

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lancaster

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119620

Headteacher: Mr P Doherty

Reporting inspector: Dr J N Thorp
6327

Dates of inspection: 6 - 9 November 2000

Inspection number: 225353

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Aldrens Lane

Lancaster

Postcode:

LA1 2DU

Telephone number: 01524 65576

Fax number: 01524 60588

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J D Ashall

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr J N Thorp (6327)	Registered inspector	English; information and communication technology; art; music	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs J Madden (13450)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs B Walker (1530)	Team inspector	The foundation stage; mathematics; history; geography; special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr R Hardaker (16971)	Team inspector	Science; design and technology; physical education; equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is fairly centrally located in Lancaster, serving the Skerton area to the north side of the town. It is average in size, with 232 pupils aged three to eleven on roll, organised into a nursery and seven classes. The school admits 30 children each year; in addition there are places for 52 children attending part-time in the nursery. Children of other faiths attend the school, although no more than 20 per cent of each intake will be children from non-Catholic families. The great majority of the school's pupils are white and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Around 36 per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is above average. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are below and often well below average. Around 4.5 per cent of pupils have statements of special educational and 30 per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is well above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's School is an effective school; the quality of education it now provides for its pupils is good. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, and in most subjects their attainment is generally average by the time they leave. The quality of teaching is good and the school is very well led and managed; it now provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good overall; teachers are highly committed to the school and community and work hard for their pupils
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and other key staff
- There is strong and effective teamwork amongst all the staff
- The governing body is actively involved in decision-making and makes an effective contribution to the management of the school
- Provision for special educational needs is good
- Pupils' attitudes to school are positive; most are keen to learn and respond well in lessons
- Pupils' learning is good, ensuring they make good progress, particularly in the juniors
- Provision for promoting pupils' personal development is very good
- Relationships among pupils, and among adults and pupils are very good

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science in the infants
- Standards in information and communication technology throughout the school
- Assessment of children's attainment and progress in the nursery
- Procedures for ensuring child protection
- The quality and range of books in the library

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

Under the effective direction of the new headteacher, this school has made significant improvement since the last inspection. **The serious weaknesses identified at that time have been successfully addressed.** The areas for improvement identified in this report however, will form the basis of the governors' action plan for development, which will be sent to all parents.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in March 1998. The improvement made since then has been good. The new headteacher has made significant improvements to the quality of leadership and management in the school, which is now very good. The introduction of a senior management team provides him with effective support; he is also well supported by the school's governors who contribute appropriately to decision-making. There is now a comprehensive school development plan, identifying priorities for further development and progress is regularly reviewed. There is a clear focus on raising the standards of pupils' attainment and this is already having a marked effect, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2. There are now good systems and procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment, which enables teachers to track their progress effectively. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is now a strength of the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. Senior managers now monitor the work of the school effectively enabling them to identify aspects for further development. The new headteacher has also been instrumental in securing additional resources for information and communication technology. Although the new computer suite provides the school with an excellent resource with which to improve pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, it is too new as yet to have had a marked impact on attainment.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The most recent test results indicate that standards of pupils' attainment when they leave the school are beginning to improve. There has been particular improvement in English and standards are now in line with the national average; when compared to those of pupils in similar schools they are well above average. In mathematics and science, standards remain below the national average. One important factor to take into account in analysing these results is the consistently high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each of the year groups. Despite the nature of the cohorts, over the past two years the school's performance targets were exceeded in English; in mathematics they were exceeded in 1999 but not met in 2000.

Inspectors found that standards of attainment among pupils who are currently in Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected in English, mathematics and science. In Key Stage 1, standards in these subjects are below average. Standards in information and communication technology are below average at the end of both key stages. In most other subjects standards are appropriate for pupils who enter the school with such poor levels of attainment, indicating that they make at least satisfactory and frequently good progress. Although children under five make satisfactory progress, their attainment is below the standard expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They settle quickly to work, are eager to participate and enjoy their learning. This contributes positively to the progress they make.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour throughout the school is good, both in classrooms and while pupils move around the buildings. Behaviour is monitored effectively, ensuring lessons are not disrupted. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils co-operate well in pairs and in small groups and most can work appropriately without constant supervision. Pupils' confidence grows as they move through the school.
Attendance	Attendance has improved recently, but it is still below the national average. Some parents fail to inform the school about reasons for their children's absence and some do not always ensure they arrive for the start of the school day. As a result their children are missing some parts of their education.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is now a real strength of the school. In around 75 per cent of lessons teaching was good or very good; there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is particularly strong in Key Stage 2, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of the teaching has a major impact on pupils' learning and the progress they make. Teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons throughout the school is consistently good; some lessons in literacy are of a high quality, especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers pay due attention to the needs of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers at the school work hard and pupils benefit from the considerable effort they put into their teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall the curriculum is good; it has appropriate breadth, balance, relevance and, in Key Stage 2, it is often challenging. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are firmly established. Teachers now use the computer suite to teach information and communication technology skills, but pupils have insufficient opportunities to use the computers in other subjects. Provision for extra-curricular opportunities is very good.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Effective provision is made for pupils with special educational needs which enables them to make sound progress. Targets set for these pupils are specific, clear and achievable. The leadership and co-ordination of special educational needs provision is exemplary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal, spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils receive considerable guidance and support to help them think things through, behave well and use their time effectively. Overall provision for cultural development is satisfactory, although pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about our contemporary multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	In most respects the school cares for its pupils very well. Teachers and other staff are understanding and caring, sensitive and approachable; they give pupils their full support and make their well-being a priority. However, procedures for assuring child protection are unsatisfactory. Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory in the nursery. Elsewhere in the school however, they are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher provides clear direction and purpose. The senior management team functions effectively; teamwork among all the staff is very good. There is a strong commitment to raising standards. This effective management has led to the significant improvements made in the school since the previous inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and play an increasingly active role in managing the school; they meet their statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's arrangements for tracking pupils' progress are impressive. Teachers make good use of data from the analysis of tests to set targets for improvement. The headteacher is clear about the strengths of the teaching in the school because he monitors it.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of available resources to support pupils' learning, including those with specific needs. Financial planning and the evaluation of spending are good; resources are used well to support development.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a friendly, open school, like a big family • Teachers are approachable and interested in all the children • School is exciting - children are challenged by the work and they make good progress • The school has been turned round • Setting is working well in the junior school • Pupils with special educational needs get more help and support • Teachers try to raise self-esteem of children • Christian and family values are promoted • Behavioural problems are well dealt with • School listens - all upsets are quickly sorted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new roof on the infant department building • The amount of homework set • The information provided about how well pupils are getting on • The range of extra-curricular activities

Inspectors agree with the many positive features identified by parents. The evidence in this report indicates the extent to which the school has been improved. Parents are right to be concerned about the state of the roof on the infant building. Inspectors found that homework was set appropriately for pupils of different ages and that the information provided for parents in reports and at open evenings was clear and comprehensive. The range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 When pupils leave St Joseph's School at the age of eleven, the standard of their attainment in English, mathematics and science is in line with the national average.

2 Children's attainment on entry to the school varies considerably; overall it is generally below average, although amongst a significant proportion of young children it is well below average. Few of the children entering the school have acquired sound basic skills and a significant proportion of them come to the school with poorly developed speaking skills. Where this is the case, it inhibits their ability to communicate well with both adults and with other children. Children's knowledge of numbers is at a similar level to their early literacy as they enter the school.

3 Although young children make progress in their learning through the nursery and reception, by the beginning of Year 1 their attainment is still below average. At this point some children are ready to start their work on the National Curriculum, but others still need to develop their early learning in preparation for this move. Their attainment falls below the national targets set for the age group. These young children quickly adapt to classroom routines however, and most get on well with each other. By the age of five, some children develop a good understanding of the story line and can link words to pictures and recognise some words; higher attaining children recognise and read some key words in print. Young children's listening skills develop well and they become more confident in speaking. They begin to recognise numbers to ten; some children can sequence numbers in the correct order to ten. More able children begin to acquire simple strategies for counting on, or adding on one. At this stage children learn to understand change in the context of their work on autumn through their discussions and observations. Children develop control over their own movement, enabling them to participate in a range of physical activities.

4 The results of statutory assessment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was well below the national average. The proportion attaining a higher level was also very low in comparison to the national average. Overall, pupils' performance in the reading test was well below the national average, and also below that achieved by pupils in similar schools. In the writing test, pupils' attainment was very low in comparison with the national average and well below that of pupils in similar schools. Results in mathematics were similar, with attainment well below that of all pupils nationally and those in similar schools. All these results are so low because there is a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

5 While there are some signs of improvement at this stage, standards attained by current Year 2 pupils remain well below average in both reading and writing. Pupils' ability to speak and listen effectively is also well below average. Some pupils can follow a discussion and a small number are beginning to express their ideas more confidently. Standards in reading are improving with pupils' attainment now generally higher than it is in writing. Pupils grow in confidence with their reading and this enables them to make progress in improving their accuracy. Some children enjoy talking about books; higher attaining pupils can discuss previously read stories. The majority of pupils have difficulty expressing themselves in writing. In mathematics, standards have improved slightly although the attainment of Year 2 pupils remains below average. Although their recall is slow they now know some number facts. This is the result of improvements to the curriculum, with the introduction of the national numeracy strategy. Despite this, some pupils are making slow progress towards becoming both literate and numerate because of the low level of

their prior attainment in these two important areas.

