

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Malvern, Worcestershire

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116901

Headteacher: Mrs A M Wallbank

Reporting inspector: Mrs Diane Lever
13132

Dates of inspection: 16 – 20 October 2000

Inspection number: 225196

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Newtown Road Malvern Worcestershire
Postcode:	WR14 1PF
Telephone number:	01684 573016
Fax number:	01684 891205
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Simpson
Date of previous inspection:	23 September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Diane Lever 13132	Registered inspector	Maths	What sort of school is it?
		Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
		Equal opportunities	What should the school do to improve further?
Bob Folks 19692	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?
Beryl Thomas 21816	Team inspector	English	How well are the pupils taught?
		Art	
		Geography	
		History	
		Under fives	
David Hartley 4192	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Information Technology	
		Design and technology	
		Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Staffordshire and Midlands Consortium

Mr I H Jones

Kingston Centre
Fairway
Stafford
ST16 3TW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 12
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	13 - 17
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	17 - 19
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	19- 22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22 - 23
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	23 - 24
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24 - 26
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26 - 27
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	29 - 33
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	34 - 53

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school of average size. Currently, it caters for 199 pupils between the ages of four and eleven years, of whom 111 are boys and 88 are girls. The school serves two Catholic parishes, and draws pupils from a more diverse area than other local schools. Pupils' attainment as they enter the Reception class is typically slightly above average. The number of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs reflects the national average, whilst the number with statements of special educational needs is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Almost all pupils come from a white British background and speak English as their first language. The school is emerging from a period of change and great uncertainty, which left it extremely vulnerable in terms of management and staffing issues.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school where teachers and pupils are now happy to come and work together. Its strong ethos for learning, high expectations of pupils and commitment to improvement are evident in all its work, and reflected in the high quality of much of the current teaching. From a very good start in the Reception class, pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, and achieve standards generally above those expected of seven year olds nationally. Pupils' rate of progress increases throughout much of their junior years, and they achieve standards well above those expected nationally by the age of eleven. The school is efficiently and effectively led and managed. The leadership of the recently appointed headteacher is a key factor in the school's current success. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards, especially in English and mathematics, have improved significantly in the past two terms.
- Provision for pupils under five, particularly the quality of teaching they receive, is very good.
- The quality of teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 was very good in all subjects seen.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships contribute significantly to their achievements.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities of high quality.
- An increasingly effective partnership with parents has now been established.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and management of the school.
- The staff, governors and parents share a passionate commitment to the school's future success.
- Improvement since the previous inspection, although generally recent, is significant.

What could be improved

- The time spent on each subject varies too much from class to class.
- Pupils' progress in their learning is not monitored systematically enough.
- Information about pupils' attainments is not analysed and used sufficiently to plan what they should learn next.
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work varies too much.

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

The school has many strengths which far outweigh the areas where improvement is needed.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in September 1996, it has gone through a period of turbulence and disruption. This includes significant changes of staff, at both senior level and among class teachers, half of whom have joined the school in the past two years. There has been much greater stability in this calendar year. The majority of the very significant improvements in its life and work have occurred since the appointment in May 2000 of the current headteacher, who has already established a sense of direction, unity and determination to succeed.

Standards in English, mathematics, science, history, art, design and technology, information technology and music have risen. Information technology is now used widely to support pupils' learning. Teaching is now of more consistent quality in all subjects and classes. The teaching of pupils under five years of age and in Years 4, 5 and 6 is a strength of the school. The school has made effective progress on tackling most of the key issues identified in the last inspection, particularly in the planning of English and mathematics and the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop personal learning skills. Information for parents, although now satisfactory, could be improved further. Assessment of pupils' attainments to guide the planning of their future learning has improved, but is still unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	D	A*	A
mathematics	A	C	A*	A
science	B	C	A	A

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

Pupils enter the Reception class with attainment levels generally around or slightly above the national average. They make very good progress and achieve standards above those expected for their age by the time they begin Year 1.

Over the past four years, there have been variations in the standards pupils achieve by the time they are seven. Whilst performance in English remained above the national average in 1999, it fell to a level reflecting the national average in mathematics. Outcomes of national assessments for 2000 generally confirm this picture. These recent results are reflected in the standards of work seen during the inspection. Pupils are making satisfactory progress. Current Year 2 pupils are generally attaining above the level expected nationally in mathematics. This represents an improvement.

In the junior years, although the school's overall performance in English, mathematics and science has remained generally above the national average, between 1996 and 1999 it fell in all subjects and markedly in English and science. However, results of national assessments for 2000 show that targets were met in all three subjects, and reflect a significant improvement, placing the school's performance well above both the national average and the performance of similar schools overall, and very high in English and mathematics compared with the national average. In all three subjects, the number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) is also well above both the national and similar schools' averages. The standards of work seen during the inspection indicate that, at this relatively early point in their final year, pupils are already working at a level above that expected for eleven year olds in English and mathematics, and in line with expectations for the end of the year in science. Standards in information technology and other subjects inspected are in line with national expectations, with the exception of history where they are above expectations for eleven year olds. Pupils' satisfactory rate of progress increases in Years 4, 5 and 6, due to the quality of teaching they experience.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are enthusiastic and want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are friendly, courteous and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships of all kinds are very good. Pupils accept responsibility for their learning and contribute well to school life through the duties and responsibilities they fulfil. They take the initiatives offered them confidently and work well with each other and adults.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Punctuality is good.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are a major strength which contribute significantly to their learning and the standards they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The inspectors observed fifty-two lessons. All class teachers were seen teaching. Teaching seen was of good quality overall, ranging from unsatisfactory to excellent. Thirty-eight per cent of teaching seen was very good or excellent. All the teaching in the Reception class, and most of that observed in Years 4 and 5, was of this quality. Sixty-three per cent of teaching was at least good. Just over seven per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory.

Teachers generally make very good use of time and support staff. Pupils are very well managed in the Reception class and most of Key Stage 2, but less successfully in Key Stage 1. Teachers' high expectations and good planning, matched in most cases to the needs of pupils of differing abilities, succeed in moving all pupils on at a good rate in their learning. Most of the teaching of English and mathematics is good, almost half of that seen being very good or excellent. Isolated examples of unsatisfactory teaching were observed in both subjects. The quality of teachers' marking, although variable, included examples of excellent practice. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well throughout the school. Pupils relish the opportunities to develop their independence, and apply effort in order to meet their teachers' high expectations. They acquire new knowledge and skills at a good rate, but are not always clear about how they can improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum, is broad and includes opportunities matched to the needs of all pupils. There is insufficient guidance for teachers on how much time to devote to each subject; consequently, time is used inconsistently and pupils' experience of different subjects is too variable.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and is a strength of the school. Activities challenge pupils and the quality of support they receive enables them to reach the individual targets set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development overall, and spiritual, moral and social development in particular, is very good, reflecting the strong Christian ethos and values that are central to the school's work. Provision for cultural development, whilst satisfactory, gives less emphasis to the cultures found in our society, other than pupils' own.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school attaches great importance to pupils' welfare. Procedures and practices are now in place in relation to child protection and health and safety issues, and the monitoring and support of pupils' behaviour and personal development. Although better than at the time of the previous inspection, the use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is unsatisfactory.

All subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education issues are included in pupils' learning programmes. The range of activities offered outside teaching time is very good. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in aspects of English and mathematics. An increasingly effective partnership with parents is now in place. Parents' views of the school are very positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong leadership and clear educational direction for the work of the school. This has led to recent but marked improvement in all areas. The roles of other senior staff have recently been clearly defined. This is enabling them to support the headteacher and contribute more effectively to the leadership and management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Several recently appointed governors strengthen the governing body by their diversity of knowledge and experience. Although some governors are still developing an understanding of their role, the governing body overall has a growing awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and fulfils its responsibilities appropriately.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Although recently appointed, the headteacher has a clear awareness of the school's potential for improvement, based on her monitoring and evaluation of its performance. This has enabled her, with staff and governors, to identify appropriate priorities for action and to implement strategic plans to improve provision and raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used appropriately to support the curriculum and pupils' progress. Good use is made of the considerable skills of support staff, to the benefit of the pupils.

The headteacher has the support of the staff, parents and governors in driving forward a challenging programme to secure improvement. The good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum, together with the adequacy of the accommodation and learning resources, are factors contributing to the school's success. The school applies the principles of best value to good effect.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children's enjoyment of school • The high expectations of the headteacher and staff • The good quality of teaching pupils experience • The school's support for pupils' personal development • The improved communication with parents and the growing partnership between home and school • The willingness of the staff to discuss issues concerning individual pupils • The strong leadership and management of the headteacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content and quality of written reports about pupils' progress • The range of extra-curricular activities available to younger pupils

The inspectors fully support the parents' views, other than the comment regarding extra-curricular activities. Given the limited number of staff, the range of such activities is impressive. However, the school plans in the near future to improve opportunities for younger pupils, in response to parents' views.

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school was inspected during the first half of the autumn term, and pupils had been in their present year groups for only six weeks. Most Reception class pupils were still engaged in an induction programme involving them in part-time attendance. Other than in English and mathematics, a limited amount of work from the current school year, and very little of the work from the previous year, was available. Judgements are based on analysis of the school's performance data, scrutiny of pupils' work, both in their books and on display, observation of fifty-two lessons, discussions with pupils and hearing them read, and discussions with staff and governors.
2. Standards in the school have improved markedly, albeit only recently. From 1996 onwards, standards in subjects measured by national assessments fell significantly until the year 2000, when this negative trend was overturned. Standards in English, mathematics, science, history, art, design and technology, information technology and music have now risen, in most cases to levels either in line with or above those found at the time of the last inspection. The available evidence indicates that recently pupils' rate of progress has increased overall, and especially in mathematics, art, information technology and design and technology.
3. As indicated by assessments carried out very soon after they enter school, pupils of five years of age and under demonstrate levels of attainment generally in line with or slightly above those found nationally. Such assessments carried out this term indicate that the performance levels of pupils aged five and under are particularly high. Inspection findings confirm this picture. In the short time these pupils have been in school, their very good rate of progress is clearly evident in all their work and the lessons observed. This is attributable to both the very good teaching they have experienced and their capacity to learn. Most have already exceeded the national goals set for pupils of this age, which are expected to be achieved by the end of the year, and are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
4. The national arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are based on a scale with eight levels. The target for seven year olds is Level 2 of the scale; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 3. When the performance of the school's seven year old pupils is compared with national averages for 1999, the pupils' performance was above average in reading, well above in writing and in line with the average in mathematics. As well as comparing the school's results with the national picture, it is possible to make comparisons with schools that are "in a similar context", that is, schools who have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. When the school's results for 1999 are compared with this group of schools, then the seven year old pupils' results are average in reading, well above in writing and science (as assessed by teachers) and below in mathematics.
5. Over the past four years, there have been variations in the standards pupils achieve by the

time they are seven. A fall in standards between 1996 and 1998 was followed by some improvement in 1999 in reading and writing, although standards in mathematics continued to fall. When this inspection took place, the school had received not only its test results for the year 2000, but also national data against which comparisons could be made. These show that the number of pupils reaching the level expected is above the national average in reading and writing, but just below in mathematics. The number of pupils reaching the higher level, (Level 3) is generally well above the national average in each subject. When the performance of all pupils is taken into account, the school's results in reading are well above the national average, and above average in writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools, the school's performance in reading is well above average, whilst its performance in writing and mathematics is close to average. Inspection findings indicate that the standard attained in mathematics by pupils in the current Year 2 class has risen, and is already above what is typically expected by the end of the school year. This represents an improvement. Pupils show good mental agility and recall of number facts. In English, reading is stronger than writing.

