This is a strength of the school which has been maintained since the last inspection.
12. On entry into the nursery and reception classes a significant number of children under five have under-developed personal and social skills. Many children find it difficult to relate to others in a large group. The teachers work hard and effectively to develop the children's confidence so that they accept others around them and begin to co-operate in groups or with a partner. Throughout the rest of the school the teachers encourage pupils to be courteous to each other and to adults. The pupils learn to be helpful and co-operative. The teachers' interest in their pupils' welfare and the good example they set for them are reflected in the good standard of behaviour observed. Pupils' behaviour is almost always good. When the last inspection took place it was suggested that behaviour mirrored the pace of lessons. During this inspection the very few incidents of inappropriate behaviour were linked to individuals who have difficulty in coping within a classroom environment and are given individual support.
13. Movement around the school and during playtimes is orderly, pupils have helped to formulate classroom rules and this has a beneficial effect on their behaviour. Isolated incidents involving a few pupils have resulted in recent exclusions and the school has done all it can to involve parents in the management of pupils with behavioural problems. The large majority of parents agree that the school achieves a consistently high standard of behaviour.
14. There are some opportunities for the pupils to experience what is involved when given responsibilities, when these occur they are undertaken sensibly and have an obvious impact on the self-confidence of the pupils undertaking them. Opportunities for pupils to study independently and organise their own investigations in practical lessons are very limited and consequently the pupils rely on the teachers' direction and guidance rather than working things out for themselves.
15. Attendance is close to the national average. Authorised absences and the level of unauthorised absence have improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Punctuality has also been improved. The pupils arrive promptly for their lessons and settle quickly and quietly into the day's routines. The inspection took place very close to the start of the school year. The pupils settled into school routines quickly and there has been a marked improvement in attendance rates since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The teaching is satisfactory with some good features throughout the school. In ninety-six percent of the lessons observed it was satisfactory or better and unsatisfactory in four percent. The teaching was good or very good in more than half of the lessons observed, seven percent were very good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because a larger proportion than last time was judged to be very good and fewer lessons were

unsatisfactory. The teaching is having a positive effect on standards achieved in reading and numeracy where standards are improving and the pupils make good progress. The teaching is also more effective in geography and history because the topics are well planned and organised and resources are better used to influence the pupils' thinking and enhance their learning. The teaching of writing is less secure than it is in reading because there are inconsistencies in the way writing is taught. There is little scope provided for the pupils to experience a broad range of independent forms of writing, for example, poetry, note-taking and extended writing, so that standards in writing are lower than in reading.

17. The teaching of the children under five in the nursery is satisfactory overall. The teacher and nursery nurse work well as a team and the planning is satisfactory as it enables the children to develop the children's personal, social and language development. However, the teaching in the nursery does not always challenge the children and assessments of their progress are not rigorous enough to enable the staff to monitor the children closely. The teaching in the reception year is good, resulting in the children making good progress, helping them to improve their speaking and listening skills, as well as challenging the children with questions and prompts. The teaching enables the children to organise their thinking and to develop skills through stepping stones recommended in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.
18. Good teaching was seen in all year groups and there was some very good teaching observed in Years 3 and 6. In these lessons, the expectations were high and the pace of the lessons was much more challenging and effective in improving pupils' learning. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers are particularly effective in teaching reading and numeracy, reflecting the improved standards in reading scores year on year and the effective methods the pupils use during mental arithmetic sessions in mathematics. This is continued in Key Stage 2 where the emphasis of the teaching is to encourage the pupils to become more independent. The school is now well placed to identify and target the pupils who have the potential to score higher than average scores in national tests. In the few unsatisfactory lessons in Key Stage 2, the teaching was ineffective resulting in the pupils marking time with the more able pupils not being sufficiently challenged. In these lessons the planning did not give sufficient attention to the specific needs of all ability groups, resulting in some ineffective and inappropriate tasks that did not help the pupils to make progress. The information technology curriculum is inadequately planned and there is a lack of subject expertise amongst the staff resulting in below average standards across the school in the subject.
19. Teachers do not sufficiently evaluate and record the progress their pupils are making. The school recently introduced assessment folders which are a useful management tool for teachers and will help to organise their assessments of the pupils consistently across the school. However, the methods used to assess work, including teachers' marking, varies and as a result, it is difficult for teachers and curriculum co-ordinators to analyse what the pupils have learned.
20. Support staff are well deployed and this benefits the pupils, especially those pupils on the special educational needs register who receive individual support in lessons. In some lessons the support staff are involved in the teachers' planning so that they are deployed to work with a group of pupils and guide them in their work during literacy and numeracy lessons. This is a very effective use of the support staff and is helping groups and individuals to make good progress. At times the deployment of support staff does not involve them in direct contact with the pupils, for example, when listening to the teacher introduce a literacy lesson. At these

times the support staff are ineffective and could be better deployed in lessons where groups work or individual support is needed.

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

21. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The first inspection of the school identified the need to improve the quality of curriculum planning through producing schemes of work for all subjects. The school has satisfactorily introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and is now planning around the nationally recognised guidelines in most other subject areas. This improved curriculum structure is beginning to raise standards in several subjects including English, mathematics and science.
22. The school has spent time in extending curriculum planning across the range of subjects. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for all curriculum areas. Whilst the school also has a number of other policies in place there are some, including that for the marking of pupils' work and homework that are not formalised policies and there are many variations in the implementation of such procedures which leads to inconsistent assessments of pupils' progress.
23. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum except in information technology where some aspects are not being taught or planned for. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory overall although this varies between good to unsatisfactory. The school is not consistently providing a broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils in information technology and the appropriate statutory curriculum is not fully in place. In art and design and technology, the curriculum does not sufficiently address the progressive development of skills in sufficient detail to ensure that teaching builds on what the pupils know, understand and can do. In the last inspection the planning for information technology and design and technology was less secure than in other subjects and these remain areas for considerable development. Whilst curriculum planning for music has slightly improved it has not improved in art.
24. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is satisfactory. Planning for the children who attend on a part time basis in the nursery and for those who attend full time in the reception class is suitably based upon the Early Learning Goals for pupils of this age. Whilst curriculum provision for the under fives was a strength of the school at the time of the first inspection this is no longer as effective in the nursery where staffing changes have resulted in less curricular expertise. Planning is much better for the children in the reception class where their needs are well met. Here activities centred on the Topic of 'Myself' interest the children who enjoy talking about themselves and their families. This foundation curriculum prepares them well for entry into the National Curriculum.
25. The strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are beginning to be effective in raising levels of attainment. However, planning lacks a clear focus on how to improve specific aspects of writing and provide more opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes across different subjects. The extensive use of worksheets throughout the curriculum limits the opportunities for descriptive, creative and imaginative writing. This impacts upon the progress made by all pupils but particularly the more able pupils. Not enough time is given to providing pupils with the opportunity to develop research skills because the library and computers are rarely used to enhance learning.
26. The planning is satisfactory because it ensures the breadth of coverage of the subjects of the National Curriculum but there is inconsistency as some aspects are planned in greater depth and more effectively than others. The school provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to

take part in open-ended tasks to use and apply their knowledge in investigational activities in mathematics and science. Many activities are directed by the teacher so that pupils simply have to find a given answer rather than investigate a range of possibilities. Curriculum development in information and communication technology has been very slow. Whilst long overdue plans are now well advanced to improve the information technology curriculum this planning for improvement has been at an unsatisfactory pace and has limited the development of skills across the curriculum.

