

INSPECTION REPORT

SPRINGSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walmersley, Bury

LEA: Bury

Unique reference number: 105316

Headteacher: Mr M Wright

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
23482

Dates of inspection: 16-19 October 2000

Inspection number: 225400

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Springside Road
Bury
Lancs

Postcode: BL9 5JB

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J G Clegg

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Inspector's Number	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Diana Mackie Registered inspector	23482	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Art Information technology Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve?
Peter Dannheisser Lay inspector	1165		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Lyn Butlin Team inspector	12089	English History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
David Grimwood Team inspector	29426	Mathematics Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Paul Stevens Team inspector	28200	Science Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Springside Primary School is situated in Walmersley on the north side of Bury. It is an average-sized primary school for pupils aged from three to eleven and currently has 254 on roll, including part-time children in the nursery. Most pupils come from the surrounding area, where there is a variety of housing, including owner-occupied and rented property. Children are admitted to the nursery class part-time in the September after their third birthday. They join the reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. When they start in the nursery, most children have levels of attainment which are broadly as expected for their age. There are currently 55 children in the Foundation Stage for children under six. There is a general balance of boys and girls in the whole school. There are 12 pupils from minority ethnic groups, all of whom speak English at home. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (8.5 per cent) is well below average for schools nationally. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school in which staff and governors have worked together resolutely and successfully to overcome the serious weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good overall. The school's performance in national tests rose dramatically in the year 2000. The headteacher and senior teachers now ensure clear educational direction and governors manage the school very well. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work, enjoy coming to school and form good relationships. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' results in the latest national tests for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science were very good overall.
- Standards are good in art, history and information and communications technology throughout the school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to work, relate well to one another and show a good sense of responsibility.
- Teaching is good overall and some is very good or excellent.
- The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well.
- There is good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes.
- The headteacher, his deputy and senior teachers ensure clear educational direction for the school.
- Governors are very effective in managing the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in design and technology are unsatisfactory.
- There are insufficient opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor their subjects or manage budgets for them.
- *Playground provision is unsatisfactory.

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

*The school has already identified this area for improvement.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection in February, 1998. Robust management by the governing body provided the school with a firm background on which to build success. The school development plan now provides a useful tool for managing the school. The headteacher has monitored teaching and learning in the classrooms and staff have worked hard to improve standards of teaching and pupils' attainment. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly but subject co-ordinators still do not monitor work in the classroom sufficiently. A greater percentage of seven-year-olds now achieve the expected levels for their age in reading and writing because of the school's commitment to the nationally introduced strategy for literacy. Test results are analysed rigorously to identify areas of weakness and to inform the next stage of planning. Professional training for the implementation of national strategies has equipped teachers throughout the school with a range of skills which are used well in all subjects. Standards in physical education have improved because planning and provision have been managed well. School publications now meet statutory requirements. The school environment has improved. There is new furniture in many classrooms and there is a systematic plan for improved internal decoration. All the key issues identified in the previous inspection have been dealt with, mostly with a high degree of success.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The above grades show that in the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' results in English were above the national average and above the average for similar schools. In mathematics, they were well above the national average and well above average in comparison with the average for similar schools. In science, pupils' results were very high in comparison with the national average and the average for similar schools. Teachers and governors have taken a resolute approach to raising standards. There have been significant improvements in teaching and provision in the past two years, with the introduction of the national strategies and improved lesson planning. As a result, the school's performance has improved significantly in mathematics and science.

In the 2000 national tests and assessments, there was a significant improvement in the performance of seven-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science. A greater percentage than in 1999 reached the expected level in writing, but results at the higher level were disappointing and this adversely affects comparisons with other schools. In mathematics and science, all pupils reached the expected levels for their age. Systematic teaching of letter sounds and emphasis on mental arithmetic provide pupils with a secure base on which to build future learning.

In the nursery and reception classes, children reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative and physical development. They exceed the goals in personal and social education and knowledge and understanding of the world. Speaking and listening skills develop well. Children achieve well because of consistently good and very good teaching and secure staff understanding of the needs of young children.

From current inspection, overall standards are judged to be satisfactory in:

- the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes)
- Key Stage 1 (the infant classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2)

- Key Stage 2 (the junior classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6)

Standards are above average in science in the juniors and in information and communications technology, art and history throughout the school. They are below average in design and technology in both the infants and juniors. In all other subjects standards are average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are attentive in lessons and they are polite, courteous and thoughtful towards others as they move about the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are responsible and helpful. As they get older, they show high levels of commitment. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Overall, the teaching was good in the 72 lessons or parts of lessons seen. The teaching was excellent in one per cent of lessons, very good in 19 per cent, good in 56 per cent and satisfactory in 24 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. There was more very good teaching for children under six and in the juniors than in the infants.

The teaching is good in English and mathematics. Teachers make good use of national guidance for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Careful planning of lessons takes account of what pupils already know so that they build effectively on earlier learning. In all other subjects, the teaching observed was generally of good quality. Teachers' marking of work does not consistently provide pupils with sufficient information about what they have achieved and how they might improve further.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory in the infants and juniors. In common with most schools, Springside is reviewing the curriculum in most subjects to meet new national guidelines. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work and learn independently.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans help pupils to be successful and make good gains in learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Good in moral and social development, in which the school has some novel ways of encouraging pupils to be responsible. Satisfactory in spiritual development, although opportunities are missed to help pupils to reflect on art and music. Cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Attendance is monitored very well. The school has good procedures for promoting good behaviour and dealing with

	bullying. Pupils' personal development is supported well. Procedures for monitoring health and safety and for child protection issues are satisfactory.
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Partnership with parents is satisfactory. There are strong, positive links with the Friends' Association to promote interest and support for the school. Newsletters and meetings about the curriculum are informative but opportunities are missed to get parents more involved with their children's progress through improved reading diaries and end-of-year reports.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has raised staff morale and monitored classroom teaching and learning so that provision is much improved. Subject leaders do not have sufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors fulfil their roles very well and have supported the school effectively to overcome serious weaknesses identified in the last report.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Appropriate priorities are clearly identified and implementation of plans is monitored effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Governors apply the principles of best value when they make decisions on spending. Financial decisions are not always identified clearly on the school development plan.

The level of staffing at the school is satisfactory. The school has a satisfactory range of accommodation but the playgrounds are in need of refurbishment. Learning resources are adequate overall, but inadequate in design and technology and music. The new computer suite supports pupils' learning well and resources for physical education are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and behave well • Their children make good progress in school • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible • The teaching is good • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of activities outside lessons • Provision of homework • The way the school works with parents • The way the school is led and managed • Information on how their children are getting on

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. They judge that provision for activities after school is satisfactory. A broad range of clubs for pupils is confined to the junior-aged pupils; this is the situation in most schools. Provision for homework is now satisfactory as the school has started the new school year with clear guidelines for pupils and parents. Communication with parents is variable in quality. Newsletters provide a good selection of news and information. Opportunities are missed for the school to work more closely with parents when reading diaries are not used for helpful dialogue between school and home. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has worked well with senior staff to lead significant improvements in the school, and governors play a major role in managing the school very well. End-of-year reports do not give parents enough indication of what their children need to do to improve their performance.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school has taken a resolute approach to improving standards, and results from the 2000 National Curriculum tests show a significant rise in pupils' performance. There were improved results for eleven-year-olds in mathematics and science and seven-year-olds did well in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils' performance has risen so that an increasing number reach nationally expected levels. All seven and eleven-year-olds reached the expected levels in science and all seven-year-olds did so in mathematics. The school has undertaken a detailed analysis of pupils' test results and is working on areas for further improvement. Pupils have achieved well over time in relation to their prior attainment and achievement was good in the lessons observed. The school is well placed to build on this sound foundation.