6 In science, teacher assessments in 2000 indicated that while more pupils reached the standard expected in this subject than last year, this was still below the national average. Overall, the performance of seven-year-olds in science was below that of pupils in similar schools. The standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 remain below the level expected, although the achievement of a small number of the higher attaining pupils is better.

7 Since the previous inspection, the attainment of seven-year-olds in the reading, writing and mathematics tests has fluctuated, but throughout the period it has been well below the national average. The new headteacher and assessment co-ordinator have now introduced careful tracking procedures to analyse the difficulties pupils are having and the school is working hard to overcome them.

8 The results of statutory assessment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 indicate that an average proportion of eleven-year-olds attained the expected levels. Results were well above average in comparison with similar schools, indicating that pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 in this subject. Standards of pupils' speaking remain below average, particularly through the early years of this key stage. In mathematics however, a well below average proportion of pupils attained the expected levels and this was below average in relation to pupils in similar schools. In science, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels was below the national average, but in line with that of pupils in similar schools. The inspection found that attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is around the national average in English, mathematics and science. This is the result of the improved quality of teaching this cohort of pupils has received over the past two years.

9 Over the three years 1998 - 2000 standards in English have improved year on year. In science, standards have improved since last year, but in mathematics they have remained consistently below average. Standards among pupils currently in Year 6 are better. There remains a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school however, and this needs to be taken into account when comparing standards of attainment with those of other schools.

10 By the age of eleven pupils' achievement in literacy is satisfactory and this contributes to the progress they make in some other subjects. For example, pupils use their literacy skills appropriately when researching information in history or geography and they are well used in drama. The satisfactory standard of their numeracy is apparent in pupils' use of graphs and tables, and in their ability to measure in design and technology for example.

11 Pupils make good progress in science through Key Stage 2. Overall, standards are broadly in line with the national average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of science are satisfactory, while an appropriate emphasis on experimental and investigative science enables pupils to develop their skills of investigation appropriately.

12 Standards in information and communication technology are below average by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This is the result of the lack of appropriate resources which has only very recently improved. Until now there has been insufficient direct teaching of computer skills and pupils have had insufficient opportunities to work with the computers in all subjects. Standards are too low; pupils' achievements are below their capabilities and their progress throughout the school has been poor.

13 In both key stages, standards in art, geography and physical education are in line with those expected. In music, standards in singing are in line with those expected at the end of Key

Stage 2 and in history they are above average in both key stages. In music in Key Stage 1 and design and technology in both key stages there was insufficient evidence to judge standards of attainment.

14 The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is variable, but overall satisfactory. Those pupils with specific learning difficulties make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. Where progress is made, it is due to the effective support provided by teachers and learning support assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15 The attitudes of pupils to the school are good, as they were during the last inspection. Pupils settle quickly to the day's work after the purposeful and efficient registration sessions. From the reception class onwards, they ask and answer questions willingly and are clearly involved in their work. Good teaching, allied to clearly articulated expectations for behaviour and achievement, provides secure guidelines within which pupils enjoy learning. Pupils in the reception class hung on the teacher's every word during a lesson based on *The Owl Babies*, resulting in questions, comments, and a real eagerness to read and participate. These positive attitudes equally apply to pupils with special needs, where the good classroom management and high level of effective support enable pupils to succeed.

16 Behaviour throughout the school is good, both in classrooms and while moving around the building. Behaviour targets are regularly reviewed within the classroom at the beginning of sessions. This ensures that lessons are not disrupted by discipline problems. Pupils eagerly seek rewards and house points. Those with exceptional achievements in behaviour and work are rewarded by the headteacher, who also informs parents. Pupils are polite to each other within the school and learn to say 'please' and 'thank you' from their entry into the school. Parents are pleased with the behaviour in the school and the swift action to deal with any inappropriate behaviour. There were ten exclusions during 1998/99, one of which was permanent.

17 Personal development of pupils is good. They take part in the daily routines of the school, with class monitors for such areas as the library and the hall. They co-operate well in groups and pairs work unsupervised or independently, as appropriate. As children move through the school, their confidence increases, and in Y5, some are willing, for example, to sing solo in front of their peers. In the supportive atmosphere of the school, relationships, too, are good. Pupils listen carefully and respectfully to each other as they answer questions or take part in discussion. They take an interest in each other's work, and generally care about each other. Teachers take every opportunity to boost pupils' confidence, and in return, pupils are confident in their discussions with adults. They are attentive to teachers who understand their capabilities. Pupils are encouraged to work for those less fortunate than themselves through charities such as The British Leprosy Relief Association (LEPRA), the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

18 Attendance has improved through 1999/2000, but is still below the national average. Some parents allow pupils to claim medical absence, and do not always ensure their arrival at the start of the school day. Their children, as a result, are denied access to a full education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19 Overall the quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good; in around three quarters of lessons teaching was good or very good and the remainder was satisfactory or better. Teaching is particularly strong in Key Stage 2, which represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Parents and governors have noted the positive change in pupils' attitudes to their work in response to this effective teaching, which is now a real strength of the school. It is

already ensuring some success in raising standards of attainment and providing the school with a secure basis on which to improve further. Teachers know their pupils very well and have appropriate expectations of them, which they communicate successfully right from the start. They draw effectively on a range of strategies to promote pupils' learning. All the teachers at the school work very hard and pupils benefit from the considerable effort they put into their teaching.

20 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, with some good lessons seen. Teachers are able to draw on a range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour well, including careful and sensitive awareness of targets for improving behaviour and they motivate their pupils well. They plan lessons carefully and provide an appropriate variety of activities to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The best lessons contain many strengths. For example, in one mathematics lesson the teacher successfully extended her pupils' mental arithmetic skills with a range of number fan activities, which enabled all her pupils to participate. Lively and purposeful in her approach, she moved the lesson on with good pace, yet pupils were challenged with the individual questions she was able to pose at an appropriate level. This ensured that learning was good and that all pupils made appropriate progress. The individual tasks set later in the lesson were well matched to pupils' abilities and there was good use of direct teaching to help and support individual pupils as they worked. In a geography lesson, the teacher very successfully built on what pupils had learned earlier about the travels of Barnaby Bear to extend their understanding of maps and travel. The teacher used a variety of resources, such as photographs to maintain her pupils' attention and arouse their curiosity and she ensured that all levels of ability were catered for. She was very calm and her evenly paced approach, along with her effective class management skills, enabled her to manage the lesson well.

21 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall; around a third of all lessons seen were very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of most of the subjects they teach; this has a positive effect on the work they are able to do with their pupils. Teaching in literacy sessions is of a consistently high quality; in every literacy lesson seen during the inspection at this key stage teaching was good or very good. In one such lesson, for example, the teacher was able to revise and extend pupils' understanding of instructional text. She was lively, positive and enthusiastic in her approach, pushing her pupils hard over the identification of command verbs, for example, which she knew they were able to do. There was very good reinforcement of the learning objective of the lesson at different points as it proceeded, with the teacher providing very good questions to ensure that all pupils understood. All the work was very well prepared and ready, enabling the teacher to maintain pace and purpose. The teacher managed pupils' learning most effectively in this lesson and showed her pleasure at what individual pupils did. Such skilful teaching has a most positive impact on the good progress pupils make. Throughout this key stage teachers conscientiously ensure that pupils are aware of the learning objectives of their lessons and this enables pupils to understand the purpose of their learning. Teachers are also consistently positive in their response to their pupils' efforts, which is effective in raising self-confidence and esteem and thus reinforcing learning. They provide good support to individuals, as in one art lesson seen with older pupils at this key stage, in which pupils were constantly challenged to use their own ideas but supported and guided where needed. This very positive and encouraging approach clearly helped individuals to evaluate and improve their work.

22 Teachers use homework well to extend pupils' learning, particularly in Key Stage 2 where pupils are carefully prepared and supported in what they are given to do at home. In Key Stage 1 homework consists principally of reading. While this is useful in providing opportunities for pupils to practice their skills, the use of books from outside the reading scheme is not always as helpful as it could be in building on what pupils have done in school.

