

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brindle, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119669

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Poskitt

Reporting inspector: Mr David Cann
20009

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th November 2000

Inspection number: 225252

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bournes Row
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Preston
Lancashire

Postcode: PR5 0DQ

Telephone number: 01254 853473

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Joe Proctor

Date of previous inspection: 7th – 9th July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Cann 20009	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities English Information and communication technology Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed?
Christine Wild 19369	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
William Gale 21317	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
Lynda Parkinson 23221	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Brindle is a voluntary aided school for pupils aged 4 to 11 with 142 pupils on roll (70 boys and 72 girls). Pupils mainly live in the villages of Gregson Lane and Hoghton and are drawn from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly in line with expectations. Currently 5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Fifteen per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is below the national average, but 3 per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, which is above average. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a good school. The headteacher provides strong leadership and teachers are committed to promoting pupils' success. Current pupils in Year 6 are attaining satisfactory standards in English and mathematics and good standards in science. Teaching is good and helps pupils to develop very good attitudes to school and learning. Pupils behave well and relationships are very supportive. The school offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good overall. Pupils are welcomed into school at the Foundation Stage and settle easily. They receive very good teaching at Key Stage 1 where they attain good standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of seven. They attain good levels in science by the age of eleven.
- The school benefits from good leadership in which the governors, headteacher and staff work closely together to provide pupils with a good quality of education.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and behave well.
- The school has a caring and supportive atmosphere, which is successful in developing pupils' understanding of right and wrong and their responsibilities to one another.
- Teachers and support staff provide valuable assistance to pupils with special educational needs, which helps them to progress well.

What could be improved

- Raise pupils' attainment in speaking and writing at Key Stage 2.
- Provide consistent challenges for the more-able pupils at Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in July 1998 and was judged to have serious weaknesses although providing an acceptable standard of education. Four main areas were identified as in need of improvement. The school has successfully addressed these while managing a number of significant staff changes. Pupils' attainment in English has been raised at both key stages although the school recognises that improvements are still required in speaking and writing at Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment in science has been greatly improved at both key stages and this reflects improvements in planning that have been implemented across the curriculum. The quality of teaching has been very successfully raised at Key Stage 1 and is stronger throughout the school. The programme of observations, monitoring and support led by the headteacher has generated a very positive approach to professional development. The headteacher and staff effectively evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and plan developments well. They have agreed a number of initiatives to raise the quality of education and need time to ensure these are effectively implemented.

STANDARDS

During the period 1996 to 1999, pupils' results in tests at the age of 11 were above the national average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. In 2000, pupils' attainment was well below average in English and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. Although a third of the small year group were on the school's special educational needs register, attainment in writing was below expectations, especially among higher attainers. The school has now implemented new approaches to teaching writing skills. Current pupils in Year 6 are achieving levels that are in line with expectations in English and mathematics and levels that are above expectations in science. By the age of seven, pupils attain levels that are above average in English, mathematics and science. By

the age of five, pupils attain levels that are in line with the Early Learning Goals¹ in all areas of learning. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average although there are significant variations between the different year groups, which the school identifies well. Pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 is good and at Key Stage 2 their progress is satisfactory.

Because the number of pupils taking Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 was less than 20, no table of results is published.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to the school and their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in class and at break-times.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and when given responsibility, pupils respond well.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Out of the lessons observed, 24 per cent were judged to be very good, 34 per cent were good and only 5 per cent were unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 1, where teaching and learning were very good in over half the lessons. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage classes well. This helps to build children's confidence at the Foundation Stage where pupils' learning is well developed through a well-balanced range of activities. The teaching of reading is good throughout the school. The teaching of writing is well structured at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2 it does not always develop pupils' vocabulary to ensure that they can fully express their ideas. The teaching of numeracy is very good at Key Stage 1 and sound at Key Stage 2. In literacy and numeracy, teachers stimulate higher attainers well at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, teachers do not always extend the thinking of more-able pupils by setting them appropriate challenges or research activities.

¹ 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.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There are good teaching programmes for science and technology, but those in history and geography are under-developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The support is well managed and enables pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' moral and social development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is sound.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel safe and consider each other's needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides effective leadership and works closely with staff to improve the quality of education
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors keep themselves well informed about the school and support the school very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at evaluating its strengths and weaknesses and plans its areas for development well.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of staffing and resources.

The school has significantly improved its procedures for measuring its performance and applies good value principles in agreeing the areas for expenditure.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifteen parents attended a meeting prior to the inspection and 59 questionnaires (42 per cent of those distributed) were returned.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children like school • children get the right amount of homework • teaching is good and there are high expectations • helps children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a small minority feel uncomfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems

The inspectors agree with parents' positive comments and have raised the concerns that some parents expressed about approaching the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

THE SCHOOL'S RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

1. At the end of Key Stage 2 current pupils are attaining levels in English and mathematics that are in line with national expectations and levels in science that exceed them. At Key Stage 1, pupils attain levels that are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. With small numbers of pupils in year groups, there have been inevitable variations from year to year but, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress as they advance through the school.
2. During the period 1996 to 1999, pupils' performance in tests at the age of 11 were above the national average in English, well above average in mathematics and above average in science. In 2000, pupils' attainment was well below average in English and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. A third of the 15 pupils in the year group were on the school's special educational needs register and in relation to their prior attainment their progress was satisfactory. However, pupils' attainment in writing was significantly weaker than their attainment in reading, especially among more-able pupils. This reflects a lack of emphasis on developing writing skills, which the school has addressed in current teaching. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment is often below average but not by a statistically significant figure. Measurements of pupils' progress at Key Stage 2, based on their attainment at Key Stage 1 and school performance data, indicate that their progress is good in reading and science and broadly average in writing and mathematics. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment and is in line to achieve them with the current group in Year 6.
3. Pupils' performance in tests at the age of seven improved steadily during the period 1996 to 1999. They attained results that were above the national average in reading, close to average in writing and well above average in mathematics. There has been a considerable improvement in attainment since the last inspection. In 2000, pupils attained results that were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. There were 20 pupils in the year group with a significant number of higher-attaining pupils and they made good progress. Current pupils in Year 2 are attaining levels that are above average in English, mathematics and science. In 2000, pupils attained standards that, in comparison with those in similar schools, were average in writing and above average in reading and mathematics. Pupils' progress is good at Key Stage 1.
4. By the age of five, pupils achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of development and often exceed them in their personal and social development. Children start the reception class with a broadly average level of skills although there is a wide variation between the small year groups. Most children have pre-school experience before attending full-time education and an increasing number attend the private nursery which is run within the school. They make sound progress across the Foundation Stage.
5. Pupils' attainment in English is satisfactory in listening at both key stages. In speaking, their confidence and command of language is good at Key Stage 1 but not well developed among older pupils at Key Stage 2. Teachers are very good at questioning pupils at Key Stage 1 and provide a number of opportunities for pupils to talk to the class. At Key Stage 2, teachers do not all plan speaking activities with a sufficiently structured approach. Most importantly, they do not always help pupils to broaden their vocabulary by using precise terms in subjects like history, geography and music. Pupils read plays but opportunities for drama and role-play are limited among older pupils and teachers do

not give them sufficient instruction on delivery and expression. This affects the progress of all pupils, but especially limits the opportunities for higher attainers to describe their ideas and discuss concepts.

6. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in reading that are above expectations and they achieve good results in comprehension tests. However, pupils do not have a wide experience of non-fiction and using the library for research. Although higher-attaining pupils do not have a structured programme to develop their skills in independent learning activities, the proportion who achieve Level 5 in Key Stage 2 tests is often above average.
7. Pupils' attainment in writing is above expectations at Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations at Key Stage 2. The school has identified the need to extend pupils' writing skills and timetables a weekly writing activity for all classes. Teachers are developing these effectively and at both key stages pupils produce good examples of writing for different purposes and in different styles. However, their range of vocabulary is often limited and teaching does not always ensure that pupils develop the confidence to use technical terms. While pupils have opportunities to extend their writing skills in science and religious education they do not often write in history and geography. Handwriting skills are satisfactory by the end of both key stages but the progress at Key Stage 2 is uneven with some pupils still printing their words in Year 4. Spelling is sound and teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge with tasks that are well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities.
8. Pupils reach levels in mathematics that are above expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and better teaching strategies has had a significant impact on standards at Key Stage 1. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2, but does not always stimulate the thinking of higher-attaining pupils.
9. Pupils reach above average levels in science at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and teachers now place far greater emphasis on investigative work. This promotes pupils' interest and skills very effectively at Key Stage 1 but some of the experiments are relatively simple at Key Stage 2. Lower-attaining pupils are given a good level of assistance, sometimes through working with more-able pupils, and they make good progress.
10. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are well supported in individual and group sessions that focus on their particular needs. Lower attainers receive valuable assistance in sessions with trained assistants who offer additional literacy support. Higher attainers often achieve satisfactory results in Key Stage 2 tests, but are not sufficiently encouraged to develop their skills for independent enquiry and research. In language, mathematics and science there are not enough activities planned to challenge the thinking and skills of more-able pupils.
11. In information and communication technology pupils attain levels that are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment has improved significantly since the last inspection and enthusiastic and well-focused teaching is helping pupils to make even more progress. The school is developing the use of its new computer suite very effectively, which is helping all pupils to develop a range of new skills.
12. Attainment in design and technology is above expectations at both key stages and has been raised since the last inspection. Resources and teaching have been considerably improved and pupils achieve good levels both in designing and making. In art and design

and physical education, attainment is in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. In history and geography, pupils attain levels that are in line with expectations at Key Stage 1 but below expectations at Key Stage 2. Older pupils do not have a sufficient knowledge of other countries nor appreciate the different sources of historical information. The school has placed an appropriate priority on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and recognises that it has not made significant advances in raising standards in history and geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. Parents state that their children are happy to be at school. Teaching is good and ensures that pupils are motivated in their work. In class, pupils are keen to pose and answer questions and they quickly settle to their assignments. They are attentive to teachers and when encouraged to do so are willing to talk about what they are doing. The school's involvement in charities such as the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development helps the pupils to have consideration for others and to be aware of those less fortunate than themselves.
14. In class, around the school and at play, behaviour is very good. The behaviour policy with its emphasis on praise, along with the school's golden rules, helps to create a community where respect for others is paramount. Movement around the school takes place in an orderly manner. Pupils form a queue in the classrooms and the playground as a matter of course. The school has an effective system of linking older pupils and younger ones as 'big friends and little friends', which benefits both groups. It has recently formed a school council and this is helping pupils to become aware of their responsibilities to one another. Parents are supportive of these recent initiatives and feel that they have had a positive effect on behaviour in the school. Recognition of good behaviour is rewarded in the weekly achievement assemblies. Pupils and parents have been instrumental in the development of the golden rules, which pupils know and understand. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection week. There have been no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.
15. The Catholic ethos of the school strengthens and encourages pupils to have respect for others and themselves. Relationships throughout the school are good. Staff provide good role models. At lunchtime, Year 6 pupils could be seen playing voluntarily with younger pupils. Pupils were courteous and polite to each other and to visitors. Assemblies and classroom prayers encourage pupils to reflect on their action on others. No instances of sexist or racist attitudes were displayed during the inspection. Opportunities to show initiative are limited, but when pupils have responsibilities such as collecting and returning registers to the administration office they respond well.
16. In the previous inspection report, attendance at the school was good. The school has maintained a well above average attendance record over several years. The majority of pupils arrive at the school punctually. Registers and registration procedures meet the statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good overall with very good teaching and learning at Key Stage 1. Out of all the lessons observed, 24 per cent were judged to be very good, 34 per cent were good and only 5 per cent were unsatisfactory. Teaching of the under-fives in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching is very good at Key Stage 1. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching at the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2 is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. There has been a significant improvement in teaching at Key Stage 1, which was identified as a weakness during the previous inspection, but is now a strength of the school.
18. The quality of teaching is good at the Foundation Stage, with 50 per cent of the lessons observed judged to be good and 25 per cent judged to be very good. Teaching is well planned with a good balance between structured classroom learning and exploration through play. Children's behaviour is well managed, especially during whole-class sessions when they are encouraged to develop high levels of concentration and independence. Resources are well prepared and are ready for children's use as soon as they move into groups. An appropriate level of prompting and encouragement helps children to sustain their pace of working. All children, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in activities and questions are well used to explore children's level of understanding. Classroom assistants and voluntary helpers, including parents, are well deployed to supervise groups and they show considerable patience in taking children through different stages of learning. Relationships are good. Children trust adults, which gives them the confidence to develop a good level of independence, showing curiosity as they explore materials and toys.
19. Teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 with 58 per cent of lessons judged to be very good. Teachers have high expectations at all times. Pupils are expected to think about their approach to learning and are encouraged to answer questions in a thoughtful and relevant manner. Classroom discussions are often lively and productive with nearly all pupils eager to answer questions which are carefully framed to develop their understanding. Teachers and classroom assistants have a very good understanding of how pupils of this age learn and plan sessions to develop pupils' knowledge. They enable pupils to sustain very good levels of interest and concentration. Tasks set are suitable for pupils of all levels of attainment and particular attention has been given to the needs of the higher attainers who often work together in larger groups with less structured guidance than other pupils. This helps them to develop their own methods of learning.
20. During group work, a busy atmosphere is developed with a good pace of learning. Staff make good judgements about when they should intervene, often leaving pupils to ask questions of each other. This encourages the development of very good co-operative skills and independent learning. The teaching of basic skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy, is very well developed and there are very good arrangements to promote these skills in other subject areas, for example, encouraging pupils to write up their investigative work in an accurate and carefully structured manner. Any weaknesses in learning are quickly identified and are addressed in all lessons. The whole-school emphasis on developing the standards of writing is actively promoted throughout the day.
21. Teaching is mainly satisfactory at Key Stage 2, but there were shortcomings in a small percentage of lessons seen. Fifty per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 5 per cent were very good, 36 per cent good and 9 per cent unsatisfactory. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is frequently good, although teachers do not always challenge the learning of higher attainers in mixed-age classes. Teachers pay good attention to the needs of less-able pupils. Classroom assistants are well deployed to help pupils with special educational needs and show a good understanding of their level of learning, helping them to sustain their concentration when they find the work difficult. Teachers

have a well-developed knowledge of the literacy and numeracy strategies and implement them effectively in the classroom. Instructions given at the start of lessons are clear, which helps pupils make a prompt start to their learning. Classroom routines are well explained and pupils know the standards of behaviour expected of them. Teaching is carefully structured and usually meets the needs of the majority of the class.

22. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers do not always plan to develop the understanding of the higher attainers, who are too often engaged in relatively mundane tasks that they can easily master. As a result, pupils are conscientious about their work, but are not used to thinking more deeply and have not developed the maturity of learning of which they are capable. When conducting investigations or researching information, they are slow to identify interesting characteristics and tasks do not encourage them to pursue a more sophisticated level of enquiry. Work is marked regularly and errors in pupils' work are clearly identified. Good attention is paid to pupils' spelling and neatness of presentation. There are fewer suggestions on how pupils might develop a more interesting and varied writing style. Although some teachers are good at asking challenging questions in order to develop pupils' thinking, others do not always require them to extend their skills. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were asked to suggest different calculations producing the answer 20. Pupils mainly suggested numbers adding up to 20 and were not challenged to use different operations. In physical education and music lessons, pupils are not always helped to develop their language skills by commenting upon and evaluating the performances of others. Teachers' weekly planning is better than at the time of the last inspection and includes good arrangements to meet the needs of pupils of lower abilities. Tasks for younger pupils and those with learning difficulties are clearly planned to help them develop basic skills. Homework is set regularly, but tends to concentrate only on routine tasks, such as reading or completing written work, and does not suggest many areas in which pupils carry out their own research.