2. Evidence from the 2000 assessments for eleven-year-olds indicates that the pupils' performance in English was above the national average, in mathematics it was well above and in science it was very high. As well as comparing the school's results with the national picture it is possible to make comparisons with results in schools which are 'in a similar context', that is, schools which have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. When the school's results in the 2000 tests are compared with this group of schools, then the pupils' results in English were above average and in mathematics and science they were very high. The original targets set with the local education authority for English and mathematics have been exceeded. The amended target for English has not been met.

3. In the 2000 assessments for seven-year-olds, pupils' performance in reading was above the national average; in writing it was below average and mathematics it was average. Teacher assessments in science were very high in comparison with the national average. The school's results in the 2000 assessments, compared with those of schools in similar contexts, were well above the national average in reading, below average in writing and average in mathematics.

4. In 2000, there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in mathematics and science, but girls performed much better than boys in English. The better performance of girls is typical of that seen nationally and the school is monitoring standards and providing appropriate lessons to boost the performance of any pupils who are considered to be underachieving in Year 6.

5. Since the last inspection in February 1998, results have risen in mathematics and science at both key stages. The good performance of eleven-year-olds in English has been maintained. Although the percentage of seven-year-olds reaching the expected level has risen in writing, the school's results are still below average in comparison with similar schools.

6. From inspection, overall standards are satisfactory by the end of:

- the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes)
- Key Stage 1 (the infant classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2)
- Key Stage 2 (the junior classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6)

7. Standards are above average in science in the juniors and in information and communications technology (ICT), art and history throughout the school. They are below average in design and technology in both the infants and juniors. In all other subjects standards are average. Analysis of last year's assessments of pupils currently in Year 6 indicates that the school's 2000 results for eleven-year-olds are not likely to be matched in English and mathematics in 2001. However, inspection evidence indicates that pupils are making good progress based on their prior learning. Pupils in Year 2 are only half way through the infant stage and they are making

good progress in lessons. The school's drive to improve standards in writing is having a positive effect on pupils currently in Year 2.

8. Children under five enter the nursery with levels of attainment which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Children achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical and creative development by the time they move to Year 1. In personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world, they exceed expectations. They make good progress because of the consistently good teaching based on secure understanding of the needs of young children. The planning of the curriculum is good and staff create an encouraging atmosphere in which children learn happily.

9. By the time they are seven years old, most pupils are working at the expected levels for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Staff plan lessons well so that pupils gain skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. The school emphasises the teaching of letter sounds and patterns to help pupils with their reading and spelling. In mathematics, teachers engage well with pupils to find out what they know and extend their learning. The school's drive to improve standards in science has paid off and teaching has improved.

10. By the time they are eleven, pupils are generally working at levels expected for their age in English and mathematics and above the levels expected in science. In these subjects, the school has effectively introduced and monitored new ways of teaching. There has been effective professional training and teachers use a clear structure for lessons. By the time they leave the school, most pupils use their speaking and listening skills effectively to ask questions, explain their work and share ideas. Consistent teaching of spelling and regular practice in basic grammar gives pupils a good grounding so that they achieve appropriate writing skills. In mathematics, pupils' good skills in mental arithmetic and secure use of the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers are the result of good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to mathematics. In science, investigations in the infants and early years of the juniors provide pupils with relevant experience on which to build understanding, which they do well.

11. Achievement and standards in ICT are good for pupils throughout the school. Pupils have a wide range of skills to word-process, collect and sort information and make graphs. By the time they leave the school, pupils search for information in CD ROMs, send e-mail, create spreadsheets and use sensors in science. Pupils' achievement in ICT is good because of very good leadership, staff confidence and growing expertise.

12. Achievement and standards in geography, music, physical education and religious education are typical of those found nationally for seven and eleven-year-olds. In art and history, they are above those normally seen. In design and technology, they are below expectations in both the infants and the juniors. Overall, this is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when standards in art and physical education were unsatisfactory in the juniors. Standards have declined in design and technology during the absence of the subject co-ordinator.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Realistic targets are set for these pupils to achieve regular success. Teaching support is very good and classroom assistants help pupils to achieve well in lessons. Higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop independence in their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The high standards of behaviour, good attitudes of pupils and opportunities for personal development noted at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and continue to be a strength of the school.

15. Pupils enjoy school. In discussions, pupils said that they like coming to school and 97 per cent of parents supported this view in the pre-inspection questionnaire. Further evidence is provided in the playground before the school day when virtually all pupils are present before the starting time and they line up and enter the school quietly and efficiently.

16. When they start in the nursery, children settle quickly into the daily routines and play happily together. They collect their own milk sensibly and sit and talk with other children and adults. Jobs for the day are allocated and children take responsibility for tasks such as tidying the wheeled toys, the dolls and the collage area. As they take part in a wide range of activities, children develop appropriate levels of concentration and become increasingly confident. They know how to ask for help and are keen to join in activities. When they move to the reception class, children soon adapt to the brisker pace of lessons. They move about the school and playground confidently and relate well to older pupils.

17. Throughout the school, pupils behave well in and out of lessons and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils in the large Year 6 class work sensibly and considerately on practical activities in quite cramped conditions. Good behaviour is particularly obvious in whole-school assemblies, when pupils of all ages enter and leave the hall quietly and listen attentively during collective worship. This good behaviour helps to create an appropriate atmosphere and increase the significance of the occasion. Pupils are noticeably courteous and helpful to visitors and they speak politely, allow them to go first and take pride and care in showing them around the school. The only examples of less than satisfactory behaviour occurred in discussion periods, when enthusiastic younger children found it difficult to wait for their turn to speak. There have been no recent exclusions of pupils for bad behaviour.

18. Pupils co-operate well as they work in groups and this has a positive impact on their learning. For example, in a geography lesson in Year 5, pupils were very supportive of each other as they shared information and discussed ideas. Importantly, pupils were very pleasant and understanding with each other and were not critical of suggestions put forward by lower attaining members of the group. This response has a positive impact on the confidence of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are generally very appreciative of the efforts of others. The good relationships between staff and pupils create an atmosphere of security and warmth and provide a solid platform for learning. Older pupils reported that they were encouraged when they found 'See me' written on their work because they knew that they would get helpful advice rather than criticism. In discussion with inspectors, older pupils said that one of the things that they liked best about the school was the teachers. Such good role models actively promote the personal development of pupils. The school takes a keen and successful anti-bullying stance and parents' comments on pre-inspection questionnaires confirm this view. In discussions, pupils said that bullying was rare and that teachers dealt with reported cases quickly and firmly.

19. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility. Throughout the school, pupils work well independently and in groups. As they grow older, they play an increasing role in the smooth running of the class and school. Each day, older pupils complete work diaries which detail assignments and outline what has to be done. They thus become increasingly responsible for their own education and time. Pupils' skills of organisation grow as they record their own progress, particularly in numeracy and literacy. Older pupils help with the running of the school. They distribute registers, collect and compile dinner numbers, make sure that the hall is ready for assemblies and operate the overhead projector and music centre. They organise the school bank, collect money and enter information into individual accounts on the computer. Pupils in Year 6 are keen to help in the nursery during break times. Pupils thoughtfully support charities and they made and sold cakes to raise funds for the Mozambique flood appeal. This response was prompted by work they had undertaken in geography.

20. Attendance is good. Figures are above the national average for primary schools. Absences include a small percentage which are unauthorised by the school, but the figure is in line with the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. It was excellent in one per cent of lessons seen, very good in 19 per cent, good in 56 per cent and satisfactory in 24 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. There was more very good teaching seen for children under six and in the juniors than in the infants. This represents a big improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was less than satisfactory in 19 per cent of lessons. Improvements are the result of the school's determination to raise the quality of teaching. Governors have become more involved in the school and they take a keen interest in the raising of teaching standards. Increasingly, teachers work together as a team so that strengths are shared and areas for development are dealt with resolutely. The headteacher has monitored classroom teaching and learning, given constructive feedback to teachers and raised and maintained staff morale. The local education authority has supported the school well with advice and teachers have taken a positive and active approach to their own professional development. The successful introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has helped teachers to plan lessons more effectively and to focus on raising standards of pupils' attainment.

22. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the nursery and reception classes. In the infants and juniors it is good in English, mathematics, science, art, history, ICT and music and satisfactory in the other subjects.

23. The quality of teaching for children under six is good and there is some very good teaching in the reception class. Staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and their planning adheres closely to the national early learning goals for young children. Lesson objectives are clear and activities are planned very well so that children are motivated and want to learn. Children are encouraged to be independent and to respond appropriately to instructions, and this has a very positive effect on their personal and social development. There is a purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms which promotes good learning habits and raises children's self-esteem. Letter sounds and early mathematical skills are taught well and staff use every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary. Teachers deploy non-teaching staff well so that children have good levels of support and time is used efficiently. Very good use is made of resources, including the school grounds, to enhance teaching. Regular assessments are used appropriately to inform the next stage of planning.

24. In the infants and juniors, teachers' subject knowledge is good in most subjects. In English and mathematics, professional training of good quality and improved curricular provision have helped teachers to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy successfully. The basic skills are taught well and teachers reinforce them in other subjects such as science and geography. In history, art and ICT, staff confidence and expertise are strong features which promote pupils' enjoyment, good progress and good levels of attainment. Some excellent teaching was seen in art in Year 5. Where the teaching is most effective, teachers present the learning in a lively and engaging way and give clear explanations and appropriate guidance. Teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to set up their own investigations and explore their own ideas, for example in science. When opportunities are offered, for example when pupils compose music in their own way in Year 6, pupils respond imaginatively and extend their learning well. Throughout the school, teachers expect pupils to behave well and attend to their work so that they learn at a good rate. Pupils are managed very well and most lessons move at a brisk pace. All teachers are encouraging and they reward pupils regularly with praise.

25. Teachers use national guidance well to produce medium-term plans of good quality for most subjects. Planning for design and technology, however, does not help teachers to teach skills systematically and build on what pupils already know and can do. Literacy and numeracy are used appropriately to support and enhance work in all subjects. Teachers' use plenary sessions effectively at the end of lessons for pupils to explain what they have done and learned. Work is usually prepared for pupils of differing abilities and pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Specialist colleagues are involved appropriately to ensure that these pupils gain

maximum benefit from individual educational plans. Non-teaching staff are aware of the objectives of lessons and are deployed well to support pupils' learning throughout the school.

26. In the main subjects, teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly throughout the year and good records are kept. In most lessons, teachers question pupils well in order to find out what they know and to extend their achievement. This simple form of assessment provides information which guides teachers' planning and helps pupils to move forward with their learning at a good rate. Work is marked regularly, but it does not consistently provide pupils with sufficient information about what they have achieved and how they might improve further. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils ask for help confidently and are able to learn from their mistakes. Homework is used effectively to give extra practice and extend pupils' learning, especially in mathematics. Reading diaries are exemplary in the reception class, but this good practice does not continue throughout the school to make the maximum use of parental support.

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

27. The school provides a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities and meets the requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented successfully.

28. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is good. It is closely linked to the six recommended areas of learning in national guidance and prepares children well for the early stages of the National Curriculum. Well-planned activities take into account the 'stepping stones', identified in the curriculum for the new Foundation Stage, for children to reach the early learning goals. There is a strong emphasis on personal and social development so that children acquire good learning habits and become happy members of the school community. Language development is planned well, not only in literacy lessons but in all subjects, to help children to gain appropriate vocabulary to support their learning. Planning also includes opportunities for children to develop necessary skills in numeracy to prepare them for the daily numeracy lessons in Year 1. In all areas of learning, there is an emphasis on practical activities, discussion and appropriate support for children to be able to investigate and ask questions.

29. In the infants and juniors, the best quality provision is in English, mathematics and science, where the impact of whole-school planning and effective staff training have provided teachers with precise guidance in their planning. In other subjects, the school is making satisfactory progress in reviewing its schemes and plans to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum. Teachers use nationally published schemes of work for most subjects and the school is adapting these to ensure the progressive and systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills. This is particularly necessary in design and technology. As in many schools, priority has been given to literacy, numeracy and science over the past two years. In religious education, the school follows the locally agreed syllabus satisfactorily.

30. The curriculum for ICT has been greatly enhanced by the addition of a computer suite and a step-by-step programme of well-identified skills to be taught to class groups. These skills have also been linked to work done in other aspects of the curriculum, such as literacy and numeracy. This good curricular provision has had a positive impact on standards. In art and history, steps have already been taken to make the schemes fit the needs of the school. In science, the clear structure of the curriculum has made a very valuable contribution to giving pupils good levels of scientific knowledge but there is insufficient emphasis on pupils' planning of their own investigations. The curriculum as a whole provides few opportunities for pupils to learn independently. Opportunities are limited for older pupils in particular to plan and organise their own projects in any area of the curriculum. This is partly due to the school's limited supply of resources for research and partly due to missed opportunities in planning.

31. The school takes care to ensure that there is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from literacy and numeracy lessons only during the group stage of the lesson so that they do not miss whole-class shared activities or plenary sessions. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school and enables them to make good progress. Individual educational plans are of good quality and are used by class teachers to plan suitable work for pupils in most lessons. Plans contain appropriate targets, which are reviewed regularly so that pupils move forward step-by-step in a systematic way. The co-ordinator for special educational needs and the support teacher work closely with class teachers. Sporting and games opportunities are open to all pupils. The school is careful to ensure that no pupil is excluded from an activity, such as a residential trip or educational visit, for financial reasons.

32. Although in their replies to the questionnaire issued to parents, almost two out of every five felt there were not enough extra-curricular activities, provision is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. There is an appropriate range of sporting and art activities. Music and dance activities include line dancing and a recorder club, but there is no regular choir. The computer club is popular and a French club is planned for the near future. These clubs are limited to pupils in the juniors, as is typical for primary schools. A good number of pupils represent the school in various sporting events. There is a good range of educational visits such as those to local museums, churches and historical sites, particularly those related to the industrial past. The locality is used well for environmental surveys and river studies.

33. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. Work is done throughout the school on how to live a healthy life and pupils in Year 6 have appropriate sex education and advice on drug awareness. Local community health personnel and the police are involved in supporting these areas of the curriculum. Personal responsibility is highlighted through assemblies and through the moral code of the school. Links with the community are at a satisfactory level and are developing. Visits to the local bank help the pupils see how their own practice in running the school bank mirrors the world of commerce. Pupils studying food preservation visit the local supermarket to see how food is delivered, stored and sold. There are good links with the local branch of a major bookseller and pupils go there to see how bookstores are organised. Links with other local educational institutions are satisfactory.

34. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' personal development, including that for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Provision for spiritual development is sound and occurs in the religious and reflective elements in assemblies. In some classes, the day ends with a prayer, often relating to the activities of the day. There are moments of reflection or wonder in lessons. For example, a child in the nursery was totally enraptured by what had happened to his cake mixture in the oven. Pupils in Year 6 were amazed by the effects of yeast when they made bread. Religious education lessons help pupils to develop respect for other people's beliefs and customs. A class of eight and nine year olds were clearly fascinated as they took part in a re-enactment of a Jewish eve of Sabbath meal. Opportunities are missed, however, to emphasise the spiritual elements in music, poetry and art.

