

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**ST WILFRID'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Northenden

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105549

Headteacher: Mr M. Young

Reporting inspector: Mrs M. J. Lewis  
22787

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 225246

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

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**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Patterdale Road  
Northenden  
Manchester

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: The Reverend G. Forster

Date of previous inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> June 1996

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Team members</b>		<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Margaret J Lewis 22787	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music English as an additional language	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
L. Shipman 14061	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How good does the school work in partnership with parents?
J. Platt 11565	Team inspector	English Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
C. Richardson 22058	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography History Equal opportunities	
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Wilfrid's is a Church of England voluntary aided primary school. It is larger than other primary schools and has more pupils than at the time of the previous inspection. It is a popular school with 323 pupils including a 45-place nursery unit. Nearly a quarter of pupils travel to the school from outside the immediate area. It is situated eight miles from Manchester city centre and is about three miles from the airport. The school serves an area of about two thirds mixed private housing and a third local authority housing.

About seven per cent of pupils come from a minority ethnic background and the percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (just over 5 per cent) is higher than in most primary schools. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils registered as having special educational needs has increased recently but is below the average. Three of these pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need<sup>1</sup>. Most pupils are taught in classes of the same age although there are three classes of mixed ages in Reception/Year 1, Years 3/4 and Years 5/6. Children are placed in classes according to their chronological ages.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

As a result of significant improvements made in recent years this is an effective school. Pupils' learning throughout the school is good and the quality of teaching is good. The basic skills of numeracy and literacy are taught well. This has resulted in improving standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards of reading throughout the school are above average. Teaching in other subjects is always satisfactory and often good or very good. The school is led well by the headteacher. He is well supported by governors and senior staff. Staff and pupils build good relationships from the beginning. The school provides good value for money.

#### What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall. The skills of numeracy and literacy are taught well. This is improving pupils' basic skills. Teachers use a variety of ideas in their lessons.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented particularly well. This has helped to raise standards in mathematics.
- As a result of the good teaching of early reading skills in the younger classes pupils learn to read quickly and maintain a high standard of reading through the school.
- The youngest children in the nursery and in the reception classes make a very good start to their education. This is as a result of good teaching.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development and, as a result, pupils respect others and form good relationships.
- The headteacher leads the school well. He knows what is going on at all times.

#### What could be improved

- The co-ordination of special educational needs and the monitoring of the progress of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The inclusion of pupils with special needs in whole class literacy lessons.
- The early identification and planned programme of language skills for pupils with English as an additional language to make sure that they are fully involved in all aspects of the curriculum.
- The enhancement of pupils' learning experiences outside lessons

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

<sup>1</sup> Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involves external specialists as well as staff within the school.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Key issues raised in the last inspection in June 1996 have been dealt with. The school uses agreed schemes of work for all subjects and has extended its use of checking and tracking pupils' performance. Teachers use this information well for grouping pupils within their classes. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and this has been instrumental in raising standards in English and mathematics. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed and a programme of checking the quality of teaching and standards of work is in place. The building of additional classrooms and new resources for the younger children has improved their learning. Financial planning in the school is now good. The school now gives good value for money.

## 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 <sup>2</sup>
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	B	B
Mathematics	C	C	D	D
Science	C	C	D	D

**Key**

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

When compared with those in similar schools, the school's 1999 results for pupils at the age of 11 were above the average in English but below average in mathematics and science. Results were the same compared with schools nationally. Although no national comparisons are available, the most recent figures for the national tests in 2000 indicate that pupils' results are at the national average in English, mathematics and science with a higher number of pupils attaining above the national average (Level 5<sup>3</sup>) in mathematics and science than in English. Standards are improving. Inspection findings show that by the age of 11, pupils attain above the national standards in English and mathematics and are at the average in science. Pupils achieve at the levels similar to those found for their age in all other subjects of the National Curriculum. They show a good understanding of scientific and historical enquiry. Levels of handwriting and presentation of written work are satisfactory but vary and are a weakness of many pupils' work. Children start in the nursery with a broad range of skills but generally their language skills are higher than those in number. Children make good progress in the nursery and are on target to reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the reception class. Pupils aged five to seven learn well. Inspection findings show that by seven they reach above average levels in mathematics and reading and average levels in science and writing. This is an improvement on the results of tests in 1999 for mathematics and reading.

<sup>2</sup> The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school. At Key Stages 1 and 2 the level attained by each pupil, for example in mathematics, is given a score. A Level 1 = 9 points, a Level 2 = 15 points and so on. Therefore the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all the points based on the level attained by pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. Therefore a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Key Stage 1 tests is greater than 15.0 is one whose pupils are performing above the level expected for their age. The average points score for Level 4, the nationally expected level for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, is 27.

<sup>3</sup> At Key Stage 2 the nationally expected level for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 is Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching a standard above that expected for a child of his or her age.

**PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils come to school with enthusiasm. They are interested and involved in their lessons
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The behaviour of the youngest children and those up to seven is consistently good. A small but significant number of older pupils show challenging behaviour in lessons and in play.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are polite and courteous. This is a result of high expectations from all teaching and non-teaching staff.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are satisfactory. Punctuality is good.

Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They enjoy coming to school and most behave well. This contributes well to their learning and personal development and is a result of teachers' high expectations.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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

Sixty-eight lessons were seen. All lessons except one were at least satisfactory and more than a half of lessons were good. A significant number were very good. Very good teaching was spread evenly across the school. The teaching of English is good overall and half the lessons are good or very good. The best teaching in English is for pupils aged up to seven. Teaching in mathematics is consistently good throughout the school. A small number of lessons are very good. This results in good progress. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language do not receive specialist identification or support.

**OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils. Children in the nursery and reception classes receive a stimulating curriculum which helps them make good progress. Provision for educational visits and visitors into school to enhance lessons is limited. Pupils with special educational needs withdrawn from lessons do not always have full access to the literacy curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs although at times pupils repeat work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition in the nursery are not identified and given specialist support. They are involved in all lessons throughout the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. This helps to develop pupils' relationships with others and with adults. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides good support and cares effectively for its pupils.

The school works well with parents and involves them in their children's learning. It has very good induction procedures in place for the nursery and reception classes and a parent and toddler group for very young children. The school keeps parents well informed of their children's progress and encourages them to help in school. It has difficulty in gaining support from parents or other adults to assist with educational visits.



**HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership and management of the school is sound. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy headteacher. The quality of teaching is closely checked. This has raised the standard of teaching since the previous inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors take their responsibilities very seriously and fulfil their roles well. They have established committees and support the headteacher and staff well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Governors evaluate some aspects of the school and are becoming more involved with the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Positive management by the headteacher, governors and the school's financial adviser ensures that funding is used well. This has led to additional classroom support assistants and support for reading which contributes to the high reading standards. Money for additional computers has been set aside by the school to add to the funding received.

Staffing and accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The school manages its budget well and spends its money wisely.

**PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Ninety-seven parents (30 per cent) returned the parents' questionnaire and 26 parents attended a meeting with inspectors before the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable to approach the school with questions and problems</li> <li>• They are kept well informed on their child's progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of interesting activities outside lessons</li> <li>• Some parents thought that children did not get the right amount of homework</li> <li>• Some parents thought that the school did not work closely with parents</li> <li>• Some parents thought children's behaviour in the oldest classes was less good.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments and views of the school but disagree with some of their criticisms. Children have the right amount of work to do at home and the school makes a good effort to work closely with parents. The school has a choir and recorder groups as well as a badminton club. Inspectors agree that there are few educational visits or visitors into school to make the curriculum interesting for pupils and that the behaviour of a small number of older pupils is less good.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and achievements

1. Children start in the nursery with a broad range of abilities overall. Generally their skills are lower in mathematical development than in language development. As a result of good, and some very good teaching, they make good progress. They begin the reception year with average levels of attainment in all the areas of learning for children of this age except in writing, where attainment is below average. From the results of assessments carried out in the current reception year and inspectors' findings, it is clear that children are on line to achieve the expectations for their age in all areas of the early years' curriculum by the time they begin in Year 1.
2. The previous inspection findings indicated that at the age of 11, pupils attained at the average level in all areas of English, mathematics and science. At the age of seven, pupils achieved above average levels for reading and writing, and the average level for speaking, listening, mathematics and science.
3. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard and with success to raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics. It has implemented the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies well and carried out close monitoring of teaching. The school has achieved its targets set for year 2000. Targets were realistic and it is due to set higher targets for the current year.
4. Over the four years up to 1999 standards of reading have improved more than those of writing by the age of seven, and standards in mathematics have remained at the average. In 1999, English results for seven-year-olds were in line with both the national average and the average for similar schools for reading and writing. At the age of 11 standards overall in mathematics and science have been in line with the national trend over the past four years; in English the trend has been above that found nationally. English results for 11-year-olds rose in 1999 to be above the average both for similar schools and schools nationally. However, results in mathematics and science were below the average for both national and similar schools.
5. No comparisons are yet available for test results for 2000 either nationally or for similar schools. The initial indications of results for pupils aged 11 in English are that standards are at least at the national average, although a slightly lower percentage of pupils in this group reached the higher level (Level 5) than in 1999. Results in mathematics and science for pupils aged 11 indicate that pupils reached at least the national average, and a higher percentage achieved at the higher level in mathematics than in science and English. At the age of seven, pupils' reading and writing results are similar to those of 1999, although fewer pupils reached the higher level (Level 3) in reading and more gained the higher level in writing. Results for seven year olds in mathematics for 2000 indicate a rise in the number achieving national levels and above.
6. Current inspection findings show that, by the age of eleven standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy are above the national average. Standards in mathematics are improving. No differences were found between the attainment of boys and girls. In tests results in 1999 boys outperformed girls in English and science and there was no significant difference in mathematics. At the age of seven, pupils reach the national average overall in English, although they attain above average levels in

reading. This good attainment in reading is linked to the good teaching of early reading skills and the support given to pupils by parents and support assistants in school. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are average at the age of seven. However, they improve and by the age of 11 they are above average. At the age of 11, pupils' overall attainment in English is above the national average, although it is not as high in writing as in reading. In mathematics, attainment is judged to be above the national average at the ages of both seven and eleven. This achievement is attributed to the good quality of teaching during numeracy sessions, which results in good learning. Teachers make careful assessments of pupils' work and plan accordingly to set targets for them in mathematics lessons. Standards of achievement in science are at the national average for pupils of seven and 11. Average and lower-attaining pupils make good gains in their scientific knowledge as a result of good teaching and through an emphasis on scientific enquiry in practical work. One or two higher-attaining pupils reach the higher levels in science by the end of Year 6.