6. The target for eleven year olds taking part in national assessments is Level 4; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 5. In 1999, the results obtained by the school's eleven year old pupils, compared with those for all schools, were below average in English and in line with the national averages in mathematics and science. Compared with the performance of similar schools, they were well below average in all three subjects. Although the school's performance in English, mathematics and science has remained generally above the national average, between 1996 and 1999 it fell in all subjects and markedly in English and science. The school did not meet the targets it had set itself for 1999.
7. However, results of national assessments for 2000 show that challenging targets - ninety per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 in English, mathematics and science - were met in all three subjects. Absence rather than underachievement accounts for the very small number of pupils who did not achieve the target. This reflects a significant improvement, placing the school's performance well above both the national average and the performance of similar schools overall and very high in English and mathematics compared with the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) is also well above both the national and similar schools averages in English, mathematics and science. Inspection findings confirm that, at this relatively early point in their final year, pupils now in Year 6 are already working at a level above that typically expected for eleven year olds in English and mathematics, and in line with typical expectations for the end of the year in science. The challenge for the school is to build on recent improvements. Handwriting is a weaker area of English, as is pupils' ability to discuss the work of authors. A strength of mathematics is pupil's confidence in mental calculations and understanding of number patterns.
8. Due to the good match of the tasks they are given to their individual abilities, all pupils, including higher attainers, achieve appropriate standards throughout the school. Their rate of progress, at least satisfactory during the infant years, increases significantly in the majority of the junior phase after a satisfactory start. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour are factors contributing to the progress they make and the standards they achieve. Pupils with special educational needs achieve particularly well, thanks to the

targeted support they receive from skilled staff. In the infant phase, the performance of girls generally exceeds that of boys, reflecting the national picture. Performance in the junior phase indicates that, although girls outperform boys in English and mathematics, the performance of boys in English compares favourably with that of boys nationally. Boys and girls achieve similar standards in science.

9. In addition to the successful implementation of the national guidance on teaching literacy and numeracy, the school provides pupils with many opportunities to consolidate and extend their understanding of English and mathematics through their work in other subjects of the curriculum. This constant application of their skills to new situations makes a beneficial contribution to the high standards they achieve.
10. Teachers' assessments generally match pupils' performance in tests in the infant phase, although the teachers' expectations of performance at the higher level in mathematics were above what pupils achieved in the test. The difference is explained by the fact that the teachers' assessments were based on pupils' longer-term performance across all elements of the subject. Discrepancies between teachers' assessments and test results of eleven year old pupils relate to the size of the cohort – each pupil representing nearly three per cent – and the absence of several pupils when the tests were taken.
11. Until the year 2000, the school's results demonstrated that improvement in all three subjects was below the national trend. However, when the results of the latest national assessments are included, the school's performance improves dramatically and compares favourably with the national picture.
12. The school's own analysis of its performance is at an early stage, although writing, including handwriting, has been identified as an area where some improvement is needed. More detailed analysis, leading to the identification of specific aspects of other subjects that need to improve, and assessing the impact of additional, focused support on pupils' performance, has yet to be undertaken. Overall, the school is keenly aware of how its performance compares with that of all and similar schools, and recognises the challenge it now faces in consolidating recent improvement. Further challenging targets and action to improve the quality of teaching contribute to the likelihood of its future success.
13. Inspection findings indicate that standards in information technology, art and design and technology are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven years. In music, standards are in line with those expected of pupils aged seven. There was insufficient evidence of the attainment of pupils aged eleven in music. In history, standards are in line with expectations by the age of seven, and above by the age of eleven. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in geography and physical education. No judgements were made about standards in religious education as this subject was not inspected in this Roman Catholic school. A separate inspection of this aspect of the school's work has been undertaken; and the inspection report is available from the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.

14. The pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are very well behaved. Their personal development is of a very high standard and relationships within the school are very good. All of these are a strength of the school. Attendance is above the national average.
15. The pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in the many and varied activities available. They make the most of the opportunities provided. The level of support and enthusiasm shown at the netball and chess clubs during the inspection is a good example of this. They enjoy learning and are eager for knowledge. They are friendly, self-assured and courteous and make visitors to the school feel particularly welcome. They socialise very well and work co-operatively in groups as well as individually. Under fives make a particularly impressive start and their attitudes and behaviour and early examples of independence are very good and even excellent on occasions. The attitudes, behaviour and relationships seen are a credit to the school.
16. In lessons, attitudes and behaviour are very good overall with very occasional signs of a small minority of pupils losing concentration in some lessons. This occurs when the teaching is less effective and the pace of the lesson is slow or the tasks are insufficiently challenging. Otherwise, the pupils expect to work hard, show lots of enthusiasm in their lessons and respond very well to the teachers. Outside lessons, the pupils are always well behaved. They move in an orderly fashion around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes are actively involved in the range of activities available in the playground. The air of enthusiasm and enjoyment is always present in whatever they are doing. Parents feel that the school has high expectations for attitudes and behaviour and this was confirmed to be the case during the inspection. There have been no exclusions.
17. The school was criticised at the time of the last inspection for providing limited opportunities for the pupils to show initiative and take responsibility. This has improved dramatically since then and numerous opportunities are now available for pupils to become involved in the life and activities of the school. The school has a prefect system with a negotiated and agreed roster of duties for the pupils. The pupils undertake these duties enthusiastically and do them extremely well. They include preparing the hall for assembly, acting as servers and doing door duties. The way that Year 6 pupils put out the equipment for the netball club without being asked, so that an early start could be made after school, was particularly impressive. The house system motivates pupils well and they work very hard to make their house the most successful. From the time they join the school as under fives, children are taught independence. For example, they were seen to fold their clothes neatly when changing for physical education. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils were seen to form constructive relationships with each other, which were particularly evident at lunchtimes and playtimes as well as in lessons. Relationships between the staff are particularly good and the inter-relationships between the staff and pupils create a very good learning environment. Opportunities are given in assemblies and in lessons for pupils to consider the effect of their actions on others and it is evident that they have respect for other people's views and feelings and for property. No oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and the overall feeling created is of a shared, "family" ethos.
18. Attendance is above the national average. It has improved during the last year and both

authorised and unauthorised absences are below the national average. Registration is efficiently undertaken and the procedures now comply with statutory requirements. This has improved since the last inspection. The education welfare officer visits the school regularly. There is very little evidence of lateness.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The school has eight full-time teachers including the headteacher. Since September a part-time teacher has joined the staff to work as the co-ordinator of provision for pupils with special educational needs. There are five classroom support assistants. Classes are organised into single year groups, and teachers are responsible for the teaching of a specific class. All staff carry curriculum responsibilities.
20. The inspectors visited the school over four days and observed fifty-two lessons. All class teachers were seen teaching. Teaching seen was of good quality overall, ranging from unsatisfactory to excellent. Thirty-eight per cent of teaching was very good or excellent. All the teaching in the Reception class, and most of that observed in Years 4 and 5, was of this quality. Sixty-three per cent of teaching seen was at least good. Less than eight per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory.
21. At the time of the previous inspection teaching, although generally satisfactory, varied in quality especially in Key Stage 2. Although most of the good or very good teaching was seen in this stage, it was also here that much of the twenty-three per cent of unsatisfactory teaching was found. Teaching was satisfactory in all lessons for children under five, and in over half these lessons it was good or very good. Since then, much improvement has occurred, especially in Key Stage 2 and for the foundation stage.
22. Some of the best teaching seen was in the Reception class. The quality of teaching and learning at this stage was always very good and often excellent. The teachers' relationships with the children, their management of them and the care they take with them is excellent. Teachers have high expectations of all children. The curriculum they plan is very good in all six areas of learning, and contributes effectively to the progress children make in working towards achieving the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy is very good. Speaking and listening activities are planned throughout the day. Elements of the literacy framework are well used. This develops the children's awareness of books and is having a positive impact on their understanding and use of the skills needed to read, write, speak and listen.
23. The teaching of English and mathematics was observed in all classes. The teaching of English was rarely less than good. Almost half seen was very good or excellent. The quality of English teaching in Years 1 and 2 was good. It was satisfactory in Year 3 and typically good or better in Years 4, 5 and 6. Literacy skills are taught well throughout the school. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well in each year group. The good focus on teaching basic skills and emphasis on guided reading and shared text work is contributing effectively to improvement in spelling and, in particular, fluency and expression in reading. The literacy strategy has improved teachers' subject knowledge and the pace of

lessons. In the better lessons, the plenary session draws together the main points to check learning and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from this approach because the teachers include questions that are directly linked to their understanding. Learning consistently progresses well and standards are improving. However, the teaching of handwriting is inconsistent, and as a result the older pupils do not all develop a fluent, cursive style.

24. A similar number of mathematics lessons seen were of the very high quality seen in English, and other lessons were of at least satisfactory quality. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is of good quality. Numeracy skills are taught well throughout the school. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. This has gone some way towards improving the teachers' subject knowledge, which was a key issue in the previous report. Teaching skills have been significantly strengthened, to produce higher standards in mathematics, with improvement in the teaching of mental skills in all classes.
25. Isolated examples of unsatisfactory teaching were observed in both subjects. This was generally the result of teachers' insecure subject knowledge.
26. It was only possible to observe one lesson in information and communication technology during the inspection. Although this was of a satisfactory standard, it is insufficient evidence on which to base an overall judgement about the quality of teaching throughout the school. Evidence from displays of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that teachers have greater confidence and more secure subject knowledge than was the case at the time of the previous inspection. This reflects the specific training that has taken place. Pupils' progress is now more consistent, and tasks matched to their needs are effective in challenging all ability groups appropriately.
27. The teaching of religious education was not included in this inspection, and is the subject of a separate specialist scrutiny.
28. The teaching of other subjects seen ranged in quality from one example of excellent practice to isolated instances where it was unsatisfactory. It was of good quality overall. In Years 1 and 2 it was generally satisfactory. Of more varied quality in the junior years, it is here that most of the good and very good teaching was seen. Since the time of the previous inspection, when the teaching of art, music and design technology were highlighted as unsatisfactory, the quality of teaching has improved in these subjects and across the curriculum overall. There was insufficient evidence to make separate judgements about the teaching of geography and physical education throughout the school, and music in the junior years. History continues to be taught well; teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the periods being taught.
29. Among the many strengths of teaching is the high expectations that the teachers have of the effort pupils will make and the standards they will achieve. Pupils rise to the challenges set for them. There were many examples of this, including a Year 6 lesson in which pupils worked with envelopes, using prompt cards of Victorian situations, places, objects and characters. The teacher expected, and received, high quality responses to the task set.