23 Throughout the school teachers are conscientious in their marking of pupils' work. Verbally they respond very warmly and positively to pupils' efforts and they are frequently enthusiastic in recognising the particular achievements of individuals. This serves to motivate and encourage

pupils. In some cases the quality of teachers' written comments on pupils' work, particularly in Key Stage 2, is enabling them to understand how to improve their work. This is contributing positively to the progress they make. However, some teachers' writing in pupils' books is a poor example and ineffective in helping pupils to improve the standard of their own handwriting.

24 Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. They receive very good support from their teachers and other classroom assistants.

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

25 The curriculum is good overall. The school provides all the necessary elements of the National Curriculum. There is suitable provision for sex education and awareness of drug abuse. The provision for extra curricular activities is very good for pupils of all ages. There are effective policies for most subjects, which are being up-dated on a regular basis. Appropriate published schemes of work have been adopted or developed; these support teachers in preparing their work because they identify the knowledge, skills and understanding that are to be taught to each year group.

26 A satisfactory curriculum is provided for children under five. There is appropriate emphasis and time given to each of the required areas of learning for this age group. Children in the reception class have suitable literacy and numeracy sessions each day. Staff in the nursery have satisfactory understanding of the general needs of this age group and as a result their curriculum planning ensures children's good general progress. Staff in the reception class have good understanding of the range of needs and offer a curriculum which is well matched to the children's stages of development. The reception curriculum ensures that children have suitable opportunities for active learning such as work in the sand tray and the home corner as well as extending their learning more formally through regular reading, writing and number work.

27 The curriculum for Key Stage 1 pupils has satisfactory breadth, balance and relevance. English and mathematics have suitable time allocations and most other subjects are provided in good balance, although information and communication technology is quite limited. Pupils have opportunities to learn a satisfactory range of knowledge and skills. The curriculum for Key Stage 2 pupils is good overall. It has good breadth and balance, is lively and often challenging. English and mathematics sessions are carefully structured and involve pupils well in their learning through a range of appropriate teaching methods. Other subjects are well provided for and attention is given to skills development. The curriculum at this key stage often encourages pupils to think. For example, a lesson about the Ancient Greeks had good potential for considering the idea of a democracy.

28 The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively introduced and are beginning to have an impact on standards. Some basic skills are also incorporated into planning for other subjects. The development of pupils' writing skills, for example, is planned effectively across geography and history. Information and communication technology is developing well in the school but is not yet used effectively across the curriculum.

29 Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in both key stages and very good for children under five. There is an effective policy for special educational needs and individual education plans are in place for those pupils who need them. These plans include clear and specific literacy and numeracy targets. Pupils have full access to all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Access to the full curriculum for statemented pupils in the nursery and Year 2 is very good. Access for statemented pupils and all other pupils with special educational needs is good in Key Stages 1 and 2.

30 There are very good opportunities for extra curricular activities. Pupils benefit from a wide range of educational visits and visitors. There are many clubs after school in both key stages. A residential visit offers new experiences in fieldwork. Pupils are effectively supported in their learning by the community. For example, a former pupil explained to pupils in Year 6 how the school has changed since her childhood. There are good links with the secondary school.

31 Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development is very good and for cultural development it is satisfactory. This is a clear improvement since the last inspection. Pupils receive considerable guidance and support to help them to think things through, behave well, use their time in school effectively, respect learning and each other and do their best on all fronts. One element of personal development is weaker, as pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to reflect on other cultures and further their understanding of our contemporary multi-cultural society.

32 There is very good provision for extending pupils' spiritual development, with a good range of opportunities taken which are both planned and spontaneous. Daily prayers in class bring opportunities for expression of shared beliefs. Small altars, with prayer books and candles, add a special ethos. Teachers encourage pupils to think about special things or special people. Everyone is valued. Assemblies offer time for prayer and reflection each day. Younger children are encouraged to observe and explore, such as the reception children investigating leaf mould and seeds and the nursery children exploring soap lather or looking at fruit. Older pupils are given insights into the wonders of learning, such as in Year 5, when effective teaching helped them to consider many aspects of Tudor life in a most enjoyable way. In Year 2 pupils were full of wonder about the work of Florence Nightingale.

33 The provision for moral development is very good. Moral development is a strength of the school. There is a comprehensive system of awards to encourage good, sensible behaviour. The headteacher sets a clear lead and appropriately high expectations. All the staff give clear and consistent guidance about correct behaviour. Good effort and behaviour are always acknowledged. School expectations are clear and consistent, with all adults setting a good example. Courtesy and encouragement are strong features across the whole school and a sense of respect for people, the environment and learning is consistently nurtured.

34 The provision for social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate with others. In class they work effectively together in groups, interact well and listen carefully to each other's ideas. Pupils mix well in a variety of playground activities. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school. Pupils have opportunity to work with a range of adults: support staff work closely with groups, governors and parents help in school, the local priest visits regularly and many visitors support the curriculum. Pupils are also encouraged to think of others, which they demonstrate effectively in their contribution to a variety of charity events.

35 Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' understanding of their own culture is extended effectively through visits and events in the community. They gain a wider cultural understanding when they are shown pictures by European artists such as Ruskin, Kandinsky, Klimt and Morris. Pupils also have opportunities to consider life in other societies, like those in the past through their work in history for example, or in other parts of the world in geography. Year 1 pupils are extending their knowledge and understanding of France, for example, through following the travels of Barnaby Bear and in Year 3, pupils have produced some interesting work on Aboriginal art after learning about the *Dreamtime*. However, there is insufficient emphasis on extending pupils' understanding of the rich variety of cultures in contemporary society.

36 The policy for personal, health and social education is being reviewed, evaluated and updated. The school nurse works with children on health promotion, there is an appropriate sex

education policy in place and pupils are taught alcohol and drugs awareness. The school is now investigating the use of circle time (when children all sit around quietly and discuss their work or concerns with the teacher) and is finding it very effective.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37 The last inspection report spoke of a secure and reassuring atmosphere within the school, and this still prevails. Pupils are well known to their teachers. Within classrooms, questioning is sensitive and helpful, and good support ensures pupils enjoy success. This applies equally to pupils with special needs who are enabled to participate in whole class and group activities, giving them full access to the curriculum.

38 Health and safety issues are taken care of well. The caretaker checks the premises daily, and effective action is taken on any matters of concern. A recent health and safety audit recommended that the responsible governors' committee makes regular checks on the site, and this is scheduled to happen. Safety is appropriately emphasised throughout the school, beginning with a request to parents to teach their children the rules of road safety. For older pupils, the school enters a team in the annual Home and Road Safety Quizzes organised jointly by the police and the local authority, which are valuable in raising awareness. Pupils are also effectively trained in cycling proficiency. Children under five and pupils in Key Stage 1 undertake a range of useful tasks concerned with road safety. Pupils' health is effectively monitored and promoted. An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid and are on duty at all times. First aid equipment is easily accessible throughout the school. The school site is extensive and provides opportunities for pupils to play in separate areas for nursery, for the reception class and for both Key Stages 1 and 2. However, at times there are insufficient numbers of staff on duty to monitor pupils' play in these areas effectively.

39 Measures for child protection are unsatisfactory. There is confusion about who is the responsible designated person in the school. No member of staff has received effective, up-to-date training. There is no in-service training for all staff to maintain and update their knowledge and understanding of procedures, and no document available to indicate the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse. This needs to be remedied immediately.

40 Pupils with special educational needs are cared for well. They receive good support from classroom assistants, especially in literacy and numeracy. All staff are properly informed of their needs so that they can offer targeted support and monitoring for each pupil. There is effective liaison with outside agencies, including educational psychologists, learning support, and the primary referral unit.

41 Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Parents inform the school at the beginning of the day if their child is going to be absent. They know that the education welfare officer, who checks registers at regular intervals, will investigate unexplained absence. As a result of these checks, class teachers investigate in detail any attendance issues causing concern. The two categories causing most concern are lateness and the amount of medical absence. Registers are efficiently marked and are up to date. Attendance has improved over the year 1999-2000.

42 The positive behaviour policy is good. It is used effectively by all the staff and is applied consistently and well across the school. It is linked to a system of rewards, including a house point system, and pupils' personal targets. Behaviour is monitored with a recording system for more serious problems in place in each classroom. Parents are immediately involved in serious incidents such as bullying. They are delighted with the policy and its application, and feel that the behaviour of pupils is much improved since the last inspection.

43 Assessment arrangements are good overall in the school, although they are unsatisfactory in the nursery. Most teachers keep reading records and records of progress in the core subjects. Some are diagnostic, although some of the reading records lack detail, which would help to identify learning needs more clearly. Mathematics records show progress and achievement. Records for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Arrangements for the assessment of children's learning in the nursery are unsystematic and as yet not sufficiently clearly informing the learning opportunities planned for them.