7. In other subjects of the curriculum pupils attain at the expected level. Due to the emphasis on English and mathematics the good levels of attainment found at the time of the last inspection in art, geography, history, music and physical education have not been sustained, although they are still satisfactory. Pupils' attainment in design technology and information technology has been maintained. Although computer resources in information technology were limited at the time of the inspection, teachers used what they had systematically. Arrival of new computers for the computer suite was imminent. Many pupils bring good knowledge of the use of information technology from home and apply this well to their own learning and in supporting that of others in school. Across the different subjects of the curriculum levels of handwriting and presentation of pupils' written work vary and this is a weakness.
8. Pupils on the register of special educational needs attain below the national average, but they make satisfactory progress relative to their previous attainment. In English, effective support is not always available during the literacy hour and on occasions pupils miss aspects of the literacy hour or even the whole lesson when they are withdrawn for support. This disrupts the continuity of learning in future lessons when pupils are unclear about what has been happening in their absence. This was more apparent amongst older pupils who missed some very interesting class discussions about the shared text and the evaluation activity at the end of the lesson. In other subjects such as mathematics and science teachers plan activities closely matched to pupils' prior attainment, support in class is more effective and pupils' progress improves. Pupils with a formal statement of need have their progress and attainment checked by the classroom assistant. This is not closely tracked by the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs. This means that there is insufficient detail about how the pupils are getting on and what could be done to extend their learning. Similarly, class teachers are not involved in planning activities to fulfil the requirements of these pupils' individual education plans. This means that only limited time is allocated to their specific needs and this hampers their progress.
9. The attainment and progress of pupils with English as a second language are not separately monitored. Teachers do not identify pupils for specific specialist support when they start school and no additional language provision is given to them. The school is uncertain whether they achieve as well as they could. During the inspection some pupils with little English found it difficult to articulate their needs clearly to the teacher during lessons.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils are good. They have been maintained since the last inspection. Parents are pleased about this. Behaviour of those children in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 is good. However, a small but significant number of older pupils at the end of the juniors show challenging behaviour both in lessons and in boisterous play.
11. Pupils come to school willingly. The younger ones run in eagerly and with a sense of excitement. Relationships between pupils of all ages are good. Many older pupils arrive with their friends. The headteacher and staff meet both children and parents on arrival. This allows parents an opportunity to discuss any concerns informally with staff.
12. Pupils quickly settle down to the school routine. They concentrate well in lessons and finish their tasks. For instance they collaborate well, share ideas and exchange resources. A good instance of this was seen in a Years 5/6 science lesson. Pupils collaborated well in their predictions of what would happen when an ice cube melted and at the end of the lesson were able to say whether their predictions were correct. Good classroom management and planning by teachers ensures that pupils' learning and enthusiasm is stimulated. This has a positive influence on the levels of attainment they reach.
13. Many pupils are keen to show their work or explain what they have done and learnt in a lesson clearly. In question and answer sessions, many put their hands up and wait patiently for an opportunity to answer.
14. Behaviour in and around the school is satisfactory. For the youngest children and in Years 1 and 2 behaviour and courtesy is of a consistently high standard. This is especially so during the lunchtime play period, where boys and girls happily played together with squeals of delight and laughter. Behaviour is frequently good in the juniors. However, isolated instances of poor behaviour in class by a few pupils, sometimes disturb the flow of the lesson. This challenging behaviour is observed in a minority of older boys who knowingly seek to push the barriers of acceptable behaviour to the limit. This behaviour continues into the play periods.
15. Relationships and personal development of the pupils are good. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The staff are good role models. They are calm and caring towards all the children and to each other. There is no graffiti, litter or damage around the school. The pupils show respect for their school and each other.
16. Pupils are smart in their uniforms. Across the whole school, many perform roles as monitors, helping the school and each other in different ways, for example setting out the teachers' chairs for assembly. Courtesy and politeness were often noticed, for example, pupils hold doors open for each other and adults and fetch chairs for visitors to the classrooms.
17. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and in line with the national average. Authorised absence is due almost entirely to extended holidays in term time. Registration is taken promptly and efficiently and the punctuality of the pupils is good. This has a positive influence on the pupils' general attitudes to learning.

**HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. The standard of teaching is good overall and has some very good features. Teaching in all but one of the lessons seen was at least satisfactory. It was good or better in 72 per cent of lessons and very good in 15 per cent. The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when 10 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory and only 8 per cent was very good. This improvement is due to the closer monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior staff, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. Since the previous inspection the school has developed sound schemes of work in subject areas. It has recently reviewed these and now uses the nationally recommended subject guidelines and the national strategies for English and mathematics. This is having a good impact and is raising standards particularly in mathematics. Staff changes have taken place and half the staff are new to the school since the previous inspection. This has contributed to raising the overall standard of teaching. Staff are enthusiastic and dedicated. All of them have had recent training in the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and are due for training in information and communication technology.
19. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall, although it is variable in some subjects, such as music and information technology. In these subjects some teachers are less confident and secure. In classes where teachers are confident pupils make the best progress. Teachers make good use of a variety of ideas and different activities to motivate and capture pupils' interest. For instance, they use games and practical activities well in mathematics lessons throughout the school and choose challenging texts such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in English lessons for pupils at Years 5 and 6. Pupils in a Year 1 science lesson made ongoing observations and recordings of the growth of beans. In a well-devised information technology lesson at Year 6, the teacher demonstrated very effectively to the class the use of a program to record sound, heat and light sensors. The results from a computer print-out of an effective reading taken earlier that day of a sound sensor in the classroom stimulated the pupils. They deduced from the graph what had been happening in the classroom at different times in the morning.
20. Teachers of the youngest pupils have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They provide stimulating activities and organise large numbers of pupils well in the nursery and reception classes, including the mixed-age groups in the reception and Year 1 class. As a result children in the Foundation Stage make consistently good progress in their learning. Staff promote the children's curiosity well in a range of activities, for instance when exploring fruits and vegetables which are new to them, such as a pomegranate.
21. Teachers plan effectively. Some lessons are linked to each other to make learning meaningful for pupils. For instance, pupils in a Years 5/6 class learn about music from different cultures, and in their art lesson they make observational drawings of a variety of musical instruments from those countries. Planning in English and mathematics follows the national guidelines and teachers make good use of the planning sequence for these lessons in some other lessons, such as history and geography. They begin with a class discussion and, after completing their tasks, pupils are brought back together to review what they have learnt. Teachers make effective use of displays in the school to help pupils to learn and understand. For instance, in a Year 2 class the teacher had prepared an eye-catching display of natural objects to help pupils to understand what happens to plants and seeds in autumn. Teachers generally group pupils by ability in their mathematics and English lessons, but in some English lessons teachers' planning does not always clearly



show what different groups of pupils should learn by the end of the lesson. This hampers progress particularly for some lower attaining groups of pupils.

22. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good in lessons throughout the school. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. The teaching of language and number skills is well developed in the nursery and in the reception classes. Speaking and listening, new vocabulary, the enjoyment of books and early writing skills are developed very well by teachers and the staff who work with them. Children develop a good understanding of numbers with the use of rhymes, songs, poems and counting games. Teachers give pupils a wide range of strategies for the learning of basic number skills such as addition and subtraction in Years 1 and 2 and this skilled teaching of methods for number skills continues into the junior classes. Teachers give brisk and lively mental number sessions. They encourage pupils to explain their methods and how they arrive at their answers which results in good learning taking place.
23. In infant classes teachers have a good understanding of the teaching of reading skills, including phonic skills, and as a result pupils make good progress. They build on their reading skills in the junior classes and teachers develop an awareness of audience when reading aloud with expression. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with a sufficiently wide range of reading material for their independent reading as they become older and pupils express an interest to read more interesting material. The school has identified the teaching of writing as an area for improvement. Teachers provide good support for pupils in their lessons. Teachers provide a range of writing opportunities across other subjects of the curriculum such as in history and geography and the writing of scientific experiments. These lessons also contribute well to pupils' understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. The teaching of handwriting and presentation skills is inconsistent in the school and teachers do not all use the handwriting style chosen by the school.
24. Teachers develop good relationships with pupils and have high expectations of behaviour. They manage pupils very well in the nursery, reception and infant classes. Teachers receive additional support from the deputy headteacher for managing pupils' behaviour in several junior classes where small groups of pupils are sometimes disrespectful to teachers and behave badly. This additional support is very successful and enables lessons and learning to proceed effectively. In some lessons however, such as in a Year 6 design and technology lesson when noise levels became high, time is taken up managing behaviour and re-engaging the pupils' attention to their tasks.
25. Teachers use time and support staff effectively in their lessons. Teachers and support staff work well together and share the same values. Teachers direct classroom assistants and nursery nurses well, for instance, in the nursery and mixed Year 1 and reception class. However, the support for pupils with statements of special educational needs is less well directed by the special-needs co-ordinator.
26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and teachers try to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons. This is usually successful, although it is unsatisfactory that several pupils do not receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum, as they miss lessons on a regular basis to receive additional reading and writing support. When pupils are provided with extra help in class this is usually planned in consultation with the class teacher and is effective in improving the rate of learning in lessons. On occasions pupils are withdrawn for a small amount of time for extra help. However, the amount of time is mostly too short to have any real effect upon pupils' learning, for example a lesson of just 20 minutes each week to learn letter

sounds. A lack of communication about what is happening in these withdrawal sessions leads to pupils repeating similar activities when they return to class. For instance, pupils in Year 1 returned to class having missed the story aspect of the literacy hour. In the group work they repeated the task using the same resources that they had used in the withdrawal session. This led to pupils marking time as they started to lose interest in their learning. In other lessons teachers plan tasks to match the ability of all pupils or ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive additional support. Extra support in class is sensitive, unobtrusive and very effective in ensuring that pupils fully understand the focus of the lesson and are clear about the tasks to be completed.

27. The school has no procedures in place for identifying and checking the progress of language learning for those pupils who join the school with English as an additional language. The school does not have a designated co-ordinator to track these pupils. No register is kept of these children nor are individual language plans prepared for them. They receive the same curriculum as others, but their level of language skills is not ascertained or their progress recorded through the stages of language acquisition. It is unclear whether they learn as quickly as they could. Teachers are not fully informed of the specific needs of these pupils or aware that they may need individual language support.
28. Teachers mark and assess most pupils' work effectively. They use the results well to inform their lessons and to group pupils according to their levels of attainment. They set individual targets for pupils to enable them to be aware of what they are learning, how well they are doing it and what they need to do to improve. The school has a homework policy and teachers give the right amount of homework on a regular basis.

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

29. Children in the nursery and in the reception classes receive a stimulating curriculum, which helps them to make good progress. The focus on social skills is very effective and pupils are developing well and accept responsibility for following the routines of the school. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities although the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are not always fully addressed to ensure that they are fully included. Religious education is taught according to the local and diocesan guidelines.
30. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the effective teaching in these lessons has led to improved standards in numeracy and literacy. These areas take up a considerable amount of the school day but the school has planned carefully to provide time for other subjects of the curriculum. Planning for these subjects follows the nationally recommended guidelines and this is providing teachers with details so that they can build more effectively on the previous year's learning. The provision for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning and skills in information and communication technology has been hampered by the lack of sufficient computers in the school. However, pupils have still maintained levels of attainment in line with the nationally expected level. The future plans for the subject are good, as new resources are now available.