Pupils' oral responses indicated very good learning and understanding, in particular the inferences they drew to life in Victorian times.

30. Improving the quality of teaching was an issue in the last inspection. Curriculum planning is now clear, with the literacy and numeracy sessions generally carefully planned. Staff match work well to the abilities of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good, steady progress throughout the school. Many instances of additional challenge in the tasks given to pupils of higher ability were seen, but this aspect of provision is less consistent. It is generally successful in enabling such pupils to make progress in their learning at a rate similar to that of other pupils, and achieving standards appropriate to their abilities. Books are marked regularly, and there are instances of excellent practice. However, the quality of marking varies, and does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work, or set targets for pupils to aspire to. Similarly, teachers' use of the evaluation sheet on the reverse of the weekly planning sheet does not always reflect sufficient analysis of how much pupils have learned and what they need to do next. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend what is learned at school. Teachers generally make very good use of time and support staff. Pupils are very well managed in most of Key Stage 2, but less successfully in Key Stage 1.
31. Pupils learn at a generally good rate, for example in quick-fire oral mathematics sessions and in some creative work. In a Key Stage 2 art lesson, for example, the pupils listened intently and interpreted an extract from Holst's "*Planets Suite*" in pictures, showing little self-consciousness. Occasionally, teachers assume a level of understanding beyond that which pupils actually have. On these occasions, they fail to build sufficient structure into the learning to enable pupils to build on what they already know and move forward in a systematic way. The involvement of most pupils, including the youngest, is very good, especially when their interest is engaged by imaginative teaching. Pupils are interested in their work and sustain concentration well. Across the curriculum standards are rising and much of this is attributable to the significantly improved quality of teaching.

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

32. The quality and range of the curriculum provided for all pupils are good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is broad and highly relevant to the needs and interests of the pupils. The school has yet to determine the amount of time that will be devoted in each class to a number of the foundation subjects. This lack of agreement results in varied provision from class to class, for example in music, information and communication technology and physical education. This was noted in the last report although some improvement is evident as fewer subjects are now affected. Current class timetables do not accurately reflect the actual time available for teaching. This gives the impression that the overall weekly time available for Years 3 to 6 is below that recommended. In reality, however, this is not the case. Teachers currently have the freedom to determine when in the year to teach subjects such as history and geography, which are delivered in blocks of time occupying several weeks rather than continuously throughout the year. This leads to differences in each year group relating to when pupils experience these subjects, and can

result in inappropriately long gaps in their learning opportunities.

33. The last report commented that curriculum planning was unsatisfactory and precise learning objectives were not identified. The quality of planning has improved a great deal. It is now less complex and lesson evaluations are far more focused and useful. The assessments that are made of what pupils know, understand and can do are used to plan future learning opportunities. Effective strategies have been established for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and the progress that they make.
34. The quality of the curriculum provided for pupils under statutory school age is very good and effectively supports both their brisk rate of learning and the standards they achieve. The needs of all children are being met through a wide variety of first hand experiences that engage their interest and challenge them appropriately. Adult intervention is both timely and sensitive. The ethos evident promotes confidence and independence as children develop the ability to make informed decisions.
35. The statutory curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities that are supported by all members of staff. For pupils aged between four and seven, these are provided largely during the school day. Activities include art and craft, cookery, board games and construction play. These are run by teachers and volunteers. Out of school provision occurs when they plant bulbs and flowers at appropriate times of the year. Opportunities for older pupils are provided after school hours. These are wide ranging and include chess, recorders, a fitness group and a range of choral singing in the school choir. A science club provides further opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations both indoors and along the school's nature trail. An example of this work involved pupils searching for seeds and then discussing their likely method of dispersal. Links with the community are extended through the support of the Kidderminster Harriers and tutors from the privately run Petite École organisation.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is a strength of the school. The effectiveness of the support provided ensures that individual education plans are focused on a pupil's specific needs. Detailed records are kept and parents are fully involved in the process. Support staff are well informed and this ensures that these pupils make good progress. Parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection support this view.
37. All pupils enjoy the same access to the curriculum, and strategies to ensure that similar opportunities are available to all are good. A number of pupils inevitably miss parts of some lessons when they have their instrumental tuition with visiting teachers. The impact, however, is minimised, as the lessons affected are taught on different days of the week when required. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the very effective support they receive. Support staff get to know individual pupils well due to the fact that they work with the same pupils as they move through the school. In recent years the performance of boys, when compared to national results, has deteriorated steadily, for example in science. An awareness and concern regarding this situation led the school to

review aspects of provision. The decline has now been reversed and standards have risen significantly.

38. The provision for pupils' personal and social education is very good. This is another significant improvement since the last inspection and features among the strengths of the school. The school now has a policy to address sex education and this work is supported by the school nurse. The development of health education and the attention to drug misuse is coherent and appropriate to the age and needs of pupils. Drug awareness is taught in Year 6. Whilst personal, social and health education appears on the time table for younger pupils, for others it is also effectively developed during assemblies. Achievements are valued and awards are recorded in prominent positions in the hall and around the school.
39. Numerous opportunities are provided to foster the development of inter-personal skills when pupils are asked to work in small groups or participate in large group discussions. They listen well to their teachers and each other and are willing contributors when questions are asked or views are sought. They are very tolerant of each other. Opportunities are provided for the pupils to make decisions, such as how they will record their group work in mathematics and how they intend to carry out an investigation in science. Effective group work in Year 6 led to the creation of wire and papier maché models based on a sculpture by Giacometti. Pupils have a sound knowledge of health issues and an awareness of their ability to make choices relating to maintaining good health.
40. The school provides all pupils with opportunities to exercise responsibility. Children in the Reception class collect musical instruments sensibly from an adjoining room and they operate audio-tape machines independently. Class monitors help to distribute books and equipment. The Year 6 pupils willingly undertake a range of tasks in their role as prefects. These involve the distribution of registers, setting up the hall for assemblies and assisting staff when pupils come into school after playtime and lunchtime. House captains take their role seriously and take an interest in the achievements that lead to the award of house points.
41. The standard of behaviour observed reflects the high priority that the school places on moral development. The principles of right and wrong are clearly taught. Parents support this view. Pupils are able to recognise when behaviour is inappropriate. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to discuss school rules at regular intervals, and these are discussed further in assemblies and implemented as appropriate. An example of this was the decision to ban ball games prior to the start of the school day as parents, possibly with young children, would be arriving on the playground. A number of charities are supported by the pupils, such as the Samaritan's Purse, 'Operation Christmas Child', in which pupils collect items that fit into a shoe box. The gifts are then distributed by the charity to needy children across central Europe and Russia.
42. The school's work is enriched by the links it has established with the local community, in which its church school status renders it a focal point. As previously reported, the parish priest continues to be a regular visitor. Letters have been sent to fifteen local schools to explore the possibility of setting up a football league. Arrangements have been made for older pupils at the receiving high school, Blessed Edward, to work with Year 6 pupils

helping them to construct a web page on the Internet. The school continues to take part in a number of events such as the Malvern Festival. As well as singing at the naming of the Millennium Hill ceremony, the choir has been asked, for the third consecutive year, to take part in a local, professional production of “Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat”. Effective links have been established with the Malvern cluster of schools along with the wider Catholic community.

43. To address the needs of the highest attaining pupils, the school has enrolled with the National Association for Able Children in Education. Links are also currently being developed with another school in Coventry in order to exchange ideas and share expertise to meet this challenge. The member of staff responsible for special educational needs works closely with the governor responsible for this area. She is also a co-ordinator for special educational needs at a local school and further links are being forged in order to share good practice. Work in history is enhanced by visits to an Anglo Saxon day at Bishops Wood and a workshop on Tudor Dance. Participation by Year 6 pupils in a local arts festival, ‘Off the Wall’, helped to generate some interesting drawings and clay work.
44. Opportunities for cultural development remain satisfactory. The use of musical instruments from a range of cultures, work in history on the Aztecs and the school’s participation in the Malvern Festival make useful contributions to this area of development. Little or no art reflecting other cultures, however, is evident and the number of books available to promote the pupils’ awareness is limited. Exploration of the rich cultural diversity of our nation, in order to prepare pupils for life in our multicultural society, is limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. It was criticised for not having a policy or effective procedures for child protection in the last report. This has now been remedied and the procedures are properly implemented.
46. The school provides a safe and secure environment for the pupils and the school and governors make regular inspections of the school and grounds. Pupils are known by the staff and are well looked after at all times including lunchtimes when the supervisors’ role is well accomplished.
47. The school nurse attends regularly and provides good support to the school. Apart from doing the usual health checks, she also helps the school with sex education. Speech therapists help with one or two pupils and good support for pupils with special educational needs is given. The educational psychologist is very helpful in giving advice on behavioural and emotional problems.
48. The procedures for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour, and for supporting pupils’ personal development, are good, and those for eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory.

49. Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance, although now in place, are in the early stages of development and inconsistently applied. Baseline assessments are used effectively to evaluate the performance of children under five years of age, and optional national tests are now being used in addition to those undertaken by pupils at ages seven and eleven.
50. The school has started to track the work of a sample group of pupils as they move through the school, to assess their progress, and Records of Achievement have recently been introduced. The tracking is related mainly to English and mathematics at this stage, but will over time be extended to cover other subjects and cohorts of pupils. The program "Assessment Manager" is being set up on the computer as a useful aid to the school's assessment procedures. However, at the moment, assessment of pupils' performance is mainly done informally on the reverse of lesson plans. Although this is better than had been undertaken at the time of the last inspection, there is still room for improvement. The use of assessment information to guide the planning of future learning opportunities and for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress is still unsatisfactory.
51. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good and individual education plans are very specific and work well. They conform to the Special Education Needs Code of Practice and the procedures are implemented effectively and consistently.
52. Annual pupil reports give useful information about how pupils perform but do not identify areas for improvement and set targets for pupils. Teachers do have a good informal picture of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and encourage them to improve but have yet to formalise this into a system which will enable parents to work with the school in addressing these areas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents have very positive views of the school and a very good partnership is developing with them. They are now becoming more involved with the work of the school and make a useful contribution towards their children's learning. The information they receive is variable but is satisfactory overall.
54. The parents are very supportive of the school. At the pre-inspection parents meeting, they said that their children do very well at school, and that the school develops good attitudes and values in their children. Parents feel that communication has much improved since the new headteacher took up post. However, they are not happy with their children's annual reports and would like them to be easier to understand and to identify targets for the next year. Extra-curricular activities are also felt to have much improved in the last two terms. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire emphasised this strong support for the school.
55. The school has very strong and improving links with the parents. This is illustrated by the enthusiastic support of the Parent Teacher and Friends Association, which has become stronger in the last few months. More parents are now becoming involved in helping in the

school, with extra-curricular clubs and with work and fund-raising, for example for the outside play area.