27. Extra-curricular provision is good especially in the provision of sporting activities including football, netball and cross-country running. There are several opportunities for pupils to play against other schools in competitive sporting activities. There is also a drama club and opportunities for musical tuition for pupils who wish to play the flute or guitar. The older pupils attend a residential centre in the summer term. Other educational visits and visitors help to widen the curriculum in a satisfactory manner and the school has plans to considerably extend these opportunities in order to interest and motivate the pupils. Good use has been made of the local area to study the changes in the local environment including shops, housing and the school grounds. A recent environmental project involving ideas from the pupils is about to be launched when the funding becomes available. This will considerably enhance the external appearance of the school and provide more opportunities to broaden the curriculum.
28. The school has good links with local schools, which supports curriculum development and is beneficial in helping pupils prepare for transfer to secondary school. Particularly close links have been developed over many years with the adjoining church. This not only supports the religious education curriculum but also of particular note is the regular and direct involvement of the parish priest in story sessions with all classes.
29. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of health issues. Sex education, together with awareness of the misuse of drugs, is discussed with older pupils where outside agencies are used to deliver additional activities and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Aspects of personal, moral and social education are discussed during religious education lessons and assemblies. However, the school is rightly keen to develop the depth of the personal, social and health education curriculum in order to prepare the pupils for life in society today.
30. Equality of access to the curriculum and other aspects of school life are generally provided for all pupils. Curriculum planning for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is satisfactory. Special educational needs support is generally focused upon extending the pupils' skills in English in order to support their progress across the curriculum. Pupils on the higher levels of the school's register of special educational need receive support on a withdrawal basis. Whilst the quality of this support is satisfactory the organisation of support activities has an adverse effect upon the pupils' access to some aspects of the curriculum. This is exemplified by one group of pupils who regularly miss the first Literacy Hour of the week when the class is introduced to new text. Whilst staff make efforts to ensure that pupils listen to tapes of the stories pupils miss, this is not consistent and is sometimes difficult to plan.
31. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) works with the part time SEN teacher to plan the work pupils undertake in withdrawal sessions. The quality of Individual Education Plans is satisfactory although some recent plans have been very brief and unspecific in identifying exactly what the pupils learning needs are and how best to support them. A learning support assistant also works with a small number of pupils on a regular basis under the direction of the co-ordinator. The quality of this support is satisfactory. However, the

quality of additional classroom support offered to pupils in Years 3 and 4 is inconsistent as newly appointed staff do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of their role in assisting the pupils as they are to undertake additional induction training provided by the local authority.

32. Overall the school cultivates the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well. The school places importance on promoting self-esteem and on helping pupils build a positive self-image. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship is met. Assemblies make a valuable contribution to the development of spirituality. Pupils begin to develop knowledge and understanding of beliefs and values largely through the religious education curriculum. Teachers respect the thoughts and opinions of the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of nature such as the growth of beans and sunflowers but many opportunities are missed within lessons to extend such spiritual moments. There are planned opportunities for reflection and contemplation. But there is little use of music for the entry to or departure from school assemblies and the quality of singing at times does little to generate enthusiasm and an enjoyment of music.
33. The provision for moral development is very good. It is closely linked with the positive behaviour management policy, which is effective and consistent. Adults in the school provide good role models for the pupils. All pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. They are encouraged to make good choices, understanding the difference between right and wrong, and develop a clear sense of right and wrong. The school fosters honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice. An orderly environment has been established in which the pupils feel safe, secure, valued and cared for.
34. The provision for social development is good overall. Good work, behaviour and effort are all rewarded. The school promotes positive attitudes. Pupils relate well to adults and to one another. They show courtesy to one another and to visitors. Pupils have a sense of responsibility towards their community and take part in organised fund-raising for charities.
35. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There are occasional school visits including the local art gallery and museum and involvement in community activities. The range of visitors to enrich the curriculum across the range of subjects is limited. In the main these reflect western traditions. Although the study of world faiths is provided through the religious education syllabus, there is little planned provision for pupils to appreciate the wealth and diversity of other cultures in other subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school provides a satisfactory level of care including welfare and guidance for the pupils. The teachers know their pupils well and they are usually sensitive to their individual needs. All adults in the school collaborate effectively to ensure that the pupils are well cared for.
37. Procedures for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour are good. The school's code of conduct is clearly displayed in classrooms; pupils were involved in the establishment of these and they are usually followed. The inspection was conducted at the start of a new school year and only a few settling in problems were observed by the inspectors. Teachers are alert to the needs of their pupils and they provide them with opportunities to familiarise themselves to new school routines. This good practice was not seen consistently in all classes,

in a few lessons teacher intervention centred on control where guidance would have been a more appropriate strategy.

38. No incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour were observed, and comments made by parents confirm that isolated incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with effectively and fairly. Pupils with special educational needs have appropriate individual education plans, a few refer to behaviour targets as well as specific learning needs, for those pupils who find it difficult to relate to others and to settle into school routines independently.
39. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Teaching and support staff are aware of the need to be vigilant and to report any concerns they may have to the co-ordinator. The school adopts the policy recommended by the local authority. The child protection co-ordinator collaborates fully with outside agencies, including the educational welfare and social services. Circumstances regarding individual welfare matters are discussed at staff meetings. Several members of staff hold first aid qualifications, and there is an adequate understanding regarding reactions to allergies and how to respond should they occur. Fire practices are conducted regularly and the school is aware of the importance of adhering to other statutory safety arrangements. During the inspection matters of detail regarding safety issues were drawn to the attention of the school.
40. The procedures for assessing, monitoring the pupils' performance and progress are unsatisfactory. The headteacher works very hard to monitor all the pupils' work effectively during the year but other members of staff with management responsibility have very limited opportunities to do this. The youngest pupils are assessed by the class teacher and classroom assistant against the Early Learning Goals and take account of the baseline assessments for planning the children's learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school established effective means of identifying and recording what pupils know and can do in English and mathematics linked to the literacy and numeracy frameworks, statutory and non-statutory national tests. Assessments of the pupils' progress in science are undertaken but no whole school assessments are recorded for any other subjects, including information and communication technology. The school has established a detailed assessment record in reading and spelling following twice-yearly tests for all pupils and uses these to provide additional support for pupils with special educational needs. Whilst the school maintains good records in English and mathematics, it needs to more effectively use these for tracking individuals and groups of pupils' progress in key areas of the curriculum and to plan future work matched to their needs. At the moment this is not easily done as different members of staff keep the information and this may account in part for the discrepancy between statutory test results and teachers' assessments, which were inaccurate in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999. Teacher assessments were more accurate in 2000 because the school has begun to use the assessment folders to guide them in their judgements.
41. Procedures for promoting good attendance are good. Following the last inspection when it was judged to be poor the school has put in place effective management arrangements that have improved the attendance level of pupils and in reducing the amount of unauthorised absence. Punctuality has also improved. Very little lateness was observed during the inspection and a good system is in place to monitor this. It is effective in making most parents aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The school is becoming increasingly concerned about the number of parents who withdraw their children for annual holidays. These absences have an adverse effect on the progress that the pupils make as well as the disruption it causes the teacher and the class.

42. School registers are marked and analysed accurately and good use is made of the educational welfare service.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The parents have confidence in the school, especially in the way it is managed. The involvement of parents is improving and the recently completed parents' room is a good initiative designed to further develop this aspect. The money raised to enable this project included European Community funding, it aims to enable the parents to have access to adult literacy and numeracy training.
44. The parents who completed the questionnaires or who attended the meeting with the registered inspector agreed that the school is effective in promoting good standards of behaviour, and that the school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible. They also believe that the school handles incidents of misconduct well. They feel that the provision of homework is inconsistent and inspection evidence supports this view. Discussions held with individual parents confirms that the pilot adult education programmes have helped them to understand what happens in lessons.
45. Day to day communication with the school is good. Once parents enter the buildings they meet helpful teachers in a positive and supportive environment. The school is aware that it has to promote itself in the community but the external appearance of the buildings does little to support this and parts of the school building look drab and uninviting. There are two occasions when parents can have formal discussions with teachers. Day to day access for informal discussion is good.
46. The annual reports parents receive about their children's progress have good information in them regarding the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The space for information in the other subjects is limited. There is no provision for parents or pupils to add their comment. The information the school provides includes a regular flow of informative newsletters. The brochure and governors' annual reports are informative, but they do not provide information regarding the progress it has made in tackling the issues raised in the last inspection.
47. There is no formally constituted parents' association but there are well organised and managed collaborative fund-raising arrangements in place to support both after school activities, for example Beavers and Cubs, as well as providing support for school needs, especially to enhance the quality of equipment.
48. Numerous outings into the community are conducted to widen pupils' understanding of the subjects being taught and also to gain an historical perspective of the area. Year 6 pupils benefit from a residential experience in the Lake District. Transfer arrangements into secondary education are very good, they commence at the end of Year 5 when the local secondary school's Year 7 teachers make collaborative visits. The process continues in Year 6 with joint sporting and education activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher, together with his core management team of senior staff, provide satisfactory and effective leadership. The headteacher teaches every afternoon, sharing a class with another class teacher who teaches in the mornings. He has established good relationships with the pupils, staff, governors and parents and he is very well respected in the community served by the school. There are effective systems in place to ensure that school routines and timetables operate smoothly. The governors are well established and known to the pupils, staff and parents and there are very good relationships between the governors and the school. After recent training supported by the local authority, the headteacher has begun to undertake systematic self-evaluation of the school. However, this is limited as he teaches every day, sharing full responsibility for the management and organisation of a class with another teacher. Curriculum co-ordinators have full time teaching commitments and have no time during school hours to monitor planning and standards or to work alongside colleagues as part of the school's professional development programme. As a result the overall quality of monitoring and evaluation is unsatisfactory, with very little opportunity for the headteacher and senior staff to evaluate teaching and learning or to monitor planning and standards. Consequently, the school does not support improvements in teaching or the curriculum effectively.
50. The management and control of the school's finances are good. The secretary manages the day to day finances, orders and stock control very efficiently and at the same time receives parents and visitors very well. The headteacher and deputy headteacher authorise payments and ensure that budget allocations to individual subjects comply with the agreed priorities and budgets in the school improvement plan. There are effective arrangements in place to undertake annual audits for each curriculum subject with curriculum co-ordinators drawing up action plans and the governors agreeing with the headteacher and core management team the priorities for the future development of the school. The governors' role in monitoring standards is unclear and in the very early stages of development. The headteacher's self-evaluation process is an improvement on previous practice and will go a long way towards helping the governors and staff evaluate the long-term needs of the school.
51. The school has a sufficient number of teachers who are trained and experienced to match the demands of the curriculum. There is a reasonable balance of experience and expertise on the staff although with little specific mathematical or scientific expertise. This is having an impact on practical mathematics and science where the pupils make less progress than they do in numeracy. Professional development is satisfactory but not all staff have received recent training linked to the development of their subject responsibilities resulting in variable improvements to the overall curriculum. There is a good number of classroom support assistants. The quality of the support provided by some staff, including those working in the reception class, is good. Whilst all staff have job descriptions some appear unsure of their responsibilities and how best to support the pupils. The lack of monitoring of staff by the senior management team has resulted in inconsistencies in approach, which have not been picked up and dealt with. Consequently, the improvements made to the curriculum are not always recognised in sufficient detail to have an impact on standards or the quality of teaching.
52. Teaching staff all have subject co-ordinating roles but the division of this responsibility is unequal with some staff having responsibility for two core subjects whilst other staff have responsibility for only one non-core subject. This has made it difficult for some staff to fully develop their roles and also limits the effect that some experienced staff are able to make upon the curriculum. Of concern are the very limited opportunities that staff have to develop their roles in monitoring the quality of planning, teaching and learning in the subjects for which