31. The recommendations for the Code of Practice<sup>4</sup> for pupils with special educational needs are fully in place, although the directed help for such pupils is not always as effective as it could be. Teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator are not fully involved in drawing up their individual education plans. This is mainly done by the local authority support services and delivered by a classroom support assistant. This leads to occasions when tasks do not match the needs identified in the pupils' formal statements and this hampers their progress towards their identified targets.
32. Sex education is provided as part of the personal and social education and the science curriculum. It is set successfully within the Christian school ethos and the development of relationships is promoted well in the school. Drugs education is provided by the school nurse as well as in other aspects of the curriculum and is at a level appropriate for this age range. The older pupils have regular slots to discuss current affairs and this is effective in extending confidence in speaking and listening skills as well as providing opportunities for discussion about a range of interesting topics.
33. Visits to places of local interest, such as Wigan Pier and the proposed visit to Bramhall Hall, enhance the statutory curriculum to some degree. However, parents expressed a concern that these visits have declined in recent years, as has provision for extra-curricular activities. Inspectors found that there has been a reduction in the number of visits although the school does have a range of musical activities and a badminton club. Provision for other sporting activities is limited. The school has found difficulty in finding a sufficient number of parents and helpers to assist on educational visits and for instance with football training.
34. The school has established satisfactory links with the community but these are not fully extended to include a range of visitors into school or visits by pupils to sporting and cultural events to extend their learning. Currently, the strongest link is with the local church for special services as well as grave rubbings to appreciate the history of the locality. The vicar is also a regular visitor to school and takes collective worship each week. Other visitors include people to talk about safety on the railways and at home.
35. Pupils leave to attend up to ten different secondary schools and the school finds it difficult to sustain close relationships with all of them. However, it strives to ensure a smooth transfer to them through a range of visits and one secondary school provides a mathematics challenge for the pupils. The introduction into school is managed well and many children have attended the parent and toddler group before they start in the nursery. A social meeting is arranged for parents. It includes a presentation about the school so parents are well informed about school organisation before their children start school.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

36. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory as at the previous inspection. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There are whole, departmental and class assemblies when pupils are encouraged to celebrate their own and each other's achievements, for instance through the award of reading certificates. The clergy and the church contribute to pupils' spiritual support regularly during collective worship. The importance of raising

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<sup>4</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.



pupils' awareness of the needs of others is highlighted by, for example, *Jeans for Genes*. The subject is handled sensitively and in a caring and purposeful atmosphere. There are some successful examples of spiritual experiences in lesson when pupils are encouraged to experience wonder. In the youngest pupils' lesson there was an awed silence as they saw a pomegranate cut open and another group were amazed at the growth of their beans. Pupils have the opportunity to think about beauty and creativity when they look at the displays around the school, such as in a display of autumn tints and textures in glorious shades of brown and red. However, opportunities to highlight and develop these aspects further are often missed.

37. The school makes good provision for the moral development of the pupils. Pupils know right from wrong and benefit from quiet guidance when incidents occur. The school encourages respect and consideration for others. Each class has clear rules and these are known by pupils and referred to when necessary. Pupils value the system of rewards and certificates within the school. Children have a good grounding in the foundation stage when they discuss fairness, sharing and how they ought to behave. There are expectations that pupils should make decisions and choices and develop self-discipline by moving around sensibly and helping with daily school routines. These include tasks such as taking registers and closing the blinds to use the overhead projector. The oldest pupils study *Macbeth*, experiencing the story and characters as part of their English programme. This gives them the opportunity to debate the many moral issues that arise in the play. In history, and sometimes in English texts, they consider the advantages and disadvantages of being poor and rich in Victorian times. Pupils think about events at home and in other parts of the world during discussions of *What's in the News?* and this makes them want to support others through fund raising. They raise money for Christian Aid, the *Jeans for Genes* day, and gifts from the harvest festival are taken to old people in the area and the homeless in the centre of Manchester.
38. Provision for social development is good. Expectations of good behaviour through consideration of others, both in and out of school, are clear and staff foster values of fairness and sharing when pupils are working or playing games. Older pupils participate in a variety of activities, taking responsibility around the school and enjoying their roles as monitors. For instance, they set out the hall for assembly sensibly. Pupils are polite and respond quickly when they see the needs of others, for instance getting a chair or opening a door for a visitor. Younger pupils, including those in the foundation stage, have very good opportunities to develop social skills as they walk around the area as part of their geography or share their lunchtime break. There are many planned opportunities for pupils to work together and pupils know that they are expected to work together sensibly and share books and equipment, for example in mathematics. When a pupil in Year 2 saw another boy had finished his written work his friend suggested, *I've finished and you're finished. Will you be my partner in the space game?*
39. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The religious education programme provides appropriate references to other religions, while geography lessons provide a focus on life in other countries around the world. This was emphasised when pupils were following the Olympics. Pupils listen to and join in with music from many countries and learn about art from different cultures, such as Africa, South America and Australia. Pupils study Shakespeare and other writers in English and learn about previous times and cultures, such as Greece, in their history lessons. There have been few visits out of school recently or visitors into school. The school has found it difficult to find sufficient volunteer helpers to support teachers and pupils on school visits. Future visits to places where they may enjoy first hand experiences over a day as they take the part of people in Victorian and Tudor times

are planned for some groups of pupils. Pupils are made aware of aspects of English culture through visits to the church and around Northenden. However, there are insufficient wider experiences. No visits to extend pupils' experience of other faiths and cultures are arranged and pupils' awareness of the richness of life in multi-cultural Britain is underdeveloped. There are very few up-to-date books in the library on other cultures.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the care and provision for the children which is now good overall. The parents have expressed their appreciation for the quality of care and the happiness of their children.
41. There is a designated member of staff and procedures to monitor and promote all aspects of children protection are very good. The headteacher has ensured that all staff, including non-teaching staff, have been trained to raise their awareness of the protection of children. The school has adopted procedures agreed by the local education authority.
42. Provision for first aid is very good and effective. There is a designated member of staff. Appropriate records of minor incidents are properly noted and action taken, for example parents are informed of any bumps to the head.
43. Other aspects of health and safety are satisfactory. The caretaker and head teacher conduct regular checks of the whole school. All records of maintenance, such as, electrical apparatus, are in place. However, they are not easy to monitor or ascertain when a check is due. Staff are provided with good safety precautions.
44. Support and guidance for the children are good. The staff know the children and their families well. Teaching staff have a good rapport with their pupils. This is enhanced by the extra support the classroom learning assistants or parent helpers provide. These measures have a positive impact on the children's confidence and attitudes to their learning.
45. Personal development is further supported by the personal, social and health education policy. This is well integrated into the curriculum, assemblies or listening to the children and their concerns during classroom sessions when pupils come together in a circle to discuss things that matter to them. Health and safety are promoted through the curriculum; for example, in a physical education lesson, a boy warned a girl not to run when carrying heavy equipment.
46. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are good. Recent improvements to the recording of registration, with the use of computerised forms, make monitoring easier. The educational welfare officer visits frequently and regards St Wilfrid's as a good local model of efficient methods for recording attendance. Attendance is further promoted through the school prospectus and annual progress report. Every year, certificates are awarded for good attendance.
47. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are satisfactory. The present behaviour policy, linked with the home-school agreement is due to be reviewed by the school. Views of all staff are due to be sought to fully support teaching and supervision of pupils where behaviour is challenging or disrespectful. In appropriate cases, the support from specialist agencies, the special education needs co-ordinator and classroom learning assistant are in place. The school involves parents effectively if their child misbehaves.

48. Racial disharmony is not an issue at this school. There have been no exclusions. The staff are alert to bullying or anti-social behaviour and have appropriate strategies to deal with isolated instances immediately.
49. Assessment of pupils' work and the use of information gained to guide future planning were areas the school had identified for action following the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are now effective and make a good contribution to identifying areas for raising standards, such as writing in English and problem solving in mathematics. Teachers carefully check what children know and can do when they start in the nursery and ongoing assessments are made regularly. When they start in the reception classes pupils undergo initial checks of what they can do in accordance with the local authority guidelines. Pupils' individual progress in tests throughout the school including the results of optional tests has been tracked carefully over the past four years. The results of these tests are used to predict pupils' results at the age of 11 and to form booster classes for pupils to reach higher levels of work. However, there are weaknesses in the careful checking of the individual education plans for pupils with statements of special educational needs and there are no language plans or checking for the language acquisition of those pupils with English as an additional language.
50. School systems are now firmly in place and assessment provides valuable guidance for setting individual targets, grouping pupils according to their levels of attainment and in informing planning. These systems have been particularly useful in identifying groups of higher attaining pupils within the school to ensure that they have opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

51. The school has retained the support of the majority of parents since the last inspection. However, a few, though significant number, have expressed some concerns through the questionnaires, comments at the parents' evening or interviews during the inspection process. The governing body is aware of these criticisms and is seeking ways to improve these perceptions.
52. The inspection findings do not support some parents' concerns that homework is inappropriate. Evidence does support some parents' concerns that there is limited provision of educational activities outside lessons. However, the school provides musical activities such as a well attended choir and recorder lessons and some sporting activities such as a badminton club. These contribute well to pupils' learning in music and physical education. Teachers' time after school is at a premium. The school has been trying unsuccessfully to find some willing parental assistance with football since the departure of the previous coach. Some outside visits have had to be cancelled, due to insufficient numbers of adult helpers volunteering to support staff. It is necessary for the school to meet the health and safety guidelines of adult to pupil ratios for educational visits to take place. The school provides some visitors into school such as visiting artists and theatre groups although these are infrequent.
53. Parents' concerns about inappropriate behaviour by a few older children are, in part, supported by inspection evidence.
54. To meet a developing social need, the school provides a useful parent and toddler group for very young children up to the age of three and a half years old. A room has been developed for that role. Those children naturally progress into the impressive nursery for the first stage of their education. The induction process to the nursery is thorough and very much appreciated by parents. Several parents referred to the

nursery provision as, “the best start they could possibly have”. Close links, both socially and academically, between the nursery and reception classes ensure that children’s confidence is maintained. This results in enthusiasm for learning and play.

55. The school enjoys a high reputation amongst parents. The school is expanding and over 70 children now arrive from outside of the immediate area. The school has tried hard to reach out and involve the parents more, using a number of strategies. There are three open evenings per year, regular newsletter and an ‘open door policy’ should parents have concerns. To attract further parental support in their children’s learning, curriculum weeks are held, the most recent being in numeracy. The headteacher is invariably available before and after school for informal discussions.
56. The school provides parents with sound information about the school and their children’s progress. The nursery and reception provide good information on what the children learn in school but this does not extend to the infants and juniors where less information on the curriculum is given. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the amount of information they receive.
57. Other information includes a very informative prospectus. However, it omits attendance figures and any reference to the provision for pupils with special educational needs. It details the school’s procedures for complaints well and these are followed rigorously should they be needed. The annual progress report gives parents a clear picture of what their child has achieved. Targets are stated and space for both child and parental comments available. In appropriate cases, parents are fully involved in reviews when their children have reviews of their special educational needs. A limited number of parents help in school, especially with reading. The high level of attainment in reading at seven and 11 reflects this.
58. Homework provision is satisfactory and many parents support their children and the school by ensuring it is completed. To illustrate this important input, two children with better than average reading skills read regularly with their parents, who check and complete their children’s reading diaries. However, two children with below average reading skills who were also listened to during the inspection seldom read with their parents, according to their reading diaries. A few parents help in other ways, such as, playing the guitar or flute.
59. A small and dedicated number of parents organise fund-raising events through ‘The Friends of St. Wilfrid’s’. However, the response from parents is sometimes disappointing. For instance, a recent *Autumn Hoedown* to raise funds at the time of the Harvest had to be cancelled due to a lack of ticket sales. Over the last year nearly £2,000 was raised and purchased items of equipment, such as an overhead projector. This support provides valuable extra resources to improve pupils’ learning.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The overall leadership of the school by the headteacher and senior staff is good. The leadership and management of the school has improved since the last inspection. Since then the quality of teaching and the efficiency of the school have improved. During the inspection the overall quality of teaching was good and a significant proportion of lessons were very good. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen compared with 10 per cent of lessons at the last inspection. These improvements are due to good leadership and management by the headteacher in managing staff changes and new appointments, the careful monitoring of teaching especially in literacy and numeracy and the careful management of the school budget. Standards of pupils’ results in English, mathematics and science have risen

since the previous inspection in line with the trend for all schools nationally. Areas for improvement include the co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language