56. A weekly newsletter has been introduced which is of high quality and is much appreciated by parents. The school prospectus, although informative, reflects an outmoded design and is soon to be re-vamped to the same high standard of the newsletters. The annual governors' report to parents is good and the home-school agreement is comprehensive and effective. However, although annual reports on each pupil satisfy statutory requirements, they do not inform parents in easy-to-understand language of their child's progress and attainment or identify areas for improvement and targets for the next year.
57. The school has already had consultations with parents about homework and plans to hold further activity mornings to enable other areas of concern to be discussed. This can only improve the already very good relationships with parents and enable them to contribute even more to their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The school has gone through an extended period of change and disruption, at the heart of which were staffing issues that coupled with a changeover of fifty per cent of the staff in the past two years. This included senior posts and that of headteacher. Changes within the governing body echoed this state of unrest. The effect on the school of this lack of continuity of leadership and management had been all-pervasive and very damaging until the end of 1999. It led to very low staff morale and uncertainty about the school's future. It contributed to a fall in standards, and left the school in a vulnerable position. The appointment of the current headteacher in May 2000 heralded a new period of much needed stability and positive thinking in the school's life.
59. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and clear educational direction to the work of the school. Her vision of the school as a centre of excellence has been conveyed to staff, parents and governors, who are united in their determination that this vision should be realised. As a result, the headteacher enjoys their total support and loyalty. In the short time since she took up her appointment, she has identified the specific short-term focus for the school's development. She has made the raising of staff morale and the development of a whole staff team an immediate priority, and succeeded in achieving this. She has set in place a programme of management reform which is already underway, and has led to clearer understanding about the complementary roles of senior staff and the management responsibilities of subject leaders. Although at an early stage of realisation, her plans for the increased involvement of staff in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are shared, understood and supported by all. The school is aware of the training needs of some members of staff, including the deputy headteacher, if they are to fulfil their roles successfully. The headteacher has established good working relationships with members of the governing body, who have total confidence in her ability to raise standards and secure improvement. Her additional significant achievement is the improved communication with parents, which is widely acknowledged and deeply appreciated. The school now has the capacity to move forward and achieve the targets for improvement it has set itself.

60. Immediately following her appointment, the headteacher, in consultation with governors and staff, set in place an interim plan with short-term objectives. This was intended to act as a preface for the review of the school's ongoing plan for development and improvement. The successful completion of this initial plan has already enabled her to move the school's improvement forward into a second phase. The accurate identification of areas where improvement is needed has enabled the creation of action plans specific to each issue. These include appropriate details of how improvement will be achieved, and success monitored and evaluated against agreed targets. Co-ordinators' individual plans for improving standards and provision in the subjects for which they hold responsibility reflect and build on the overall plan.
61. Central to its work are the school's stated aims and values, which are widely known, agreed and supported by everyone connected with St. Joseph's.
62. Recent appointments to the governing body have broadened its range of expertise and knowledge considerably. The governing body is now much stronger in terms of its ability to fulfil its role of critical friend to the school. However, in its present form it is at an early stage of its life. Although it is united in its support for the headteacher and the staff, within the governing body there is some insecure understanding of the role of governors and how this should be fulfilled. Through their regular visits to the school and discussions with the headteacher and staff, individual governors have an increasingly sharp awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the challenges it faces. The specific expertise in commerce and educational management and practice, held by three governors, is particularly valuable in this respect, and balances well the pastoral support already established to good effect. All statutory requirements are now met appropriately.
63. In the current calendar year, and initially in the spring term under the leadership of the acting headteacher, co-ordinators have begun to gain a view of standards and provision in their subjects. Several co-ordinators observed colleagues teaching and provided feedback both individually and in staff meetings. The deputy headteacher has begun a detailed analysis of performance data as part of his newly defined responsibilities. As yet, this is limited in its coverage and depth, resulting in his incomplete picture of the school's overall performance. The new headteacher's monitoring of teaching has given her a clear overview of where strengths and weaknesses lie. This, together with professional discussions she has held with individual staff, form the basis of a programme of staff training she has put in place. Recent changes of teaching staff and extensive training in how to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, as well as in-house training sessions led by subject co-ordinators, for example in music, have improved the quality of teaching overall since the time of the previous inspection. This has been a major factor contributing to the recent rise in standards.
64. The school's ethos of care, together with the drive to secure improvement by maximising the contributions of all staff, ensures that new staff receive appropriate support and guidance. The school has the potential to be a provider of initial teacher training, although this is not a current priority.

65. The governing body has set annual performance objectives for the headteacher, and reviews progress in achieving these regularly. The requirements relating to the performance management of staff are known and currently being addressed, in order to ensure that the school meets statutory requirements in this regard. Arrangements for the annual review of staff pay are well established. The targets for improved pupil performance, set annually, are based on relevant information gathered and analysed as a preface to setting targets that are realistic but challenging.
66. Priorities for development, identified in the school's plan for improvement, are effectively funded to support their successful implementation. The school budget is soundly administered, making appropriate use of new technologies. Governors exercise close financial control and make effective use of specific grants. Budget planning reflects the governing body's determination to reduce the amount of funding carried forward each year to an appropriate amount. The principles of best value are known, understood and used to good effect. The school acknowledges the needs of the headteacher and newly appointed administrative assistant for training in financial procedures.
67. The number, breadth of knowledge and expertise of the teachers and support staff make an effective contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. Support staff working with pupils who have special educational needs are effective in promoting their learning whilst encouraging a sense of personal responsibility. The accommodation supports the successful delivery of the curriculum. It is extremely clean, attractive and welcoming. Recent improvements to the outdoor area for younger pupils enhance their opportunities for learning well. Learning resources are now adequate, appropriate and accessible.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to raise standards in the school further, the governors, working with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions. (Detailed reference to these issues can be found in the numbered paragraphs of this report).

I. Ensure that pupils' progress in all subjects is supported through the consistent use of teaching time by:

- adopting a whole school approach in allocating time to different aspects of the curriculum;
- creating a curriculum plan which gives appropriate guidance to class teachers on how available time should be allocated to subjects;
- including the monitoring of teaching time in the school's procedures for self-evaluation, by scrutinising teachers' timetables and curriculum plans.

(paragraphs 32, 114, 128, 132, 148 and 151)

II. Ensure that pupils' academic progress is monitored and supported by:

- introducing whole-school procedures for the systematic assessment of individual pupils' work over time;
- agreeing the system, including methods and content, by which pupils' progress will be recorded, based on a realistic appreciation of the demands on teachers' time;
- ensuring that systematic information relating to each pupils' progress is passed on with pupils as they move through the school.

(paragraphs 49, 92, 116, 123, 128, 136 and 141)

III. Ensure that assessment information is used to plan future learning opportunities by:

- increasing the awareness of all staff of the performance of pupils as indicated by the outcomes of national assessments;
- engaging subject co-ordinators in more detailed analysis of performance data, so that strengths and weaknesses in specific subjects are more closely identified;
- building on the good practice already in place in some classes regarding ongoing evaluation of pupils' learning in individual lessons;
- monitoring the use of assessment information by scrutinising teachers' term and weekly plans;
- providing appropriate training for staff to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to assessment.

(paragraphs 12, 30, 50, 63, 72, 92, 100, 105, 110, 115 and 141)

IV. Ensure greater consistency in the implementation of the school's marking policy by:

- reviewing with the staff the requirements of the marking policy;
- identifying and sharing the very good practice already found within the school;
- monitoring teachers' marking on a regular basis as part of the school's procedures for self-evaluation.

(paragraphs 30, 92 and 101)

69. In addition to the issues referred to above, the governing body should consider including in its action plan the following less significant areas for improvement:

- improve the presentation of pupils' handwriting and work, where this falls below the generally high standard; (paragraphs 12, 88 and 98)
- provide training for the minority of governors who are unclear about their role and how it should be fulfilled; (paragraph 62)
- improve the quality of written reports to parents on their children's progress. (paragraphs 52, 56 and 115)

70. The school has already included a number of these issues in its plans for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8%	31%	25%	29%	7%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	199
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	42

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	n/a

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.45%
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.07%
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	9	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	13
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	23	23	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92(90)	92 (93)	88 (90)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	16
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	23	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (86)	88 (83)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	17	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	9
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	25	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (65)	90 (73)	90 (77)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	26	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (73)	90 (77)	100 (88)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	195
Any other minority ethnic groups	3

Exclusions in the last school year

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	335810
Total expenditure	340703
Expenditure per pupil	1678
Balance brought forward from previous year	28769
Balance carried forward to next year	24394

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57.0	40.0	3.0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40.0	54.0	3.0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49.0	51.0	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48.0	47.0	5.0	0	0
The teaching is good.	53.0	42.0	0	2.0	3.0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34.0	61.0	1.0	3.0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67.0	30.0	1.0	1.0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64.0	36.0	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58.0	37.0	0	3.0	1.0
The school is well led and managed.	48.0	46.0	3.0	3.0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58.0	39.0	0	0	3.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52.0	39.0	5.0	2.0	3.0

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

71. Children enter the Reception class in September and at the time of the inspection the majority were still attending part-time as part of their induction programme. Only four children were attending full-time. Evidence provided by the school indicates that the current Reception class children entered the school with levels of attainment that were not only good for their age, but higher than the slightly above average levels typically demonstrated by the school's new entrants. Standards observed during the inspection are generally well above average. Most of these young children have already exceeded the national goals set for children of this age, which are expected to be achieved by the end of the year, and are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Standards and the progress of children under five have improved since the time of the previous inspection.
72. Provision in the Reception class is very good and is a strength of the school. The room is colourful and bright and divided into different areas where the children can learn quickly how to work with others, play musical instruments, write freely or sit quietly and look at books in the reading area. The curriculum is very good. Planning covers all the national goals for early learning well. The school is beginning to use the information about its incoming children to provide a broadly balanced and relevant programme which meets the needs of each child. The well planned use of support staff is very effective in promoting children's learning. The quality of teaching and learning seen was always very good, often excellent, and has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Assessment is used successfully to identify individual learning needs. Learning resources to support all aspects of children's learning are good, well organised and accessible to all children. All areas identified for improvement in the previous report have been acted upon, or are in the process of being so.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. All the children in this year's Reception class have entered the school with mature personal skills and good social skills. The teacher's relationship with the children and care of them are excellent. The children quickly learn the teacher's structured routines and gain quickly in confidence. Good progress is made. They know they are expected to work hard, and they demonstrate respect for each other when working in groups and independently. They concentrate and persevere in their learning and ask for help when they need it. Wooden spoon characters, Grumbling Gertie, Willy Won't, Sally Selfish and Cheerful Charlie, are used well by the class teacher to promote high standards of behaviour and good attitudes. Behaviour at all times is very good. The children know what is right and wrong, and why. They take great care of the environment and their own property, for example folding up their clothes very carefully when undressing themselves for their physical education lesson. Children are being helped to think about healthy eating, health and bodily awareness. For instance, in the physical education lesson children understood and were able to explain the importance of the warm-up session.