they hold responsibility. Co-ordinators do not see planning across the school, have few or no opportunities to work alongside colleagues or have access to detailed samples of pupils' work. This severely hampers the effectiveness of the roles of subject co-ordinators in developing the curriculum further. Similarly the special educational needs co-ordinator, whilst fulfilling her statutory responsibilities, currently has little opportunity to work alongside colleagues in the classroom and observe or be involved in day-to-day curriculum provision for the pupils.

53. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory overall although with some areas of concern. Classrooms are generally of a reasonable size but the two classrooms for the oldest and largest pupils are small and this restricts the space for some activities. During the period of inspection the library and small information technology base was virtually unused.
54. Whilst the nursery building is adequate, the maintenance of the outdoor facilities is poor with nettles in part of the nursery grounds being taller than the children. Similarly whilst the school has extensive and potentially attractive grounds the grounds maintenance, which is contracted out to the Local Authority, and parts of the exterior of the school, particularly the Year 5 and 6 building, are poor, although the school has submitted tenders for further improvements to the building. Whilst the school has ambitious plans to develop the grounds the large amount of funding required is beyond the scope of the school, and the school is rightly discussing alternatives to the current use of the whole building. The poor quality of some parts of the school environment makes a statement to prospective parents and members of the local community. There are minor health and safety issues that have been pointed out to the school and will be acted on immediately.
55. The senior management team have recently begun to consider changes to the use of parts of the building in order to make better use of the facilities available. Possibilities include the current nursery to be used as a parents' wing and crèche, the new parents' room as a special educational needs base and the establishment of an early years' base with the nursery and reception classes in one wing of the school. These are all positive moves that could considerably enhance the quality of the learning environment.
56. The provision of learning resources is sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum and the teaching in the foundation stage. An exception is that there are insufficient resources for information technology and this together with the inadequate use of existing resources severely restricts possible progress in this subject. The school intends to use the National Grid for Learning funding to improve information technology resources. Whilst satisfactory art materials are available their restricted use in a narrow range of activities sometimes results in unimaginative and poor quality work. The limited use of the school library to support the enjoyment of reading and developing research skills impacts on pupils' opportunities for independent study. The school makes satisfactory use of resources outside the school including the school's library loan service.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- * **Raise the attainment of pupils in mathematics and science by:**
(Paragraphs 1-2; 6 – 7; 16 – 20; 26; 84 – 85; 92; 95; 98)
 - providing more opportunities for the pupils to plan, organise and check their own investigations and experiments;
 - providing more challenging practical work for all pupils which is better matched to their capabilities and broadens the scope for pupils to record their findings using mathematical and scientific vocabulary;
 - providing a balanced programme of mathematics and science which involves more open-ended investigations and problem solving tasks. These should offer the pupils opportunities to choose from a range of resources and equipment and apply the most appropriate methods using their knowledge and understanding.

- * **Raise standards in writing by:**
(Paragraph 4; 5; 16; 25; 66; 79; 82)
 - adopting a whole school policy on writing which helps teachers to plan for different forms of writing in all subjects of the curriculum;
 - improving extended and independent writing that extends beyond the Literacy hour across a range of subjects, including information technology;
 - improving the way that teachers assess writing so that it helps them to monitor the pupils' progress and set targets for improvement;

- * **Improve the information technology curriculum and raise standards by:**
(Paragraph 8; 18; 23; 69; 80; 123 – 125)
 - teaching all aspects of the information technology curriculum as set out in the National Curriculum;
 - providing appropriate staff training to improve teachers' confidence and to raise the overall level of competency in the subject across the school;
 - implementing systematic assessment procedures to help monitor the progress of the pupils and to raise standards in information technology.

- * **Improve the way that teaching, learning and the curriculum are monitored and evaluated so that:**
(Paragraph 49 – 52; 83; 89; 106; 109; 116; 122)
 - curriculum co-ordinators are able to evaluate standards and monitor planning in their subjects;

- the headteacher and governors evaluate standards across the school in order to better inform the school improvement plan when establishing priorities for the future development of the school.

* **Improve assessment procedures so that they:**
(Paragraph 19; 40; 65; 99)

- help teachers use the information to better inform their planning;
- help provide work for pupils of all abilities which is closely matched to their capabilities.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	9	43	44	4		

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)	15	154
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	60

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	52

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	13	7	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	15	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (60)	80 (66)	85 (82)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	17	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (81)	85 (91)	100 (84)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	12	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	5
	Girls	9	7	7
	Total	16	13	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (64)	62 (59)	57 (49)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	12	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (72)	62 (67)	67 (82)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	144
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	10	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.7
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53.8

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	0.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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Total income	394,383
Total expenditure	388,860
Expenditure per pupil	2,235
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,491
Balance carried forward to next year	33,014

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31		4	
My child is making good progress in school.	68	26		2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	37	2		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	40	11	8	
The teaching is good.	74	20	4	2	
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	31	6		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	13	4		2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	15	2		
The school works closely with parents.	67	28	4	2	
The school is well led and managed.	83	11	4	2	
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	19		2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	36		11	2

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents. Parents are very supportive and think highly of the school. They are particularly pleased with the care their children receive.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. Due to a fall in pupil numbers the school has reduced the number of children admitted to its nursery so that it is only open in the mornings. At the time of the inspection there were only 15 part-time children in the nursery, some of whom were admitted during the previous school term in the last school year. The children are taught by a teacher and nursery nurse. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the school's reception class. It is helping the children to settle into routines and to socialise with other children. It is also having a positive impact on their language development as well as their personal and social development.
58. When the children are admitted to the nursery the majority start with well below average language and communication skills. Most of the children find it difficult to communicate, often speaking in phrases rather than sentences. The staff assess the children after spending three weeks in school. These assessments indicate that personal, social and communication skills are well below the standard expected for their age. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is very limited and their physical and creative development are under-developed.
59. Nearly all the children transfer to full-time education in the school's reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five years of age. Up to 30 children are admitted in the nursery and at the time of the inspection, which took place in the second week of the new school year, 17 out of the 21 children in the school's reception class had attended the nursery.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. From a very low baseline when they first start school in the nursery the children make good progress in this area of their development. By the time they complete their reception year the majority of children are achieving the early learning goals in this area. The teaching in the nursery is satisfactory, it enables the children to develop in confidence and build good relationships with other children. In the reception class the skilful intervention of both the teacher and nursery nurse helps all the children to behave well, listen to others and to respect the feelings of other children in a group.
61. In both the nursery and reception class the children co-operate with each other, participate willingly in role-play, sharing resources and helping each other by taking turns and working together. The inspection took place very early in the school year with the reception children experiencing their first week of full-time education. The teacher and nursery nurse work very hard to help the children sustain concentration when supervising small groups. The adults in both the nursery and reception class are good role models for the children and are constantly vigilant when correcting or modifying a child's behaviour. For example, when children are upset, the adults quickly come to their assistance, offering re-assurance and encouraging other children to help and support in a group. The school is successful in reinforcing a strong moral code, teaching the children the right way to behave and rewarding them if they help other children or co-operate in a group.