44 Baseline assessments are used at the start and end of the reception class, which is effective in helping teachers track pupils' progress through this early stage. As pupils move through the school, the results of statutory assessment at the end of both key stages and the year group optional tests are analysed and the findings are used effectively to continue tracking pupils' progress. This analysis provides good information which teachers also use well in their planning. Very useful portfolios of assessed work are very helpful to teachers assessing pupils' work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45 Most of the parents who responded to the questionnaire and who attended the parents' meeting prior to the inspection indicated that they are very happy with the school. However a more recent questionnaire, sent out to parents by the school, highlighted some dissatisfaction with the homework pupils receive. The school has appropriately addressed this issue and parents now know when to expect homework. During the inspection, inspectors found that good use of homework was having a positive effect in raising standards of pupils' attainment.

46 The quality of information provided for parents about the progress of their children is satisfactory. The school holds three meetings each year for parents and teachers. Annual reports provide satisfactory information on what pupils know and can do and how they are progressing. They also provide a useful brief personal profile with details of social abilities and behaviour. Reports for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are generally more detailed than others in the school. However reports provide unsatisfactory indication of what pupils need to do to improve and insufficient guidance on how parents can help them to do so.

47 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about their children's achievements, progress and areas for further development, and are given clear guidance about how they might help with learning at home. They have good opportunities to discuss progress with the class teacher and the special needs co-ordinator. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational need are fully involved in the annual review process.

48 Parents of children entering the nursery have a valuable opportunity to visit with their child before starting. When children begin school their parents stay with them for the whole of the first session and half the second, which help young children settle. Parents are also encouraged to help with routine activities such as baking, walking and visits. These activities are all helpful in ensuring pupils quickly settle into school.

49 There is an open door policy, where parents are welcome to talk to teachers before or after school, or to make an appointment at short notice if the need arises. This approach is effective in ensuring that parents feel fully involved in their children's education and one which they value. Open days for parents are being introduced during the present academic year to provide further valuable opportunity for parents to find out about how their children are making progress.

50 There is a flourishing parent, teacher and friends of the school association, which raises considerable sums of money for the school, as well as creating a valuable social network for parents and families.

51 An excellent weekly newsletter keeps parents fully informed about events in the school, including details about sporting or social occasions and fund raising. Newsletters also include regular reminders about issues of pupil welfare. A home/school contract is in place, acting as a valuable reminder to pupils, parents and the school of their joint responsibilities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52 Leadership and management of the school is very good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when it was considered to be a serious weakness. Very well supported by his senior management team and with good support from the governing body, the headteacher provides very effective leadership. He is well supported by an able administrative officer who contributes positively to the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The headteacher gives the school very clear educational direction and purpose, reinforced by a clearly defined school development plan, the ongoing success of which is effectively monitored and regularly evaluated by the governing body. The headteacher, senior staff, other teaching colleagues and all other adults in the school work well as a team. With the members of the governing body they share a strong commitment to improving the school and raising standards for all pupils.

53 The school's aims and values are well focused and wholly appropriate and the school promotes them well. There is a shared commitment to improvement with clear structures and procedures in place to monitor standards in the core subjects. The headteacher and the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators effectively monitor teaching in all classes. Curriculum development in other subjects is well managed by subject co-ordinators, who support their colleagues well. In English and mathematics the careful analysis of test results is used to identify aspects of the curriculum that need further development. For example, additional funding has been targeted at improving standards of literacy and numeracy among older Key Stage 2 pupils. This has been a contributory factor in the successful raising of standards in these areas of the curriculum.

54 The leadership, co-ordination and administration of special educational needs provision are exemplary. All staff work as a team. Very clear communication systems keep everyone properly informed so that they can offer well targeted support and monitoring for each pupil. All records are effective and up-to-date.

55 The school's strategy for teacher appraisal and performance management is good. The headteacher has helpful regular reviews with teachers to discuss their professional development. Staff development is well used to improve the effectiveness of teaching. For example, a contributory factor to the satisfactory implementation of the national numeracy and literacy strategies was the focus on literacy and numeracy in the school's staff development programme. The governing body satisfactorily monitors the performance of the headteacher. He is set appropriate targets against which performance is measured. Arrangements for supporting of newly qualified teachers are fully in place. The most recent newly qualified teacher receives good support from a trained mentor and the headteacher. Her teaching is monitored effectively and overall performance is reviewed half-termly. Although an informative staff handbook is available for teachers use, arrangements for the induction of new staff are yet to be fully developed.

56 The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good. This represents an improvement since the last report. Governors now have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Members of the governing body have a strong commitment to the school and confidence in the headteacher. They support him and the school well. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and his teaching staff. They play an active role in monitoring standards within the school. For example, they monitor the impact of the numeracy strategies on the school and discuss pupils' annual performance in the national tests of

attainment. As part of this process of monitoring some governors usefully visit school and observe lessons. There is effective governor involvement in the strategic management of the school. Most governors are well placed to make strategic decisions as they are well informed and talk about relevant issues with confidence and good knowledge. Governors show a commitment to training and as a result they are becoming even better informed and better placed to play a greater role. Governors largely fulfil their statutory responsibilities. However, the school's child protection policy is too vague and there is no person with the designated responsibility for child protection.

57 The schools' system for financial planning is good. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes well. For example, funds allocated for headteacher training have helped the recently appointed headteacher to build on his existing management skills in such a way that he has been able to improve significantly the leadership and management of the school in the short time in which he has held office.

58 The school has satisfactory procedures to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services it purchases and the service it provides. Governors evaluate the effect of the school's spending decisions on standards. Good use is made of educational technology in the administration of the school. The school's accounts were last audited in 1999. It was reported that...*procedures in place are of a standard which should provide the basis for the efficient and effective management of the school's financial and other resources.* Some minor recommendations were made in the report and these have been satisfactorily addressed.

59 The school has sufficient qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Curriculum. All teachers have clearly designated responsibilities and they work effectively as a team. The school has a good number of learning support assistants who give good support in classrooms, especially to those pupils with special educational needs. They work well with the teachers.

60 Overall the three buildings which make up the school accommodation provide adequate space for the numbers of pupils on roll. Some areas of the school have been refurbished recently, for example the library and the information and communication technology room, which now make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. There are good facilities for teaching physical education, both indoors in the well-equipped large hall and outdoors on the large grassed and hard-surfaced areas. The creation of a prayer room has provided a very valuable quiet area for worship and reflection. Classrooms and other areas of the school are well maintained and cared for, creating a stimulating and interesting learning environment for pupils. Well-presented displays of pupils' work also contribute positively to promoting pupils' learning. The state of the roof of the building housing Key Stage 1 pupils gives cause for concern. It leaks badly during poor weather and the resulting necessary reorganisation of classes disrupts teaching and learning for some pupils.

61 Resources for teaching are satisfactory overall but the quality and appropriateness of some of the fiction books in the library is unsatisfactory. Resources and accommodation for teaching information and communications technology have improved considerably since the last inspection. Resources are at least satisfactory and sometimes good in all other areas of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 Considerable work has already been done to improve this school over a short period of time and rapid progress has been made. To improve the school further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Raise standards of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Key Stage 1, by:
 - (a) using current assessment information about what pupils know, understand and can do to inform planning for individual lessons in all these subjects
 - (b) identifying specific learning objectives for every lesson which address pupils' individual learning needs
 - (c) setting appropriate individual targets for improvement
 - (d) improving the performance of boys
 - (e) building on the flexible use of the national literacy and numeracy strategies
 - (f) developing skills of planning, drafting and re-drafting, more often using the computers
 - (g) extending further pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy through other subjects of the curriculum
 - (h) developing teachers' marking strategies to provide a clear indication to pupils of ways in which they might improve or develop their written work and improving the quality of teachers' handwriting as an example to pupils in their books
 - (i) teaching pupils how to improve the presentation of their work.

- Raise the standard of attainment and improve the rate at which pupils make progress in developing the full range of their skills in information and communication technology throughout the school, by:
 - (a) developing the national scheme of work to inform and support teachers' medium and short term planning
 - (b) ensuring teachers plan systematically to develop pupils' specific skills in information and communication technology
 - (c) providing pupils with an appropriate sequence of learning activities to ensure the progressive development of their skills
 - (d) devising appropriate procedures for assessing pupils' skills in this subject and monitoring their progress
 - (e) ensuring teachers' lesson plans indicate how the computers might be used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum
 - (f) providing more opportunities for pupils to work with the computers in all subjects
 - (g) providing time for the information and communication technology co-ordinator to work alongside teachers to support and improve their confidence and competence in this subject

- Ensure that the management of young children's learning is as effective as possible in the nursery, by:
 - (a) developing appropriate procedures for assessing young children's acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills
 - (b) devising systems for recording the outcomes of assessment and monitoring progress
 - (c) using the outcomes of assessment to plan further learning opportunities for individual children.