Communication, language and literacy.

74. The children enter school with good communication skills. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is very good. Teachers plan the main activities well and this is having a positive effect on learning. Much learning takes place when the children listen attentively to the very good questions posed by the teachers.
75. Elements of the literacy framework are well used. A good understanding of what an author and illustrator do is developed and explored using big books, such as "*What can you see?*" The class teacher points out picture clues and the relevant punctuation and the class as a group reads the sentences carefully and accurately, recognising the rhyming words and initial letters. A game of 'I spy,' enhanced children's learning well. Children were able to identify a teddy, telescope and toys. This learning was reinforced in the plenary session when Teddy wanted a present beginning with 't' from a box full of objects. The good clear notices, labels and instructions related to the different areas within the classroom help children to recognise and appreciate the need for writing words and reading them. Individual play encourages writing, for example when the patient visits the doctor with her baby she has to give her name which is then recorded. Children are given many good opportunities to practise writing letters in sand and holding and using a pencil effectively to make recognisable letters, which are correctly formed. Words of the week are clearly written for them to copy and learn.
76. Children in Reception enjoy books and are able to choose their favourite. They understand that text carries meaning, and are able to predict what might happen next. Children have a book to take home. This enables their parents to share in effective learning activities with their children.
77. There is a listening table where children make good use of the wide variety of story tapes during free and play time.

Mathematical development.

78. The children's mathematical understanding is very good for their age. This particular area of learning is very well taught and by the end of the Reception Year all children are likely to have exceeded the early learning goals for mathematics. Very good teaching ensures that all children count confidently from zero to ten and some children can go well beyond. They recognise and understand symbols such as + and =, and use their knowledge to record their answers to problems, for example $2 + 3 = 5$. A minority are able to add two single digit numbers to make totals up to twelve. Using a ruler of cubes, children are able to answer questions relating to comparisons of length such as how long? how many? shorter or longer? taller or shorter? Very effective teaching involves the use of a variety of activities relating to the mathematical concept being taught. This maintains the children's interest and enjoyment very well. The children are actively involved in their learning and the teacher's expectations of them are appropriately high. This creates a very positive and challenging learning climate where children want to succeed and to please their teacher.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

79. Children enter the Reception class with a good general knowledge. The teacher builds on this very effectively and, as a result, their knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live is very well developed for their age. Investigative skills are developed as children use their sense of smell to identify different substances. Children use dough to mould, slice, flatten, roll and cut shapes. In the topic, "All about me", teachers provide activities so that the children can find out about the past and present through sequencing pictures of themselves when they were younger and now. They learn how life has changed since they were babies. As part of their scientific development, children extend their vocabulary through the use of the bucket in the nursery rhyme, "*Jack and Jill*". They make comparisons such as smaller, bigger, fuller, half full, lightest, heaviest, fat and thin, and using words connected with water such as spill, flow, sink, float, drip and splash. The teaching in a lesson to develop their sense of taste was excellent. The teacher used six unusual fruits to help the children predict and make comparisons with fruits they already knew.
80. The children enjoy using the computer and they display a level of skill above that expected for their age. They are already confident enough to use the mouse. A display of children's work shows how well they do this, drawing faces using a painting programme to practise mouse control. As part of their language development the children use the programme, "I want to read". They are required to identify all the rhyming words and they drag these together well. Other children used a computer for picture control, learning how to use the arrow keys to take a robot for a walk as they identified letter sounds. The children know the names of the parts of a computer system and can confidently use a cassette tape player, without adult assistance. They know which buttons are used to rewind, play and stop their story tapes. They create simple tunes using pictures associated with sounds.

Physical Development

81. Overall, the children demonstrate good levels of physical control and skill for their age. The use of the large and small apparatus in the hall is a major factor in helping the children make progress at a good rate. In the warm-up part of a lesson seen, the teacher used different kinds of beans to encourage children in their physical response, such as jumping, string, wide and runner beans. The children run, jump and climb well. They move confidently, and after travelling carefully along a bench are able to jump from a box landing well on both feet. Although the development of the outside area is nearing completion, the children have less opportunity at the moment to use this space. Children have very good cutting skills. They handle scissors very well. There are many opportunities for the children to develop their good cutting and pasting skills, for instance when sequencing stories or recording their work on the senses by putting pictures in the correct column of a chart.

Creative development.

82. The children's creative development is generally good for their age. Teachers have high expectations and provide a strong lead, as when the class performed, "*The Grand Old*

Duke of York". The majority of children can hear a rhythm and clap or tap it, showing a good level of accuracy. Percussion instruments help the children to express themselves creatively, and they have an increasing ability to respond to music. Some good learning took place when the class teacher discussed the colour and size of different shapes to make picture patterns. Very good opportunities are provided to develop the children's imaginative thinking through role-play. This helps their language development and their speaking skills particularly. Skills of observation were developed when the class teacher asked the children to handle unusual fruits. The children had to predict the taste and make comparisons with known fruits; for example, the top of the pineapple felt like holly and the star fruit reminded them of starfish.

ENGLISH

83. Inspection findings indicate that, overall, standards are above national averages for seven and eleven year olds, but slightly below the level reported as achieved by eleven year olds when the school was last inspected in 1996. Standards of speaking and listening in the present Year 6 class are very high, reading standards are high whilst in writing they are average. Standards are above average in the present Year 2 class, where well developed speaking, listening and reading skills were seen. Writing skills are average for pupils aged seven. No significant or consistent differences between the attainment of boys and girls were noted during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support, which helps them to make good progress and generally achieve the standards typically expected of pupils of slightly higher ability.
84. In the 1999 national tests for Year 2, the average point score achieved in reading was above the national average, although in line with the results achieved by similar schools, whilst writing was well above. This was an improvement on the reading and writing grades obtained in 1998 which had dipped in both national and similar school comparisons. In Year 6, the 1999 average points score for English was below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. At the time of the inspection the school had just received the national comparisons for the year 2000. These show a marked improvement in standards, placing them above the national tests for Year 2, and in Year 6 well above the performance of similar schools and very high in comparison with the national average. The school met the targets set and this too shows good improvement.
85. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy successfully throughout the school. The focus on teaching basic skills and the emphasis on guided reading and shared text work is contributing effectively to improvement in spelling and, in particular, to fluency and expression in reading. Teachers plan very effectively to national literacy guidelines. The quality of planning has improved significantly throughout the school since the previous inspection. There is now an extra planned extended writing lesson for pupils once a week, to improve the standards in writing.
86. Knowledge and understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts have also been extended using the literacy strategy, particularly with older pupils. The pupils in Year 6 are self-motivated, enjoy reading, and are reading some demanding texts. However, in Year 5, given the high

number of pupils of lower ability or with special educational needs, reading attainment overall is below expectations for the year group. The pupils with difficulties in reading are well supported individually and achieve well. The skills needed to read with deeper understanding are being taught at an appropriate level in whole class and guided group reading time. All pupils appear to enjoy reading and regularly take books home. However, the range of authors and texts used in Key Stage 2 has been limited in the past. Few pupils can recall a favourite author or illustrator, and although J. K. Rowling and Roald Dahl are popular, pupils are generally unable to say why, or talk about their work in depth. Nevertheless, standards of reading and comprehension in Year 6 are high for the age group. In class and in assembly, pupils read aloud with confidence, clarity and good expression.

87. Standards in speaking and listening are very high throughout the school. Pupils listen attentively and are interested in what other people say. This was clearly evident in Year 6 at the end of a well planned oral story lesson, when pupils were taped telling the class the story they have decided upon using prompt cards of Victorian situations, place, objects and character. The pupils found this a very challenging exercise and could not believe how difficult it was to speak clearly without stopping. Pupils in Year 3 were so impressed after listening to two of their peers read *'The Dinner Lady'*, that they clapped spontaneously. Good questioning by teachers ensures that all pupils are drawn into the subject being discussed and are given very good opportunities to contribute their own ideas. Pupils benefit greatly from the friendly and encouraging atmosphere created by teachers, who have the skills to wait for each contribution whilst keeping a good pace to the lesson.
88. Overall, standards of writing throughout the school are in line with expectations. Pupils are beginning to write for an ever-widening audience as they move through the school. Most Year 5 pupils can explain formal and informal language clearly after comparing a diary, police report and newspaper report. By the age of eleven, handwriting is just average. A number of pupils have failed to acquire a neat, legible and fluent handwriting style and some write with poorly formed and unevenly sized letters. Standards in spelling are average. Pupils at both key stages are beginning to make good use of punctuation.
89. Across the school English is developed successfully through links with other subjects. In art, pupils have written their own interpretations of their paintings. In history, opportunities to write about a range of subjects are provided, and speaking and listening skills are well developed. Year 6 pupils created an oral story, based on a variety of cards about life in Victorian times. In personal and social education lessons, where pupils had brought items and magazines from home, they were able to explain these clearly, confidently and articulately. Pupils ask pertinent questions and listen well to one another. In one class, this resulted in pupils beginning to understand selling techniques and consider how to resist the pressures of inappropriate advertising. In a mathematics lesson, older pupils were confident to explain the process they used in mental calculation and how to use data to create a graph. In all classes, research work is undertaken successfully. Pupils are learning how to access information from non-fiction books to help with their independent work across the curriculum.
90. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was good overall. In Years 1 and 2

it was consistently good. In Years 4, 5 and 6 it was always good and often very good. In Year 3 the quality of teaching was generally satisfactory, although unsatisfactory on one occasion. The literacy strategy has improved teachers' subject knowledge and the pace of lessons, which are well planned to cater for different age and ability groups. The better lessons end with the teachers using their skills to draw together the main points, to check learning and understanding. Pupils are provided with activities in an appropriate sequence that builds on the previous learning.