61. The headteacher is committed to promoting high standards in all aspects of the life and work of the school and provides a clear direction for school improvement. He has a clear understanding of how best this can be achieved and works well with the governors, staff, pupils and parents to ensure the effectiveness of the school. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher, governing body and the teaching staff. The day to day management of the school is efficient and the administrative staff are organised, dedicated and hard working. They use recent technology very well on a daily basis. A good example of this is for the lists of pupils on the roll and the attendance sheets.
62. Since the previous inspection the number of pupils on the school role has risen. St Wilfrid's is a popular school and has increased its intake to a one and a half form entry. The new block to accommodate the extra pupils has been well planned and managed. As an aided church school the governors, headteacher and staff were closely involved with the successful design and organisation of the new architect designed building.
63. The headteacher is very evident on a daily basis to parents, staff and pupils around the school and at the beginning of the school day. Parents are pleased that they can approach him on an informal or formal basis with any concerns that they may have. The school ethos succeeds in its aims to create a caring and structured learning environment where children are valued and hard work is rewarded. Staff work well together as a team. The headteacher is very supportive to staff and pupils and likewise the Chair of Governors and governing body are considerate and supportive to the headteacher, staff and pupils. This understanding underlies all the work of the school and contributes well to a shared commitment to improve and raise standards.
64. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators monitor teachers' and pupils' work effectively. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has monitored the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and lessons have been observed and recorded for all classes. A planned programme for monitoring teaching is in place. The headteacher and senior staff regularly scrutinise teachers' planning and pupils' work. The senior management team analyses pupils' National Curriculum test results at the ages of seven and eleven.
65. The school has a sound three-year development plan. The headteacher and staff in consultation with some members of the governing body have produced this. The plan clearly identifies the process, current progress, time scale, resource and success criteria and resource implications. It accurately identifies strategies for raising standards such as target setting in literacy and numeracy and in assessment for tracking progress of individual pupils. This links well to the planned programme for the monitoring of further subjects.
66. Procedures for implementing the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are in place and the school meets its statutory requirements in this area. Teachers are aware of the procedures for carrying this out and maintain records for these pupils in their classes. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs visits the school and discusses the provision with the special educational needs co-ordinator. However, insufficient attention is given to monitoring the overall progress of pupils identified as having special educational needs. This is a particular



weakness relating to pupils with formal statements of need. The co-ordinator's records relating to these pupils lack sufficient detail to track their progress or to check that the school's provision is meeting their needs. A lack of communication between staff and support assistants makes it unclear who has the overall responsibility for making sure that the targets for these pupils' educational plans are carried out. This hampers the progress that these pupils make.

67. The percentage of pupils identified by the school as speaking English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. However, the school has does not have arrangements in place for identifying and checking on their individual progress. Pupils in the nursery receive sound support from their teachers which enables them to make satisfactory progress. No register is kept of these pupils and they are not tested or given regularly checks on their progress in acquiring language skills in English. These pupils have no individual language plans or receive any specialist support. They are fully involved in the curriculum but in the absence of clear records is unclear whether they progress as quickly as they could. This is a weakness.
68. After careful consideration by the headteacher and governors, the deputy headteacher has recently become non-class based. Her role is supported by a detailed job description. She supports and monitors teaching and behaviour throughout the school. Her work concentrates on small groups of more able pupils and pupils with special needs within classes to boost their attainment. However, the school does not yet have procedures in place to check how efficient this role will prove to be in the work of the school over the next year.
69. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are very committed to conducting their various roles. They play a supportive management role in leading the school. Governors, in particular the chair, vice chair and chair of finance are fully involved in shaping the direction and planning of the school. All governors work together well as a team and have a good shared understanding of the strengths in the school. They have well-established committees to carry out their roles effectively. They fulfil their statutory duties. Each governor is responsible for at least one curriculum area and meets with their partner co-ordinator regularly. This involvement is good and gives governors a general overview of standards in the school. There are, however, no formal procedures in place for governors to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school or to check the success of school priorities in the school development plan. This prevents them from analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the school systematically and identifying areas for further development.
70. Financial planning is good. The headteacher, financial advisor, and finance committee work together and provide the governing body with carefully prepared and detailed information for the annual budget. Spending is based on the school's educational priorities. It is carefully discussed and takes into account the benefits for the pupils. The finance committee plans in the light of full, up-to-date budget statements and the priorities identified in the school development plan. It compares costs carefully and evaluates its decisions primarily in the light of their effect on pupils' standards and the quality of provision in the school. The school has maintained a healthy surplus budget due to the increased number of pupils on the roll and to substantial amount of money which has been allotted to the school as a result of the sale of a nearby school. The school uses specific grants thoughtfully for their designated purposes. For instance, the appointment of extra classroom support assistants and payment for midday supervisory staff to hear pupils read, has benefited pupils and the substantial investment in staff development has been in

important factor in the improvement in standards. Other money has been spent wisely, for instance on a new floor in the school hall which was badly in need of repair.

71. Pupils benefit from the care and attention given to financial efficiency. For instance, there are sufficient resources for pupils in most subjects and the amount of money from the national grant for improvements to the school's provision for information technology has been increased by the school to provide extra computers.
72. In view of the improvements since the previous inspection the school now gives good value for money.
73. The school has a good number of teaching staff and from the start of this school year has a non-class based deputy headteacher. There is an adequate number of support staff and several have had specific training for their posts. Teachers are appropriately qualified to teach in the primary phase and co-ordinate all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Their professional development needs are identified through discussion with the senior management team and are linked to areas within the school development plan. Good procedures for the induction of newly qualified staff are in place. Newly appointed teachers are given a good level of support within the school, although there is no staff handbook to elaborate on this. Appraisal is in place for the headteacher and appropriate targets have been set. The school has implemented the recent performance management policy for teachers.
74. The school's buildings and grounds provide good accommodation and enable the curriculum to be taught although there is no access for disabled pupils to the upstairs rooms. The governing body has worked hard to meet the demands of increasing numbers and new classrooms in the Foundation Stage provide a stimulating and exciting area for the interests of the youngest children. These facilities have a positive impact on children's personal and social development. The main building is spacious and welcoming. Throughout the school are attractive teaching displays and displays of pupils' work which help to promote their interest and value their achievements. However, some classes for the older pupils are cramped and make it difficult for the teacher to move amongst the desks which sometimes results in inattention by a few pupils. The school is well kept by the site manager. It is clean and well maintained. Outside grassed and hard surfaced areas are generous and well used by pupils of all ages.
75. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Although the arrival for the installation of new information and communication technology resources was prepared for and imminent, at the time of the inspection the number of computers available to pupils was insufficient. Library resources are in need of review. Some books are old and in a poor state of repair and the choice of reference books is restricted.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. In order to improve the quality of education in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

**(1) improve the learning opportunities for all pupils by ensuring that these are broadened and accessible for all by:**

- ensuring that all pupils with special educational needs have full access to the full range of learning experiences as other pupils; (paragraphs 8, 21, 26, 29 and 92)
- identifying early those pupils who have English as an additional language and monitoring their progress carefully through the stages of language acquisition; (paragraphs 9, 27, 29, 60, 67 and 93)
- improving and augmenting the learning experiences of all pupils by providing a wider range of educational visits and visitors to school and encouraging further parental involvement and help in these activities; (paragraphs 33, 39, 52, 59, 127 and 146)

**(2) improve the co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special education needs by:**

- clarifying and developing the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator so that the school has a deeper knowledge of the needs of individual pupils with formal statements of educational needs and is able to improve their rate of progress; (paragraphs 8, 31, 49, 60, 66 and 91)

## OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

77. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- develop a more effective approach to the teaching of handwriting and presentation throughout the school;
- by reviewing, auditing and classifying book resources, improve the library to make it a more effective resource for developing pupils' research skills;
- training teachers further in information technology so as to build on their expertise and give confidence with the new computer technology;
- ensure that staff at all levels, including the midday supervisors and temporary teachers, are more familiar with and use the school behaviour management policy.



**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

**Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	93

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	14.7	57.4	26.5	1.4	0	0

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

**Information about the school's pupils**

**Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	45	278
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	2	45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

**Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	50

**English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

**Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

**Attendance**

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	24	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	20
	Girls	20	20	22
	Total	35	36	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (83)	82 (81)	95 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	20	20
	Girls	23	22	23
	Total	37	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (85)	95 (96)	98 (98)
	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	21	23	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	19
	Girls	20	19	21
	Total	35	35	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (84)	80 (66)	91 (81)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	20	20	23
	Total	37	38	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (87)	86 (81)	95 (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	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	10
White	301
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

**Teachers and classes**

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.7
Average class size	20.6

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90.5

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	45

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	568,781
Total expenditure	561,502
Expenditure per pupil	1,633
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,313
Balance carried forward to next year	31,592

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate 30%**

Number of questionnaires sent out	323
Number of questionnaires returned	97

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	33	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	37	8	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	52	3	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	44	13	6	9
The teaching is good.	60	38	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	37	9	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	25	9	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	46	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	38	16	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	46	36	10	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	50	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	31	24	14	20

## 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

78. The school admits children from the age of three to the nursery. During the inspection 57 children attended the nursery. Of these 24 had part-time places. Children start in the nursery with a wide range of skills. Of the 24 children in the reception classes, results of tests taken when they start indicate average attainment. An analysis of work and records indicates that when children reach the end of the reception classes they attain close to the levels expected for their age, although attainment in writing is below that usually found.
79. Provision for the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching is good overall. It ranges from good to very good. The teachers in the reception and the nursery classes plan very well for the recommended areas, with different goals<sup>5</sup> having a high focus each week. Very detailed assessments are kept on children's achievements. These also help teachers to plan future lessons. Staff work well together as a team. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in teaching, children's progress in all areas of learning and accommodation. Staff give due emphasis to speaking and listening, the development of new vocabulary, number skills and pupils' personal development. Nursery and reception children use a wide range of computer programs from the beginning. The nursery and infant buildings, completed in 1997 provide a very attractive working environment for the children. There is a parent and toddler group that is based in the school building and many of the toddlers move on to the nursery at the appropriate time.

#### Personal, social and emotional development

80. Children in both reception and nursery classes make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and overall attainment is good for the majority of children by the time they are ready to move onto Key Stage 1. Because teaching is at least good in both areas, with 25 per cent of very good teaching in the nursery, children respond well to the good learning opportunities provided and their attitudes and behaviour are good. Children arrive with their parents at the start of the sessions and are greeted warmly by staff. They greet each other, talk with their friends or join an activity of their choice. The older children in the nursery choose three activities for the day, showing increasing independence. They value their friendships and are keen to tell visitors who their friends are. They have good relationships with adults and other children when working together at the same activity, such as the sand tray in the nursery. They improve their social skills by taking turns and they wait for each other to finish speaking. Children take pride in receiving gold stars and like to tell their friends about it, for example in reception when working on counting games. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are very aware of the teachers' expectations of appropriate behaviour, for example, when working on inside and outside activities in the joint reception and nursery creative sessions. In both nursery and reception classes, because the teachers have good management skills, children concentrate well and can sit quietly when asked to do so. They are motivated and excited by the teachers' very good use of resources. A particularly good example of this was the use of a duck hand puppet to help reception children

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<sup>5</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

achieve the correct final letter sound in words such as *cup* and *doll*. Most children in reception can change their clothes independently for physical education lessons. In the nursery, they are increasing their skills in independence, getting their own aprons and putting them on when working with paint and putting their warm clothes on when playing outside. They are developing appropriate social skills and table manners at lunchtime.