62. The adults are successful in encouraging the children to become independent. For example, in the nursery they are taught to tidy away and look after equipment. In the reception class the adults were particularly successful in helping the children to dress and undress for a dance lesson. Given that this was their very first dance session, the children quickly learned to get ready for their lesson, putting away their clothes neatly on tables and hanging their bags over their chairs.

Communication, language and literacy

63. The nursery children are only just getting used to talking to other children in role-play and other activities. Most are unable to hold a pen or crayon correctly and have very little experience of handling books. They make satisfactory progress when the teacher reads a story or teaches them a nursery rhyme. In the reception class the teaching is helping the children to make good progress because the adults talk to the children in a much more focused way so that the children learn to listen to instructions and respond accordingly. For example, in the reception class, the lessons are planned so that every day there is focused discussion in a large group and also during group work where up to five children are introduced to characters in a story book using a recently introduced commercial reading scheme.
64. In the nursery, the children are learning to negotiate during natural discussion in the supermarket role-play area. They enjoy sharing different roles, for example, the cashier works out how much change his customer needs while the customers point to items and begin to construct sentences logically. However, the adults in the nursery allow some sessions to drift on for too long without sufficient focus for the children or intervention by adults with missed opportunities to develop the children's spoken skills further. In the reception class, the children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in language development because the adults plan daily focused language sessions. These enable all the children to develop their spoken English clearly and logically. For example, the reception teacher has established a very good rapport with the children when sharing the Big Book "The lost teddy". There is very effective teaching which ensures that every opportunity is given for the nursery nurse and herself to assess the children's use of language using quick reference assessment sheets which include specific prompts and stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The children are making good progress in the reception class because the teaching involves the children in a wide range of language. They handle books, question what is happening and the adults model good language by providing clear instructions and a focus for all the speaking, listening, reading and writing activities planned for each day.
65. In the nursery the teaching is satisfactory, the adults prepare a variety of activities in each area so the children learn to drop into areas and become accustomed to routines. The staff encourage the children to explain what they are doing but this does not always involve sufficient questioning by the teacher or nursery nurse. There are some examples of focused discussion, for example, when the teacher sits with a small group of children on the writing table and encourages them to make marks on large paper with a marker pen. Although the planning is well set out with all areas of learning included for the week, insufficient attention is given to assessing what the children experience on a daily basis so it is not always clear what the children are learning and how they are developing their language skills.
66. In the reception class the teaching is good, it is more successful in promoting independent thinking. All the children are at a very early stage of language development but are quickly learning to distinguish print from illustration in books. They can handle books and talk about what is happening in different parts of a story. The teaching builds up logically during the

week so that all the reception children learn to recognise individual letters and letter sounds. As a result, all the children make good progress in speaking, listening and reading development. In the nursery the children are given early writing experiences by making marks on paper using crayons or marker pens. In the reception class the children quickly learn to write for a specific purpose, for example, writing their own names and recognising labels or drawings they have made. The school has not adopted a coherent policy for teaching writing so that in both the nursery and reception class the characteristics of a cursive style or print style are not always pointed out to the children when attempting to write their first letters. The children have made good progress but their level of attainment is below average by the time they start Year 1.

Mathematical development

67. In both the nursery and reception class the children make satisfactory progress. Most of the children are unable to recognise numbers although reception children can count to five and some of them up to ten. The majority recognise simple shapes such as squares, triangles and circles and can match similar shapes of different sizes by arranging them into related groups.
68. On entry to the nursery the large majority of children do not recognise numbers or simple shapes. The activities set for them by the adults provide opportunities for the children to handle shapes, count and sort numbers as well as identify how many objects there are in a group. They make satisfactory progress when adults intervene and encourage the children to think about a specific number up to five. In the reception class, there are more counting activities, often led by an adult, and these help the children to build on their knowledge of numbers by recognising them in print and counting out or sorting groups of objects using numbers up to ten. The teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning, helping the children to develop their mathematical language through stories, counting songs like “The speckled frogs” song, rhymes and practical tasks using table top construction toys. By the time the children finish the reception year they have made satisfactory progress from a very low baseline as a result of the teaching but are still achieving below average for their age towards the early learning goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. When the children first start school in the nursery and reception class their general knowledge is very basic. Many children are unable to describe their journey to school and many do not recognise some common fruits and vegetables displayed on a poster or in a book. There are very few opportunities for them to use a computer resulting in most pupils unable to recognise symbols on the keyboard or control the computer mouse.
70. In the reception class the children talk about their pets and how to care for them. At the time of the inspection the children were experiencing their first week of full-time education and were learning to settle into routines using a range of construction toys and equipment in the sand and water area. They have very limited knowledge or experience of independent play so that it is difficult for them to focus on specific observations when filling up a container with sand for example.
71. In the nursery the focus is on the topic “Myself” with some good activities involving the children in face painting. The nursery nurse asks the children to focus on the colour of their eyes, hair, mouth and nose. Reception children have made faces using paper plates and can identify specific facial features. In both the nursery and reception class there are few

examples of learning aids, such as magnifying glasses, or pictures of animal habitats, to encourage the children to think about the world around them. Although the children make satisfactory progress, especially in designing and making skills, they are achieving well below average standards in exploring, investigating and information technology. By the time they are in Year 1 their level of attainment is below that expected for their age.

72. Through stories, prayers and religious education the children make good progress in developing an appreciation of the Christian faith and other world faiths and cultures. This aspect falls outside the remit of this inspection because the school is a Catholic Voluntary Aided school. However, it is obvious from the daily routines, the opportunities for prayer and reflection and the more formal planning of religious education that the children are benefiting from these experiences and make good progress as a result in these aspects towards the early learning goals.

Physical development

73. The daily outdoor play sessions in the nursery enable the children to make good progress using wheeled toys and large apparatus. Reception children receive a balanced programme of dance, gymnastics and physical construction in the classroom which enables them to make good progress in the development of their physical skills. The reception teacher uses a recorded radio programme which includes music and movement instructions as a prompt for the children in their dance lessons. She intervenes by stopping the tape and helping the children to focus on specific movements. As a result the children learn to mime and improvise body movements well, developing an increasing awareness of their bodies and exploring different methods when travelling, jumping, rolling and landing. They improvise life on a farm by imagining they are driving a tractor. The children develop a good sense of space, avoiding bumping into others in the hall while moving. They learn to co-operate in a large group as they hold hands in a circle and move around in time to music. The teaching in this area of learning is good as it enables the children to quickly develop a sense of space, to use small and large equipment, tools and materials with safety and control. As a result the children are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals in the development of their physical skills.

Creative development

74. In this area of learning the children in both the nursery and reception class make satisfactory progress towards achieving the early learning goals. During the Key Stage 1 singing session the reception children joined in for the first time in the school year. They made good progress because the teaching enabled them to participate in music and song, learning simple rhymes and songs such as “Three little fishes” and “Run rabbit run”.
75. In both the nursery and reception class the children are given daily opportunities for role-play, movement, painting and printing, water and sand play. A good range of materials are used to make face masks, shape prints and observational drawings. In the nursery the children are sometimes asked what they see, how they feel, during adult-led discussion or practical activity such as the face painting. The children have very little vocabulary or knowledge of texture, colour, shape and space so early in the school year. In the reception class the teaching is very clearly focused on evoking discussion so the children are constantly questioned about what they are doing, what they feel and touch and how to improve their model, picture or marks on paper. As a result the children make good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in their creative development. They are likely to fall short of the expected

standards by the end of the foundation stage because they started from such a low baseline on entry to the reception year.