91. Pupils enjoy English lessons and are well motivated and eager to learn. During the majority of lessons seen, the pupils' behaviour was very good, pupils concentrate very well and are eager to learn, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6. They participate fully in discussions and work well together when opportunities arise.
92. The co-ordinator is providing good leadership for the subject, and is aware of how English needs to be developed. Through her analysis of performance data, she has identified writing as an area where improvement is needed. However, further detailed analysis of pupils' performance is limited. There are no portfolios containing annotated samples of pupils' work to help teachers in assessing pupils' progress, and guidance on how this should be done is insufficient. As a result, practice is inconsistent and lacks the rigour that a whole school approach would facilitate. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor the effectiveness of planning, teaching and learning throughout the school. There is a very good-shared commitment to the improvement of the subject. Marking of pupils' work varies. The best examples identify why the work is good or not, and indicates how it can be improved. Too often, however, marking is limited to ticks with corrections shown, but there is little evidence of pupils correcting and learning from their mistakes. Resources acquired to promote the introduction of the literacy hour are of good quality and have been carefully chosen. Effective use is made of the well-resourced library to support pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

93. Judgements about mathematics are based on the observation of thirteen lessons involving all classes in the school, scrutiny of displays in classrooms and samples of the work of pupils of different abilities and discussion with the co-ordinator and pupils.
94. Overall, attainment in mathematics is above that expected for pupils aged seven and eleven years. In the 1999 national assessment tests for seven year olds, pupils' performance was in line with the national average but below that of similar schools. Similarly, results for pupils aged eleven were in line with the national average but well below that of similar schools. Teachers' assessments reflected higher expectations of more able pupils, some of whom were absent at the time the tests were taken. Although the school's results have remained at around the national average, over the past four years they have steadily declined, particularly at the infant stage. Results for the year 2000, however, show a reversal of this trend. Standards overall have improved markedly at the end of the junior stage, and now compare very favourably with the national average and the performance of similar schools. The evidence gathered from the inspection supports a picture of improving standards, albeit this improvement is recent rather than dating from the previous inspection. At this relatively early

stage in the academic year, pupils are already attaining standards above those expected by the end of the year. The challenge for the school is to maintain and build on this recent improvement.

95. From a very good start in the Reception Year, all pupils make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school. The rate of progress improves significantly in Years 4, 5 and 6, due to the generally very high quality of teaching pupils experience. Resulting from the matching of tasks to their abilities, pupils of higher attainment are appropriately challenged, particularly in most of their junior years, and make progress at a rate at least similar to others. The quality of support they receive, together with work well matched to their needs, enables pupils with special educational needs to progress at a good rate. As a result, they attain standards similar to those achieved by pupils of higher, though less than average, ability.
96. Provision for the development of pupils' mathematical skills is good, as demonstrated by the number of opportunities seen in other subjects for pupils to practise and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in new situations. In a Year 1 art lesson, pupils' understanding of two-dimensional shape was reinforced when they used such shapes as triangles, circles, rectangles and pentagons to print repeat patterns. Pupils in Year 6 recorded the scores they achieved playing team games in the hall on a grid designed for the purpose. Year 4 pupils used Venn diagrams in a science lesson to sort and record objects made from more than one material, and selected their own method of recording the results of investigations into the hardness of rocks.
97. Since the previous inspection, the school has placed great emphasis on developing pupils' confidence in handling numbers, as is evidenced by the work in their books and their participation in lessons. Year 1 pupils of higher ability are beginning to complete algebraic statements such as $? + 4 = 9$. They use hand spans to measure objects, and record the results of their traffic survey as a tally chart. Pupils of average ability in Year 2 apply their knowledge and understanding to the solving of algebraic problems. They give examples of odd and even numbers, and can describe the features of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils with special educational needs demonstrate secure knowledge of number facts beyond ten, and understand the process of subtraction. In Year 3 pupils extend their understanding of place value to include hundreds as well as tens and units. Working with standard measures of length, they make sensible estimates before measuring specific objects. Good examples of investigative work in Year 4 include pupils using four digits to make the smallest and largest possible odd and even numbers. Higher attaining pupils explore with increasing confidence the different ways to make a given number such as 19. Year 5 pupils create their own addition and subtraction problems for others to solve using calculators. They apply the four rules of number to compute accurately using three digit numbers, and use a variety of methods to record their work. Pupils with special educational needs are able to complete tasks similar to those of the rest of the class but with smaller numbers involved. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils multiply and divide numbers involving two decimal places. All pupils can calculate the area and perimeter of simple shapes, understand the equivalence of fractions and express the factors of given numbers.
98. The presentation of pupils' work is not always as neat as it should be. Very often, the best

presented work is that of pupils with special educational needs, particularly among older pupils.

99. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' progress was judged unsatisfactory in both key stages, and there was lack of challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils. The progress of pupils with special educational needs was sound. The quality of teaching, although good in some lessons, was unsatisfactory overall, as was the management of the subject. The improvement seen in this inspection relates to all these areas.
100. The teaching of mathematics is good overall, with some particular strengths in Key Stage 2. It has improved in quality since the previous inspection, due to changes in staffing, the training teachers have received in the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, and the school's gradual introduction of new material to support the teaching of the subject. In the thirteen lessons seen, teaching was at least good in seven, and very good or excellent in five. In only one lesson was teaching unsatisfactory. It is consistently at least satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons seen included isolated examples of excellent and unsatisfactory practice. The best teaching is in Year 4. Here and elsewhere effective teaching is characterised by brisk pace to lessons, which keeps pupils on task, interested and suitably challenged by time targets. The structure of lessons outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented consistently and to good effect. The frequent use of a "game" approach appeals well to pupils, engaging and sustaining their enthusiasm. This was seen in a Year 4 lesson where individual pupils were invited to select the two-dimensional shape that matched the description they had chosen at random from a range provided. Good questioning skills probe pupils' understanding and requires them to explain their thinking. This is of benefit to all, as pupils are articulate and able to communicate their ideas clearly and confidently. This occurred in a mental skills session in Year 6, when pupils offered a variety of ways for how they found the difference between two two-digit numbers. Questions are geared to the different abilities represented in the class, and challenge all, including those of higher ability. Teachers act on pupils' suggestions, for example, in deciding the scale to use on the axes of a graph recording temperature in a foreign country. Their confident subject knowledge enables teachers to be flexible and to adapt their lessons in response to pupils' needs. The use of pupil demonstration adds variety and motivates pupils, who are keen to be chosen. Good and appropriate use of information technology is made, as when a group of lower ability pupils in Year 4 used a program to identify, name and draw polygons. Their work was subsequently printed off and used to make an attractive display. This adds further variety and interest to lessons, and also boosts the self-esteem of these pupils well. Ongoing assessment of pupils' learning and prompt feedback also motivates pupils well, as when a teacher said, "Well done, I can see you've moved on since Monday". Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are always positive and generally good or better. They behave well in lessons and clearly enjoy the challenges presented to them. Homework, set to a regular pattern known to pupils, is completed to a good standard, always marked, it reinforces and extends classroom learning well.
101. Where teaching is less effective, teachers demonstrate insecure discipline, which reduces the rate at which pupils learn. Sometimes too long is spent introducing the lesson, and pupils

have insufficient time to complete their group tasks as a result. A further consequence of this is too little time for the plenary session, and missed opportunities to underline the lesson's learning objectives. Occasionally, the learning objective is not shared with pupils, although in discussion later they were able to say correctly what they thought it was. Evidence from pupils' books indicates that the quality of teachers' marking varies widely. At best it provides explanation, clarification and clear indications of what the pupil needs to do next. At worst it consists of a tick and a smiley face stamp, with no written comment at all. Similarly, the match of work to pupils' needs, whilst generally very effective, does in isolated classes slip from this high standard. As a result, higher attainers receive insufficient challenge, and pupils of lower abilities struggle to complete their work.

102. In all classes, displays of mathematical vocabulary and symbols reinforce and promote pupils' understanding and learning well. Pupils in Year 6 use terms such as mode, ratio and proportion in describing their work. A mathematics display in a central position in the school invites pupils to solve puzzles relating to magic squares and the use of numbers; for example, "The answer is 24 – what is the question?" and "Use the digits 1, 2, 3 and 4 to make the most products by multiplying".
103. Teachers employ a range of grouping arrangements during mathematics lessons. Opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class, in large and small groups, pairs and individually do much to develop the social skills of collaboration, listening to and respecting an alternative point of view and the sharing resources. A good example was seen in Year 4 when pupils worked in trios to throw dice and count the totals to a given number target. Work on shape prompted an appreciation of the spiritual dimension to life when a pupil commented that triangles had personalities reflecting the type of angles they had. The discipline of mathematical rules is a constant reminder to pupils of the need for rules in life generally, in order that society functions effectively. The frequency with which pupils are given choices in how they complete their work makes a significant impact on their personal development and independence as learners.
104. In addition to the improvements already referred to, the school has acted on other issues raised at the time of the previous inspection. These include improved planning of both term and weekly work, where the framework of the national strategy forms the backbone of guidance. The use of the Abacus mathematics materials has increased opportunities for practical and investigative, problem solving work. Equipment purchased to support this work is used constantly and effectively, to the benefit of all pupils. These responses have added to the significant improvements attributable to more effective teaching.
105. The co-ordinator has only recently had the opportunity to assess the school's performance in mathematics by analysing data. Consequently, his view of the standards pupils attain and where improvement is needed is as yet limited, as is his awareness of the impact of recent initiatives, such as booster classes, on pupils' attainment. His main impact on the subject has been to train teachers in Key Stage 2 in how to implement the national numeracy strategy, offering support and advice when requested. Through looking at teachers' planning and observing them teach, he is beginning to have an informed view of where good practice is found. He has also been effective in obtaining adequate resources to support the increased

emphasis on practical work. His plan for the future development of the subject is insufficiently precise to serve as a useful management tool to secure improvement.

SCIENCE

106. The 2000 Year 2 teacher assessments indicate that standards achieved by seven year olds are well above the national average and above the standards found in similar schools. No pupils achieved less than the level expected for their age. The statutory test results for eleven year olds show that standards achieved are well above the national average. This is a significant improvement when compared to the 1999 results and those of the preceding two years. The percentage of pupils in Year 6 who attained a standard above that expected for their age was well above the national average and higher than that achieved in similar schools. No pupils were awarded a level lower than that expected for their age. Statistics show that St. Joseph's 1999 results were below average when compared to those of similar schools. This can be largely explained by the absence of three able pupils during the test period. The attainment of boys has also improved and this has halted the decline of recent years. Evidence from the inspection, however, shows attainment in current classes at the ages of seven and eleven years to be similar to that expected for these age groups. A significant challenge lies ahead if the recent high test standards are to be maintained. Whilst all pupils make at least satisfactory progress, the rate of progress for those with special educational needs is good.
107. Pupils in Year 1 develop their awareness of forces through activities designed to explore the use of pushes and pulls, such as when they discussed the movement of a toy car down a ramp. Year 2 pupils learn about different sources of light and the formation of shadows. They use poems such as "*My Shadow*" to reinforce their learning whilst extending their literacy skills. Further activities, such as shadow puppet theatres, allow them to demonstrate how shadows can be created and changed in size, as well as developing their skills of speaking and listening.
108. Pupils in Year 3 learn about materials and why they are used for different purposes. They work in groups to investigate questions such as, "Which is the most hard wearing material?" and then record their findings appropriately. In Year 4 pupils' investigative skills are extended as they design fair tests in order to identify how well water passes through a range of different types of soil. They collaborate effectively in groups and reinforce their learning in mathematics as they carefully measure similar volumes of water for their tests. Displayed work shows that they use Venn diagrams to sort objects made from more than one material. Pupils in Year 5 use their research skills to find out about how day and night occur and why we see different phases of the moon. A discussion with four higher attaining pupils in this class showed that they are clearly achieving well above what is expected for their age. The oldest pupils explore electrical circuits and are beginning to understand the difference between a circuit drawing and a circuit diagram. They are starting to use symbols for electrical components but do not always draw them accurately. Discussions with a number of pupils show that they have an insufficient understanding of what is happening in the circuits they construct.