### Communication, language and literacy

81. All children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in communication, language and literacy. The majority of children attain at the expected standard those for children of their age by the time they are tested at the beginning of the reception classes. By the end of the reception year children reach standards above those usually found for their age. The promotion of speaking and listening skills throughout the Foundation Stage is strong and has a good effect on children's learning in the nursery and reception classes. In the nursery, children mix well with others and are confident to speak even when they are at an early stage of development and their speech is indistinct. Children speak confidently about holidays that they are going on and they say prayers reverently. They listen quietly when asked, as when listening to the teacher read *Eddy the Elephant*. Basic skills are taught and reinforced throughout the day in all areas in the nursery; for example, sounds are linked with letters as *Eddy the Elephant* is read with expression to the children. Teachers link sounds to letters, including the letters *f* and *t* when they work with fruit and vegetables. Other members of staff focus effectively on speaking and listening through play in a *flower shop*. In reception, speaking and listening is promoted well across all subjects. For example, in physical education when the teacher reads a poem about *the moving body*. Children are assisted by adults to form letters correctly. They write letters in sand, use picture dictionaries and use alphabet games. There has been a clear focus on writing, and this is improving the standard of early writing skills which are below average when they start in the nursery. The teachers' imaginative use of puppets excites children of reception age and they are keen to learn rhyming words, such as *rat*, *mat* and *bat* and the initial and final letter sounds of words. Children throughout the Foundation Stage are learning to appreciate and enjoy books. In the nursery, they know which way to hold the book and that words carry meaning. They tell stories in their own way and can point out words that begin with certain letters, such as *e*. They invent their own stories and act them out together. In reception, reading standards are above those expected for children of this age. The higher attainers read within the first level of the National Curriculum. They recognise familiar words in simple texts and use their knowledge of letter sounds well. They are able to discuss their books and the characters in them. Average attainers recognise a number of words, and phrases and many letters and letter sounds. Lower attainers do not recognise words but know a few letters, can turn the pages correctly and understand the difference between print and pictures. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children have good opportunities to read and teachers keep detailed records. Children build up a good repertoire of songs, rhymes, poems and prayers to reinforce and support their communication, language and literacy. New vocabulary is constantly being introduced, for example *pomegranate*, a fruit that many children had not experienced before. Children draw pictures and put them in order to tell stories. Children are challenged throughout the Foundation Stage. In the nursery, two thirds of children in their third term can write their names and can read 16 familiar words. In reception classes, more than two thirds can write their names and a fifth know 20 familiar words.

## Mathematical development

82. All children make good progress in this area throughout the Foundation Stage. They attain standards above those usually found by the end of the reception year. This is because teaching is well focused, the basic skills are taught well and teachers and staff manage children well. This has a positive effect on children's attitudes. They are keen to learn, listen well to the teachers' instructions and concentrate well on the mathematical activities. Teachers use rhymes, songs, poems and counting games well to help children grasp the concepts of mathematics. For example, in a reception class the teacher uses a birthday cake and lights the candles when reciting a poem *lighting one candle* and using the term *more*. Children reinforce their understanding through play-acting, when they sell apples and pears for 29 pence and give plastic coins as change. Children learn to count backwards and forwards to 5 and 10. They are eager to show how much they know, including the terms *none* and *zero*. In reception, information communication technology is used appropriately to teach and reinforce mathematical language, including *short* and *long*. Children also use computer software to make designs using geometric shapes. Many recognise circles, triangles, oblongs and squares. Children experience filling a variety of containers with coloured water and sand, when learning about of capacity. Teachers constantly reinforce mathematical language, including *round*, *circle*, *curved*, *corner* and *side*. Play includes a shop where they use money in a till. In the nursery all the children in their fourth and fifth term and four fifths of children in their third term can count and use numbers up to 5. Nearly all children in their fourth and fifth term of nursery can count and recognise numbers up to 10. In reception, just over a half can count and use numbers up to 10 in simple calculations.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Children make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and attain at the expected level by the end of the reception classes. Adults provide stimulating and interesting activities for them to enhance their learning. In the nursery beautiful fresh fruit and vegetables are used in an activity with a scientific bias. When handling these, children know what roots are and that potatoes grow underground. They are surprise and excited when they see a pomegranate cut open, as most of them have not seen one before. Children show pleasure when they explore these fruits and vegetables with their senses of sight, touch and smell. They plant seeds so that they can watch plants grow and learn about living things. Children in the nursery explore pliable materials, including modelling clay, for example to make *snakes*. They experience wet and dry sand. Children show an understanding of the passage of time, such as when they discuss what kind of eggs they had at Easter. Children remember events that are important to them, including discussions about when they were bridesmaids. Pupils in the nursery and reception use information technology, including the computers and software programmes to support and reinforce their learning across the curriculum. Most use the mouse confidently, developing good hand/eye co-ordination. Children use construction kits effectively to make models, for example of a car, using their imaginations. They use tools, including forks and scissors, when solving problems such as how to retrieve a carrot, which is buried in wet sand without using their hands. Children use scissors, glue and paint brushes appropriately with increasing skill. When singing and using musical instruments they explore sound, learning how to make different sounds, for example high or low sounds.



## Physical development

84. By the end of the reception classes children's levels of physical development are above those usually found for children of this age. There is an imaginative outside area with curved pathways, climbing apparatus and a covered area for children in the Foundation Stage. In the nursery adults work well to support children as they travel around, under, over and through the outside climbing equipment. The children make good progress and are particularly good at travelling across a horizontal ladder. They use bicycles and scooters carefully and are aware of the space around them. In reception they respond well to the good opportunities provided in physical education, including dance. They react quickly to the teacher's instructions and use their imagination to find different ways of travelling around the room, including going forwards, backwards, running, walking and side stepping. They move safely with confidence and are aware of their own and other children's space. Teachers use good rhythmic music, including Australian outback music which inspires the children to enjoy their movement. Staff use praise and children's demonstrations well to reinforce learning. In a gymnastic lesson, children travelled across apparatus, including mats and benches, safely and responsibly. At the end of exercise, they sat quietly in a neat line. The teachers' management skills have a good effect on the children's response. They listen well, behave well and respond to instructions quickly. Children throughout the stage are developing their fine motor skills well. They use a variety of simple tools, including paintbrushes and pencils when mark making and spoons and forks when making patterns.

## Creative development

85. Children make good progress in creative development and attain levels above those usually found by the time they reach the end of their reception year. This is due to the good provision for a wide range of activities, which includes painting, printing with natural objects, construction work, treasure-hunts, information and communication technology, and imaginative outside activities. As well as individual creative sessions, the children in the nursery and reception join together once a week for creative activities. Children in both nursery and reception use their imagination to produce bright prints using natural objects, such as leaves and pieces of wood, increasing their knowledge about colour and texture. They make individual designs with geometric shapes using the computer programmes. Adults value their work and display it so that the other children can see it. Children in both the nursery and reception classes have well planned singing sessions. In the nursery they sing songs, such as *I Have Seen the Golden Sunshine*. They learn to vary the rhythm and speed of their singing, understanding how they can change the sounds in their songs. They clap and perform actions to the songs, following the adults' example, matching their movements to the music. In reception, they sing songs from memory and play instruments at the same time, experimenting with different rhythms and beats. They play *quickly* or *slowly* and *loudly* or *quietly* when asked, having some understanding of how to play the instrument to achieve a variety of effects. Children throughout the Foundation Stage enjoy singing a variety of nursery rhymes and songs that enhance their learning across the curriculum. They make choices about which instrument they want to play and communicate their feelings well, sharing their enjoyment with others.



## ENGLISH

86. Over the past four years results of national tests for 11-year-olds have been consistently above both the national average and that of similar schools. In 1999 the number of pupils exceeding the expected level was close to the national average. Results from the national tests in 2000 are not quite as high as in 1999, although initial indications are that they remain above the national average. Trends have been higher than the national picture, although there have been dips. These have been related to the number of pupils identified with special educational needs in the different years. Inspection evidence reflects these good results, with standards in speaking, listening and reading being above average. Standards in writing are average. These results are higher than those identified in the previous inspection. The school sets targets appropriate to the assessed level of the pupils and is on target to achieve them. Indeed, early indications are that they may be exceeded.
87. Since the previous inspection, standards for seven-year-olds have improved, although there was a significant dip in 1997 linked to the range of ability in this group. In 1999 results were in line with the national average in reading and writing. In comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds a similar picture emerges, although standards in writing fell below average. The results for 2000 are similar and inspection evidence reflects these results in writing but identifies an improvement in reading, which is now above average. This improvement is linked to good teaching of early reading skills. A variety of interesting approaches give pupils a good foundation in sounds and symbols and they use this knowledge well in their reading. Standards in speaking and listening are average overall. The previous inspection judged standards to be good, although national test results did not support this judgement and were average. Standards have not dropped since the previous inspection, as pupils are making good progress and achieving well based on their prior attainment.
88. Pupils speak confidently and most explain their tasks well. Although a few use short phrases, others express themselves very clearly in class discussions. Most understand the need to take it in turns to speak in these discussions, but a few still call out. Pupils listen well to stories but not all pupils give full attention to teachers' instructions. Pupils' listening was better in Year 1 when the teacher included pictures and a competitive element. In the junior classes, pupils have planned discussion opportunities to discuss anything that is topical. This successfully increases their confidence in speaking in front of an audience. In Year 6 pupils show an ability to argue their point and express their opinions in a comprehensive manner, including suitable facts to support their ideas. This was evident when pupils discussed the character of Macbeth. Listening skills were also good during this lesson. It was evident from pupils' comments that they had given good attention to previous speakers.
89. All ability groups achieve well in reading. The main reason for this is that most teachers know how to teach reading effectively. This is most evident in the younger classes when a firm foundation for reading skills is established and, by the end of Year 2, pupils have a range of different methods to work out unfamiliar words. Year 2 pupils who read to the inspector clearly understood how to locate information using both contents and index and had a good knowledge of the order of the alphabet. These skills are further extended throughout the school and pupils benefit from individual support from many adults in the school and from reading with parents. By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils are reading with good expression and have a good understanding of the text. This was most apparent in the class reading of

*Macbeth*. Pupils of all abilities had a clear appreciation of the plot and the main characters. Higher attainers recognised the expertise of Shakespeare in developing the drama through the characters of the witches. Their debate about the part the witches played in influencing Macbeth showed a good insight into the story. Pupils understand how to locate information in books and are able to read silently and then explain the main points in their own words. Throughout the school, pupils do not read a sufficiently wide range of texts and this is partly due to an overemphasis by teachers on the books in the school's reading scheme. This was most noticeable in Year 6 when three pupils who read to the inspectors all declared they were bored with their reading books. A weakness in reading has been the lower attainment of boys compared with girls, which the school has identified. However, the range of non-fiction books is not sufficiently stimulating to raise boys' enthusiasm for reading.