- Formally establish appropriate procedures for child protection specific to the school and ensure that all staff are fully aware of them, by:

- (a) devising a policy for child protection which is specific to the school
 - (b) ensuring that all staff, governors and parents are aware of the arrangements made
 - (c) providing appropriate training for the designated person
 - (d) addressing the training needs of all other staff in this area.
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- Improve the quality and range of books in the library, paying particular attention to the needs of different groups of pupils for appropriate fiction books.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	19	56	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	183
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	61

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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	19	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	4	8
	Girls	14	11	16
	Total	19	15	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (56)	50 (68)	80 (60)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	8	6
	Girls	15	17	15
	Total	20	25	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (64)	83 (80)	70 (80)
	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	15	10	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	8	14
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	18	14	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (52)	56 (44)	84 (64)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	7	14
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	17	13	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (36)	52 (40)	84 (40)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	148
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	8	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: Y R – Y 6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	48

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	406 936
Total expenditure	426 771
Expenditure per pupil	2 102
Balance brought forward from previous year	27 976
Balance carried forward to next year	8 141

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	207
Number of questionnaires returned	88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	32	11	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	54	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	33	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	58	21	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	25	21	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	29	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	33	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	30	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	33	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	3	39	29	29	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63 At the time of the inspection there were more than 60 children under five years of age attending the school. These children were distributed between the morning and afternoon sessions in the nursery and the full time provision in the reception class. Children enter the nursery during their fourth year. Not all children who attend the nursery stay at the school, because the nursery serves the local community and is not confined to specific numbers of children from Catholic families. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that which could be expected for the age group.

64 Assessments, which take place at the beginning of the time in the reception class, show that children's attainment at five years of age is well below the national expectation. Children under five years of age make satisfactory progress in all areas of the curriculum, although they are unlikely to reach the levels expected.

Personal and social development

65 Personal and social development is satisfactory. On entry to the nursery the majority of children show personal and social development which is low compared with what could be expected for their age group. It is still low when they enter the reception class but by this time children are showing greater social confidence. In the nursery they are helped to understand the routines and to deal with personal hygiene, work alongside others and follow instructions. They make sense of the parts of the day such as snack time and outdoor time. Reception children learn to work in groups, use the school's facilities effectively, co-operate in their work and play, sustain social conversations and understand the school's expectations about behaviour and attention to work. Children have positive attitudes to school, but limited concentration. The staff help them to be aware of each other. Teaching is satisfactory in promoting young children's social and personal development. In the nursery, children are encouraged to be independent and self reliant, putting on their clothes and putting things away, but most need adult support to do these things. The teaching in the reception class helps the children learn to sit and listen, to participate in turns in class discussion sessions and to understand that they are part of the class and part of the larger school community. All staff in the nursery give consistent support. The reception teaching recognises children's needs and the members of staff co-ordinate their support well.

Communication, language and literacy

66 On entering the nursery, children's spoken language and their understanding and experience of books are well below what is expected for the age group. They have not developed the ability to listen well and they need much encouragement and help from the adults in school to hold a conversation.

67 Provision is satisfactory. In the nursery the teacher and other staff talk to the children, questioning them and giving encouragement to help them to speak and listen. They work hard at giving them activities to stimulate discussion, or talk with them about their personal experiences. Books are used extensively and children develop understanding of some stories and characters, with some developing their own favourites or being able to re-tell the story. Some children handle books effectively, can distinguish words from pictures and attempt their own illustrations. All take home a reading book and a mark-making book on a daily basis. Not all children respond so positively, and some children's interest levels are immature. All children enjoy being told stories.

68 Teaching is satisfactory overall. The day-to-day interactions between teachers and

children are appropriate and are generally successful in promoting learning. The procedures for assessing young children's learning are weak, however, and there is insufficient emphasis on building systematically on their prior learning. As a result children do not make progress as quickly as they should. Special educational needs provision is very good. A statemented child is making very good progress in communication as a result of very effective well matched provision from the special needs assistant, which is based on clear, ongoing assessment.

69 In the reception class children listen well and enjoy responding to the teachers. In regular literacy sessions a big book is used so that all can see the words and pictures. Effective questioning and encouragement by staff and very suitable activities lead to children developing good understanding of the story line. Higher attaining children develop the ability to read key words well. All children learn to link words to pictures and recognise some whole words in the context of the book. Listening skills develop well and children's concentration improves effectively. Interest and meaning are added when children work with the support teacher to produce the story line in words and pictures. This helps them to recall and re-tell the story as far as they are able. All of these activities support the development of speaking skills, which children show more confidence in using. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good elements in the reception class. It is well planned, makes good use of the classroom support staff and pays attention to different levels of learning in the group work and the need for active play at times.

Mathematical development

70 On entry to school, children have low capability with numbers and have limited mathematical experience. Their limitations in spoken language and their limited vocabulary further inhibit their facility to speak about numbers.

71 Provision is satisfactory. A carefully planned programme of work by the teacher in the nursery involves counting and clapping, using rhythms and patterns, building up the vocabulary of numbers and extending sequences. Children enjoy fun with number when the teacher uses miniature frogs and monkeys to provide a focus. They measure to fit their piece of wood into the vice and they match the tableware in the home corner. Teaching of mathematics in the nursery is satisfactory, although there is a significant weakness as assessment is not sufficiently well used to plan young children's learning, which is therefore less systematic than it should be. In the reception class, a daily numeracy session builds on this beginning and introduces more formal elements. Children enjoy using a number line to ensure correct order and sequence of the numerals, and are helped to develop simple strategies such as 'count along', 'add one', or 'take one away'. They begin to record numbers. Higher attaining children can select five items and, on instruction, add more or remove some, and give the correct answer. Teaching is good. At this stage some valuable assessment informs the planning for the groups, so that tasks set are well matched to children's learning needs and this ensures that they continue to make good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72 Provision is satisfactory. Children have different levels of curiosity on entry to the nursery, with a few showing good levels. Most are not familiar with discussion of what goes on around them and their experiences are limited. Provision for this aspect is good. Children learn how soap suds can be whipped to a thick cream, they fix wood into a vice and use tools to work on it and join wood together. With help they become familiar with the computer, the mouse and the keyboard. They use a large mouse to select items on the screen. They have recently enjoyed a visit to the church. Photographs of activities over a period of time show them to enjoy walks in the school grounds, planting seeds and bulbs, exploring floaters and sinkers in the water trough and making a home corner café. Teaching is satisfactory: staff help children to understand and talk about all their experiences. There is insufficient assessment and recording of what children know and understand. In the reception class, children are helped to understand autumn and the

changes in the seasons through discussion, observation and exploring the 'ground cover' display. Opportunities are offered for further exploration of sand and water. No use of the computer was seen in the reception class. Teaching is good. The teacher modulates her voice well so that children develop a high level of interest, listen carefully to all that is said and respond with enthusiasm.

Physical development

73 Children have under-developed physical skills on entry to nursery, in both body and limb movements and in skills which demand small controlled movements. Provision and teaching are satisfactory. Nursery children play outdoors regularly on a range of suitable equipment and use pencils, crayons, paint brushes, scissors and woodwork tools, sometimes with help. They are developing some control and make satisfactory progress. When working in the hall, reception children still show physical limitations. Some are unable to skip and they find difficulty in working in pairs or clapping to rhythms, while some have difficulty following instructions, but all move with confidence. Children understand that their bodies need to warm up beforehand. There were no opportunities to observe children using large or small equipment during the inspection. Reception children continue to develop skills of using tools and equipment to develop their finer physical skills. Teaching is satisfactory, with appropriate subject knowledge, in the range of work seen, to suit the age group.

Creative development

74 Provision is satisfactory. Creative development is low on entry, with many children having had only narrow creative experience before coming to the nursery. Response to the creative activities provided in the nursery is enthusiastic and thoughtful and progress is satisfactory. Children can relate one activity to another. They know that frogs are green, and mix green paints to make pictures. They cut out green shapes to make their own frogs. They follow instructions and guidance well, building up concentration. They play music on their instruments. In reception, almost all children are still dependent upon having an adult nearby for most of the time they are working on creative activities. They work with paint, crayons and paper collage and clay. Teaching is satisfactory in both the nursery and reception.

75 All children under five benefit from the experiences that are provided. The nursery teacher and other staff visit homes prior to entry, which is useful in helping them understand these young children's initial learning needs. The nursery keeps few records to support planning, and neither are there appropriate procedures for assessing young children's learning and monitoring their progress, other than for the statemented pupil. This means that the planned activities in the nursery provide a range of valuable initial experiences and support general progress, but the different levels of ability are not specifically catered for. In the reception class there is better use of assessment and recording. The baseline test is applied, reading development is tracked and there is good understanding of the different levels of mathematical attainment. Resources for children under-five are used effectively to support teaching and learning and are of a satisfactory range.