ENGLISH

76. Inspection findings reveal that attainment for the majority of pupils in the present Year 2 class is below average and in Year 6 is broadly average. The progress made by the pupils is satisfactory overall, with good progress made in reading throughout the school. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are well supported by both teaching and support staff. Their individual education plans set out small, attainable targets to improve their language skills.
77. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. In Year 1 the teaching effectively develops the pupils' skills in listening to adults and to other pupils resulting in a good level of achievement. Many of the Year 1 pupils have difficulty in using spoken language to express themselves but with effective teaching the youngest pupils increasingly become more confident in speaking to their peer group. As they move through the classes, they make satisfactory progress in expressing their thoughts and opinions in an increasingly clear and mature way.
78. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are reading in line with expectations for pupils of their age. Year 1 pupils learn to match spoken words to the written or printed word and that we read from left to right. They are given good opportunities to read through songs, nursery rhymes and sharing books. In the shared text work of the Literacy lessons the youngest pupils enjoy the Big Book and can use phonics along with picture and context clues to help with their understanding of the story. Year 2 pupils know many key words and have an appropriate range of skills which enable them to tackle unfamiliar words. The majority of pupils make good use of these strategies when they are reading independently. By the time they are eleven most pupils are reading with reasonable fluency and expression, and they talk about their preferences for particular authors and titles. They recognise different types of punctuation in print and are able to explain how it assists the reader. The pupils' individual progress in reading is assessed and monitored carefully but in some classes pupils are reading books that are not suited or matched to their ability level.
79. The pupils' achievements in writing are satisfactory in both key stages, but are lower than those achieved in their reading. The time and opportunities provided for them to complete written work, particularly extended pieces of writing, are limited. This happens not only in the literacy lessons but also in other subjects, where appropriate opportunities are limited in developing the pupils' writing. Year 2 pupils are beginning to extend their writing and use words and phrases more clearly to communicate their ideas and meaning. Higher attaining pupils' writing is well-organised and imaginative, with basic grammar, spelling and punctuation usually correct. They develop their ideas through sequencing their sentences clearly. Most pupils only use a limited number of forms of writing but are beginning to increase the range of vocabulary that they use. Sentences are more thoughtfully organised with capital letters and full stops. Spelling of simple words is accurate. They have developed handwriting that is legible, with accurately shaped letters but no pupils join their writing other than when practising to do so in handwriting sessions. For lower attaining pupils, their writing has no demarcation between words and needs continual teacher support, to help them clearly form words in simple

sentences. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils' writing clearly conveys meaning and is varied and interesting. Imaginative vocabulary is used and sentences are organised into paragraphs. Punctuation, spelling and grammar are usually accurate. Basic punctuation and spelling are usually accurate when writing. Their handwriting is generally fluent, joined and legible. Lower attaining pupils improve the organisation of their written work and sentences are more effectively ordered. They increasingly use more varied vocabulary and simple punctuation and spelling are usually accurate.

80. In both key stages the pupils have only limited opportunities to use a word processor as an aid to writing. Examples of Year 1 pupils and Year 5 pupils using computer programs to support literacy were observed. In both cases learning assistants effectively developed these.
81. The pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in English are good at both key stages. The pupils are interested and enthusiastic about their work and they listen and concentrate well. They work co-operatively and most pupils can work independently when required.
82. The overall quality of teaching is good. The teachers have sound subject knowledge, particularly in developing speaking, listening and reading. They use praise appropriately and positive relationships are being effectively formed at the beginning of the year. Effective routines are being established. The planning of the Literacy Hour is thorough and the teachers have successfully adapted it to meet the needs of their pupils. The teachers have clear objectives for each lesson that build upon previous work and the groups are organised effectively with extension activities provided for the higher attaining pupils. These objectives are shared with pupils verbally but are not reinforced by presenting them in a written form. The teachers use the Big Books and other texts effectively. They encourage the less confident readers and draw attention to the text. Questions are used well to extend the pupils' thinking and to encourage closer observation of the use of vocabulary and punctuation. For instance in the Year 1 class pupils are highly motivated to develop their knowledge of sounds through rhymes. In Year 2, pupils were identifying correctly the use of apostrophes and exclamation and question marks, in 'We're going on a bear hunt' and 'Goodnight, Goodnight'. The teachers use a variety of teaching methods. In Year 3, the teacher effectively developed with the pupils a story based upon different characters. In Year 4, the teaching engages the pupils in useful discussion about 'plot', 'story' and 'characters'. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 were helped to generate their ideas for story lines. Whilst in Year 5 the pupils were constructing story openings. Most pupils had ideas that they wanted to develop but many pupils found it difficult to express their ideas as clearly in their writing. The teachers have at least satisfactory expectations, and in some cases, good. In Year 6, the pupils discuss an extract from 'Oliver Twist'. The teacher effectively challenges the pupils to discuss in greater depth the significant ideas in the text and how they differ from the film version. The teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously but the quality of comments varies. The best practice includes oral feedback to pupils about their work and written comments which include points for improvement. Formal assessments of the pupils' attainment and progress are carried out but the information gained is not used either to plan further work, or to set targets for specific groups of pupils. Individual targets for improvement are not set.
83. Planning and teaching in English is based on the National Literacy Strategy Framework supported by commercially produced textbooks. At the time of the last inspection, two of the key issues centred around improving the quality and consistency of monitoring, evaluating and assessing of the quality of pupils' achievements. In English, these issues have been largely and effectively addressed but a few improvements still need to be made. For example, the teachers now use a common framework when planning for the Literacy Hour. Regular

assessments of all pupils' reading and spelling are made and used and this must partly account for the improvement in these areas. In writing, assessments are not as well developed and in order to raise standards further this needs to be done. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and hard working but her opportunities to monitor of the quality of teaching and learning in other classes is still underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICS

84. Inspection findings show that the standards achieved by the pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are below average. The teaching is mainly satisfactory, as a result the pupils make satisfactory progress in their numeracy work. End of key stage test results show year on year improvement in numeracy standards with more pupils achieving standards that are higher than expected for their age. Compared with schools nationally the proportion of pupils achieving these high standards is below average. Compared with the very low level of attainment when they first start school the pupils' make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of numbers because the teaching of numeracy, using the recently introduced National Numeracy Strategy, is having a positive impact on standards. In other aspects of mathematics the pupils' progress varies because the teaching does not provide consistent opportunities for the pupils to investigate problems involving shapes, space and measures. Nor are pupils doing enough work related to data handling so that when the pupils are required to plan their own investigations, organising and choosing the most appropriate resources, the level of attainment is below average.
85. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is below average. The pupils have made good progress in their number skills since starting school and satisfactory progress in all other areas of mathematics. In Year 2 the pupils can order numbers and recognise the value of tens and units when using their digit cards to represent numbers up to 100. The pupils have been taught a good range of mental and oral number skills to help them work out simple number bonds quickly. All numeracy lessons begin with an appropriate quick-fire mental recall session and these are helping the pupils to increase their understanding of number facts. In all the lessons observed during the inspection the pupils respond well to their number work but were not given sufficient opportunities to investigate problems independently or to organise their thinking using a range of practical resources. The majority of Year 2 pupils can use a 100 square to count back or forwards. Only a few pupils can translate number problems presented in words, for example, "one less than 40" or "how many tens are there in 21?" and the majority of pupils rely on prompts from the teacher before tackling mathematical problems practically.
86. In Key Stage 2 the opportunities for the pupils to develop their investigative skills in mathematics varies from unsatisfactory to good and is not consistent across the key stage. In a good Year 6 numeracy lesson for example, the majority of pupils achieve well because they are given time to investigate numbers using dice, digit cards and challenging worksheets which present problems in more complex forms. The pupils could use related number facts when halving and doubling to calculate more complex multiplication. Many pupils could see the relationship between 59×8 and 59×4 by calculating the simpler problem then doubling the answer to work out the more complex problem. In a good Year 3 mathematics lesson the teacher provided plenty of opportunities for the pupils to calculate and estimate using note

books resulting in the pupils working more purposefully on their understanding of number bonds and relationships between addition and subtraction facts. In Year 4 the pupils have developed a good knowledge of number facts to 100 and understand how many tens there are in a two-digit number when counting on along a number line. In Year 5 the pupils respond accordingly to the teacher's questions about halving and doubling but there are insufficient opportunities for them to plan their own investigations with some more able pupils not being sufficiently challenged in the numeracy work as a result.