90. Standards of writing are not as high as in reading, although there are signs, notably in the infants and in higher attaining groups of pupils in junior classes of rising standards. An examination of infant work from previous years included only limited examples of writing for a range of activities. However, this is not the case in the present classes who write for a range of purposes and show an awareness of their audience. Pupils write recipes in lists, favourite poems, and produce small non-fiction books complete with index, contents and labelled diagrams. Higher attainers in Year 2 plan a story with a good understanding of structure and include a suitable ending. Pupils gain confidence in writing, by working together as a whole class and in groups. Teachers support their writing development well. This leads to most pupils having a good understanding of the use of basic punctuation, although many still need prompting to use it correctly. At times in the junior classes there is a reliance on closely directed worksheets which are not always relevant to pupils' learning. Teachers teach a joined-up style of writing but fail to model this in their own writing and pupils do not transfer the standard of work shown in exercises to their daily work. This means that by the end of Year 6 many pupils do not have a fluent style of joined-up writing and presentation varies. It is not high enough for many pupils. Teachers are effective in promoting writing skills in other lessons. For example, in history when Year 5 pupils wrote imaginatively about life as a Spartan, and in Year 6 when pupils wrote factually about the water cycle and recorded the results of their scientific investigations. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 use more-advanced punctuation and have a good understanding of planning stories. Language is imaginative, as in such phrases as *huge, terrifying and dreadfully untidy*. Imaginative vocabulary is not as evident in lower attaining ability groups, although nearly all pupils have a good understanding of sentence structure. Spelling is appropriate for this age range and most pupils check their work for accuracy.
91. When pupils start in Year 1, their literacy standards are average overall although writing development is weaker. The majority of pupils respond well to good teaching and make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual educational plans. Support for these pupils in class is usually effective in enabling them to learn well, but it is not always available. Some pupils receive 20-minute weekly withdrawn session and this is insufficient for notable learning to take place. The pupils with formal Statements of Special Educational Need receive most of their support from a classroom assistant who has responsibility for their individual educational plans. Planning for this support is ineffective and leads to opportunities in lessons being missed to extend their learning and insufficient attention being given to the needs identified in their statements.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It was at least good in almost three quarters of lessons and in other lessons seen apart from one lesson teaching

was consistently satisfactory. Teaching was strongest in Years 1 and 2, where it was consistently good and very good in three-quarters of lessons and no teaching was less than satisfactory. Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are confident in teaching the literacy hour. The very imaginative way in which letters and sounds are taught captures the pupils' interest and they learn these skills very well. The teaching of writing is effective in Years 1 and 2, with teachers demonstrating good practice. This is not as evident in the junior classes and, when teaching was less effective, pupils received insufficient guidance to improve their writing skills. The choice of text is sometimes governed by closely following a commercial scheme which does not match the interests and abilities for all pupils in the class. This hampers the learning for some pupils. Activities and provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is not always well matched to their programmes for learning. This was not the case in Year 6, where *Macbeth* was the selected text and was taught well and challenged pupils of all abilities. Preparation for this activity had been thorough, and the initial use of a video had captured pupils' interest and they gained an enthusiasm for the text. Teachers' planning follows the National Literacy Strategy guidelines. It is good overall and includes evaluations that are used well to inform future lessons. This leads to most tasks being set at a level that extends pupils' learning. In some lessons, however, planning lacked clarity about what pupils were to learn in groups and adult support focused on the completion of a task rather than on the learning. As a result this hampered the progress for pupils' with special educational needs who were not always clear about what was expected of them. Management of pupils is good and often very good and they behave well in lessons. Most lessons are conducted in a busy, working atmosphere. Homework is generally satisfactory and the support parents give to hearing children read at home makes a significant contribution to the good reading standards in the school.

93. The subject is managed efficiently. The National Literacy Strategy is fully in place although some pupils withdrawn for special educational needs miss or repeat work during these sessions. Assessment procedures are fully developed and used well to identify pupils requiring additional support through the Additional Literacy Strategy and booster classes. This helps nearly all pupils to achieve in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. An ongoing record details current initiatives and comments on progress and this has led to adjustments in the curriculum when a weakness has been identified. This has been effective in improving standards in reading but has not addressed the inconsistent teaching of handwriting. However, pupils with English as an additional language receive no specialist identification or support. The library is used well for selecting fiction books. However, the school has a large additional collection of reading books kept in corridors, some of which are rarely read. Amongst these are some good quality children's fiction but they have deteriorated in condition and are dusty due to a lack of use. This is similar in the case of the range of non-fiction on display outside classrooms. The range of information books in the library is barely adequate. The library is underused as a resource for independent research. The school intends to review its use when the new computer suite is organised.

## MATHEMATICS

94. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils' attainment is slightly above national averages. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection and on the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests when results were below average compared with both schools nationally and with similar schools. There was an upward trend in the results in 2000 and this improvement is confirmed by inspection findings. Important factors in the raising of standards are the systems established by the

school for assessing pupils' work and the use the school has made of these assessments in order to set targets for improvement. Equally important is the quality of teaching, supported by the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The quality of teaching is good and in some lessons very good. This corresponds very closely to the quality of pupils' learning, which is consistently good.

95. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, work hard. For example, in Year 1 pupils are taught a wide range of strategies for addition and subtraction, including counting on or backwards to solve problems. They apply this learning well by counting on number lines and completing several examples. In Year 2 most pupils recall number facts to ten accurately and lower attaining pupils make good use of the "help cards" given to them by the teacher so that they, too, enjoy the activity and successfully give quick and correct answers. The teachers' imaginative use of space travellers in a rocket moving along a number line to different stars in the galaxy captures the interest of Year 2 pupils. They design their own problems, challenging themselves and their partners to take away large numbers from 30.
96. In the junior classes, teachers encourage a brisk response in mental number sessions and Years 3 and 4 pupils are confident to demonstrate their understanding of number facts when they solve simple problems. They explain their methods clearly and well. This is because teachers' value their contributions and relationships are good. Most pupils behave well and stay on task because of the skilled teaching and interventions of the teachers. For example, in Year 5, pupils sustain their concentration when learning about decimals, fractions and equivalence. This is because the teachers manage them well. They prompt pupils with challenging questions to think about different strategies for finding out the patterns and answers.
97. Most pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their knowledge and skills. For example, in work on decimals and percentages the teachers revise and reinforce previous learning thoroughly. They share the well-planned focus of the lesson, including specific vocabulary to be learned and practised at the beginning of lessons and then review these in discussion at the end. Teachers use the time at the end of lesson well to reinforce learning and clarify any misunderstandings. During their work on subtraction, Year 2 pupils used considerable intellectual effort and sustained their interest because the teacher had high expectations of their involvement and provided them with opportunities to use their initiative. When asked, *how do you know you have all your sums right?*, one boy replies *I checked them on the 100 square*. His friend reminds him, *you could have checked them on the number line*. Lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently explain their tasks and show how to work out tenths on a 100 chart. Higher attaining pupils work confidently with decimal fractions and percentages, learning from their mistakes and explaining their reasoning and calculations in an articulate manner. This is because teachers plan work that is suitably matched to the differing abilities of pupils.
98. By the time they are 11, most pupils recognise and know the properties of common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. In Year 3 they match packets with wooden shapes very confidently and show some understanding of prisms. Older pupils measure angles and describe rotational symmetry. This is helped by the teachers' careful explanations, good subject knowledge and very careful choice of resources. Pupils count tallies, which they use effectively to complete a range of graphs. Teachers' probing questions help them to use the information on graphs well. Pupils have a developing knowledge of addition and subtraction bonds and multiplication tables. The brisk and enjoyable numeracy sessions help pupils to see patterns between numbers and to explain their strategies for solving problems. The

high quality of the teaching of basic skills and the focus on mental and oral work, have improved pupils' attainment in mathematics throughout the school since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils see relationships between addition and subtraction, multiplication and division more clearly. They use this knowledge effectively to solve problems in number and measures, such as time, money and length. This is appropriately supported by homework.

99. The majority of pupils present their work neatly and carefully. This is because teachers have high expectation of their presentation. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful and supportive comments to praise pupils for what they have done or to suggest ways in which their work could be improved. A very good and helpful feature of the marking of older pupils' work is that if a long calculation is incorrect the teacher marks the point in the sum where the first error was made. The pupils then see that it was a mathematical mistake rather than lack of understanding of the process involved. Classroom support staff work well with groups, and individuals to ensure that all pupils have an opportunity to contribute to lessons and to make progress. Pupils are learning to work independently in their groups and enjoy the wide range of interesting activities that teachers provide for them. Very good use is made of the mathematical displays in classrooms. These change regularly and pupils know how to use them very effectively in their learning. Group activities are matched well to the interests and abilities of pupils, but have an appropriate degree of challenge in them.
100. Teachers make good use of mathematics in other subjects. For instance, in history pupils use time lines, in geography co-ordinates. Information technology is used effectively to produce colourful graphs, and in art fascinating and attractive patterns are created through very good use of mathematical language. The interesting numeracy displays around the school and the weekly problems for pupils in each key stage demonstrate an enthusiasm for mathematics and are very good examples of the thoughtful and stimulating activities provided for pupils.
101. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She works hard to support colleagues and to monitor planning, teaching and pupils' work. Careful analysis of test results and data has raised attainment effectively and enabled the school to identify areas for development. The co-ordinator organises the subject well and has a clear idea of that the school needs to do to build on the progress made in the teaching and learning of mathematics. The school has been very ably supported by the local education authority in its implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Together they have made a significant contribution to the progress that has been made in raising attainment.

## SCIENCE

102. By the age of 11, the most recent results for 2000 indicate an improvement on the previous year 1999 when pupils achieved below the average compared with both schools nationally and with similar schools. In the current group of 11 year olds, one or two higher attaining pupils are working at above average levels. Average and lower attaining pupils are making good gains in knowledge and understanding. This is as a result of the good teaching and provision for scientific enquiry which is the practical area of this subject. The majority are on course to achieve at least the standards expected by the age of 11, with the prospect of achieving higher. Pupils know that gravitational force is a pulling force and the teacher reinforces their knowledge and understanding through reminding them that this force acts *towards the centre of the earth*. Pupils put forward ideas about why a spring goes back to its original shape after being pulled, including the idea that the metal has been *cut in a*



*specific shape*. Several pupils discuss fair testing and know that the weights used must be the same to achieve a fair test in their experiments. The higher attaining pupils ask relevant questions relating to mass, showing that they are using their thinking skills, although they do not yet have real understanding of the area. They carry out experiments with weights and elastic bands and record their results. Pupils use correct scientific vocabulary, including the words *force* and *gravity*.