ENGLISH

76 The standards of pupils' attainment in English are well below average by the time they are seven. Their achievement is well below that of pupils in similar schools. By the time they are eleven the good progress they make enables them to achieve standards in line with the national average, and above those of pupils in similar schools. Pupils enter the school with below average skills in reading, writing and speaking, and the fact that they reach average standards at eleven is indicative of the good progress they have made by the time they leave the school.

77 The attainment of seven-year-olds in speaking and listening is well below average. Pupils lack confidence in talking, with many finding it difficult to express themselves clearly when asked to share their ideas or communicate what they have learnt. While younger pupils in this key stage listen appropriately to teachers' explanations or stories, they do not always demonstrate satisfactory levels of understanding in the answers they give to questions.

78 By the age of seven pupils' reading is below average; few of the pupils currently in Year 2 read confidently or fluently. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some basic words and some can use different strategies to decode those that are unfamiliar. The reading of a small group of higher attaining pupils is accurate and fluent. These pupils often have favourite stories and they can name their favourite authors. They can explain what is happening in a story clearly, although most of them find it difficult to anticipate what might happen next. Pupils with special educational needs read simpler texts with some accuracy, and many can attempt new words by sounding them out. The system for taking home books to read that are different to those read in school limits the effectiveness of the potential help pupils might receive from parents.

79 Seven-year-olds achieve standards in writing that are well below average for their age. The small number of higher and average attainers can write appropriately structured accounts, stories or descriptions that contain some varied vocabulary and, at times, interesting detail in their diaries for example. These pupils understand sentence structure and can write in sentences. Their handwriting is usually clear, although the use of a cursive style is not helping some pupils present their work as well as they might, and levels of spelling and punctuation are satisfactory. The majority of the class are lower attainers, who communicate unsatisfactorily in writing, even in simpler and shorter pieces. Their handwriting is often poor, punctuation of sentences is inconsistent and accuracy of spelling is variable, sometimes poor.

80 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory. To achieve this level pupils have made good progress, since standards among the younger pupils at this key stage are much lower than they should be. By the time they are eleven pupils talk more confidently and listen carefully and with understanding in a range of situations. Older pupils often engage in lively discussion, very well supported and encouraged by their teachers. Most pupils generally listen with appropriate concentration and are able to follow ideas and explanations. Year 5-6 pupils, for example, follow a discussion of similes and personification well, after studying Judith Thurman's poem *New Notebook*. Pupils were able to make detailed references to this poem as they discussed similes. Later they developed their understanding of personification in their guided group work and in a subsequent lesson used their knowledge and understanding gained in their own poem.

81 Eleven-years-olds attain average standards in reading. The majority of pupils read fairly fluently and independently. Some read with good expression to communicate the meaning in the text well. Most pupils have satisfactorily developed research skills and can use the contents page and index appropriately to select information readily for their purpose. These research skills are sometimes used well in other subjects, like history for example, where pupils seek information about Ancient Greece. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in their reading.

82 By the age of eleven pupils' attainment in writing is average and a significant proportion of pupils write imaginatively and sometimes at length. Higher attaining pupils have a satisfactory understanding of some of the stylistic features in different kinds of writing and write appropriately for a range of purposes. The majority of pupils understand the need to choose language appropriate to their audience, and they use this knowledge as they prepare stories for younger pupils on the computer. Pupils have good opportunities to write extended pieces, in playscripts for example, and they consider the effectiveness of beginnings to stories and alternative endings.

Higher attaining pupils can structure their writing appropriately and increase the interest of the reader by using varied vocabulary. Most of their stories and poems are imaginative and sometimes detailed. The Year 5-6 pupils' work on Macbeth is very interesting and shows how they can re-tell the story from different points of view, like that of Lady Macbeth for example. By the age of eleven pupils' handwriting is satisfactory, with most pupils comfortably writing in joined cursive script.

83 There have been significant changes in the leadership and co-ordination of this subject since the last inspection. Resources have been significantly enhanced, and national schemes effectively introduced. Assessment and recording systems have been improved to ensure that the monitoring of pupils' progress is effective. The subject co-ordinator's file, including samples of pupils' work, has been developed and effectively facilitates the evaluation and moderation of pupils' written work. The national literacy strategy has been well implemented across the school, and is now operating successfully in both key stages. All these developments have raised teacher and pupil expectations and effectively enhanced the quality of the curriculum.

84 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is now satisfactory overall and in Key Stage 2 it is good, where some lessons of high quality were observed during the inspection.

85 In Key Stage 1 the better teaching is characterised by focused planning matched well to the levels of attainment of the pupils, stimulating questioning and tasks, and good use of praise and encouragement. In these lessons pupils learn well and make satisfactory progress because they are interested and understand clearly what they have to do. At times however, the organisation of independent and group work in literacy lessons is insufficiently well co-ordinated or challenging; in these lessons teachers are insufficiently demanding of their pupils with the result that they make slow progress.

86 In the most effective lessons in Key Stage 2 teachers explain the purpose of the lesson clearly to their pupils, ensuring they understand what it is they are trying to learn and why. This contributes to the pupils' positive responses in these lessons. There is often good discussion, with teachers skilfully using questions at an appropriate level for each pupil, indicating how aware they are of individual learning needs, and enabling them to set appropriate individual tasks. In these lessons the quality of pupils' learning is good and sometimes very good. Pupils learn, for example, how to select and use connectives as they work on instructional texts. Others select ideas for a group poem by discussing and evaluating individual contributions. Teaching has pace and rigour; teachers' enthusiasm is successful in engaging pupils' attention and interest, which sustains their concentration and learning. In all lessons pupils are aware of what is expected of them.

87 Teachers generally make satisfactory use of the opportunities that arise in other subjects to extend pupils' skills in reading and writing. In history, for example, they provide pupils with good opportunities to discuss and write accounts, as in their work on Ancient Greece for example, and to research information from books. In geography pupils learn appropriate specialist vocabulary, like sedimentation, filtration and bacteria in their work on water treatment. These opportunities provide pupils with experience of using this specific language. Information and communication technology is not yet used effectively to extend pupils' literacy skills in Key Stage 1 but it is beginning to develop in Key Stage 2.

MATHEMATICS

88 Standards in mathematics are below average in Key Stage 1 and average in Key Stage 2. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Although progress in Key Stage 1 is not as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection, in Key Stage 2 there has been a significant

improvement. The reasons for these differences include staffing instability and changes at Key Stage 1, which have had a detrimental effect on teaching and learning and concerted efforts by a more stable staff to improve provision at Key Stage 2.

89 Attainment in mathematics is very low at the age of five. By the age of seven pupils understand the written words for numbers, add and subtract below 20 and understand that polygons are shapes with a number of sides. Higher attainers can round up or down to the nearest ten and make a record of each transaction. Many do not have sufficient recall of basic number bonds. By the age of eleven, pupils multiply by ten, one hundred and one thousand, order fractions by size, understand mode, median and mean, and work out probabilities. They learn their times tables and use them effectively. There is good attention to mental mathematics.

90 Pupils have good attitudes towards mathematics and numeracy. They enjoy the regular mental mathematics sessions and apply themselves well to written work. They behave well in lessons, listen to the teachers and each other, and work hard at applying their mathematical knowledge to the lesson content. They check their answers, demonstrate to others, explain their thinking and use mathematical equipment with care. There is little difference between the performances of boys and girls in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 however, boys do better than girls. This difference is evident in the most recent test results. The inspection did not uncover any particular reason for this difference, but the school is monitoring it effectively in the longer term to find the factors that influence it.

91 Teaching is good overall. Teachers plan with care, use resources well to support the learning and use effective classroom methods. This is particularly the case at Key Stage 2, where pace of learning is sometimes accelerated through the good methods. For example, in teaching counting above and below zero in multiples of three, four, five and six, teachers used multi-purpose number sticks very effectively to build up pupils' speed of calculation. Teachers provide regular homework in mathematics, which has a positive influence on the learning. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Good reference is made to individual education plans, which contain numeracy targets for those pupils who need them. Support assistants understand their roles very well and are properly informed about their pupils' targets and the learning objectives of the lesson. They give good support and they use assessment and evaluation to ensure progress in learning. This reflects the training they have undertaken, the teamwork which is applied across the school and the clear communication systems which keep everyone properly informed. Learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 do not yet work at speed, but are learning to work with care. The very large number of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 2 class means that the appropriate speed of working with numbers is slower than it would otherwise be because pupils struggle towards accuracy.

92 The curriculum is good. All aspects of mathematics are included and considerable attention is given to progression and continuity through assessments and monitoring. Pupils have good opportunities for practical work in some aspects of mathematics, but there is insufficient attention paid to using and applying mathematics practically during the daily numeracy sessions. Pupils with special educational needs receive a suitable curriculum, as do two gifted pupils in Key Stage 1. Some whole school projects offer valuable experience of specific aspects of the mathematics curriculum, such as the recent work done on money. Pupils from every age group contributed to a display showing all aspects from coin recognition to complex shopping activities. There is some provision for using mathematics in a range of other subjects. Pupils are encouraged to collect data in science, make clear time-lines in history and talk about dates and bigger numbers in context. Mathematics makes a valuable contribution to social development through the good opportunities it offers for speaking and listening and the regular group work. There was little information and communication technology used in numeracy sessions, but some mathematical work is done separately in the computer room.