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

23. The curriculum includes all areas of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school places an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and planning is based on the recommended national strategies. The effectiveness of literacy teaching has been reviewed and planning has been adapted to raise pupils' attainment in writing. The curriculum at the Foundation Stage effectively meets the Early Learning Goals for children under five years old. The curriculum for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 has been improved in terms of time allocation since the last inspection but the planning of history and geography teaching still needs clearer organisation. The school has no agreed scheme of work for geography and while the scheme for history is agreed it has not yet been published.
24. Substantial improvements have been made in the planning so that pupils can make progress in most subjects, largely as a result of the sensible decision to adopt nationally approved guidelines to form the basis for schemes of work. Good use is made of the guidance for mixed-age classes to ensure progress can be made during two years in the same class. Most subject co-ordinators have a sound knowledge of the guidelines and have helped to explain them to other teachers. This has addressed a weakness identified in the previous inspection. Recently revised co-ordinators' files provide substantial evidence of work to develop subjects and, within the subjects, a good balance has been achieved between the different elements. Good arrangements are in place to plan for the development of pupils' skills at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, arrangements are satisfactory, but current planning does not place sufficient emphasis on developing independent library and study skills, which weakens the preparation for the next stage of pupils' education.

25. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are good. Planning takes account of the targets in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) and planned activities include strategies to meet additional needs, particularly in terms of literacy. The planning of group work is usually good and includes pupils with special educational needs in all class activities. A good balance is achieved between pupils working with pupils of similar ability and working alongside those who are more able and can offer help and advice.
26. There are satisfactory arrangements for personal, social and health education (PSHE). A limited amount of time is allocated to the subject, which is sufficient to meet current objectives but is unlikely to provide enough time for an expansion planned for in the school development plan. A suitable scheme for health education has been adopted, which also provides broad guidelines for personal and social education. There are plans to strengthen this aspect of the curriculum by introducing 'circle time' discussions to one class on a trial basis, when pupils will be encouraged to talk about issues.
27. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided. Regular lunchtime and after-school clubs take place. Sporting clubs are particularly popular. The library club is the least well attended. Staff are energetic in their promotion of the benefits of attendance at the clubs. There are trips to museums and theatres, although these are relatively infrequent. A privately organised after-school club provides additional opportunities for some pupils.
28. There are satisfactory links with other schools and the community. Staff visit from the local secondary school and there is effective liaison with the nursery on the school premises. Regular visitors to the school include the local priest, police and fire services. Teachers make use of the locality trails around the village to provide pupils with more information about the area.
29. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a good understanding of the values and beliefs of their school and community. There are relatively few opportunities to explore the beliefs of communities beyond their own. Pupils' ideas are valued and their achievements recognised during lessons, when staff are keen to demonstrate examples of good work and helpful behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the work of others. Some opportunities are provided to examine the effects of events on people, especially when pupils are reading relevant stories. The impact of changes in nature is explained to pupils, particularly in science lessons, and they have developed a good appreciation of the natural world.
30. The arrangements for pupils' moral and social development are good. School rules are well understood by all pupils and they have a clear idea of the effects of their actions on others, showing tolerance and patience with those less able than themselves. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong, which is developed through a wide range of activities throughout the school. Minor incidents at school are used well to illustrate the difference between right and wrong behaviour. Young pupils know how to control their behaviour in classroom situations and often show sympathy towards those who are upset; for example, showing concern for a boy who had hurt his head on a door. Older pupils can explain why it is important to help others and develop firm friendships. Relationships are good throughout the school and staff provide good role models in their concern for all children.
31. The school promotes an understanding of local culture well. Pupils know their surroundings, the village community and the occupations of many local people. They know some aspects of how the village has developed, and the history of the local church and its links with the school. Arrangements to develop a sense of broader, multi-cultural aspects of society are under-developed. Although visitors are occasionally invited to

demonstrate the celebrations of other cultures, the school does not have a reliable programme for promoting a sense of the different ideals and backgrounds of many of the people from outside the immediate area.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Overall, the school provides good care for its pupils. Staff know their pupils well and good relationships are a strength. The quality of provision for support and guidance has improved since the previous inspection.
33. Procedures to promote pupils' well-being, health and safety are good. A detailed health and safety policy promotes the well-being of all pupils and staff. The governing body's premises committee in its termly safety reviews of the premises carries out risk assessments. Three members of staff are fully trained in first aid and written notifications of bumps to the head are provided to parents. Fire procedures are adequate, regular testing of fire and electrical equipment takes place. The school makes good use of the local police and fire service, who instruct the pupils in areas of personal safety and raise awareness of the dangers of strangers and fire hazards. Personal and social education helps the pupils to think about topics such as the use of medicines. Along with working in the classroom, non-teaching staff often have different roles in the school, working as lunchtime supervisors and helping with the successful after-school club. Consequently, pupils are well known to them and are trusting and confident in their care.
34. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The designated person with responsibility has received training and advice from the local area authority. The school follows local guidelines and appropriate support is available when needed from outside agencies. However, the brief child protection policy is out of date and the school plans to address this and raise staff awareness of procedures.
35. The school has very effective procedures for the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour. The detailed behaviour policy is supported by a system of rewards and sanctions and house-points are awarded for consistently good behaviour. Details of any concerns regarding behaviour are recorded in pupils' action records. The expectations of the headteacher and staff, the moral guidance provided through assemblies and religious education, along with implementation of the policy, have a significant effect on the achievement of very good behaviour. Overall, parents agreed that standards of behaviour are good and are pleased with the 'big friend/little friend' system. Mid-day supervisory staff maintain good order and are able to provide information that contributes to the rewards that pupils receive. During the inspection, no observations were made of unacceptable conduct.
36. Personal development records are detailed and significant concerns regarding behaviour, social or medical information are recorded and monitored regularly by the class teacher and the headteacher. The detailed recording helps to identify and support improvements in pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Annual reports to parents include information on the personal and social development of their children.
37. Procedures for assessing, monitoring and supporting academic progress are good. The school has addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. Effective procedures are in place at the Foundation Stage of education where baseline assessment takes place and parents are encouraged to meet with the class teacher to discuss the outcomes and discuss targets for the future. Performance information from statutory and non-statutory testing in the core subjects is analysed and recorded and targets are set for pupils in literacy and numeracy. The school has recently introduced procedures in which pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy is recorded weekly and the information used in planning the next stages of teaching. Teachers set individual targets

for pupils but do not always use them in marking pupils' work. The format of the annual progress reports to parents has been improved since the last inspection and now includes targets for improvement. In the early years, these are succinct and helpful, but for older pupils weaknesses are not always clearly identified and targets are sometimes generalised and not specific to the pupil. Teachers carry out and record termly assessments of pupils' progress in the foundation subjects. The use of information is generally satisfactory, but teachers are reviewing the use of assessment to help them both in their planning and providing guidance for pupils.