103. The teachers' specific scientific knowledge means that the subject is taught confidently and competently. Pupils are challenged and encouraged to ask probing questions and they rise to these challenges. Difficult areas are tackled as higher attainers ask relevant questions, for example, about *mass*.
104. By the age of seven, inspection findings show that pupils' standards are similar to those expected for pupils of this age. This is not as high as shown by teacher assessments for 1999 which were well above the average overall. Pupils plant broad bean seeds. They are starting to explore the effects of a variety of conditions on growth. Their planned experiments include growing plants in the dark and in the light and also with and without water. They name the major part of a plant, including stem, leaf, root and flower. Pupils have watched a plant grow previously and they are starting to make a diary in which they will record the rate of growth of the broad bean seed that they have just planted. The teachers' good subject knowledge ensures a well-planned series of lessons exploring plant growth. Pupils' learning is reinforced by a good classroom display on the subject. The teachers' good management skills have a positive effect on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which are good. They listen carefully to the introduction, even though they are excited about their experiments and want to plant their seeds. The teachers use time well, so that there is a good balance between the introduction, practical activity and time to reinforce learning at the end of the lessons.
105. Scientific enquiry is taught well throughout the school and pupils make good progress, as in a Years 3/4 lesson on *habitats*. Pupils also make good predictions about what habitat woodlice might prefer in this lesson. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in this area as do others. This is because special resources are prepared when necessary and these pupils have extra adult support.
106. Science makes a good contribution to literacy through speaking and listening, asking questions, writing about experiments, recording results and good use of a specific scientific vocabulary. It makes a good contribution to numeracy through the recording of data and results and of accurate measuring. Information communication technology is used well, for example, for producing line graphs and different charts such as pie charts when working on different types of food. Past work and work seen during the inspection shows that pupils make good progress in learning in all the aspects of the subject, including living things, physical science and materials.
107. Since the last inspection results have been analysed and standards improved in 1999. The co-ordinator is a science specialist who has had experience in industry and scientific research as well as teaching. The school now uses the nationally recommended programme of work. Because of this, pupils' scientific skills are built up steadily as they go through the school. Teaching has improved and pupils, including the higher attainers, are now challenged.
108. The quality of teaching is good overall. One sixth of teaching is satisfactory and the rest is good. When teaching is good, the teachers' planning is clear and detailed, so that they know exactly what they want the pupils to learn. They assess pupils

informally as they visit groups, using good questioning skills to extend the pupils' knowledge. They use questions such as, *Why do you think...?* and *What would happen if...?*. Their assessment, to find out exactly what pupils know and can do, helps them to plan the next lessons. Relevant homework is given to improve and reinforce the pupils' learning. When teaching is satisfactory the teachers' management skills are slightly inconsistent and pupils become rather noisy at times. This has an adverse effect on their learning as it affects their concentration.

109. The co-ordinator is skilled in pitching the content of lessons at a level that the pupils understand. He supports colleagues well. He makes good links with other subjects and helps pupils to apply the knowledge that they have gained in one subject to other subjects. For example, they can apply their knowledge of *forces*, learned in science, to geography *when studying rivers* and to design and technology when learning about *structures*. Appropriate in-service training has been given to teachers concerning the changes to the science 2000 curriculum. Resources are very good and are of good quality. Some teachers' assessments have been over optimistic and the co-ordinator is working to standardise and moderate these so that teachers will have a clearer understanding of what the pupils know, understand and can do in relation to the National Curriculum levels. He has started to analyse the National Curriculum test results so that appropriate targets can be set. He has not yet monitored teaching but this is included in the school's planned programme for monitoring and due to take place later this term.

## ART AND DESIGN

110. Art was not observed being taught at the age of 11 during the inspection. Judgement of standards the end of the juniors takes account of analysis of the pupils' past work and discussion with teachers and pupils.
111. By the age of 11, standards in art are as expected for pupils of this age. At the time of the previous inspection they were good. However, over the past few years, the curriculum in art was reduced to a certain extent, as in most schools, to enable the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This accounts for the slight decline. The nationally recommended programme of work has been discussed with members of staff and adopted for the school. It is acknowledged that three-dimensional work is not developed fully. Management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has planned strategies, including having an artist visit the school to work with the pupils to improve standards. This planning has a particular emphasis on achievement in the area of three-dimensional work.
112. By the age of 11, pupils use their sketchbooks appropriately to make exploratory studies of still life, for example shells and scissors. They use the digital camera to record a variety of still life compositions. Pupils extend their skills in literacy by writing about their photographic images, evaluating them and saying how they could be improved. These are good links to literacy, information communication technology and science. Other pupils of this age make a drawing of their own family group, after studying an African ceramic piece of work depicting a family. They study the work of van Gogh and make good progress in the use of oil pastel as they draw their own chairs. Pupils' skills in the use of oil pastels are better than their skills in the use of pencil, when working on observational drawings. A sound majority of pupils have difficulty in using their pencils to show areas of shade. More focused teaching would improve these skills.
113. By the age of seven, pupils achieve the standards that are expected of pupils of this age. The teachers use good resources, such as pictures of other artists' work

including William Morris, to help pupils to understand the design process. Pupils learn how shapes and colours can be overlapped when making a collage using leaf shapes. Teachers plan effectively to use current work (leaf prints) and extend this through the use of other media and techniques, such as when making their felt collages. The teachers' management skills are good and because of this pupils' attitudes are good. They are able to concentrate on their work. They try hard and complete their tasks stage by stage. In one lesson the teacher did not emphasise enough the name of the technique that the pupils were using and consequently few remembered the word collage. Pupils draw around a template and use scissors confidently, although a few pupils have difficulty when cutting thick felt. They know what autumn colours are and choose the ones that they like for their own work.

114. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved and consequently so has the progress which pupils make. This is now good overall, throughout the school and occasionally very good, as in Year 4 work on pattern. Colour is used well, for example when the younger pupils draw faces after the style of Paul Klee.
115. The quality of teaching in art is good overall, with a quarter of lessons very good and a quarter satisfactory. Where teaching is very good, the teachers' introduction is very good and includes a recap of the previous week's work. This reinforces the pupils' knowledge. Pupils have to evaluate each other's work and they learn to use appropriate vocabulary, including *overlapping* and *vertical*. Very good teaching generates very good attitudes to work and gains in learning, such as careful observational skills. The pupils respond well to the teachers' very good classroom management. They are fully involved in the activity and do not want the lesson to end.
116. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This is because they are given extra adult support when necessary.
117. Art makes a sound contribution to literacy, particularly through speaking and listening when pupils discuss and evaluate their work and also through writing, as when pupils write about their work, for example in Year 6 when writing about their photographs.
118. Art makes a sound contribution to numeracy, particularly through pattern, proportion and shape, such as in Years 3 and 4 when pupils create patterns. Information communication technology is used in art although this area is not developed fully.
119. Display in the school is good and is used well by the teachers to extend and enhance learning, as in a science display on plant growth in a Year 2 class.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Judgements take account of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.
121. By the age of 11, pupils' standards in design and technology are in line with those expected of pupils of this age. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils explored ways of *making a roof stronger* through trying different ways of using two pieces of A4 card to make structures that will support as much weight as possible. They used glue, scissors and sticky tape. The task was suitably challenging to all pupils and stretched the higher attaining pupils. The teacher planned the lesson effectively, as one of a series in which pupils build up their skills, knowledge and understanding of structures. Because of this, the higher attaining pupils were particularly confident to experiment and exchange ideas. Two groups of pupils made strong structures by corrugating



their card. Other pupils used triangular supports and curved structures. Because the teacher had used appropriate methods and made pupils think to apply their knowledge gained in science on *forces*, they are really involved in the task. However, at times noise levels became high and this had an adverse effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour although the class is also supported by the deputy headteacher. The teacher's sensitive assessment particularly helped the lower attaining pupils to achieve and develop their ideas. Pupils discuss their solutions to the problems they encounter and consider their designs, amending them so that they will support more weight. Pupils make sound progress and occasionally good progress, as in Year 3 in their design skills. In a good lesson pupils learned to design *monsters*. In an effective working atmosphere they successfully developed ways of making moving parts with simple pneumatic systems such as syringes and pumps. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

122. By the age of seven, pupils achieve the standards that are expected for pupils of this age. Pupils work on display shows that they design and make felt hand puppets. Other pupils of this age make pages with moving parts for their storybooks, using simple levers, for example a giant with a moving arm and hand in *Jack and the Beanstalk*.
123. Since the last inspection pupils' skills in the design process have improved. More emphasis is now put on teaching pupils to evaluate and amend their work. The school now uses the nationally recommended programmes of work, which ensure that appropriate skills are appropriately built up gradually as pupils move through the school. Teachers are more confident in their knowledge about the subject.
124. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory overall with around two thirds satisfactory and one third good. Where teaching is good the teachers establish a good working atmosphere through enthusiastic introductions to the lessons. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and they are keen to start their designs. Teachers use questioning techniques well to ascertain pupils' learning and to extend their knowledge. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work, managing the classes well. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement. Pupils relate well to each other as they work together in groups. Time is used productively and all pupils complete their designs. In some junior classes, such as was seen in Year 4 and Year 6, pupils' behaviour is noisy and challenging. Although teaching is satisfactory overall in these classes, teachers' management strategies are less successful. They occasionally raise their voices to establish a quieter working environment.
125. The subject makes a sound contribution to literacy through discussion and written evaluations, and pupils also use specific vocabulary, such as the word *pneumatic*. The subject makes a sound contribution to numeracy through measuring and data handling.
126. Leadership in the subject is sound. There is now a satisfactory subject policy and the school uses the nationally recommended programme of work. Information communication technology is used, for example data handling to record types of food preparation.

## GEOGRAPHY

127. During the inspection no lessons were observed in the infant classes and only two lessons were seen in the juniors. No judgement on the quality of teaching could be made. However, from scrutiny of pupils' work, high quality displays and topic books, teachers' planning, and discussion with teachers, standards by the end of both key stages are at least those expected for seven and 11 year olds. The quality of discussion by the older pupils was high. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language make at least satisfactory progress. Whilst standards have been generally maintained since the previous inspection, the reduction in the number of visits has limited the opportunities for fieldwork and first hand comparisons of areas. The school has difficulty in obtaining sufficient numbers of adult helpers to accompany pupils on educational visits.
128. Younger pupils' interest and enthusiasm are developed well through following the journeys of several class toys around the world. For instance, Mungo Monkey goes to Florida and a farm near Manchester, whereas Katie Camel has a holiday in Greece and one in Scotland. Pupils find places around the world and discuss the journey from Manchester to these exciting places. They learn about the climate and work out why one place is hotter than another is. Pupils develop a good understanding of north, south, east and west. This is enhanced by the teachers' skilled questioning and the help they give to pupils to formulate their own questions and answers. On a walk around Northenden pupils follow a route and write about the places they see. Many do not like the scrap yard; *it was dirty and horrible in the rain*, but think that the new houses *look nice from a distance*. They like the River Mersey, which flows through the area. Pupils differentiate between maps of Britain and world maps, so they make good gains in learning about the capital cities and holiday resorts of the world. They are able to work out different ways of travelling from one place to another and transfer this learning well when considering Florence Nightingale's journey to Scutari in history. Teachers reinforce learning well and pupils are improving their use of geographical terms.
129. Pupils in Year 3 use the knowledge gained previously to find appropriate places for people to go on holiday. They extend their understanding of weather in England and the rest of the world through good use of weather symbols and charts. The teacher provides challenging tasks for pupils to use atlases and match weather conditions to countries before planning the best routes and methods of travel.
130. In Year 6 pupils show a good awareness of the time taken for waterfalls to develop. Many bring their homework research to the lessons and are already familiar with several waterfalls around the world. The teacher encourages pupils to use the Internet as a good source of information. For his contribution one pupil brought in a bottle of water from Niagara and this evidence impresses everyone. The teacher fostered interest and thought about the subject well. Pupils were pleased to have the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of scientific principles, gravity and the effect of forces in nature, which have obviously been taught well previously. Pupils gave coherent and relevant explanations so that good dialogue and use of geographical language are maintained in the lesson.
131. Pupils present their written work well and show good use of literacy in writing reports, labelling diagrams, as well as the use of reading skills for further research. The programme in the Foundation Stage leads pupils well in to the topics in Key Stage 1. There are good links with history whenever these are appropriate, for instance in the seaside holiday topic. The co-ordinator organises the subject well and planning

across the topics is good. The use of information and communication technology is being developed effectively.