35. The school's provision for pupils' moral development and to promote their understanding of right and wrong is good. There is a good, positive set of rules, including some for the playground, devised by the pupils themselves and widely displayed around the school. The rewards and sanctions are well understood by pupils, who are regularly reminded of the school's expectations in class and in assemblies. Pupils' self-esteem is promoted and they are encouraged to show respect and courtesy towards others. Teachers react quickly to correct sniggering or other negative responses when pupils give incorrect answers to questions. Displays of pupils' work suggest how seriously the school takes the subject of bullying, and a 'bully box' is provided for pupils who wish to report incidents without having to speak to a teacher. It is a subject that is also discussed openly and candidly with teachers in the classrooms. There is an ethos of good behaviour; staff expect it and pupils generally want to behave well. They are not dependent on rewards to do so. Teachers have a positive manner with pupils, offering praise and encouragement whenever possible.

36. Provision for social development is good overall, but unsatisfactory playground provision hampers opportunities for pupils to make the most of the time they spend with their friends at lunchtimes. Older pupils have jobs to do around the school and are responsible and reliable. They organise music for assembly, put out chairs and set up the overhead projector. They run the school bank and in doing so deal with groups of pupils from all classes. Some pupils from Year 6 play with the nursery children and help them with everyday tasks during lunch and break times, or help in classrooms during wet breaks. The school actively promotes a sense of responsibility and uses innovative ways to prepare pupils for the adult world. For example, at the end of Year 5, pupils apply for the jobs they want to do in Year 6. They make applications, have interviews and are given job descriptions which are referred to if jobs are not done properly. Harvest gifts are distributed to a hospice in Bury and pupils visit the hospice and a local home for the elderly to sing carols at Christmas.

37. There is satisfactory provision for the cultural development of pupils. In assemblies, teachers play a selection of modern and classical music and pupils share their skills by playing a range of instruments to accompany songs. In art, pupils visit the local art gallery and explore the work of famous artists. In English, pupils benefit from well-planned visits from drama groups. The music, art and literature of other cultures do not figure to any great extent in the work of the school. Pupils' awareness of other faiths is enriched when they visit nearby places of worship such as a church, a mosque and a synagogue.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The staff and governing body contribute well to the provision of a caring school in which the personal needs of the pupils are well met. There is a positive atmosphere and the teachers know their pupils well. Parents and pupils say that all the staff are kind and supportive. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully monitored. The midday supervisors keep records of any behavioural difficulties and the class teacher follows up the behaviour of pupils having special difficulties at lunchtime. The school has been concerned to involve both pupils and their parents in developing rules of conduct and this has successfully fostered a good atmosphere. Unacceptable behaviour is unusual and is dealt with appropriately; good behaviour is rewarded and staff concentrate on reinforcing success. There are special assemblies when pupils celebrate each other's achievements.

39. The school monitors attendance very well and follows up any unexplained absences immediately. Punctuality is also well monitored and parents are given the attendance and punctuality figures in the annual report about their children's progress. Registers conform to requirements. They are completed twice a day and are normally kept in the classrooms, but the reporting process ensures that both the office and the class teachers communicate necessary information. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer who meets regularly with the headteacher and follows up any individual concerns. Procedures for monitoring attendance have improved since the last inspection.

40. The school provides a good range of experiences which help pupils to mature into responsible and caring individuals. These include religious education, visits to local parks, and shops and residential visits. There are many opportunities for pupils to discuss feelings, attitudes and behaviour with each other. This work is being done through the use of 'circle time' but also during class and school assemblies and in science and design and technology sessions when the curriculum covers issues of health and safety, cleanliness and relationships. In addition, contributions are made by visitors who come to the school. For example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning to bake bread with a visiting chef who explained the importance of good hygiene.

41. There is a sufficient number of staff who are trained in first aid procedures and accidents are recorded appropriately. All staff are aware of the school's named person for child protection but training for staff is not up to date. The caretaker and his staff ensure that there is a clean, pleasant

and litter-free working environment. There are regular professional checks on the safety of portable electrical equipment, fire extinguishers, and physical education equipment. The school carries out an annual safety check in line with local education authority guidelines and an annual tour of the school is to be included in the monitoring and evaluation policy of the school. There have been satisfactory improvements in the school's arrangements for health and safety since the last inspection.

42. The school has thorough and effective methods of assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are assessed on entry to the nursery and statutory assessments are appropriately carried out for five, seven and eleven-year-olds. The school also uses nationally recognised assessments for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Results are carefully analysed to check the progress of individual pupils and to identify any gaps in learning. Analysis of results is also used to check the school's performance against that of other schools. The school also checks the progress of groups of pupils; for example boys or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Assessment data is then used to set targets for individual pupils and for particular year groups. For example, the school has identified writing as an area for development and pupils are set an independent writing task to be completed each term. This work is analysed and used to set targets for improvement in writing for individual pupils.

43. Results of national tests are scrutinised by the headteacher and a representative of the local education authority to ensure that there are no significant differences between the progress of boys and girls. The progress of pupils in classes containing mixed age groups is scrutinised. The headteacher is working with the class teacher so that all pupils in Year 3 are taught science together this year. The school is monitoring their progress and will report to governors at the end of the school year. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The school is monitoring how these pupils get on in the literacy and numeracy hours. The register of special educational needs is conscientiously maintained and the school ensures that appropriate actions are taken to support pupils. Outside agencies are involved as necessary.

44. Since the last inspection, there have been considerable improvements in the school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress. There are no consistent arrangements for assessing progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, and science, whether to inform the planning of work or to give parents clearer information about their children's progress in end-of-year reports. The school is improving assessment arrangements as part of the plans for the new National Curriculum. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and expect pupils to complete corrections. Marking includes appropriate praise for good work and effort but there are few comments which help pupils to make significant improvements or extend their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were generally positive about the school. They feel that their children like the school, make good progress and behave well. Parents appreciate what the school has achieved. A significant minority of parents feel that pupils are not receiving the correct amount of homework. Inspectors judge that homework provision is now satisfactory as the school has started the new school year with clear guidelines for pupils and parents. From the pre-inspection questionnaire, a significant number of parents would like more information about their children's progress and feel that the school does not work closely with parents. However, in conversation, several parents said that the relationships with the staff had improved markedly and that staff were more accessible since the last inspection.

46. Parental involvement in school has increased since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Parents attend special events such as the annual concert, and a large number of them attend the open evening in the spring to meet the teachers and discuss their children's progress. Quite a few parents and grandparents help in school and most support their children's

learning at home. Parents help regularly throughout the school, particularly in the nursery and the infants. They also help with the pupils' bank, in the library and on visits. There is good support from governors, some of whom visit classrooms. The long established Friends' Association organises a variety of imaginative fund-raising activities which contribute both to the spirit and the finances of the school. The school has been active in setting up a club, before and after school, to provide care and interesting activities for pupils. This service is clearly appreciated by a large number of families.

47. The school provides a good range of opportunities for parents to meet the staff, often starting with a home visit before their children come to the nursery. At the end of the year, parents are invited, but few come, to discuss the annual reports on their children's progress. These reports meet requirements but they do not always tell parents enough about their children's progress or set targets for the following year. Many parents attend meetings organised by staff to provide information on the curriculum. The meeting on the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy was particularly well attended. Parents of older children are invited to preview a video which is shown to pupils as part of sex education lessons. Parents of children who have special educational needs are appropriately involved in reviews of individual education plans. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is keen to improve further the school's system of communication with parents on a more regular basis.

48. Letters to parents are informative, to the point and friendly and parents are sent a considerable amount of information about school activities, including information about the curriculum. There are also notice boards to remind parents of school news. Opportunities for closer links between home and school are missed, however, when homework and reading diaries are not used sufficiently to let parents know how they can help their children at home. Good practice in the reception class, where diaries are used well to involve parents in their children's reading, is not followed throughout the school. Most parents have contributed to and signed the home/school agreement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher and senior teachers lead the school well and ensure clear educational direction. Together, they have worked with staff and governors to raise standards of pupils' attainment and effect significant improvements since the last inspection. Staff morale and confidence have been raised through the headteacher's sensitive but rigorous monitoring of classroom teaching and learning. This has resulted in the sharing of good practice and improved communication so that all who are involved with the school now work effectively towards achieving its aims. The recent appointment of a new deputy headteacher has added strength to the school's management. The leadership critically but positively considers the strengths and areas for improvement in all aspects of the school.