38. Procedures for the monitoring of attendance are satisfactory. Registers comply with the statutory requirements and registration takes place at the beginning of each morning and afternoon. Attendance at the school is well above the national average and has been consistent in previous years. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average, the school outlines the need to inform the school of absences and parents respond well to the requests. Individual absences are monitored and recorded, but the analysis of the types of absence to ascertain the impact on the progress of pupils does not take place. Almost half of the absences recorded are holidays taken in term time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The school has a very good relationship with parents, which has a positive impact on the learning and achievement of the pupils. Parents feel that they have access to the school and that they can approach the headteacher and staff with ease. Views expressed by parents in questionnaires are generally supportive. The previous inspection report identified the school's links with parents as being a strength of the school and this has been maintained. Overall, parents are happy with the provision the school makes for their children.
40. A parents' forum, open to all parents, is available to bring concerns to the attention of the headteacher. A working party discusses the concerns along with reviewing policies that the school wishes to introduce or improve. Recently parents have been involved in the reviewing of the homework policy and consulted on the school uniform. Informal consultation has taken place on best value principles when planning the new information technology suite, but this requirement for governors and schools is still in its initial stages.
41. As a whole, the information provided to parents is good. The quantity and quality of newsletters is good and provides a useful overview on the school's activities. Curriculum information provided termly for each class assists the parents in understanding what their children will be studying.
42. There are good induction procedures for new pupils. Early in the first term, parents of reception children are invited into school on three occasions to look at the reading schemes, numeracy and activities. Baseline assessment and the targets for improvement are discussed. The special educational needs co-ordinator is available to discuss the specific requirements of pupils. An open evening is held in the autumn term for parents to meet with staff. Parents are also invited in to school for two other evenings each year to discuss their children's progress. The format of the annual progress reports to parents is good. Pupils' achievements are celebrated and, in some classes, weaknesses in subjects are included, but this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Provision is made for the inclusion of targets for improvement but the targets are not always specific to the pupil or related to the weaknesses identified.
43. The prospectus is a valuable document with information that is relevant and useful to new parents. Information is provided for the induction of pupils to school in reception. The prospectus meets with the statutory requirements. The governors' annual report to

parents contains useful information about the work of the school and the work of the governors, but minor statutory requirements have been omitted.

44. The school recognises the important contribution parents can make in helping with their children's learning. The school has been successful in encouraging a group of parents to participate in a course that provided opportunities for parents, teachers and children to work together. The course has helped to raise the confidence of parents helping in school and to enable the school to focus the help constructively in the school. Grandparents are assured of a welcome in working with the children, which ensures good relationships are fostered. An active Friends of the School Association holds social events and raises funds for the school. The school's homework policy was devised in conjunction with parents. Homework diaries are consistently used throughout the school and are well maintained by staff and parents.
45. The home/school agreement document was well developed with the help of the parents' working group. Clear expectations of the school and parents are included. Approximately two-thirds of parents signed and returned the agreement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved and are consulted on the reviews of the individual education plans for their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher provides good leadership and provides clear educational direction for the school. He has made a major contribution to improving the quality of education provided by the school since the last inspection. The school's aims and values and its commitment to equal opportunity are reflected in its work. The school's policies and organisation have been extensively reviewed and improved and the school is in a strong position to maintain and continue its clearly defined programme of developments. The headteacher has succeeded in managing staff changes well and works closely with a staff team that is now committed to improving standards and promoting pupils' high attainment. Many of the new initiatives are relatively recent and the school has plans to review their implementation in order to ensure that they are effective.
47. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well and has strengthened its monitoring role since the last inspection. It is well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses and takes an active part in shaping its future direction. Through formal and informal contact with staff, parents and pupils and through the work of the committees, governors monitor the work of the school very effectively. They are closely involved in financial planning and have supported the headteacher in managing spending effectively. They have established good systems for ensuring the school obtains best value in its spending. Governors have improved their monitoring of the curriculum and those with special responsibility for literacy and numeracy are closely involved and well informed. The monitoring of support for pupils with special educational needs has been effectively maintained since the last inspection.
48. There has been improvement since the last report with regard to how the staff with responsibilities monitor and offer support in their areas of responsibility. New staff appointments have necessitated changes in the way responsibilities have been allocated but co-ordination roles have been well distributed. The headteacher and co-ordinators of the core subjects maintain a careful overview of planning and have placed an appropriate priority on literacy, numeracy and science. The school is aware that developments remain to be completed in other subjects and has plans to complete these in the medium term. The headteacher and senior staff have carried out a programme of lesson observations, which has had a positive impact in raising skills. Support for newly qualified teachers is sound, but the school needs to provide time and resources to develop this.

These initiatives have made a considerable improvement to the quality of teaching and planning as indicated at the last inspection.

49. There have been significant improvements in the school development plan since the last inspection and objectives are directly linked to raising pupils' attainment or improving the quality of education. The preparation of the plan and its structure are good. There is open discussion and governors and teaching staff have an input into its content. Clear links are made between objectives and costings and success criteria are defined in measurable terms which enable management and teachers to see improvements.
50. The school is well staffed with a balance of experienced and more recently qualified teachers, full-time and part-time staff. There is a wide range of subject knowledge amongst the staff with particularly valuable expertise in information and communication technology. Systems for implementing performance management are well developed and staff appraisal interviews are well organised. The school has made important improvements in identifying and providing training for the professional development both of teaching and non-teaching staff. Classroom assistants are well deployed and properly involved in lesson planning and evaluation.
51. The school makes good use of its accommodation and the quality of facilities is good. The school is maintained to a high standard and provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment. The school has a clearly defined programme for exploiting its new computer suite, but the library is under used for learning especially as a resource for developing the independent learning activities of higher-attaining pupils. While outdoor facilities are satisfactory, the school has not fully developed its potential as a learning resource by providing natural areas for the study of animal and insect habitats. An outdoor play area for children under five has been successfully created since the last inspection and the school has appropriate plans to extend facilities further. Resources are at least satisfactory in all subjects except geography where there is a lack of material for teaching about other countries of the world.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to improve the standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

raise pupils' attainment in speaking and writing at Key Stage 2 by:

- establishing regular opportunities for pupils to develop speaking skills across the curriculum;
- extending pupils' command of vocabulary in spoken and written English by identifying terms to be understood and employed in all subjects;
- improving teachers' planning of structured writing activities;
- improving the detailed focus on assessing pupils' skills and using this in planning;
(paragraphs 2, 5, 7, 60, 69- 71, 103 and 106)

provide consistent challenges for more-able pupils at Key Stage 2 by:

- giving pupils more opportunities for independent learning activities such as personal research;
- helping them to develop the key skills of problem solving and improving their own learning and performance.

(paragraphs 5, 7-10, 22, 77 and 82)

The school should also plan ways of raising pupils' attainment in geography and history at Key Stage 2.

(paragraphs 12, 23 and 90-96)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

38

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	24	34	37	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	142
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	7
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	21
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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

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

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	96 (89)	96 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	18	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	96 (100)	96 (95)
	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			

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	9	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	60 (86)	80 (86)	93 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	8	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	54 (78)	80 (76)	80 (84)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR- Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 -2000
	£
Total income	280,522
Total expenditure	286,871
Expenditure per pupil	1,863
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,123
Balance carried forward to next year	5,774

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 41.5%

Number of questionnaires sent out	142
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	34	3	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	32	12	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	56	5	5	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	50	14	2	0
The teaching is good.	54	44	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	42	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	24	14	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	32	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	25	10	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	61	24	7	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	39	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	41	12	2	3

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

53. Children start the reception class with a broadly average level of skills, although there is a wide variation from year to year in the small groups. This is confirmed by the initial assessments conducted with the children shortly after entry. Many children have pre-school experience before attending full-time education and a good number of these have attended the private nursery which is catered for within the school. By the end of the Foundation Stage children progress well and are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all the required areas.
54. The reception class is made up of mainly reception age children plus a few Year 1 children. The quality of teaching is good. Assessment procedures and the recording of pupil's progress are good. The composition of the class, however, affects the teacher's planning. The teacher begins with the appropriate schemes of work for the National Curriculum subjects for the Year 1 pupils. Activities, which are appropriate and suitable for the reception children, are then abstracted from the Year 1 topics and themes and sensitively planned in accordance with the Foundation Stage. However, because planning does not begin firstly with the Early Learning Goals, leading later into the National Curriculum subjects, activities for the reception children are sometimes restricted. There is a new policy based upon the Foundation key stage but the school does not yet have its own scheme of work.
55. Since the previous inspection, outdoor provision has improved. A safe area has been created and resources increased. The development of outdoor provision is on-going to provide larger climbing equipment and safe flooring. Resources for the Foundation Stage are good overall and good provision is made for varied and interesting activities.
56. A strength of the early years provision is the extended welcome programme, which takes place in the months leading up to the first term in the reception class. The events that take place help the children to settle very well and ensure parents are fully informed.