87. The pupils with special educational needs receive additional support when they are withdrawn from normal lessons and as a result make satisfactory progress. Most of the work is focused on developing their reading and language skills so that they can cope with work in normal lessons across a range of subjects. For all pupils, the scrutiny of their previous work in mathematics shows that there are very few opportunities in lessons to investigate shapes, measures and data handling. There is no evidence that information technology is used sufficiently to support pupils with data handling for example. Most of the work done in mathematics that is not related directly to numeracy is very much teacher-led and often involves the assimilation of facts about shapes and their properties. In this respect the pupils are not making as much progress in their application of mathematics across a broad range of topics as they are in their knowledge of number facts.
88. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching in both key stages. All teachers use the recommended good practice set out in the National Numeracy Strategy. Most of the teaching is clearly focused on improving numeracy skills. The activities planned for the pupils during the inspection were aimed at all the pupils in the lesson with very few lessons having planned extension activities for the more able. In some lessons, the introductions lack pace resulting in many pupils marking time while the teacher labours a particular point. For example, during some quick-fire mental arithmetic sessions the activities were too repetitive or cumbersome with some pupils fumbling with digit cards or taking too long to answer, holding up the flow of the lesson. In three good lessons the teacher kept the pace going by organising enjoyable and varied mental arithmetic tasks using key numbers and flash cards to keep up the pace and challenge the pupils to think for themselves using the strategies previously taught. In Year 3 and Year 6 the teaching offered the pupils many opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding with practical investigations, rough working out and experimentation. In other parts of the school investigative mathematics is limited and often involves adult-led activities where the pupils respond to questions, wait their turn or allow others to answer for them. The most effective lessons, amounting to approximately one third of all the teaching seen, ensure that the more able pupils are continually being challenged with crisp introductions and rigorous attention to detail as all pupils use a variety of methods to calculate problems. In these lessons there are opportunities for the pupils to explain how they work out a problem, resulting in other pupils learning a range of strategies.
89. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection especially now that all teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy as a planning tool. This has provided more consistency in the way that numeracy is taught resulting in the pupils making good progress in number skills. The quality of teaching has improved with fewer unsatisfactory lessons than last time. The mathematics co-ordinator has no time outside of her teaching commitment to monitor standards and to track the progress made by pupils across the school. Nor are there sufficient opportunities for the co-ordinator to look at pupils' books, monitor the planning or to work alongside teachers. The headteacher teaches for half a day every day and this makes it difficult for him to monitor standards as thoroughly as he would wish. In this respect the

monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and the mathematics curriculum are unsatisfactory. The school is aware of the need to target individual pupils, including the more able pupils in order that more of them achieve standards higher than expected for their age. The teaching of numeracy is much better now that the Numeracy Strategy is being incorporated into every teacher's planning. This has helped the school to improve standards in numeracy in end of key stage tests year on year. Other aspects of mathematics are not receiving the same consistency in teachers' planning and this is evident in the pupils' workbooks. As a result the pupils are not being given enough scope to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to practical problems and investigations.

SCIENCE

90. At the end of both key stages the standard of pupils work in science is below what is expected for their age. This indicates a fall in standards from the time of the first inspection when standards were judged to be average. A limiting factor is the few opportunities the pupils have to design and carry out their own observations, experiments and investigations. Also the over-use of work sheets limits the ways in which the pupils develop their scientific vocabulary and how they record their findings. However, the school has begun to address some of the weaknesses in the science curriculum by increasing the time allocations for teaching of the subject to above the national average amount of time.
91. There has been some improvement in the attainment of pupils aged eleven recently. The National Curriculum assessments for these pupils in the year 2000 indicate that the cohort of pupils achieved standards of attainment in the subject that was considerably better than those of previous years. More pupils than in previous years reached the higher levels of attainment (Level 5), which was an improvement on last year's test results when no pupils had higher than average attainment. However, despite recent improvements, discussions with pupils indicate that their level of attainment is insecure in many aspects of scientific investigation.
92. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials, life and living processes and forces but they use a limited range investigation and testing skills. They are able to offer some brief, but not always accurate, ideas about the dangers of electricity or what condition plants and seeds need to grow best. The contribution of ideas as to why things happened is very limited. Discussion with pupils who have recently completed Year 2 indicates a weak understanding of scientific enquiry and poor language development. The opportunities for pupils to design and execute their own experiments are very limited. The presentation of work is sometimes restricted by the use of worksheets that require little more than colouring in and limit the development of pupils' own recording skills. The pupils' work is often observational and they rarely draw conclusions about what they have observed. The sample of pupils' recent work indicates that all pupils in a class regardless of their previous attainment undertake the same or very similar work. Therefore the level of challenge is not always as high as it could be and does not consistently extend the more able pupils.
93. The samples of pupils' recent work indicates that in Year 1 they find out what their skeleton is like, what their body can do and how they use their senses. They have planted sunflowers and investigated how forces are used to move things. This work is often of better quality than that of older pupils. Where the pupils have first hand involvement in activities through growing their

own seed or finding out about their sense of hearing, their understanding is better than when they simply observe the work of others.

94. By the age of eleven the higher attaining pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to conduct a fair test but many average and lower attaining pupils struggle to understand how they can conduct their simple review tasks fairly. For instance, when reviewing their use of forces several pupils struggle to explain that the amount of push they place on a ball or balloon will influence how much this will then bob out of the water. Many pupils lack the knowledge or confidence to use scientific vocabulary. This is seen when discussing the use of magnets and the pupils are unable to explain that the magnets attract or repel other magnets. The sample of recent work indicates that pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to make an electrical circuit and the function of many internal body parts. They have worked on a healthy eating topic and the use of magnets, how friction occurs and where light comes from.
95. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, although the rate of progress is slightly better in Year 1 than in Year 2. This is generally linked to the expectations placed on the pupils. This is seen where pupils in Year 1 learn about their bodies through reference to words, models, pictures and their own bodies. The teacher stresses the use of the words specific to the bones and skeleton and, as a result, this boosts the progress made. However, overall the progress made in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of investigational and experimental activities is unsatisfactory.
96. The quality of learning in Key Stage 2 is also satisfactory overall. Pupils make reasonable progress in their understanding of materials, forces and life and living processes. However, a similar pattern of unsatisfactory progress is continued in aspects of experimental and investigational learning and the use of scientific language. A large proportion of the older pupils have few ideas of how to conduct an experiment without following instructions. The quality of learning is generally better in Year 3 where a more imaginative range of tasks and open-ended investigations are conducted. In Year 4 whilst most pupils undertake the same or similar activities, such as making a simple electrical circuit, the sample of pupils' work indicates the challenge in lessons improves during the year. In Year 5 the pupils sometimes make unsatisfactory progress in finding out about the earth, sun and moon due to the limited information that they are given. This fails to teach the pupils anything that they do not already know and limits the progress that they can make. However, over a longer period of time their progress is generally satisfactory. Occasionally the lack of challenge in recording activities limits the progress of literacy skills. This is exemplified where pupils are often asked to record their observations in simple pictures. This places few demands on the pupils.
97. Pupils with special educational needs throughout the school generally make satisfactory progress that matches their level of attainment. The school has made some attempt to provide support for pupils with special educational needs in science but this is not extensive and pupils struggle to acquire a scientific vocabulary.
98. The teaching is satisfactory overall. The management of pupils is mostly good and pupils respond by showing positive attitudes towards learning, although some lack the confidence to offer ideas or answers in discussions. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good. Whilst teachers have a reasonable level of subject knowledge their understanding of the need to conduct open-ended investigations where pupils make choices in the uses of equipment, the methods to use and how to record their observations, is weak. In Year 4 some of the work is insufficiently challenging, after making a simple electrical circuit, some pupils record what they have done by simply inserting given words onto a worksheet. The sample of work indicates

that this also happens in Year 6. The teaching is better when the pupils are encouraged to use their own language to record what they have observed. Examples of this were seen in Years 1 and 3. On occasion the teaching is unsatisfactory, for example in Year 5, due to the ineffective use of time, the heavy emphasis on behaviour management and insufficient information given to pupils. Teachers do not share the learning objectives of the science lessons with pupils and in some very long activities the aims are unclear to the pupils.

99. The use of both formal and informal assessment is at an early stage of development and is unsatisfactory overall. The marking of pupils' work is very brief and often fails to indicate to pupils exactly what they should do to improve their work. Verbal feedback to pupils is satisfactory. Whilst the school has appropriate procedures to assess the quality of pupils' work the progress made in the use of this information to inform planning is unsatisfactory. This has failed to identify the lack of open-ended investigation in many tasks. The school has not yet introduced systematic analysis of assessment data or the practice of using information to support teaching through targeted action, and work planned at different levels of attainment. The subject co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitoring the quality of planning, teaching and learning. This is unsatisfactory and has allowed a lack of challenge to remain unidentified in some year groups and for information technology to be under-used in the subject.