50. The well-established ethos of care, support and equality of opportunity has been strengthened by a robust approach to improving teaching and curricular provision in order to raise pupils' academic performance. This has made a major contribution to the school's very considerable progress. The school has taken full advantage of the helpful guidance of the local educational authority. The co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have worked very effectively to introduce national strategies. The school is aware, however, of the need to extend the managerial role of all subject co-ordinators so that they monitor their subjects regularly.

51. Governors manage the school very well. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and carry out their duties conscientiously. Following the last inspection, when there were serious weaknesses in the school, governors and staff held frank, constructive discussions to establish a programme for improvement. Since then, governors have fulfilled their role as critical friends well and have been actively involved in shaping the direction of the school. The chair of governors has played a major role in monitoring improvements and keeping the school on track. Governors use

their skills well in the service of the school and play an active part in committees recently formed to manage the school more effectively and efficiently. They are closely involved with the headteacher in establishing appropriate priorities and setting up the school development plan. Governors review and follow up targets and visit the school to evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions.

52. Overall financial management is sound and governors apply the principles of best value when they make decisions on spending. Specific grants are managed effectively, for example to provide appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and to organise extra lessons to boost the attainment of pupils in Year 6. Strategic use of resources is satisfactory and governors look ahead to anticipate problems and plan appropriately to deal with them. The process of planning has improved since the last inspection, but governors are aware that financial implications are not always clearly linked to relevant educational priorities in the school development plan.

53. The leadership and management of the school have addressed all issues raised at the previous inspection. By establishing and implementing appropriate policies and procedures, they are being very successful in ensuring that there is good educational direction. Consequently, the school no longer has serious weaknesses; it has developed strengths which give it the capacity to improve further.

54. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to ensure that pupils have their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and are properly supported. Professional development of staff is well organised in order to improve classroom teaching. Teachers are encouraged to evaluate what they need to do to further improve their work in school. Following the headteacher's classroom monitoring, teachers show a positive and highly professional approach to identifying what they can do to improve classroom provision. Longer-term training is not so well developed so that managerial skills, particularly of co-ordinators, are not practised and used enough to the benefit of the school.

55. School accommodation is adequate. A great deal of work has been done to renew the roof and there is an appropriate programme of decoration to be done urgently to make good the damage resulting from the previous state of the building. Old and shabby furniture, noted in the last inspection, has been replaced to provide a brighter and more practical environment for pupils. Cramped accommodation in some rooms, because of large classes, limits the extent of practical activities and hampers opportunities for staff to move about the class to interact with pupils.

56. Storage space is limited, especially for the storage of equipment for physical education, much of which is now in the hall. There are few places for the teaching of small groups of pupils but the small dining area is used well for this purpose. The school has recently set up a well-equipped computer suite, which promotes pupils' good levels of attainment in ICT.

57. Playground surfaces are in need of attention. The governors are exploring possible funding to improve them. The playgrounds are also too small for pupils to enjoy a sufficiently wide range of play and sports activities, especially at lunchtimes, when opportunities for ball-games are restricted. These shortcomings in playground provision are inhibiting pupils' social development and hampering opportunities for pupils to use their good skills in physical education to the full. There is a good-sized playing field for sports and a wildlife area with a pond, used for the teaching of science.

58. In general, resources for learning are satisfactory. The nursery and reception classes are adequately equipped and resources are being monitored and improved to meet the requirements of the new curriculum for the Foundation Stage of education. Resources for physical education are good. Resources for most other subjects are satisfactory. In design and technology, however, resources are limited in amount and scope and are not satisfactory. In addition, there are insufficient multi-cultural and other resources for the full range of experiences in music. Books vary in quality. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its stock of books but some old and shabby books remain, especially in the library. The useful reading scheme is augmented with sets

of books for groups and a good number of books with large text which are used effectively in the literacy hour.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to further raise standards in the school.

- (i) Improve standards in design and technology by:
 - ensuring that national guidelines for the subject are fully implemented;
 - raising teachers' expectations;
 - improving resources.
(Paragraphs 7, 12, 121-124)
- (ii) Enhance the monitoring and managerial roles of subject co-ordinators by:
 - organising a systematic programme for co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects.
(Paragraphs 50, 54, 89, 123, 163)
- (iii) Improve playground provision.
(Paragraphs 36, 57, 157)

OTHER AREAS WHICH GOVERNORS SHOULD CONSIDER FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN:

60. These are:

- *The continuation of the school's planning for the implementation of the new National Curriculum (Paragraphs 29, 44, 124);
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work and learn independently (Paragraphs 13, 30, 112, 149);
- Opportunities for close links with parents are missed when information in end-of-year reports and reading diaries does not give enough information on what their children can do to improve their performance (Paragraphs 26, 44, 48, 89);
- Teachers' marking of work does not consistently provide pupils with sufficient information about what they have achieved and how they might improve further (Paragraphs 26, 44, 102, 113);
- *Financial implications are not always clearly identified on the school development plan (Paragraph 52).

* The school has already identified these areas for development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	19	56	24	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)	17	220
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	39

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	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	14	26	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	24	24	26
	Total	36	38	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (85)	95 (93)	100 (82)
	National	83 (82)	84(83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	24	26	26
	Total	38	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (89)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	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	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	15	16
	Girls	11	11	14
	Total	23	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (75)	87 (72)	100 (78)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	11	11	13
	Total	23	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (72)	83 (75)	97 (81)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	198
Any other minority ethnic group	4

Exclusions in the last school year

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	68

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	450,461
Total expenditure	463,086
Expenditure per pupil	1,954
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,238
Balance carried forward to next year	17,613

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
71	26	3	0	0
38	49	8	3	2
42	52	3	0	3
23	46	17	11	3
32	52	6	6	3
28	37	29	6	0
55	34	8	3	0
40	49	5	6	0
28	34	26	8	5

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

28	42	15	12	3
37	49	5	3	6
25	22	22	16	16

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

61. Children under six years old are taught in the nursery and then in the reception class. They attend on a part-time basis in the nursery and move to full time education in the reception class when they are five. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of attainments from year to year but, overall, their attainment is average. All staff are aware of the 'stepping stones' of children's development between the ages of three and six, as outlined in the new curriculum for the Foundation Stage, which the school has introduced very positively. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both classes. By the time they move to Year 1, most children reach the nationally agreed early learning goals in all six areas of development and attainment exceeds expectations in personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children exceed the levels expected in their personal, social and emotional development by the time they enter Year 1. In the nursery, children are guided and supported well and soon learn to be considerate towards one another. They gain increasing levels of self-control and gradually understand what is right and what is wrong. They readily take on the responsibility of doing jobs such as tidying up the drawing materials or putting the wheeled toys away. In both classes, the teaching is good and relationships are very good. Children show enthusiasm for school and soon join in activities and follow routines confidently. In the nursery, good levels of adult support enable children to become independent with their personal hygiene and dressing skills. Children prepare themselves appropriately for outside play and practical activities. As they play together in the home corner, children become more aware of how to take turns and share so that everyone is happy. Staff help children to become valued members of their own community and to gain increasing understanding of other cultures. Children are supported well as they transfer to the reception class and they adapt well to the brisker pace of lessons. As children become increasingly independent, their secure self-esteem and good levels of attention help them to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. They concentrate and persevere with tasks and most children become enthusiastic learners.