Personal, social and emotional skills

57. All children are on course to achieve at least the Early Learning Goals and in many instances exceed these goals. This reflects the good quality of teaching. The children are always well behaved, listening to staffs' requests and following instructions. They respond well to the teacher's pleasant, calm, firm manner. They relate to each other well. The children are learning to work independently, display good levels of involvement in the activities they are directed to and exhibit good levels of concentration. Learning support assistants are well deployed and all relationships are good. Children are willing to explore in the role-play area, which is well organised and stimulating. The need to plan initially from Key Stage 1 schemes of work for the Year 1 pupils, however, places some restriction on the level and number of activities from which the reception children are able to choose and explore. This hinders their progress in organising their thinking to select and make decisions.

Communication, language and literacy

58. By the time children are five years old most achieve the Early Learning Goals in language and literacy. All adults value the children's efforts at communicating, either in whole-class activities, group activities or individually. There are, however, some missed opportunities

to encourage and improve children's breadth of vocabulary and improve their ability to express themselves. This is because staff tend to dominate the conversation in direct teaching, either in whole-class or large group activities. They do not give children sufficient opportunities to answer questions or offer contributions. The teacher intervened well when a small group of children were baking and attempted to develop the children's ability to describe the texture of the pastry using words such as 'soft' and 'crumbly'. This good level of interaction does not always occur to capitalise on children's conversations and speech, in activities such as role-play or work in the sand.

59. Children know how books work. They can already recognise some of the letters of the alphabet and all children are learning the importance of matching the correct sound to the shape. They are building up a list of frequently read words which they recognise immediately. Average-attaining children recognise simple punctuation such as full stops and know their purpose. They recognise commas but do not always know what they are for. Above average achieving children read fluently and confidently but require a wider range of strategies to work out unknown words to keep pace with their good progress. Children's letter formation and pencil control, however, is not as mature as their approach to reading.
60. The quality of teaching in communication, language and literacy is mainly good and the classroom provides a rich environment to increase children's learning. However, the teaching of reading and writing to Foundation Stage children is inevitably restricted on occasions by meeting the needs of Key Stage 1 pupils. In some lessons, the whole class is taught the letters of the alphabet well, in a direct teaching session at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher uses visual resources very well. A writing table is provided in the reception classroom with a variety of writing tools and paper, with the intention that children should explore writing forms. Children use materials in the role-play area to write their names but staff do not help them to develop sufficiently in this area.

Mathematical development

61. This area of learning is particularly well taught and by the end of the reception year most children are likely to have exceeded the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. The Year 1 and reception children are separated into two groups, which makes teaching more effective for the younger children. Staff use visual resources very well. Children dress up as currant buns when singing the counting rhyme, which gains and keeps their attention and interest. The use of very good resources for the 'teddy bears' picnic' helps children to understand the concepts of shopping and pricing. Children can recognise a range of coinage and can order coins. They can count and order numbers to 5 and to 10 and their orientation of figures is correct. They recognise simple shapes. Good opportunities such as baking are used to extend children's understanding of measures. The children are introduced to scales and hear about grammes and kilogrammes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. The children build on the general knowledge they have already acquired before coming to school and are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are learning to use tools and equipment carefully, for example tools for glueing. They learn to use simple tools and techniques to construct models and build with construction equipment. Planning of activities for this area of learning is closely linked to the teaching of the Year 1 pupils. The school gives the children good opportunities to develop a sense of time and an awareness of local features.

Physical development

63. The improvement in provision for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage is having a good impact on their development. Children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. This provision is highlighted in the school improvement plan for further improvement regarding large equipment and safe flooring. The children exhibit increasing control of their bodies and movements. They jump in different directions, skip and walk safely in physical education lessons. Children showed a good awareness of others and of space in an activity in the school hall when they dramatised a story. Control of small tools in the classroom is developing satisfactorily, although pencil control and children's grips are immature.

Creative development

64. The children are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they are five. The children explore and join in role-play with enthusiasm. They collaborate well and sustain activities for good amounts of time. The lack of intervention by staff means children's imagination is not extended. Children explore shape, colour and line in painting and collage work. The children enjoy music lessons and learn about percussion instruments. Listening skills are improved in music by the teacher's good techniques in using teddy bears to train the children to listen. Children develop their senses and become aware of the links between music and art. They listen to music related to the night and the sky and then make collage pictures to represent their responses and interpretations of the music. They sing in tune and are building up a small repertoire of songs.

ENGLISH

65. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at Key Stage 1 and is in line with expectations at Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, pupils attained results in tests and assessments that were well above the national average in reading and above average in writing. In comparison with the levels achieved in similar schools, pupils achieved above average levels in reading and average levels in writing. Results indicate a steady improvement over the last four years, although with a small cohort there are inevitably variations year on year. Overall, since 1997 pupils have achieved above average results in reading and average results in writing. Current pupils are achieving levels in both reading and writing that are above national expectations.
66. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, pupils attained results in tests and assessments that were well below the national average overall. Pupils' attainment in reading tests was above the national average but their attainment in writing was well below. The overall results were in the bottom five per cent when compared to schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The group of 15 pupils was very small and contained a significant number of pupils who were on the school's special educational needs register. Results over the period 1996 -1999 indicate that pupils' attainment exceeded the national average and was in line with the levels of attainment in similar schools. Current pupils are achieving levels in line with national expectations both in their reading and writing.
67. Children enter school with language skills that are broadly average and achieve the levels expected of them at the end of the Foundation Stage. In the reception/Year 1 class they quickly learn to listen to the adults in school and most are good at listening to each other. Their speaking skills are sound but opportunities to develop these are not always structured carefully enough. In some activities, adults dominate the conversation and do not attempt to draw out pupils' ideas and help them with expressions. In a physical education lesson, pupils demonstrated their ideas for dance movements but were not asked to evaluate which were the best and why.

68. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1. Current pupils in Year 2 listen very well to both teachers and each other and their skills in speaking are above expectations. They benefit from well-focused discussion sessions in which adults encourage pupils' comments and observations. In a history lesson looking at toys of different dates, pupils were asked to describe their favourites. The teacher used very good questioning to elicit explanations from pupils of all abilities. He created an interested and friendly atmosphere in which pupils on the special educational needs register felt confident enough to talk about toys with which they were familiar. By asking pupils general questions such as "Can you see something special about this?" and "Can you think why we should be extra careful with this?", he very effectively directed pupils' attention and prompted them to produce some good ideas.
69. The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 2. Pupils continue to listen well and their speaking skills are sound. However, teachers do not yet plan speaking activities with a sufficiently structured approach. The school has identified this as an area for development and set target dates for achieving this. Currently, teachers ask questions for information and provide discussion activities in group work. In some classes, pupils are asked to present their work and answer questions from other pupils. However, teachers do not all timetable discussion or circle time in which pupils can explore their feelings. Pupils read plays but opportunities for drama and role-play are limited. In physical education and music lessons, pupils are not helped to develop their vocabulary by evaluating performances and suggesting ways of improving them. Teachers do not give pupils sufficient instruction on how to improve their spoken delivery or place enough emphasis on increasing their vocabulary and ways of expressing themselves to different audiences.
70. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in reading that are above expectations and they achieve good results in comprehension tests. Throughout the school there is a well-maintained home-school reading programme and pupils change their books regularly. Comments in pupils' diaries indicate that parents support the programme well and pupils take a lively interest in fiction. Teachers encourage a positive attitude to reading and make good use of the wide range of big books to develop pupils' enthusiasm. Younger pupils know the letters of the alphabet and most know how to sound out and build up words. They correct misreadings with reasonable confidence and most use pictures, context and meaning to help them. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills well and are introduced to a wide range of fiction. Teachers monitor the progress of pupils' skills effectively through shared reading activities and maintain good records of the material covered. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in individual and group sessions, which focus on their identified needs. Lower attainers receive valuable assistance in sessions with trained assistants who offer additional literacy support. Both these groups of pupils make good progress. However, pupils do not have a wide experience of non-fiction and using the library for research. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were more familiar with using contents and indexes to locate information than pupils in Year 6. Older pupils were not confident about finding their way around the library. Although higher-attaining pupils do not have a structured programme to develop their skills in independent learning activities, the proportion achieving Level 5 in Key Stage 2 tests is above average.
71. Current pupils achieve standards in writing that are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, many pupils write in recognisable sentences and are good at using simple punctuation like capital letters and full stops. Handwriting is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and pupils control the size and shape of letters well. At Key Stage 2, however, there is considerable variation. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards by Year 6, but some pupils in Year 4 are

still at an early stage of joining letters and have not developed sufficient confidence in cursive writing. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' spelling skills and regularly set words for them to learn. These are well adapted to meet the different needs of pupils and are linked to words encountered in the texts studied. In a very good lesson on making jellies, pupils in Year 2 were all encouraged to think about the importance of spelling and putting instructions in a proper order. In the initial session, individual pupils wrote on the board while the rest of the class helped to check spelling accuracy. All pupils achieved good results and higher-attaining pupils responded well to the challenge of writing their own instructions with little support. The teacher extended pupils' vocabulary well by using precise terminology and ensuring pupils understood it.

72. The school implements the literacy strategy effectively but has identified the need to extend pupils' writing skills. All classes now have a weekly timetabled session, which enables pupils to practise writing in a variety of different styles. This is having a positive effect on raising standards. In Years 3 and 4 pupils studied an extract from *Charlotte's Web* and jointly discussed the structure in order to develop their own versions of it. Many of them, especially higher-attaining pupils, produced imaginative accounts in which they incorporated a range of vocabulary. Pupils were particularly good at choosing strong adjectives that helped to bring the scene alive. In Year 6, pupils practise writing newspaper articles and develop an awareness of appropriate language. They know how to plan articles and stories but do not have a secure understanding of where to make paragraph breaks. Pupils write well for a variety of purposes, such as describing a theatre visit to see Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and retelling events from the viewpoint of different characters. Their skills in spelling, handwriting and punctuation are sound but their range of vocabulary is under-developed. They have good opportunities to write in science but in history and geography their experience is limited. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils understand and develop the confidence to use new words and technical terms. As a result, pupils cannot always clearly explain their ideas and thinking, which particularly restricts the progress of higher attainers.
73. The quality and use of assessment is generally good and has been the subject of whole school discussion. Teachers have agreed targets for improving writing for both classes and individuals and these are helping to focus pupils' attention on specific elements such as punctuation and grammar. Although teachers keep their marking up to date and make encouraging comments, they do not always refer to the agreed targets in order to indicate how pupils are progressing towards them. Teachers also keep a close check on pupils' reading development, but the monitoring of speaking and listening skills is underdeveloped.
74. Teachers are generally good at sharing the lesson objectives with pupils so that they are aware of what is expected of them. Support staff are well deployed in helping both lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs and have a significant impact on their learning. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of literature including poetry and drama. Information technology is well used in terms of word processing and reading for information. Teachers generally set useful homework tasks and in Year 6, higher attainers are provided with interesting challenges in the form of puzzles and quizzes.

MATHEMATICS

75. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and it is above expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. These levels are similar to the results in the national tests in 2000. In 1999, pupils reached levels above the national average at Key Stage 2 as well as Key Stage 1. Pupils' achievements are similar to those observed during the last inspection at Key Stage 2, but at Key Stage 1 there has been considerable improvement, with pupils attaining above average results over the last two years. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and better teaching strategies has had a significant impact on standards at Key Stage 1.
76. Teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and make good use of its different elements. Brief, well-conducted periods of mental arithmetic help pupils to think quickly and respond accurately under pressure. Whole-class sessions are conducted at a brisk pace, gradually building towards more difficult work. Teachers make very good use of visual aids to assist with learning, which helps pupils to recognise number patterns more quickly. In Year 2, nearly all pupils can count and write numbers up to 20. They recognise that units do not change when counting on in tens and higher attainers are confident in fluently adding and subtracting tens up to and beyond 100. Lower attainers can count on in tens, but prefer to add single units to achieve the same result. Pupils are proficient in their use of a hundred 'square' and recognise patterns of odd and even numbers. Most pupils are able to divide numbers in half. Pupils know about standard measurements, such as metres and centimetres, and most measure with a good level of accuracy. They compile simple graphs and explain what is meant by the information in graphs or tables. Teachers have high expectations and give pupils a good idea of the progress they are making, indicating what they will need to do next.
77. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2, but does not always stimulate the thinking of higher-attaining pupils. Teachers' planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and provides a rigorous structure to help pupils master the various stages of calculations. This is often suitable for the less able, but does not encourage higher attainers to make use of appropriate shortcuts. Pupils' number work tends to be stronger than other aspects of the subject. The majority of pupils can round up and down to the nearest 100. They have a good understanding of fractions and most pupils can convert improper fractions into whole numbers and fractions. Pupils describe the main features of common geometric shapes and most recognise lines of symmetry. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on using mathematical terminology, although many pupils continue to struggle with the wording of questions. Homework is set regularly and helps to provide a link between lessons.
78. Teachers manage classes well at both key stages and, at Key Stage 1, they create a very good working atmosphere incorporating a sense of fun into learning. Pupils listen carefully during whole class demonstrations of techniques. They answer questions promptly and their behaviour is good in all lessons. Pupils' achievements are always recognised, regardless of the level at which they are working, which prompts extra effort throughout lessons. Higher attainers are encouraged to help the less able by offering suggestions on how calculations can be made. This develops a good level of co-operation in the class with all pupils involved, including those with special educational needs. Classroom assistants are well deployed and show considerable skill in supporting the less able.