93 Leadership of mathematics is very good. Good assessment systems ensure that pupils' progress and the test results are effectively tracked. Very good analysis of all assessment information enables teachers to identify pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses. This information informs their further planning. Good support is provided for teaching and learning. Monitoring arrangements are in place for teaching quality and training arrangements keep staff up to date. Guidance is provided if necessary. There is an exemplary assessment file that shows many and varied examples of well assessed work, with context and levels clearly specified. Some of these have involved other staff in the agreement of levels. Staffing for this subject is very good because, in addition to the teachers, there is a generous number of support staff available for the numeracy sessions. The resources for mathematics are good.

94 At the time of the last inspection mental mathematics did not receive sufficient emphasis but it is now a good feature in the school. Text books were heavily used in Key Stage 2 four years ago, but no use of text books was seen in Key Stage 2 this time. Assessment was not used enough, but now there is valuable assessment which is used well in mathematics. The co-ordinator's role was under-developed, but it now shows very effective development. Teaching has improved at Key Stage 2, but is weaker than it was at Key Stage 1. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

SCIENCE

95 Standards in science are below average at Key Stage 1 and broadly average at Key Stage 2. Standards are improving over time, particularly at Key Stage 2 and have improved since the last inspection.

96 In the last report it was stated that there was an insufficient focus on the experimental and investigative aspects of the subject at Key Stage 2 and that pupils were not taught enough science. These weaknesses have been addressed with pupils now being taught science regularly throughout the year and there being a strong emphasis on practical and investigative activities. Other weaknesses identified in the previous report, including unsatisfactory teaching, poor lesson planning and the poor use of resources have also been satisfactorily addressed.

97 Starting from a very low base of scientific knowledge on entry to Key Stage 1, by the age of seven, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, now have a base of knowledge which is just below average. The recent work of pupils currently aged seven indicates that many of them are aware that living things grow and change over time. Many know that some things such as food and water are essential to support life. They recognise, name and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans. They are aware of the importance of exercise for healthy living. They carry out simple investigations and record their observations, often using simple diagrams and labels and compiling simple block graphs from their findings. Younger pupils in Year 1 learn how to complete a simple circuit using batteries and a bulb in order to make a torch work properly. Progress made by pupils throughout Key Stage 1 is satisfactory.

98 By the age of eleven, pupils have extended their knowledge of science well. They know that some substances will dissolve in water. They use this knowledge to separate salt from sand. They know what evaporation is and have awareness that properties of materials, including water, can change when heated up or cooled down. They carry out their own tests and investigations and most of them have an understanding of the conditions needed to make a fair test. By the end of Year 6 most pupils achieve standards which are in line with national expectations. This represents good progress.

99 Work in science is often linked well with mathematics and English. Pupils are encouraged to make good use of mathematical skills, for example, in Year 3 when finding the average of three

readings when carrying out an investigation about the effect of friction. Year 2 pupils produce block graphs to illustrate their findings when investigating what are favourite types of food. Pupils use their literacy skills when writing up accounts of their investigations and recording their findings. However, the use of information and communication technology in science is underdeveloped.

100 Teaching overall is good and shows a marked improvement in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and at Key Stage 2 it is at least satisfactory, sometimes good and very good. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of scientific and technical vocabulary. For example, when investigating solubility pupils are introduced to the words effervescent, molecule, particle and sediment. Before starting their investigations pupils are encouraged to predict " what will happen?" or "what will we find?" When mixing substances with water pupils predict which will dissolve. Pupils are encouraged to record both their predictions and their findings. Teachers use a good range of resources in their teaching. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and their enthusiasm contributes to successful learning. They co-operate well when investigating together in small groups. Pupils help give out equipment and help clear it away at the end of lessons. They enjoy answering teachers' questions and they talk enthusiastically about their observations and findings.

101 A satisfactory scheme of work ensures that pupils learn skills and develop their scientific understanding successfully over time. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive good support in the classroom with the result that the progress they make throughout the school is good. Pupils are assessed at the end of each unit of work and this is effective in enabling teachers to track their progress. The subject co-ordinator supports teachers well. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, has a clear vision as to how the subject should develop, which is detailed in an appropriate subject action plan, and she is able to move the subject forward and maintain the momentum for improvement.

ART

102 Standards are about average in both key stages, although there is variation in the quality of work produced between classes and within the various areas of art: drawing, painting, printing, textiles and three dimensional work. However, standards are being maintained since the last inspection when pupils were considered to be making good progress in developing their skills.

103 The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator has been active since the last inspection working to retain the range of experiences provided in art. There have been opportunities for pupils to work with artists at Storey's Institute, workshops have resulted in work produced by pupils in Key Stage 2 of a high quality. Generally there have been fewer opportunities for pupils to work in three-dimensions and with fabrics than in other aspects of art. Paintings are frequently bold and colourful indicating that pupils have made good progress in understanding colour mixing. Pupils' work is well displayed around the school alongside the works of other artists and this both indicates to pupils how much their work is valued and adds significantly to the attractiveness of the school as an environment for learning. Pupils are justifiably proud of some of their work on display.

104 Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Where progress is uneven, teachers lack confidence or knowledge about aspects of art, for example painting or drawing. Pupils spend a significant amount of time on learning how to mix primary colours together, but in some classes the skills they develop are not always obvious in their paintings. In other classes work is of a higher standard. For example, in one Key Stage 2 class pupils made pictures in the style of William Morris, using colour, pattern and line in a sensitive way.

105 Pupils make satisfactory progress in drawing. They produce pencil sketches from their close observations and these show how skills are built up over time. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 show very careful skills of observation. They produce strong lines in their drawings and know how to shade using a variety of techniques. In their edging of patterns, in their work on William Morris for example, they demonstrate good control of line. Sketchbooks for ideas and practice are used effectively in some classes, providing good opportunities for pupils to try out their ideas. Progress in printing, textiles and three-dimensional work is not so strong by comparison. For example, printing onto material is not fully developed; most pupils rarely go beyond simple repeated patterns in one or two colours. Opportunities to work with clay are restricted.

106 There were few opportunities to observe teaching and learning in art during the inspection, so there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching overall. In lessons seen the teaching was good or very good. In a lesson in Key Stage 1, for example, the teacher was able to draw her pupils into a further discussion about the work of Kandinsky, using his picture *In the Blue*. In this lesson the teacher demonstrated the confidence to focus these young pupils' attention on the shapes in the picture. In a lesson with the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 the teacher used her knowledge and understanding to enable pupils to make good progress in developing their skills. The workshop organisation of the lesson enabled her to work with individual pupils and she skilfully provided guidance or further challenge to encourage pupils to improve their work. This very effective teaching encourages choice but also gives direct assistance to pupils in the form of demonstration and discussion. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in these lessons.

107 The co-ordinator has few opportunities to observe teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1 and this prevents her seeing exactly where teaching is strong and where standards need to be raised. However, she is undertaking much of the planning for art, and this is enabling her to maintain a view of progress across the school. Assessment in art is systematic; planning suggests assessment tasks and this does provide opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor standards. Good use is made of visits to galleries, such as the William Morris gallery and Abbott Hall, to support pupils' work in art. The co-ordinator is clear about priorities for further development in this subject, particularly the need to develop three-dimensional work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108 It was possible to observe only one lesson in design and technology during the inspection and therefore there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement about the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning shows that pupils throughout the school are provided with a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop their skills. There was also insufficient completed work available to make a judgement about the standards of attainment in this subject at the end of both key stages.

109 In the observed lesson a Year 3 class were learning how to make a sandwich. In the lesson they learnt a range of things which included the importance of hygienic food preparation and storage, how to use a range of tools effectively and how combinations of ingredients and means of preparation can affect an end product. In this lesson pupils were introduced to a range of kitchen utensils and learnt how to use them and for what purpose.

110 The planned curriculum indicates that pupils make things in a variety of materials and use differing techniques. They study design and then design their own models and this enables them to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 6, for example, have studied the design of shelters, focusing their attention on bus shelters and bandstands in the locality and the design of a range of tents. This work effectively leads them on to design their own shelters.

111 Resources in school are adequate to teach design and technology. In making things pupils

are introduced to a range of tools and materials. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils learn to use scissors, cutters and glue. This improves their skills as they learn a range of fixing techniques.