ART

100. By the time they leave the school pupils attain standards that are below what is expected for their age. This indicates a fall in attainment since the previous inspection. There are few pupils with a good level of skill in drawing, painting or other art techniques. The pupils' artwork is often attractively displayed and this masks the unsatisfactory and sometimes poor quality of the work. From observations of the pupils' sketchbooks and work displayed around the school, the quality of work is often that of much younger pupils with little or no advancement in the skills required. Pupils undertake a very narrow range of activities in simple drawing and painting with few opportunities to find out about texture, pattern, line and tone, shape, form and space. There is little work produced in three dimensions.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are often not able to mix and apply paint fairly and evenly. Recent work in Year 2 shows the heavy-handed application of ready mixed paint in unidentifiable pictures of "a storm" or "the beach". An evaluation of pupils' work on display indicates that pupils have insufficient opportunities to experiment with colour mixing and investigation of materials. Whilst the work of pupils in Year 1 is attractively displayed much of this is simply adding colour or pattern to an adult drawn butterfly, flower or boat shape. There is little evidence in the key stage of the development of pupils' drawing skills and few pupils are able to draw objects with a fair degree of accuracy or style. The use of sketchbooks across the school is weak and contributes little to the development of the pupils' drawing skills. Teachers rarely use the sketchbooks to assess pupils' progress. The quality of learning and the progress that pupils make in art is unsatisfactory.
102. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are rarely able to adequately express their ideas and feelings through their drawings and in painting. The sample of pupils' work indicates that all the work is the same or similar with little opportunity to experiment with a range of materials and tools. The work on display often appears to be that of younger pupils and even when attractively presented, such work, including that in the style of Monet, shows a limited increase in levels of skill. Pupils' sketchbooks indicate that few teachers encourage the pupils to critically evaluate

their own work and this limits the development of an art vocabulary. Few pieces of work in sketchbooks are dated or titled and this makes it difficult for pupils, teachers or parents to assess what progress is made. Overall the quality of learning and progress that the pupils make is inadequate and unsatisfactory. However, during the inspection in the few lessons observed attainment was generally appropriate as a result of better and more specifically focussed teaching.

103. Evidence from lessons and from pupils' work on display indicates that pupils have satisfactory attitudes to the subject. The behaviour of pupils is good and all pupils treat the school's resources with care and respect. Whilst work on display indicates that pupils take care over their efforts few try really hard to produce artwork that fully reflects their abilities. Many pupils are easily satisfied by work that shows only limited artistic merit.
104. Overall the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory on the evidence of previous art work, although some very good teaching was seen in the inspection. The sample of pupils' work indicates that teachers demonstrate an insecure knowledge of the subject and have low expectations of the pupils. This is exemplified in the over-involvement of adults in the work of younger pupils, which inhibits the development of imaginative and creative skills. In a more effective lesson in Year 6, well-structured activities of 'people in action' promote an interest in observational outline sketches of pupils performing and recording an action. This interests pupils and has a positive impact on their motivation and learning.
105. Pupils with special educational needs are sometimes supported in lessons but the unsatisfactory progress that they make reflects that of other pupils. There is currently little or no assessment of pupils' attainment. This is an important and limiting factor on the unsatisfactory progress made as few if any staff are aware of the slow development of specific art skills. The use of sketchbooks is under-developed and no portfolios of artwork were seen. This limits the effectiveness of any informal assessment.
106. The management of the subject is poor. Until very recently there has been only limited guidance and support for colleagues on the appropriate development of knowledge and skills. Resources are satisfactory but are not used in an imaginative range of activities. The co-ordinator has had no opportunities to monitor planning, teaching or learning across the school. There have been few opportunities taken to monitor the quality of artwork on display around the school and give feedback to teachers. The use of information technology to support learning is under-developed and unsatisfactory. Where pupils study the work of well known artists these are mainly European and there is little evidence of pupils studying the work of artists from different cultures and this limits the pupils' knowledge and interest in multi-cultural art. The school recognises that the new requirements of the National Curriculum have only just been introduced and plans to address this.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. The discussions with teachers and pupils about their work and an examination of a limited range of pupils' previous work in Key Stage 1 indicates that the pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of the subject. However, evidence for progress in Key Stage 2 is too limited to make a judgement. Only one lesson in Year 2 was observed. The inspection of the school took place in the second week of the school year.

108. The pupils in both key stages talk with interest about their work. They discuss how they develop their initial ideas and record these. In Key Stage 1 a group of pupils discussed how they designed and made a coat of many colours, using a variety of textiles. In Key Stage 2 the pupils last year had made bridge constructions and musical instruments. The limited range of work on display indicates that the pupils take reasonable care in the finished product. On the evidence available the Key Stage 1 pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to plan, to select materials, and to consolidate and extend their skills. They are beginning to record their ideas satisfactorily. This is an improvement since the previous report. In the Year 2 class, the teacher was introducing the pupils to a topic on vehicles. They discussed why we need vehicles and the range of different types of vehicles. The teacher used an interesting range of pictures and models to develop the learning objectives. The pupils will design and make a vehicle suitable for a given purpose, using reclaimed materials. However, as pupils get older, teachers do not provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to extend their skills in evaluating their work. Older pupils' designs do not show sufficient detail as to the stages to be gone through and the tools and materials to be used. The use of resistant materials and electrical and mechanical components are under-developed.
109. The school has adopted the national guidelines as the basis for their scheme of work. This has been put in place since the previous inspection and from this the teachers' planning clearly identifies a range of design and make projects that the pupils will be involved in. This is an improvement since the last inspection, but the school does not have a means of monitoring the progression in skills and knowledge for each year group. Resources are not sufficient for teaching the breadth of this subject. The subject co-ordinator has very limited knowledge of the work in the school.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Standards in geography are average across the school. This indicates an improvement in some aspects of pupils' knowledge of geographical skills and understanding. The time allocated to the subject is appropriate and the subject co-ordinator has a good grasp of the areas for development. She has worked with colleagues to address the weaknesses in some previously identified areas.
111. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of their local area and are able to produce a sketch of their house and of their journey to school. They have also undertaken a small number of activities on contrasting regions. However, the sample of pupils recent work in Year 2 indicates a much heavier emphasis on history than geography, with some topic books containing less than one third the number of pieces of geography work than of history. Pupils in Year 2 make only slow and inconsistent progress and the quality of learning is barely satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 have undertaken a better range of activities including drawing simple routes and plans of their homes and the school area. They have undertaken a good study of water including the journey of a river and the water cycle. They have studied different types of transport and are able to decide which type of transport is most suitable for certain journeys. The quality of learning of these pupils is good, as is the breadth of curriculum coverage and rate of progress made.
112. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' skills in using their local surroundings for fieldwork is satisfactory and older pupils study the Lake District, when they visit Keswick in Cumbria, as a contrasting locality. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of weather and transport

systems. Mapping skills are satisfactory and some pupils can use four figure co-ordinates to locate places on maps. However, the study of contrasting localities is limited and the school misses many opportunities to develop cultural understanding through the curriculum. The pupils' understanding of environmental issues is satisfactory and pupils have considered improvements to the school grounds and local area.

113. In both key stages the pupils' technical vocabulary is very restricted. For example, in Key Stage 1 the pupils were unable to distinguish between a town and a country that they have visited on holiday and in both key stages the weak recording skills of pupils are a factor in limiting attainment at higher levels.
114. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good especially in Year 1 and Year 3. Teachers have good subject knowledge and an understanding of how to make the activities interesting and relevant to the pupils' lives. This was noted in a good Year 1 lesson when pupils were introduced to Barnaby Bear and discussed the items he would need to take on holiday. The good use of open questions prompted pupils to discuss their ideas and experiences and develop their thinking further. Similarly in Year 3, pupils compare life in ancient and modern Greece linking activities in history and geography and making links with pupils' recent holidays abroad. The teacher used quite challenging questions to motivate the class and resources were used well to heighten interest and help the pupils make progress. Staff use published guidelines for their planning, and the time allocated to the subject is satisfactory. The school has created some meaningful links with other subjects such as history topics of travelling now and in the past. However, the use of information technology to support research and learning in the subject is unsatisfactory.
115. In both key stages there is some use of geographical vocabulary as pupils progress through the school. Few opportunities are provided for them to carry out their own research and the school library is under used. Progress in some activities is also affected by the over use of simple worksheets where the emphasis is on colouring in work. This kind of activity provides few challenges, especially for the higher attaining pupils and gives them little opportunity to apply any intellectual effort to their work. A few local visits are planned to help pupils acquire more knowledge and understanding in their learning and older pupils take part in the residential visit to Keswick in the Lake District. Literacy and numeracy skills are not always consistently developed, with opportunities for measuring or recording information often missed.
116. There has been no monitoring of planning, teaching or learning in the subject. This is unsatisfactory and has allowed some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations as well as the under-development of geographical vocabulary and information technology.