SCIENCE

79. Current pupils reach levels that are above national expectations at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This reflects the improving results in national tests in 1999 and 2000. It is a significant improvement on the standards observed at the last inspection.
80. Pupils benefit from very good teaching at Key Stage 1 and progress well. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and a thorough understanding of the way in which pupils learn basic scientific concepts. They present topics with a high degree of enthusiasm and encourage pupils to develop their curiosity by asking questions. Teachers employ appropriate terminology in their explanations and encourage pupils to use them in their observations. Most Year 2 pupils are able to make suggestions about how they could find things out during an experiment. They suggest areas of the classroom where they might test the speed at which ice melts. The majority can make sensible predictions about what might happen during an experiment, basing their ideas on previous learning and their general knowledge about materials and their properties. Higher attainers know that the equipment used, the quantities of materials and methods of investigation have to be the same to ensure a fair test. Pupils' scientific drawings are accurate, with clear labelling, although their accounts of the stages of their investigations tend to be brief. Overall, pupils' ability to plan and analyse their own experiments is much better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils can sort common items into different types of materials, separating metals, plastics, wood and textiles. They can make simple observations about how some materials are better for particular purposes. All pupils know that animals need a healthy diet and can give examples of healthy meals, although a few pupils remain convinced that chocolate is always healthy! Pupils know that objects can be moved by different sources of power, such as electricity and wind, and have built up a knowledge of how many of their favourite toys work.
81. Teachers manage their classes very well at Key Stage 1. They remind pupils of the need for a sensible approach and other adults, classroom assistants and parent helpers are well deployed to supervise and ensure safe conduct. Very good questioning techniques encourage pupils to make predictions and devise their own methods for testing. There is a suitable emphasis on producing written records of experiments and pupils know the importance of recording accurate results. There are regular checks on pupils' progress and staff are quick to recognise if any pupil is reluctant to contribute to group work or is not sure of what to do.
82. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a clear idea of what comprises a fair test. They compare their initial predictions with actual results and make suggestions why their predictions might have been proved wrong. They recognise that mistakes in testing affect the reliability of results. Encouraged by the co-ordinator, teachers place an appropriate emphasis on investigative work. This has had a positive impact on raising standards and increasing pupils' interest in the subject. However, some experiments are relatively simple and do not provide sufficiently demanding work for the higher attainers. Teachers prepare and structure their lessons well. They have a good knowledge of the subject and explain the purpose of lessons to pupils very effectively. On occasions, pupils' potential for more independent investigation is not realised because of teachers' concern for maintaining the planned structure of a lesson. Teachers' questions ensure that basic information is well understood, but do not draw out more sophisticated ideas. In Year 6, pupils know about micro-organisms and can give examples of the effects they have in producing beer and yoghurt. They know the conditions in which yeast can become more active. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, know the difference between soluble and insoluble materials. Most can make suggestions about how materials can be separated. Higher attainers know about a variety of possible methods, while the less able can describe filtering and sieving. Pupils can draw diagrams showing different types of forces and know that forces may be operating in different directions, creating a balance. They know that gravity is one of the most constant forces.

83. All pupils can draw accurate scientific diagrams and write about the stages of an experiment. Lower attainers' descriptions of their preparation and evaluation of results can be rather superficial, but all pupils are making good progress in incorporating correct scientific terminology in their writing. All work is marked regularly and homework is used effectively to ensure work is completed.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Only two lessons took place and were observed during the inspection. The quality of their completed work indicates that progress is satisfactory throughout the school and that attainment is in line with that expected of pupils in both key stages. There is a suitable range of activities to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. They have a sound understanding of the work of artists. At Key Stage 1 pupils contrast the way Matisse uses colour and shape. At Key Stage 2 pupils look at the work of famous artists such as Lowry and Kandinsky. They have produced carefully executed and very effective work in their style focusing on brush techniques and texture. Pupils at both key stages draw portraits and pupils at Key Stage 2 use pencil very competently in still life sketches. They draw portraits in the style of Eileen Cooper, learning how to use colour, light and bold lines. Displays of art work show that pupils' skills develop steadily over time. There is evidence of sound progress in control through the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils use paper collage in a simple way to illustrate the story of *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. In Year 6, pupils combine different media to design pictures that illustrate movement. They use paper collage on colour washes to show the movement of skiers and cars and the effect of the finished pictures is good.
85. The work observed shows that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, but the amount of work available and on display is not extensive. The subject is taught in half-termly blocks in most classes therefore art has only begun recently this academic year. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher's subject knowledge was very good and the lesson was well structured. She conscientiously used the correct terminology so that pupils were experiencing and absorbing it although they themselves did not use it in discussing the work. The pupils put a great deal of effort into their work in the lesson, which contributed to their good progress. They obviously enjoyed the lesson. Work observed around school supports the conclusion that pupils take a pride in their art work and enjoy the subject. The quality of teachers' displays shows pupils that their work is valued and reinforces the interest in art and design. Art is linked to other subjects such as history. Pupils researched the history of cloth decorating when decorating cloth themselves.
86. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the subject very well. The scheme of work needs updating in the light of Curriculum 2000 and in-service training is planned to give teachers more confidence. The school makes good use of visits to local art galleries to stimulate interest and increase pupils' knowledge and understanding.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Pupils reach levels above expectations at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Very good progress has been made in developing the subject since the last inspection, when attainment was below expectations. Only one lesson took place and was observed during the inspection so no judgement can be made about teaching. However, teachers' planning for pupils' project work is thorough and demonstrates a good knowledge of the subject. The range of resources has been improved and provides good support to the design and making tasks described in the curriculum 'map'. The school's Technology Week is well used to enhance pupils' skills and has produced good quality work. Pupils' design folders are well organised and pay attention to all the stages of design and

making. They are checked regularly by the co-ordinator to ensure a progression in the development of skills.

88. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils prepare design drawings with accurate measurements. Drawings show the main structural features pupils are going to make. Most pupils discuss the tools they are likely to need and know the care that is needed in using tools. Pupils are able to make suggestions of combinations of ingredients for foods such as pizzas and salads. They know the importance of attractively presented food and their designs show a good eye for colour combinations. Pupils use cutting tools accurately. They show a good knowledge of how to assemble and join materials and explain how a cargo net might be made. Most pupils explain how a hinge works and know that cross-woven fabrics provide greater strength and resilience.
89. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils complete clearly labelled sketches. They make good choices of materials for construction, knowing that some strong materials can be difficult to shape. The majority of pupils adjust their designs to take account of initial failures in making. They suggest improvements which might be made if they had access to a greater range of materials. Pupils construct strong containers, such as moneyboxes. Most can operate a control box and explain their degree of control. They make small models of vehicles with moving axles and wheels.

GEOGRAPHY

90. Pupils reach levels that are in line with expectations at Key Stage 1 but are below expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection and there has been little improvement since that time. The amount of time allocated to the subject is appropriate, but there is insufficient focus in teachers' planning to ensure pupils build on previously acquired skills. This restricts the amount of progress pupils are able to make, especially at Key Stage 2.
91. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils describe the directions taken in simple journeys, such as travelling to school. Nearly all pupils read information from simplified maps of the locality. Higher attainers identify the location of their homes. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the main features of the water cycle. They know that some areas are drier than others. Higher attainers name a few local rivers. Most pupils describe how settlements have occurred and know the features of urban areas. However, they have little understanding of geographical patterns. Their knowledge of their own locality is satisfactory, but they have very limited awareness of non-European regions.
92. Only one lesson could be observed during the period of inspection so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching.. Teachers' knowledge of the local area is good and a basic understanding of the locality, its people and surroundings is usually well explained. Increasing use of correct terminology is helping pupils to describe geographical features more accurately. Whole-class introductions are well managed, with good questioning which helps to draw out the pupils' level of understanding. However, opportunities to explore a more sophisticated level of awareness are sometimes missed. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good. They listen carefully to information provided by teachers and try hard to answer questions. Written work, although brief, is usually neatly presented. The school has sufficient resources to support learning about the local area. Occasional school trips, local maps and use of locality trails help to develop pupils' understanding. There are few resources to support learning about other areas of the world, which makes it difficult for teachers to meet this aspect of curriculum requirements.