Communication, language and literacy

63. By the end of the Foundation Stage children's standards of communication, language and literacy are of the level expected for their age. Their speaking and listening skills are above average. In the nursery, children enjoy joining in the repetitive sections of stories and saying rhymes. They benefit from the good provision of relevant activities which stimulate conversation. They made good gains in learning when the teacher encouraged them to talk about their baking activities. In both classes, staff listen well to children, pick up their ideas and extend the conversation so that pupils become confident speakers. Staff sit patiently with children and encourage them to handle books, turn pages carefully, talk about the pictures and gain understanding of how print carries meaning and that it is read from left to right. Children benefit from the staff's increasing emphasis on the teaching of the sounds that letters make.

64. The teaching of letter sounds is followed up with more intensive teaching during the literacy hour in the reception class, when the teacher focuses well on sounds and rhyming words. By the time they move to Year 1, children begin to blend sounds together to form words, and higher attaining children confidently read simple books with repetitive texts. Because of staff enthusiasm, children develop a love of literature which makes them want to learn to read. Attractive, well-

labelled displays promote a wider interest in reading. Most children can write their names before they move to the reception class, but their writing is often poorly formed because of weak pencil control. In the reception class, the teacher brings a sense of fun to writing lessons when children play 'froggy fingers' as they learn how to hold their pencils properly. In both classes, staff provide writing areas where children can make marks and practise their writing. By the time they move to Year 1, most children copy the teacher's writing satisfactorily and higher attaining children begin to write simple sentences. Good teaching in communication, language and literacy in both classes helps children to achieve well, especially in speaking and listening.

Mathematical development

65. In the nursery, teaching is good and mathematical development is fostered through well-structured play activities. Children lay the table in the home corner and follow simple charts to count how many are allowed in each activity in the classroom. They count the paper cases and measure the ingredients for cake-making and know when they need more or have too much. Children gain confidence in counting as they join in number rhymes and songs. By the time they join the reception class, children count confidently to ten and understand the value of numbers to five. In the reception class, they experience a suitably adapted numeracy lesson. Good teaching, with imaginative use of resources such as finger puppets, helps children to develop appropriate skills in answering mental arithmetic questions quickly. As they play with a good range of well-chosen and colourful apparatus they learn to sort and order items and they develop an appropriate vocabulary to express size, shape and colour. By the time they are six, higher attaining children show early understanding of the processes of addition and subtraction as they count 'one more' and 'one less' confidently. Higher attaining pupils achieve very well. Work is well matched to children's prior learning and at the end of each lesson, the teacher helps children to express their understanding of what they have learned. In both classes, staff use every opportunity to develop mathematical language during stories and discussion times. By the end of the Foundation Stage children's mathematical skills are of the level expected for their age.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children achieve at levels above those expected by the time they enter Year 1. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world well through very good teaching and well-structured activities in both classes. In the nursery, children develop early investigative skills as they explore the school grounds and find out about their environment. They look at bark, observe snails on a log and talk about 'tentacles.' They play with 'small world' toys such as zoo animals and name most of them accurately. As they play with water and sand, children gain early scientific understanding. In the reception class, children gain a deeper understanding of the passage of time as they talk about autumn and look at how leaves have changed colour and fallen from the trees. The good provision of construction kits and building blocks helps children to gain appropriate levels of skill to build, construct and join materials together. They develop an understanding of their own and other people's culture and beliefs as they listen to stories, look at books and discuss their ideas with adults. In both classes, the very good levels of support from parents and grandparents provides valuable opportunities for children to ask questions and sort out their thoughts about the world around them. Computer skills develop well in both classes and ICT is planned on a regular basis into lessons such as mathematics in the reception class.

Physical development

67. Children reach the expected levels for their age in physical development by the time they move to Year 1. In the nursery, children have daily access to a safe outdoor area which provides good opportunities for climbing, balancing, running and jumping. They control wheeled toys effectively and safely and move confidently, with appropriate levels of co-ordination. In the hall,

children listen well to the teacher, follow instructions carefully and move confidently as they use space sensibly and climb on apparatus safely. Children increase their levels of manipulative control as they play with malleable materials and are involved in cooking, painting and drawing activities. The teaching is good and children make sound progress in both classes. In the reception class, children show increasing awareness of space as they move about sensibly in the classrooms and corridors. They play happily with older pupils in the playground and as they run, children balance and change direction confidently. They enjoy physical education lessons in the school hall and also have opportunities to use the outdoor play facilities in the nursery. In the classroom, children move and climb about in large models which they have made from boxes. Levels of manipulative control for painting, cutting and writing develop appropriately.

Creative development

68. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children reach levels expected for their age in creative development. In both classes, staff organise activities well and the teaching is good. Children achieve the expected levels for their age. Children gain appropriate skills as they use a wide variety of media, including paint, crayons and collage, to make attractive pictures with a range of textures. In the nursery, children explore texture and colour thoughtfully to make well-organised collages from leaves. They create bright bold pictures as they experiment freely with paint and make symmetrical patterns as they fold paper carefully to smudge the colours. In the reception class, art is used well to enhance other subjects. Children use information effectively from other subjects to enhance their work; for example, when they draw pictures of the characters from their reading scheme. Children illustrate their written work in all subjects with lively drawings. As they learn about autumn, children make hedgehogs from clay and use scraping tools effectively to mark the spines. In music, children in the nursery sing well. They develop a growing repertoire of number and action songs and follow the teacher's actions well. Musical skills develop effectively as children play percussion instruments rhythmically. In the reception class, children join confidently with older pupils to sing in assemblies and know a good range of songs from memory. They sing tunefully and listen well. In the role-play areas, children create situations and imagine themselves as adults in a family as they organise the home. Children explore their feelings and develop their imagination. Children with special educational needs benefit greatly from this aspect of the curriculum.

69. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is good overall, with some very good teaching in the reception class. Teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants are enthusiastic and encouraging. Relationships between staff and children are very good and the very effective management of children produces a stable atmosphere conducive to learning. In both classes, teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and children are encouraged to persevere with activities. There is sensitive support for pupils with special educational needs. Staff work very well together as a team and have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. All are involved in the planning and teaching and children benefit from very good levels of interaction with adults. The stepping stones of children's development are provided for well and learning is promoted through highly practical activities. In both classes, staff are firm, sensitive and fair as they insist on good behaviour and encourage children to be considerate for one another.

70. Staff provide a good variety of directed activities and others which children confidently choose for themselves. Assessment procedures are very good and staff make effective use of findings to plan appropriate programmes of teaching in keeping with the stepping stones identified in national guidance. Appropriate statutory assessments take place soon after children join the reception class. Children identified with special educational needs are supported as necessary with guidance from the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs and appropriate outside agencies. The school builds very good links with parents, who are involved with initial assessments of their children's achievements and with support for early reading skills. Non-teaching staff are deployed thoughtfully to support all children. Very good organisation of time for children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis ensures that they all have equal access to the curriculum. Learning resources are satisfactory and they are gradually being enhanced to meet the new

curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection, good provision has been maintained for children in the early years.

71. In the last inspection, children's attainment in language and literacy, mathematics and creative development was judged to be above expectations. In this inspection, personal and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world are strengths. Teaching and curriculum provision are good or very good in all areas of learning. Differences in children's achievement by the time they are six reflect their differing levels of attainment on entry.

ENGLISH

72. Since the last inspection, the school's results in national tests have been maintained in English for eleven-year-olds. The performance of seven-year-olds has improved in reading but has declined in writing in comparison with all schools nationally.

73. In the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds the school results were:

- above average when compared with those of all schools nationally;
- above average when compared with those of schools with similar intakes.

74. The girls performed significantly better than the boys. The school monitors the progress of different groups in the school and is implementing plans to support those who are underachieving. No significant gender differences in pupils' attainment and progress were reported during the current inspection.