HISTORY

117. Standards in history are average in both key stages, with a small number of pupils throughout the school with higher levels of interest and attainment. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make mostly good progress in the development of their knowledge, skills and understanding from a low base and gradually develop an idea of the order of events in the past.
118. The sample of pupils' recent work indicates that the pupils take part in a well-balanced range of activities. Pupils in Year 2 have produced a good number of pieces of work starting by identifying how they have changed in their lives and then looking at life a hundred years ago.

Pupils look at clothes then and now and look at a range of different types of transport including penny-farthing bikes and old ships. They contrast these with current modes of transport. Pupils have some understanding of the lives of famous people including the first man on the moon and of George Stephenson. The quality of learning and progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is often good.

119. This good progress continues in Key Stage 2. Pupils show enthusiasm for handling artefacts as seen when pupils in Year 3 look at and discuss Greek artefacts, books and pictures from now and a long time ago. The sample of recent work by pupils in Year 6 indicates that they study life in Victorian times and can identify some of the differences in the life of rich and poor people then. They know about some aspects of Victorian entertainment and leisure and, after visiting Wigan Pier in Lancashire, take part in a quiz. Pupils in Year 5 study life in Tudor times and produce some satisfactory Tudor portraits of royalty.
120. The teaching of history is generally good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and attempt to make activities interesting for the pupils through the use of artefacts and activities that compare their lives with those of other historical periods. The management of the pupils is good and this promotes good attitudes to work resulting in good behaviour with pupils able to handle artefacts with care.
121. As in other subjects the lack of skills in speaking and listening and in recording what they find out limits the progress of many pupils. The pupils' limited experience, weak extended writing skills and lack of fluency in speech clearly show the difficulties they have in understanding and expressing their ideas of historical events and relating them to today. The history curriculum attempts to encourage the development of skills of historical questioning, close observation of artefacts and writing in a historical way.
122. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The scheme of work is appropriate, as is the allocation of time to the teaching of the subject. However, there are important weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation of planning, teaching and learning. There is currently no opportunity for the scrutiny of pupils' work. This has limited the identification of areas for development in historical vocabulary. The lack of use of information technology as a research tool and for the recording of data and information also limits possible progress.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

123. The pupils' attainment in both key stages is below national expectations by the end of both key stages and progress is unsatisfactory. This is largely because of the limited amount of time each pupil spends developing their information and communication technology (ICT) skills and the limited range of the ICT curriculum. Little improvement has been made since the last inspection, when ICT was said to be, "at an early developmental stage" and "The lack of a formal assessment programme and the absence of significant monitoring procedures ...". These have not improved but the school plans to use the additional funding from the National Grid for Learning project to supplement and improve information technology resources. In Years 1 and 5, some pupils were observed successfully using computer programs to help develop literacy skills with the effective support of learning assistants. These pupils use the computer keyboard and mouse with reasonable confidence and there is evidence of Year 2 pupils having used a "paint" graphics program with reasonable results. In Year 4, the pupils were given appropriate instruction in editing text, such as, changing font size and highlighting

text. There is also evidence of some use of basic word processing functions having been used developed when last year's oldest pupils produced a school newspaper as part of their induction at the local secondary school. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils have not made sufficient progress in improving their word processing skills and have only limited skills and knowledge in presenting text in a variety of ways. The curriculum is not sufficiently broad and in most aspects of the subject their achievements are unsatisfactory, largely because these are insufficiently taught.

124. Only one instance of direct teaching was observed during the inspection. Whilst most of the teachers have basic subject knowledge and plan to use the computers on a regular basis, there is lack of skills and confidence in teaching aspects of this subject. There is no means as yet of recording pupils' achievements. Planning indicates that computers are used regularly to support work across the whole curriculum but little evidence for it happening. Clear records of pupils' use of computers are not maintained in all classes. The pupils say they like using the computers but feel that they do not use them often enough.
125. There is no permanent subject co-ordinator at present. The school has recently improved the quality and number of computers and shortly after the inspection is to receive government funding to establish a computer suite and the staff will be having advice and training from local authority advisers.

MUSIC

126. Only two music lessons were observed, one in each key stage and a school assembly involving Key Stage 1 pupils singing. The pupils make satisfactory progress in music but standards are below those expected at the end of each key stage. The school makes good use of two part-time teachers who have musical expertise, including the teaching of singing and individual or group tuition for some pupils who are learning to play the guitar and flute.
127. The singing in assemblies varies from poor to satisfactory which very much depends on the way that singing is encouraged or taught. Music is not always played to accompany the pupils when entering or leaving assemblies and they are not made aware of different styles of recorded music or the contributions of different composers. During the Key Stage 1 singing lesson, led by one of the school's music specialists, the singing was much better than in a previous assembly. The music teacher taught the lesson skilfully and with enthusiasm. The pupils responded very well, making good progress learning new songs to the guitar accompaniment. The lesson enabled all the pupils, including the reception children who participated for the very first time, to focus on particular note and rhythms, singing in tune and in time, with enthusiasm and enjoyment.
128. In the Key Stage 2 lesson, the teacher managed to cope very well with the recently introduced music scheme which is aimed at supporting the teaching of music by non-specialists. The pupils recognised most of the percussion instruments on the music trolley although the glockenspiel was mistakenly identified as a xylophone. The pupils arranged the instruments into similar groups identifying the main characteristics of each instrument, how it is played and what sound it makes. The overall standards of music was below average for the age group, reflecting the overall standards across the school.

129. The music scheme is helping the school to incorporate music teaching into the curriculum and it is successful in helping non-music specialists to cope with the demands of the music curriculum. The school manages to provide a balanced programme of recorded music during dance and singing lessons and makes effective use of the part-time staff who have music expertise. The teaching by specialists is good and effective, especially the music tuition sessions after school and during lunch-times and the overall teaching by class teachers is satisfactory given that they are developing and increasing understanding of the new music scheme. In order to raise standards further the school should consider incorporating more in-service training using the recently introduced music scheme as the main resource.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. The school provides a full programme of physical education and standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of each key stage. The pupils make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 2 the pupils make good progress in swimming.
131. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make satisfactory progress in dance and gymnastics. Year 1 pupils are attentive during their dance lessons, listening to recorded music when prompted to improvise movements and imagining that they are working on a farm. The majority of pupils use a range of body movements, altering speed, height and levels in time to the music. Special educational needs pupils make good progress as they are fully involved in the lesson, trying very hard to mime their movements and improvise a sequence of actions. In a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, the pupils used the large apparatus to climb, roll, slide and jump, varying their movements and trying to change direction or change shape during movement. They land on the safety mats with care and some pupils show good control as they put together a sequence of movements all linked and completed with good quality landings.
132. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils during a very good dance lesson improvised movements to tell the story of 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes. Very good use was made of recorded music to create mood and the pupils responded to the very good teaching by improving their performance and making very good progress. Year 3 pupils were observed during their very first swimming lesson. They were shown how to enter and leave the pool safely, careful attention was given to ensuring that all the pupils listen to the swimming instructor's voice and the class teacher successfully led a group during a session where they were becoming accustomed to the feeling of buoyancy. In a good Year 6 games lesson in the school playground, the pupils were introduced to hockey skills as part of a series of lessons on invasion games. The pupils made good progress, becoming used to holding a hockey stick correctly and learning to control a ball by dribbling in and out of coloured markers.
133. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall and in Key Stage 2 it is good. Teachers plan their physical education lessons thoroughly and careful attention is given to safety and organisation so that the pupils are fully involved and active. The lessons have clear learning objectives which build up during each series of lessons. This enables the pupils to make progress and improve their level of performance and skill.
134. The headteacher manages the subject very well and has expertise in this area. The school has devised a scheme which has development and breadth so that all aspects of the subject are taught. There is a good programme of extra-curricular activities which includes netball, cross-country, football and cricket. The school also benefits from the voluntary football coaching

provided by a member of the governing body. The pupils also compete in organised football matches against other schools and the school has established good links with local companies, one of which sponsors the school's football kit. The headteacher is planning to incorporate some outward bound activities, such as orienteering, in the school grounds as part of the new environmental project which aims to improve the appearance of the school site.