109. Three lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Lessons are interesting, well planned and sufficient good quality resources are provided. Pupils are made aware of what they are going to learn. An improved feature since the last inspection is the use of assessment to highlight pupils' future needs. Classroom assistants provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs and the tasks set are well matched to individual needs. This enables these pupils to make progress at a rate that is often good. Whilst relationships between the teachers and individual pupils are very good, classroom management skills, on occasions, particularly when no support is available from other adults, are less well developed. This has an impact on the quality of the learning that takes place. The rate at which pupils make progress slows down when insufficient structure is provided, given the pupils' level of maturity, to enable individuals to work effectively in groups without direct adult supervision.
110. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6, in the five lessons observed, was mainly good and never less than satisfactory. This is another significant improvement since the last inspection. The growing use of assessment to plan future learning opportunities is helping to improve the quality of teaching and the rate at which pupils make progress. Whilst emphasis is placed on the need to ensure a fair test, inconsistent guidance is given to help pupils know what they should look for, measure and analyse. Careful planning combines knowledge and skills relating to the different elements of the science curriculum. This helps pupils to see the relevance of their learning and provides opportunities for them to apply their skills in a range of contexts. Another improvement can be seen in the pupils' ability to use reference material. This was evident in Year 5 when they were required to find information about how day and night occurs and the movement of the Earth around the Sun.
111. This quality of teaching, evident in Years 4, 5 and 6, reflects the good relationships existing between the teacher and pupils and between the pupils themselves. Such relationships allow teachers to be relaxed and able to add humour without losing control. This approach helps to maintain the pupils' interest and level of motivation. Effective learning takes place when explanations are clear, scientific language is emphasised and focused questions are used to challenge the pupils' thinking. Many of these features were noted in a Year 5 lesson when pupils were discussing the movement of the Moon around the Earth. In this lesson the teachers' subject knowledge was vital if pupils' questions were to be answered accurately and any misconceptions were to be appropriately challenged. Teachers' good subject knowledge is evident in Years 3, 4 and 5.
112. The majority of pupils learn well in lessons. During lesson introductions they sit attentively and contribute well to discussions. They readily accept the opportunities provided to extend their speaking and listening skills and are keen to respond, aware that their answers are valued. Most are able to co-operate effectively in groups even when the whole class is involved in practical work. They share resources without fuss and handle them carefully. The older pupils, particularly those in Years 4, 5 and 6, are able to concentrate for long periods as teachers hold their attention through high expectations of behaviour and their own obvious enthusiasm.
113. Good use is made of the school grounds and the well developed nature trail. A science club

provides further opportunities for pupils to extend their learning as well as their personal and social development. The younger pupils are provided with extra curricular activities on Friday afternoons. These include cooking and at appropriate times of the year they help with bulb and flower planting. These activities are supported by parents. The resources available are adequate. A further improvement can be seen with regard to their storage and accessibility as these were judged as poor at the time of the last inspection.

114. Although provision meets statutory requirements, plans outlining the work to be covered by each year group provide insufficient guidance about the specific knowledge and investigative skills that should be taught. The policy is out of date and does not reflect recently revised national guidance. The teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall but there is evidence of some uncertainty with regard to the more demanding aspects of Physical Processes.
115. Whilst the use of assessment has much improved since the last inspection, the analysis of the pupils' performance in the statutory tests for eleven year olds remains shallow. It has done little to help identify aspects that pupils find difficult or where there is room for improvement. Reports to parents are informative and highlight achievement but they lack points for improvement. Those who attended the meeting for parents prior to the inspection supported this view. The subject action plan shows that targets will be set this year and this will help with the monitoring of pupil progress. It also highlights the decision to implement a new scheme of work that will address the recent changes to the National Curriculum orders.
116. The headteacher and her deputy currently share the role of subject co-ordinator. At the time of the last inspection no monitoring of teaching and learning had taken place. The report indicated that twenty per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory owing to them being insufficiently challenging, pupils being unclear about the lesson objective and too few opportunities were provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. These issues have been satisfactorily addressed with the quality of teaching now having a positive effect on pupils' learning. The headteacher has monitored the quality of teaching and learning and one of the outcomes highlighted the need for guidance regarding the development of investigative skills. Samples of work, to develop the teachers' awareness of national expectations, have yet to be collected. The use of information and communication technology to enhance the pupils' learning has improved although the provision of opportunities to sense and log physical data, such as sound and light levels or changes in temperature, has yet to be addressed.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

117. During the course of the inspection only one lesson was observed. Evidence from attractively displayed work, watching the pupils working and talking to them, indicates that standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations throughout the school.
118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. They use a range of resources to ensure that they experience the impact that information technology can have on their lives.

Pupils in Year 1 learn how to use the Shift key to produce a capital letter, they learn how to delete any errors, write short sentences and use the cursor to activate the speech element through a programme icon. They concentrate well and co-operate effectively when they work in small groups. Lower attaining pupils develop their skills systematically through good additional support.

119. Older pupils continue to make satisfactory progress as they use information and communication technology to support their work in a range of other subjects. Year 3 pupils use a digital scanner to import pictures into their weekly newspaper. They are able to place the object into their work and resize the picture appropriately. They are learning how to download pictures from Internet sites. Pupils with special educational needs use mathematical programmes when working on tasks enabling them to meet targets identified in their individual learning programmes. Using their previously saved work in history, pupils in Year 4 learn how to cut and paste information about the Aztecs and how to change the font style and size and the colour of their text. Higher attaining pupils use these skills to compile an attractive booklet on the Celts. This work includes scanned photographs and sections where text is wrapped around imported picture files. In mathematics they extend their ability to name and identify a range of polygons. This has a positive effect on the pupils' perception of the value of information and communication technology and their desire to extend their capabilities.
120. Year 5 pupils are set questions that require them to search the Internet for websites related to organisations such as the British Broadcasting Corporation, the Puffin Books site, the National Year of Reading site and the Top of the Pops web pages. They use Matisse's picture 'L'Escargot' to stimulate work with a graphics package and use a digital camera to record their work in history and design and technology. They are able to use CD-ROMs to retrieve information and can send e-mail messages to pupils in neighbouring schools. A growing number of Year 5 pupils word-process their project work at home. The lower attaining pupils achieve standards in line with their abilities and make satisfactory, and sometimes good progress. A comment in the previous inspection report, '*When the computer is used it is incidental to other activities in the class: it is seen as treat*', is clearly no longer applicable. Year 5 pupils with special educational needs used a computer-generated writing structure to help them draft a coherent piece of work. Their finished piece was displayed with care, again indicating that the pupils' work is valued.
121. A display of work by Years 3, 4 and 5 shows that pupils use computers to collect and present data. For example, they produce bar charts to record information about who is their favourite author, pie charts to record the type of transport they use to school and design the layout of a fictitious town using simulation software. Year 4 pupils use a composing package to recreate tunes such as, 'Happy Birthday'. The care with which teachers display their pupils' work clearly reflects the value they put on the use of information technology. It is now used as a tool to enhance learning across many areas of the curriculum. This is another improvement since the last inspection.
122. The recent purchase of new computers, three for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and one for older pupils, has enhanced the quality of provision. The subject's profile and impact have been

raised considerably since the last inspection. As yet, however, the range of CD-ROM material is limited. Use of the digital camera is similarly inhibited, pending the purchase of a mains powered supply. The co-ordinator is a very confident user of information and communication technology and is providing effective support. At the time of the inspection, despite only having held responsibility for six weeks, he has produced a suitable action plan for the subject's development. Some in-service training for staff has already taken place but lessons have not been monitored in order to assess the overall impact of the purchases and training. Further professional development for staff is planned through the National Opportunities Funding programme.

123. Meetings have been held with the receiving high school, Blessed Edward, in order to create further links. It has been agreed that the high school's Year 11 pupils will work with St. Joseph's Year 6 pupils to produce a web page. This work will not only benefit the school but will also provide evidence for GCSE course work. Whilst equipment is available for pupils to monitor changes in temperature or light levels, it is not used. The rate of progress for older pupils, with regard to the use of programmable toys or control packages, is unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress in these aspects is not being monitored and there is an absence of any documented guidance as to what skills would be appropriate for each year group. The current policy is due to be updated by July 2001 and the required discussions will have a further impact on the already improved level of provision.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

ART, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. Standards in **art and design** are in line with the national expectations by the age of seven and eleven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when attainment was judged to be below expectations in both key stages.
125. In Key Stage 1 pupils are able to make patterns using different media and are aware of how to mix primary colours to make secondary ones. Pupils use wax crayons to create autumn pictures, and wax resistant pictures of patterned candles are on display. However, in some of the pictures the drawings of trees are immature. Similarly, some patterns lack regularity.
126. After listening to '*Mars*', '*Venus*' and '*Jupiter*,' from the '*Planet Suite*' by Holst, pupils in Year 4 were able to interpret the music and complete a piece of work in response to the pictures in their mind. They then evaluated these pieces of work and their thoughts were written and displayed next to their work. For instance, a pupil wrote, "Then I had an idea, it reminds me of the sun and colours, sun in the middle and colours all round. It's called, 'The Sun of Colour'". After being involved with the David Glass spectacle, "Off the Wall", Year 6 pupils were inspired. The work on display entitled "Shades of Lowry" shows how careful the pupils have been when observing this artist's work. The teacher gave effective support in a further activity deriving from this stimulus to help the pupils grow in confidence and work with clay. As a result, their knowledge and understanding of the work of the sculptor Giacometti, as well as their skills in using this medium, were enhanced .