GEOGRAPHY

112 Attainment is average at the ends of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Seven-year-old pupils identify important buildings on a plan of a village, find out about the jobs available in a seaside village and compare these things with their own locality. Eleven-year-old pupils explore and investigate sources of water and explain in their written work the processes of filtration and the arrangements for the domestic water supply. They understand that untreated water is dangerous for humans to consume and they have an appropriate vocabulary to express ideas about the processes which water goes through before it is used for the domestic supply. Progress is satisfactory in both key stages.

113 Teaching was seen only in Key Stage 1, as most classes were having history lessons instead of geography this term. This teaching was good. It was well planned and prepared, with good resources collected to support learning. As a result pupils enjoyed their work and their learning was good. The careful preparation and planning ensured that pupils were quickly able to grasp where Lancaster was on the map, and how Barnaby Bear had to get on a boat to get to Paris. Pupils with special educational needs get extra support, well designed and relevant work sheets or different tasks, so that they can learn effectively.

114 The curriculum is good; it is well balanced and developmental. The school has adopted a clear scheme of work that helps teachers with their planning and prevents any repetition of the same work at any stage. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to social development through comparative studies with different areas and through developing understanding of social issues such as safety in the domestic water supply.

115 Progress in improving geography since the last inspection has been good. Arrangements for the co-ordination of the subject are now satisfactory. The new co-ordinator is well aware of the need for further improvement and has prepared an action plan for improvement over the next three years. The curriculum is now effectively balanced across all age groups, with a clear scheme of work in place. Resources have been improved satisfactorily and are now adequate.

HISTORY

116 Attainment and progress are good in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs attain equally well as other pupils in many lessons. Pupils of seven can explain why Florence Nightingale's work was important and they understand that to be allowed to work in a hospital was a great achievement for a woman at that time. Pupils of eleven understand that their Victorian school building has seen many changes over the years. They realise that some of the reasons have been related to different educational ideas and developments.

117 Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and prepared and activities are designed so that all pupils have full access to them. As a result pupils' attitudes to history are good. They enjoy the opportunities created to participate in discussions and this contributes to their effective learning. Some of the methods used in lessons are very effective. In one lesson, Year 4 pupils were required to find information, record it briefly and use the record by referring to it in the following session. The effectiveness of this approach accelerated learning very well. Activities were made enjoyable and were very well organised. The teacher ensured that everyone who needed help with reading received it and, as a result, pupils' attention remained alert throughout and no one was left behind at any stage. Learning is good overall. Pupils build up knowledge and understanding effectively.

118 The curriculum is good and ensures continuity of learning through the two key stages. Both literacy and numeracy are evident in history work. Timelines are carefully constructed with the pupils, for example and there are good opportunities provided for extended pieces of writing ensuring that pupils apply what they have learned in the literacy sessions. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their information and communication technology skills in support of their work in history. The subject makes a good contribution to social and cultural development through the study of different past cultures. For example, pupils in Year 5 learned about the Ancient Greeks in a manner which helped them to develop some understanding of a democracy.

119 The co-ordination of history is satisfactory. This has contributed to the significant improvement in the standards attained by pupils in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. The curriculum is now much more balanced and pupils have more opportunities to find things out for themselves and their skills of enquiry have improved. Better use is made of artefacts to support teaching and learning. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120 The standards of pupils' attainment are too low at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and below those expected of pupils of their age. This is a consequence of the previous lack of resources and the limited opportunities provided for pupils to work with the computers noted at the time of the last inspection. While pupils acquire some basic skills, they have not yet been able to develop the full range of expected skills in this subject. Throughout the school pupils have had too few opportunities to work with the computers in other subjects; there is little evidence of their use of the computers in any of the pupils' completed work in Key Stage 1. The school is tackling this situation very positively however; the recent completion of a new computer suite now affords teachers good opportunity to extend pupils' skills.

121 There were no opportunities to observe teachers and pupils working with the computers in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. The school's new computer suite is being used to teach appropriate skills in Key Stage 2 and this is already having an impact on the standards of pupils' attainment. As yet however, the suite is not used as fully as it might be and pupils still have too few opportunities to use the computers in other subjects. As they work with the computers, pupils demonstrate their skills, showing they can load a program from within the computer, manipulate it with the mouse and close down when finished. Their keyboard skills are not yet well enough

developed however and as a result their progress is sometimes slower than it should be. Their learning was good in the lessons seen and they made good progress developing their skills. The older pupils are extending some of their skills to a high level, for example in their work on producing an electronic book, as they add sound effects to their stories. Most of these pupils are confident in working with the computers and show how well they work together in small groups supporting each other appropriately, which also contributes to the effectiveness of their learning. The good provision now available is already having a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and on their learning.

123 The co-ordinator is well aware of aspects for improvement and the subject is appropriately identified as a priority for further development. A great deal has already been achieved however in improving a subject which was poor at the time of the last inspection. The new computer suite now provides an excellent resource. The information and communication technology policy has been appropriately revised and this is now beginning to inform and support teaching and learning effectively. The co-ordinator has audited staff training needs and these are being effectively addressed. As yet there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms and of teachers' planning for the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum, although some opportunities are made to work alongside and support teachers who are less confident. The co-ordinator has rightly identified as priority the need for assessment in information and communication technology and the recording of pupils' progress.

MUSIC

124 There were no opportunities to observe lessons in Key Stage 1 and consequently insufficient evidence to make a judgement about pupils' learning and the standards of their attainment. It was possible to observe only singing activities in Key Stage 2 and in this aspect of music pupils achieve standards that are average for their age.

125 Many teachers lack confidence in teaching music, but they work hard to overcome their lack of expertise and use tape-recorded materials satisfactorily. These taped lessons provide pupils with a variety of musical experiences, and where used effectively enable them to acquire an appropriate range of skills. In the lessons seen this helped pupils make progress in extending their skills in singing. However, their skills in listening and appraising music are not yet as fully developed as they could be.

126 Overall the teaching of music is satisfactory, while at times it is good. A particularly good lesson was observed, where the teacher had invited a singer into school to help reinforce pupils' singing. Both the guest and the teacher effectively moved pupils' learning on with their enthusiasm and expertise. Pupils' confidence was boosted by the expert musician who was supportive, encouraging and skilful in helping them improve their singing.

127 The newly appointed music co-ordinator takes up her post next term, but she has already begun developing the subject across the school. There is already some published music scheme materials in the school, but an appropriate priority identified is the development of a detailed scheme of work to ensure that pupils make progress in each aspect of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128 Attainment levels at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Throughout both key stages all pupils make satisfactory progress. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils can swim unaided at least 25 metres. Improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school is now adequately resourced for physical education. Sufficient small games equipment of a satisfactory quality is available for use in lessons.

129 In their movement about the hall the youngest pupils demonstrate developing movement skills which they use with growing control. These pupils are just learning to skip and respond to rhythm. Building on these developing skills the older pupils in Key Stage 1 move with confidence in response to music showing satisfactory form, agility and flexibility. They perform their movements with ample control and co-ordination demonstrating appropriate awareness of shape, direction and space.

130 Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make satisfactory progress developing gymnastic, dance and movement skills. In dance lessons pupils use their movement skills to express themselves to music through improvised movement and by performing set sequences of dance steps. The youngest pupils express feelings, moods and ideas when responding to music. In gymnastics pupils in Year 5 display good quality movement, control and balance. On apparatus work pupils demonstrate good body awareness and body shape. They land well from high apparatus. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all aspects of physical education. They are supported well and make satisfactory progress.

131 Overall teaching is good. Most lessons commence with an appropriate warm-up activity. Pupils are given sufficient opportunity to practise skills and opportunity and encouragement to evaluate and appraise their own performance and that of others. In one good lesson, the teacher of Year 5 used pupils to demonstrate quality movements to encourage others to improve their performance. She challenged pupils with a variety of activities and set standards to improve the quality of movement - for example, by drawing attention to the importance of the starting and finishing positions in a sequence. She communicated high expectations of both pupil behaviour and performance to which the pupils responded well. The quality of instruction pupils receive at the swimming baths is very good. Pupils display generally positive attitudes to physical education. The majority are enthusiastic, attentive, eager and able to work co-operatively. Challenging behaviour is dealt with immediately and very effectively.

132 A wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly for older pupils, makes a good contribution to the pace of learning in physical education. Junior pupils attend dance, netball and soccer clubs after school. Pupils have opportunities to play football, cricket, rounders, cross-country running and participate in athletics activities. The school gives pupils opportunity to participate in competitive team games against other schools. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential course concerned mainly with outdoor team building activities.

133 The scheme of work for physical education is satisfactory. It gives good support to teachers in their lesson planning by identifying what they should teach to the pupils in their class. Pupils participate in a range of physical activities that make up a satisfactory and balanced curriculum. Each pupil in Key Stage 2 has swimming teaching. The school enjoys good indoor and outdoor facilities. An adequate range of large and small equipment is available. Presently the subject is being co-ordinated by the headteacher who provides good support for teachers.