## HISTORY

132. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in history are typical of pupils aged seven and 11 nationally. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils achieve appropriately and their knowledge of different historical periods enhances their understanding of change over time. The provision is similar to that at the previous inspection and pupils' increasing ability to evaluate change over time remains a strength of the curriculum.
133. Pupils successfully use a variety of evidence to find out about the past as they carry out research into the lives of famous people. The youngest pupils are acquiring a good understanding of a person famous in Victorian times through the teacher's good planning and use of interesting, appropriate materials. They recalled details from the video about Florence Nightingale well and put pictures of her life in order, aware that some of the details mentioned on the video were not included in their pictures. Pupils talked about Scutari and how Florence Nightingale helped change the hospital. In Year 2 pupils imagined that they were Florence and wrote a letter home to her parents, telling them about the long journey to Turkey and what she found on her arrival. Some Year 1 pupils wrote home as soldiers who are being cared for by her and praised Florence highly. This made a good contribution to pupils' writing development. All pupils examined a photograph of her and discussed her qualities and her clothing. A Year 1 class found out what it was like to have a photograph taken in Victorian times. One pupil posed, the teacher held a stopwatch and the class waited enthralled for the 20 seconds the teacher told them the pose must be held to take the photograph. Teachers encourage pupils to observe carefully, and this helps them to compare methods of travel and photographs with modern examples very successfully.
134. Year 3 pupils responded well to the teacher's careful questioning as they commented on differences between the lives of poor and rich families in Victorian times. They listened thoughtfully to the teacher's quiet reading of an account of her life by an eight-year-old girl, before writing their own reports of their days working on machines in factories. Pupils proudly read out what they have written at the end of the lesson and were warmly applauded by others in the class.
135. The oldest pupils have looked at invasions and learned about the Romans and Celts. They have studied the events of the Civil War and written journals about the siege in 1641. This is linked well to a visit to the church, where they looked for evidence of what happened there and what has changed in Northenden since that date. Teachers prepare interesting work and assignments for these topics, such as producing an advertisement written by a Roman estate agent wishing to sell a Roman villa. This task produced interested research and detail. When studying the Greeks pupils make good use of the Internet to find information and use books for their research on triremes and warfare. They work out why the Greeks needed a navy and enjoyed looking at a very good range of photographs and pictures of pottery to learn more about the dress of soldiers and the appearance of the ships. The good teaching over time helps pupils to recall other facts and realise that many events fit together.
136. The co-ordinator has ensured that the subject has developed well since the previous inspection and there are good guidelines for teachers. Visits to enhance pupils'

learning and extend their knowledge and understanding about Tudor and Victorian life are planned.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected for pupils aged seven and 11. This standard has been maintained since the previous inspection. Although the number of computers in school is low many pupils have computers at home and this makes a sound contribution towards the rate of learning for many. Pupils support each other well when working in pairs on computers. Teachers assess pupils computing skills carefully and they group pupils together so that those who have the least knowledge learn from and alongside those with the most. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that all pupils have time to complete their tasks. However, with such a low number of computers to pupils, there are currently insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their new skills. The school computer suite was prepared and ready to receive a substantial number of computers the week following the inspection. The grants from the national grid for learning has been supplemented from the school budget and further training for teachers is due to take place. Direct teaching of information technology was observed in some lessons and at other times pupils were observed working independently on computers. Teachers are mostly confident in teaching information technology in the classroom and some have very good subject knowledge. However, all teachers are keen to extend their knowledge further to teach with the new equipment and to extend their own knowledge of the use of the Internet.
138. The school is in the second year of using the nationally recommended scheme of work for information and communication technology. Pupils at the beginning of Year 2 are becoming proficient at assembling text. They are developing a sound knowledge of the keyboard. They produce labels in different sizes and understand the use of the keyboard for both capital and lowercase letters. They use the space bar and punctuation keys correctly. They write simple sentences and phrases to put into speech bubbles to match to pictures. Pupils give printer commands and print out their work independently. At the beginning of Year 3 pupils enjoy exploring different types of fonts and using them appropriately for different types of headlines. Pupils' knowledge of the use of databases is sound. They prepare and classify information such as favourite recipes and food and prepare and display it in different types of tables and charts. As they move through the school they become more adept at writing on screen. Year 5 pupils send messages home and to friends with the use of e-mail which they do confidently although Internet access is currently confined to one computer. They save and retrieve their previous work and can access previously sent e-mail messages. Pupils become increasingly competent in Key Stage 2. They use the CD-ROM to access information. The oldest pupils follow carefully prepared instructions by the teacher to use Internet sites such as the British Museum to find information on their history topic on the Ancient Egyptians.
139. Only one direct lesson at Year 6 was observed. Pupils were observed in small groups working independently on teacher-directed tasks and discussions were held with them. Skills for information technology were seen being taught to a whole Year 2 class in short sessions. No overall judgement on the quality of teaching could be made. As a result of very good teaching and demonstrations, pupils in Year 6 are developing a sound understanding of control technology. With the use of different sensors for heat, light and sound they learn how a computer program can be used to record and log changes. They are able to read the results of data logging of a sound sensor in the classroom over several hours and deduce what was happening at different times during the morning such as assembly, playtime and work times.

When pupils are taught information technology skills their learning is good. However, lack of prolonged and consistent use of computers prevents them for reinforcing and building on these skills quickly. The computers in place are used effectively and to their maximum in the school. Teachers ensure that pupils all have equal opportunity to work with them. As a result of good pupil management, pupils work independently and persevere with their tasks both inside and outside the classroom.

140. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. They behave well, take turns sharing the resources and the more able pupils help and support others very well.
141. Pupils' learning is supported effectively across different subjects of the curriculum such as mathematics, science and English.
142. The co-ordination of the subject is sound. The subject manager is enthusiastic and very interested. She has recently trained in information and communication technology. She has clearly planned ideas for developing the subject and providing further training for teachers in the new technology as soon as the new computer suite is up and running.

## MUSIC

143. Inspection findings show that at the age of 11 pupils attain at the expected standard for their age. However, standards in music have declined for pupils at the age of 11 since the previous inspection when they were judged to be above the national expectation. This is due to changes in staff and staff expertise and an increased recent emphasis on the literacy and numeracy curriculum.
144. No lessons were observed in the infant classes and it was not possible to make a judgement on pupils' attainment in music at the age of seven or on the quality of teaching. In a hymn practice for all pupils from Reception to Year 2, pupils sang sweetly and in tune. They listened to each other's singing and kept together well with a guitar and the teachers' voices. They learned new songs quickly and added actions with even the youngest children sustaining their concentration well. By the age of 11, pupils attain close to the national expectation in music. They listen to and appreciate in their discussions well known pieces of music such as The Planet Suite by Gustav Holst. They develop a simple understanding of music with four beats to the bar. Due to good teaching, pupils in a Years 5/6 class made good progress in their understanding of rhythm and beats in recurring six and eight beat patterns. They recognised the beats within slow and fast pieces of music from a variety of cultures such as drums and voices in traditional Nigerian dance music, a modern African song, South American music and Indian music on the sitar. In pairs and small groups, pupils responded and improvised a variety of body sounds such as claps, knee slaps and finger clicks to a piece of lively music at a fast beat. They practised and refine their final compositions to perform before the class.
145. Teaching is always satisfactory although teachers' confidence and expertise varies. Teachers plan their lessons carefully. In the best lessons pupils are fully involved by the teacher in their musical experiences and lessons build well on what they have already learnt. In these lessons teachers have expertise and understanding of music and communicate it to pupils well with their own enthusiasm. They give opportunities for pupils to practise such as when singing a rhyme to show the difference between legato and staccato singing. At other times, lessons have a slower pace and too much time is spent in oral speaking activities which allows insufficient participation for pupils in listening or playing. The challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils in one class of Year 6 pupils hinders the progress for others. Teachers miss opportunities



for instance for naming classroom instruments when exploring the sounds they make.

146. Management is sound and the curriculum and resources are currently being reviewed. Resources in music are satisfactory. The school is beginning to use the recent nationally recommended scheme of work for the juniors although this is not yet in place for the younger classes. It provides opportunities for some pupils to learn a variety of instruments in school such as brass instruments and the 'cello. Lessons are provided free of charge to pupils. However, there are insufficient places to enable all those who want to learn an instrument to do so. Places are allocated fairly. The quality of this provision is good and most pupils make sound progress in their small group lessons. These pupils are expected to attend regular rehearsals with instrumental players from other local schools. The school provides opportunities outside lessons for pupils to learn the recorder and a large number of older pupils attend the choir practices after school. The choir is keen and pupils enjoy their singing which is tuneful and enthusiastic. The school has had a few recent visits by professional musicians although, due to the lack of adult helpers to accompany them, pupils have not had recent opportunities to attend concerts in the local area.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those seen in most schools. Due to the school's focus on English and mathematics, the high standards identified in the previous inspection have not been maintained.
148. In gymnastics pupils in Year 2 show good control of their bodies as they climb and jump on the apparatus. They are beginning to join movement together into a short sequence. They are energetic working on the apparatus although many have not yet reached the stage of planning what they are going to do. By the end of Year 6 sequences have extended and pupils perform more confidently. They are inventive finding different ways to perform. The majority transfers these skills to the apparatus. Pupils give greater thought to planning and work well with a partner and in a small group. As yet they do not fully evaluate their performances. These skills are more apparent in dance when pupils discuss each other's work and suggest how it can be improved. Pupils reach good standards in dance and can express themselves through movement and to a lesser extent reflect the music. The focus of the lesson in Year 6 was linked to history and the pupils' movements reflected the controlled Egyptian movements in the picture stimulus. The groups work very well together adapting and improving their performances following demonstrations and fitting their dance into the music by including pauses and turns. Due to the poor weather during the inspection it was only possible to observe one games lesson and pupils have satisfactory skills of throwing and catching small and large balls. They improve their control in judging the force of the throws to make it reach their partner. As at the time of the previous inspection pupils go swimming in Years 3 and 4 and last year the vast majority of pupils could swim 25 metres and the more able had moved on to improving their style when swimming different strokes.
149. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory and it was notably good in dance. Lessons follow a suitable structure including activities to warm up and most lessons also had a calming down task to conclude the lesson. Pupils learn most effectively when the teacher had a very certain idea of what it was the pupils were to learn. For example, in the mixed Years 3/4 class when the focus was on performing symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes and the teacher explained this clearly. After a while the lesson was stopped and a selection of pupils demonstrated the skill this clarified the task and pupils were then allowed time to improve their performances.

In other lessons demonstrations were not used as effectively as teachers failed to allow time to reflect and practise after a demonstration. Teachers have successfully taught pupils how to put out the apparatus and they have learned how to do this very efficiently. This reflects the school's emphasis on developing pupils' social skills and they collaborate and help each other carrying heavy apparatus. Most lessons are brisk and keep pupils busy although on occasions too much information slowed down the lesson and also restricted the pupils performing their own ideas. Management of pupils is good and pupils behave well and have a good sense about the need to be aware of the safety of other pupils.

150. The subject co-ordinator has observed lessons and has provided useful information to teachers, such as to avoid using a whistle in the hall. She also gives generously of her time to run a badminton club. However, this is the only after school sporting activity and pupils do not have the opportunity to take part in competitive sport against other schools.