75. The original school target of 75 per cent reaching the expected level has been exceeded. The school has fallen slightly short of the enhanced target set by the local education authority. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the use of classes to boost pupils' results have done much to maintain standards. Current standards reflect pupils' levels of attainment in assessments at the end of last year, and the school predicts that results will not be as high in 2001 as they were in 2000. However, pupils make good progress in lessons and reach satisfactory standards.

76. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 the results in reading were:

- well above the average for seven-year-olds in all schools;
- well above average when compared with those in schools with similar intakes.

77. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in writing the results were:

- below average for seven-year-olds in all schools;
- below average when compared with schools with a similar intakes.

78. The results in 2000 show an improvement in the percentage of pupils reaching the required standard in both reading and writing. However, there was a decrease in the percentage of pupils exceeding the nationally expected standard in writing and this adversely affects comparisons with other schools. Pupils in the present Year 2, who are only half way through the infant stage, make good progress in lessons. They are likely to reach standards at least in line with those expected nationally in reading and writing by the end of the school year.

79. The school has adopted a range of strategies to improve standards further. The subject co-ordinators for the infants and juniors have worked closely together and have taken a major role in the successful implementation of the literacy strategy. They have analysed past test papers rigorously and identified areas for improvement. Carefully targeted 'booster' classes for Year 6 have also made a valuable contribution. The school's focus is now on maintaining its strengths and

nudging up standards through attention to issues raised in analysis of results and monitoring of teaching and learning. Standards of pupils' attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 at the beginning of the school year are broadly average in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

80. By the time they are seven, most pupils speak clearly and reply confidently to teachers' questions. They express their ideas and thoughts effectively because of the school's emphasis on the development of appropriate subject vocabulary. Pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions; for example in Year 2, when they plan a speech for a character in a story. By the time they are eleven, most pupils join in discussions confidently and answer teachers' questions with increasing clarity. In Year 4, pupils used specific vocabulary in a science lesson, for example, to describe the diet of various animals. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils confidently gave class presentations of their findings on a local field trip. Pupils gain confidence in speaking to a larger audience when they contribute to school assemblies and take part in concerts for parents and friends.

81. By the time they are seven, pupils develop a love of reading and most read enthusiastically. Good teaching of letter sounds and patterns gives pupils confidence and appropriate skills to build words and gain meaning from texts. They also use a variety of clues such as context, understanding of character and story titles. Able pupils read simple storybooks confidently and discuss the characters and stories. As they read together in the literacy hour, pupils look for rhymes. Work on patterns of letters in Year 2 allows pupils to group words with the 'ow' sound as in 'bough' and 'cow'. They recognise speech marks and question marks and begin to use them in their own writing. Higher attaining pupils use simple dictionaries effectively and are confident in using the contents and index pages in books. Most pupils, even the youngest in the key stage, are aware of the contribution of authors and illustrators to books.

82. By the time they are eleven, most pupils have a wide range of strategies to decipher meaning from print and they progress well. They use context cues well and recount the significant ideas, events and characters in stories. Able pupils read children's novels of good quality with fluency but they lack expression to bring the text to life. They cope well with the more complex narrative structures in these stories. Fluency is hampered when some less able readers still follow the text with their fingers. All pupils read from a good range of literature, including poetry and non-fiction. In the literacy hour, pupils read together from enlarged print and this benefits all pupils by encouraging pace and expression. The study of vocabulary and sentence structure in texts gives valuable practice to enhance reading comprehension and enrich writing activities. Most pupils use CD ROMs confidently and this supports the extension of research skills.

83. The school's rigorous approach to the teaching of letter sounds ensures that, by the end of their time in the infants, most pupils know their letter sounds and are able to blend them into words. Pupils improve their spelling in sessions in the computer suite, when they have good opportunities to practise letter patterns as they play games to 'beat the clock'. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops appropriately in their writing. They begin to plan their stories and there is a clear sense of narrative. In non-fiction writing, pupils sequence events with increasing skill when they write instructions. More able pupils begin to use inverted commas for speech. Presentation of work is variable, but handwriting is usually correctly formed and evenly sized and a few pupils are beginning to join their writing.

84. The effective introduction of the literacy hour has had a very positive effect on the writing of pupils by the time they are eleven. Pupils benefit from the clear focus on work on words and sentences. In extended writing, pupils plan and draft their work systematically and use word processing effectively to present work for display. Spelling is satisfactory. The use of paragraphs is secure for average and higher attaining pupils, who use interesting vocabulary to bring life to their writing. Pupils practise the use of expressions which will make their writing interesting to read. In a story about a robbery, pupils brought action and pace to their writing by using exciting language and short sentences. The quality of handwriting varies. Letters are often ill formed and ligatures for joining are not used to promote a fluent style. Pupils' irregular pencil grips have a negative effect on

standards. In Year 5, where intense practice has taken place at the beginning of the school year, handwriting is good.

85. Literacy is promoted effectively in other subjects such as science and history but there is no clear whole-school approach to identify language and research skills clearly in all subjects for each year group. Pupils throughout the school love reading and there is literature of good quality in classrooms. Opportunities are taken to enrich the pupils' vocabulary by labelling displays and providing lists of useful words in the classrooms. Support with reading is hampered when reading diaries do not give parents advice on what their children need to do to improve their performance.

86. Pupils enjoy their English lessons and the literacy hour is popular. As they explore texts and share their ideas, pupils make good gains in learning. Interest in literature has grown and pupils are enthusiastic about their favourite authors. This interest reflects the teachers' positive approach. Nearly all pupils find increasing personal satisfaction in reading as they grow older. Behaviour is good in lessons and, by the time they are eleven, most pupils are generally productive and they use wordbooks and dictionaries for quick reference to check spellings.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Of the thirteen lessons seen, three were judged to be very good, eight were good and two were satisfactory. Very good lessons were characterised by well-chosen and effectively planned activities for each group and a brisk pace which stimulated pupils and encouraged them to learn at a good rate. Teachers are working hard and successfully at the school's target to improve spelling and writing. Pupils are provided with good models of writing in order to raise their attainment. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and a sense of humour so that the literacy hour is enjoyable. Good teaching in Year 6 enabled pupils to gain a deeper understanding of how a story unfolds differently in a novel and a video recording. Teachers choose texts thoughtfully so that pupils can relate to them. In one lower junior class, pupils read 'Nobody Knows', a poem about bullying, and then discussed the feelings of victims and what could be done to help them. They related the poem to their own experiences and talked about how their own school dealt with similar situations. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not match tasks sufficiently to pupils' earlier learning. As a result, pupils do not complete tasks because they are too difficult or they waste time with activities which do not move their learning forward sufficiently.

88. Because of teachers' good questioning techniques, pupils are engaged well in most lessons. Praise is used effectively so that pupils' contributions to discussions are given value. In one lesson in the infants, pupils enthusiastically contributed rhyming words to complete nursery rhymes. The teacher noticed and then questioned a quiet child who was immediately drawn into the activity. Throughout the school, patient and persistent teaching of pupils with special educational needs helps them to make good progress. Individual learning plans are planned thoughtfully so that pupils gain regular success and their self-esteem is raised. Support from the school's specialist teacher is of high quality and this is enhanced by well-focused support from classroom assistants.

89. The co-ordinators' role has developed effectively so that they now monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, but they are not yet sufficiently involved in observing lessons and helping teachers to increase their effectiveness in the classroom. The school recognises that pupils' home and school reading diaries are not monitored with sufficient rigour in order to capitalise on help from parents. The co-ordinators have also identified handwriting as an area for improvement. Following the last inspection, co-ordinators have had major and beneficial input into the spending plans for literacy. Recent improvements in the standard and range of materials to support lessons have had a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, the range and standard of books in the library is insufficient to support and extend the reading of higher attaining pupils and further develop their skills of research and investigation in all subjects.