HISTORY

93. Pupils reach levels that are in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements are below expectations. Standards are similar to those observed at the time of the last inspection.
94. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils are aware of aspects of past lives which are different to their own. They know that not all children went to school and that opportunities for play were very different. Most pupils can give examples of toys children played with in Victorian Times. They know that toys were often made of potentially hazardous materials. Higher attainers know that children possessed only a few toys. Most pupils know that museums contain 'old things' and that they can find out historical information from books, museums, parents and grandparents.
95. Many pupils are able to sustain their progress at Key Stage 1 into the early stages of Key Stage 2. The majority are able to draw timelines recognising major periods in British history by the end of Year 3. They know some of the reasons why the Vikings left their homeland and launched invasions of other areas of Europe. Pupils' progress is slower as they move through Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, they are able to compile more detailed timelines and have acquired a knowledge of life in the Second World War and the main personalities and events of the Victorian Age. However, they have yet to acquire a more sophisticated understanding of the subject, which would enable them to select key ideas from historical sources, such as census information.
96. In the one lesson that could be observed, pupils demonstrated good attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to instructions and carry out tasks conscientiously. Pupils enjoy whole-class discussions. Especially at Key Stage 1, they are curious about historical artefacts and are keen to ask questions about them. Behaviour is good, with pupils showing patience in waiting their turn and listening to others. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject and describe the main events of historical periods well. They do not place sufficient emphasis on developing pupils' use of a variety of sources in order to conduct independent research. As a result, pupils tend to be over-dependent on teachers providing information rather than developing their own lines of enquiry. The lack of challenge for higher attainers was identified at the time of the last inspection and is still evident at Key Stage 2, where pupils are often required to write only simple accounts of historical periods, rather than analysing the causes of events and their consequences. The management of pupils is good. Resources are prepared in advance and are made readily accessible to pupils. All pupils, whatever their level of ability, are included in the activities, and there were good examples of questions being directed at those pupils whose level of understanding was causing concern. Written work is marked promptly, although suggestions for improvement tended to focus on aspects of literacy rather than historical content.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment has improved significantly since the last inspection and with the recent installation of the new computer suite, the school has the resources to raise standards further.
98. By the age of seven, pupils have good keyboard and mouse skills. They confidently log-on to the newly installed network and know how to select and use programs. They follow detailed instructions to make good use of graphics software, matching shapes and techniques successfully. Pupils print their work independently and save it with guidance. Pupils have a good understanding of how to share and present information. They use computers for word-processing and complete articles to a high standard. In mathematics, pupils presented data they had gathered in a variety of tables and graphs. In an English lesson, Year 2 pupils made good use of a spelling programme to extend their recognition

of 'ee' and 'ea' sounds. Enthusiastic teaching gives pupils clear guidance on what to do and pupils regularly extend their learning in both literacy and numeracy through working on the computer. Pupils took pleasure in designing textiles using a graphics program. They subsequently created these in design and technology.

99. By the age of 11, pupils have sound keyboard skills and use computers with confidence. They are competent at word-processing and print stories and articles for display. They know how to change the font, size and style of their presentations to achieve different effects. They use computers to aid their research in history and geography, but have not yet been able to access the Internet through deficiencies in the school system. They have a good command of graphics software, which they use creatively and to incorporate illustrations into articles. Year 6 pupils know how to enter and display data in graphs and they compare the effectiveness of different methods. They are learning how to use a spreadsheet, which is well linked to developing their numeracy skills.
100. Teachers effectively incorporate computer activities into a number of subject areas in class and ensure that pupils' skills progress appropriately. They have a good level of subject knowledge, but few are confident about using the newly installed suite as yet. The school benefits from the skills and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator who has a clear idea of how he wants the subject to develop. He is well supported by the headteacher and a part-time technician who make a very effective team for raising the skills of both pupils and staff. The co-ordinator has planned dates to introduce the suite to all staff and provide them with the nationally funded training in computer skills. Currently the headteacher provides a weekly session to develop the skills of older pupils who do not have access to computers at home. They make good progress and use computers confidently for word-processing and basic control technology where they give instructions to a robot to draw geometric shapes on screen. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are in place but have not yet been fully implemented. Teachers keep portfolios of pupils' work, but this practice is in its infancy and is not fully developed to help teachers monitor the progress of groups and individuals. Hardware resources are very good and the school has taken time to ensure that it has the best equipment it can afford. The school has made good progress in the development of the subject since the last inspection and is in a strong position to improve pupils' learning further.

MUSIC

101. Only two lessons took place during the inspection and were observed. It is not possible to judge pupils' overall attainment but the school provides a stimulating range of activities to develop their skills and understanding. The satisfactory standards noted at the last inspection have been maintained.
102. Teaching is planned effectively to develop pupils' experience across the curriculum and follows a well-balanced scheme of work. At Key Stage 2, all pupils learn to play the violin and nearly a third of all pupils have tuition in recorder, guitar or keyboard. Pupils perform well individually and in groups and the quality of singing is good both in assemblies and in the school choir. Pupils perform with other schools at local musical events and sing both in the church and to an older people's club, as well as to parents.
103. Teaching is characterised by carefully planned activities and a good use of resources such as taped music. However, teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on developing pupils' skills in appraising and discussing musical styles and their vocabulary is often limited. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and pupils benefit from using a range of percussion instruments to develop their understanding of rhythm and tempo. At Key Stage 2, pupils worked effectively in groups to create their own compositions. They showed a good level of concentration in performing these to the class. Pupils record their ideas well using a variety of symbols and many learn how to read music notation. Pupils

listen carefully to the wide range of recorded music that is played to them in class and assemblies. These include examples of classical, popular and music from other countries. Members of the school choir perform with confidence and respond well to the enthusiastic direction which they receive. They have a very good sense of pitch and phrase their singing well.

104. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, especially among those who take part in the school choir and instrumental lessons. They listen supportively to each other's contributions and are sensitive in working with others in group performances. In class, pupils give activities their full attention and are well motivated by the clear learning objectives set by teachers. The school has a good range of instruments and recorded music to stimulate pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Pupils reach appropriate standards in dance and games at the end of both key stages. It was not possible to observe swimming or gymnastics but the school meets statutory targets for swimming at Key Stage 2. The sound standards observed at the last inspection have been maintained.
106. At Key Stage 1 pupils attain satisfactory levels in dance. Teachers give clear guidance as to what they want pupils to do and are good at maintaining a stimulating pace in lessons. They manage their classes well and introduce new activities into lessons in a way which effectively extends pupils' learning. Pupils listen carefully to teachers' instructions and respond with interest to well-chosen taped material. They understand the need for safety, have an awareness of space and work well with one another. They have a good understanding of position and balance and are successful in expressing feelings and character through their movements. Pupils in Year 2 were good at capturing the different postures of shepherds and kings in miming to the Christmas story. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate their ideas, but do not encourage other pupils to evaluate these performances or obtain their suggestions on how they could be improved.
107. At Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills in games. Years 3 and 4 pupils demonstrated good football skills and worked purposefully to improve their ball control. Teaching was of a high quality and set new challenges for pupils, which helped them progress well during the session. The teacher gave clear and detailed instruction, encouraging pupils to think about how to move their feet and improve their skills. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were less successful in developing rugby skills. They understood the principles of passing the ball, but with limited space in the hall they had insufficient room to practice effectively. Teaching explained the elements to be developed but did not focus pupils' attention on details nor set them clear targets for improvement.
108. Pupils are keen to participate in all activities both in class and in out-of-school clubs, such as football and skittleball. They willingly demonstrate skills to each other, but they do not have regular opportunities to discuss and identify what makes a performance effective. They have a sound understanding of how exercise affects the body and why it is good for their health, which helps to promote positive attitudes. Pupils take part in outdoor and adventurous activities in a voluntary residential camp, but these opportunities are not available to all.