127. Since the previous inspection, when art was identified as an area in need of development, significant improvements have taken place. The management of the subject is stronger and, based on the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching and learning is no longer unsatisfactory. Lessons are now well planned, clearly setting out what the pupils have to learn. The school has purchased many new good quality resources, which are having a positive impact on learning, particularly with skills development through experimenting with tools and techniques.
128. Work on display now values pupils' work and creates a stimulating environment in the corridors, hall and classrooms. The understanding of art forms from western and non-western cultures, identified as weak at the time of the previous inspection, is still insufficiently secure. The co-ordinator is very aware of the findings in the last report and has worked hard to improve the art curriculum. However, sketchbooks are not used as they should be throughout Key Stage 2. The co-ordinator has built up a portfolio of work and is aware that this needs to be standardised. She has not as yet had opportunity to monitor pupils' work or the teaching of art. The time available for art is shared with design and technology. Guidance about how much time teachers should use for art is insufficiently clear to ensure consistent practice throughout the school.
129. During the inspection only one **design and technology** lesson was observed. On the basis of this observation, the quality of the pupils' work displayed around the school, photographic evidence and further discussions with pupils, standards are judged to be in line with those expected for seven and eleven year olds. This is a significant improvement from the judgements made at the last inspection. Year 1 pupils are able to produce a basic design and recognise the need for safety when they produce a fruit salad of their choice. They can identify how they will prepare the fruit and make judgements about the quality of their work.
130. Pupils in Year 3 design and make baked potatoes using a range of ingredients. Their designs highlight the types of filling that they like or dislike but the retained work does not indicate that they evaluate existing products during the course of their work. Year 4 pupils attended an Outdoor Environmental Centre in connection with their work in history. They made sample woven willow fences and copper brooches. Year 5 pupils design and make pizzas using a wide variety of appropriate ingredients. Their design drawings identify the ingredients and their arrangement. Pupils in Year 6 design and make bags from a range of fabrics. They identify the steps required to produce their finished product but their design drawings do not identify the specific fabrics or materials that they will use or indicate the sizes of the various parts.
131. The pupils' response to design and technology is good and this leads to sound learning. This is a marked improvement when compared to the comments made in the earlier report. The Year 5 pupils showed a keen interest in the tasks set and willingly shared experiences with each other. Their perseverance, when work is challenging, enables them to eventually succeed. The emphasis on the need for safety, instilled by the teacher, ensures that they hold tools correctly and are aware of the possible dangers to others when they are working.

132. The previous report indicated that there was no subject policy or scheme of work. A policy has been produced but it is of poor quality. The documentation lacks clarity regarding the design and technology process and the three types of activity required to fulfil the subject requirement. There is no whole school agreement with regard to the annual allocation of time given to the subject. A scheme is in draft form but has yet to be finalised. Guidance from nationally produced material is currently being used to address this urgent need. Pupils' experience of a wide range of mechanisms and the use of rigid materials is currently limited.
133. The level of resources available for the subject is barely adequate and has not improved a great deal from the time of the previous inspection. The number of tools required for use when pupils are working with rigid materials is limited. This prolongs the time needed when the focus of whole class lessons is based on making products. This was evident in the Year 5 class where only one drill was available. The co-ordinator has attended a course designed specifically for subject leaders and feels confident to lead its future development. Risk assessments for the current activities have been completed. Some teachers' subject knowledge is still insecure. The co-ordinator has consulted members of staff in order to identify some of their current needs but as yet the planned training has not taken place.
134. It was only possible to observe one **geography** lesson and there was very little evidence of pupils' geographical work. Due to this lack of evidence, no judgement can be made on standards, teaching or learning.
135. Since the previous inspection the school has adopted the Qualification and Curriculum Authority documentation. The co-ordinator is aware of the required knowledge and understanding needed for all teachers to successfully implement the new Curriculum 2000, if the school is to maintain and improve upon the satisfactory standards in geography identified at the last inspection.
136. Resources, although generally adequate for current needs, are requiring review in the light of the demands of the new curriculum. Procedures for assessment are still not developed and assessment is not used to plan future learning opportunities. The number of visits to places of interest, to support the delivery of the curriculum, is limited.
137. In **history**, standards are in line with what is expected of pupils at the age of seven and attainment by the age of eleven is above national expectations. Pupils in Year 1 know about changes in their own lives and are able to sequence stories to develop an understanding of chronology. Pupils in Year 4 have an understanding of the period of time from 1100-1522, through their study of the Aztecs. They know about some of the Aztec gods, sacrifices, art and crafts and can talk about the Aztec calendar. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of life in Victorian times, and a number of them were able to write good, structured accounts about "Changing Times" during their English lessons. Good use is made of historical texts across the school in literacy lessons.

138. In Key Stage 2, teachers use a good variety of learning strategies to meet the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. Teachers use time lines very successfully to sequence events and happenings in the study of the Romans and the Victorians. This enables all the pupils to develop a deeper understanding of chronology. A wide range of well-prepared activities helps pupils in Year 5 to understand the legacy of the Romans. Similarly varied opportunities enable Year 6 pupils to begin to understand the events and changes in work and transport on the lives of men, women and children from different sections of society from 1837-1901.
139. Since the previous inspection the school has adopted the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidance. This has helped with the review of the long term planning and ensures more than adequate coverage. There is now good evidence of pupils in Key Stage 2 using personal research skills involving books, information and communication technology and other historical sources to produce booklets and group displays.
140. Resources have improved somewhat and are supplemented through the school becoming a member of the Hartlebury museum lending library. They are adequate for the delivery of the new National Curriculum. The curriculum is enriched through visitors into school and the visits that take place.
141. The co-ordinator is aware that assessment is still underdeveloped as identified in the previous report and that there is little use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning.
142. Standards in **music** reflect national expectations for pupils aged seven, but there was insufficient evidence of the attainment of eleven year olds. Singing continues to be a strength, as demonstrated in the many opportunities pupils have to perform both in and out of school. The strong lead and support provided by the music co-ordinator, and the adoption and implementation of a whole-school scheme on which planning is based, are successful in giving teachers the necessary confidence and skills to teach to a satisfactory, and occasionally good, standard, incorporating the use of information technology into their lessons when appropriate. Higher standards and satisfactory teaching represent improvement since the previous inspection, as does the greater balance now apparent in the planning for the different elements of the subject. Composing is now a stronger area, but there is still room for improvement.
143. Teachers are confident to take the lead in lessons by using their own voice as a model and exemplar to pupils. The five lessons observed were conducted at a brisk pace, which challenged pupils' concentration and moved them on in their learning appropriately. A variety of activities kept interest levels high and added to pupils' obvious enjoyment, although not all opportunities to engage pupils in working as a group were taken. Other evidence was gained from assemblies, displays and discussion with the co-ordinator.
144. In all year groups, pupils demonstrate good listening skills. In combination with their good speaking and listening skills, this enables them not only to appreciate elements of recorded music they hear, but also to comment on it in a critical way. For example, pupils in Year 2

recognised the repeating pattern in the structure of a song they were performing, and were able to select untuned percussion instruments to accompany their singing and emphasise the underlying rhythm. These appreciation skills are developed appropriately as pupils move through the school, and combined with opportunities to compose, as when Year 6 pupils worked together to create their own rhythms using instruments they had selected. The teacher's emphasis on appropriate musical vocabulary led pupils to describe their work as "improvisation". Pupils' learning is further enhanced by the teacher's expectation that they will evaluate each other's work and comment on why it is successful and how it could be improved. Good links are made between music and other subjects, for example when extracts from Gustav Holst's '*Planet Suite*' were used as the stimulus for art work.

145. Throughout the school, the emphasis in lessons and beyond is on pupils' active participation in musical activity. Pupils accompany hymn singing in assemblies and mass with recorders and violins. The school enjoys a high reputation in the local community for the quality of pupils' singing. Recently the headteacher was invited for the third successive year to provide a choir to participate in the local professional performance of "*Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*", and the school choir also performed during a Malvern millennium celebration involving the naming of a local hill. Extra-curricular opportunities support the teaching of music successfully, as does the range and quality of the peripatetic tuition available.
146. Resources are adequate; the school has extended its range of musical instruments to include those reflecting other cultures, such as African, South American and Vietnamese.
147. The co-ordinator has an awareness of the strengths within the subject and areas in need of improvement. For example, she is conscious of the need for more guidance to staff on how much time should be devoted to music within the curriculum. Her action plan is a useful tool to secure improvement and raise standards.
148. Only two **physical education** lessons, involving the Reception and Year 6 classes, were observed during the inspection. Given the essentially practical nature of the subject, very little other evidence was available, although displays were scrutinised and discussion with the co-ordinator took place. There is, however, insufficient evidence on which to base overall judgements about standards and the quality of teaching in physical education throughout the school.
149. In both lessons, very good teaching engaged pupils in challenging physical activity with emphasis on safety and quality in the refinement of skills. Lessons included enjoyable warm-up activities and brisk pace made demands on pupils, which they responded to with obvious enthusiasm and pleasure. Teachers' confident subject knowledge enabled them to teach with flair and imagination, offering personal as well as pupil demonstration to achieve quality work. Insistence on a high standard gave pupils a target to aspire to, for instance in improving their ball control skills in the lesson for older pupils. Clear improvement in the quality of pupils' work was achieved within the lesson, attainment reflecting expectations for pupils of this age. Links with other subjects are exploited successfully, as when pupils in both infant and junior classes wrote about the effects of physical activity on their bodies – a

Year 2 pupil stating that, “It made my hear beat faster”.

150. In the absence of a whole-school determination of how much time should be spent on physical education lessons, practice is variable. Such inconsistency does not support the steady and regular development of pupils’ skills and the raising of standards. The school is aware of this, and has plans to address the situation in the current academic year. Arrangements for swimming currently involve more time than is necessary, given the proximity of the pool the school uses.
151. The co-ordinator joined the school staff very recently but has a clear plan for the subject, and, in the few weeks she has held the post, has already achieved much. New materials to support teachers in planning work in gymnastics and games are being trialled in the infant stage as a preface to their possible whole-school adoption. Although not a specialist in physical education, she is enthusiastic about the subject and keen to improve her own expertise through imminently undertaking training leading to the qualification of netball instructor. She enjoys the support of her colleagues, who take part in the now extensive range of extra-curricular sporting activities the school provides.
152. An exciting programme of further opportunities for pupils is in place and includes tennis coaching, a skipping workshop and participation in a netball tournament in the spring term.
153. The teaching of this range of subjects, as observed during the inspection, is generally good. In lessons seen, it ranged ranging in quality from very good to unsatisfactory. Of the thirteen lessons seen, in four teaching was judged to be very good, and good in a further four. It was satisfactory in three lessons, and unsatisfactory in two. Very good teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. In the Year 5 design and technology lesson observed, for example, the teaching was of a high standard. The well-prepared lesson, combined with the teacher’s good subject knowledge and readily available resources, enabled each pupil to successfully make a moving toy with a cam mechanism. Pupils used their information and communication technology skills by selecting pictures from ‘clip art’ software to enhance the appearance of their finished product. Good support was provided for pupils with special educational needs. This enabled their progress to virtually match that of other low attaining pupils. However, this one lesson does not provide sufficient evidence on which to judge the overall quality of teaching in design and technology. In the two art lessons seen, the quality of teaching and the learning pupils achieved was at least satisfactory and on one occasion good.