MATHEMATICS

90. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. Until 1998, the school's performance in national tests was consistently well below average for the younger pupils and consistently average for the older pupils. There was an improvement in 1999, although the younger pupils were still below the national average. Results for older pupils improved to be above the national average. There has been a further, marked, improvement in the 2000 national tests. Overall, this improvement is endorsed by the current inspection findings. Good progress is maintained across classes throughout the school and it accelerates towards the end of the juniors.

91. In the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds, the school's results were:

- well above average compared with results in all schools nationally;
- very high when compared with those schools with similar intakes.

92. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. On the evidence of the current inspection and of that produced by the school, including their targets for the present year, the standard is not quite so high for this Year 6 group of pupils but it is likely to be at least in line with that expected nationally.

93. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, the school's results were:

- average when compared with those of all schools nationally;
- average when compared with schools with similar intakes.

94. On the evidence of the current inspection, standards of the present Year 2 year group are likely to be in line with those expected nationally by the end of the infants.

95. The school's improvement since the last inspection can be traced to the improved management of the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development in mathematics and has led the successful implementation of the National Strategy for Numeracy. She has worked with the headteacher, the numeracy governor and the numeracy consultant from the local education authority to give mathematics a high profile within the school. The new strategy has replaced the out-of-date scheme used at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and co-ordinator have effectively monitored teaching and learning, teachers' plans and pupils' work so that the inconsistencies noted in the quality of teaching during the last inspection have been eradicated. As a result, pupils' progress is more consistent throughout the school.

96. In the infants, pupils in Year 2 are confident with the subtraction of numbers up to 20 and can check their answers by applying the reverse operation. They measure lines and record their results using centimetres as standard units of measure. Pupils in Year 1 recognise and name solid shapes such as the sphere, cone and pyramid. They describe the characteristics of shapes, using only touch, well enough for their partners to be able to identify them. Pupils work well together in groups to make three-dimensional shapes. Well-organised work enabled lower attaining pupils to match models to diagrams, pupils of average ability to follow plans and make three-dimensional shapes and more able pupils to design their own shapes and then draw plans for others to follow.

97. By the time they leave the school, higher attaining eleven-year-olds are confident with number and are able to multiply three digit numbers by numbers up to a hundred and manipulate numbers to two places of decimals. They calculate percentages of amounts of money and plot co-ordinates in four quadrants. There is a wide range in pupils' attainment in the large Year 6 class. In the same lesson, higher attaining pupils confidently cancelled fractions to their lowest terms, whilst others had difficulty in recognising simple fractions like a third. In a lesson on shape, able pupils identified all the symmetries of two-dimensional shapes and could recognise isosceles triangles in

various orientations, whilst others confused terms like rectangle and cube. Skills in geometry develop well as pupils measure angles accurately and calculate the circumference of a circle. As they study probability, pupils calculate the chance of a certain event occurring. Mathematics is used effectively in geography; for example in Year 4 when pupils investigated wind directions and produced graphs of their findings. Most pupils develop a good level of specific mathematical language so that they are able to express their ideas and tease out their thoughts. For example, they use terms like 'symmetry', 'regular' and 'vertex' readily when defining two-dimensional shapes.

98. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of teachers' careful preparation of appropriate work. Classroom assistants are well briefed to support these pupils sensitively and constructively during the activity period of the daily numeracy lesson.

99. Pupils enjoy mathematics and this has a positive effect on their learning. They are attentive in lessons and are keen to answer questions. They usually listen well to the contribution of other pupils and are often appreciative of their efforts. Pupils in Year 6 broke into spontaneous applause as a fellow pupil succeeded in joining the 'two-minute' club by answering a specified number of multiplication facts in a two-minute period. These older pupils also show good attitudes in the care with which they organise their homework assignments and take responsibility for recording their own progress. Pupils generally concentrate well for good periods of time and even the younger pupils become engrossed in their work, as did Year 1 pupils when they were making three-dimensional models. Occasionally, younger pupils are over-anxious to give their responses to questions and they call out answers. If they feel that they have not had sufficient opportunity to give their views to the class, they tend to discuss their ideas with pupils close by. As a result, the general noise level rises and other pupils are distracted.

100. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the thirteen lessons seen, two were very good, seven were good and four were satisfactory. Good and very good teaching is spread throughout the school. In good lessons, teachers use the national strategy well to plan work for pupils of different abilities so that all make good progress with their learning. Learning objectives are clear and they are shared with pupils. Methods include good direct teaching and clear, unambiguous instructions so that pupils know exactly what to do. Throughout these good lessons, teachers encourage pupils to concentrate and remind themselves of what they should be doing and learning. They use questioning well to challenge pupils and to include all pupils in the lesson. Praise is used well to raise pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to try harder. Teachers bring a sense of fun to lessons; for example when pupils in the infants investigated number sequences and were excited when 'Cheeky Charlie' moved numbers for them to replace.

101. Teachers have good subject knowledge so that their approach to mathematics is confident. They help pupils to tease out their problems and learn from their errors. Teachers manage pupils well, encourage them to work at a good pace and expect them to do their best. They make good use of homework to consolidate pupils' learning in the lessons and to assess pupils' progress. Homework assignments are heavily reliant on commercially produced worksheets which, although of good quality, cannot always meet the exact learning needs of particular pupils.

102. Formal assessment procedures are well established. Findings are used well to check the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers' marking of pupils' work includes encouraging remarks to help to boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are expected to correct errors but there are few examples of suggestions which will help pupils to extend their learning.

103. The school's provision for the teaching and learning of mathematics is well co-ordinated. Teaching has been monitored and written feedback, offering useful advice on areas for development, has been shared with teachers. The co-ordinator has been actively involved in teaching classes throughout the school so that she has a clear idea of how pupils are progressing. The named governor for numeracy has considerable professional expertise in mathematics and has been keenly involved in the school. She has worked well with the co-ordinator to prepare older pupils for national tests. There has also been good support from the local education authority.

Parents have been encouraged to play an increasing role in their children's learning by attending 'numeracy evenings' when the school's approach to the national scheme was explained. Resources in mathematics are adequate to support the curriculum and some resources, like calculators, are in good supply and of good quality. The commercially produced scheme still used to support the curriculum, although still relevant for some topics, is not up-to-date. Cramped classroom conditions for older pupils inhibit the school's increasingly interesting, lively and practical approach to the subject.

SCIENCE

104. Standards in science are good overall. Pupils' attainment is average by the time they are seven years old and above average by the time they are eleven. Seven-year olds have good levels of knowledge and understanding about physical processes. Eleven-year-olds demonstrate above average understanding for their age about plants, living processes and the properties of materials. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection, and is part of a trend of rising standards.

105. In the 2000 national tests for eleven year-olds, the school's results were:

- very high in comparison with those of all schools nationally;
- very high compared with the results in schools with similar intakes.

106. All pupils reached the nationally expected standard, and a large proportion exceeded it. On the evidence of the current inspection, most pupils are working at above nationally expected levels by the time they are eleven.

107. In the teacher assessments for seven-year olds in 2000, the school's results were:

- very high in comparison with those of all schools nationally;
- very high compared with the results in schools with similar intakes.

108. On the evidence of the current inspection, most pupils are on course to achieve the nationally expected standards for seven-year-olds and a significant proportion are due to exceed them. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors as their skills in language increase.

109. By the time they are seven years old, pupils are able to make simple electrical circuits and turn on light bulbs by connecting wires to batteries. After investigations into how toy vehicles run down slopes, pupils give clear explanations of the effects of forces on movement. They explore light and identify a wide range of sources of light in the world around them. Pupils gain good levels of knowledge and understanding about life processes and living things. In their investigations into how the human body works, pupils recognise the beneficial effects of healthy eating and know about the process of tooth decay. Higher attaining pupils can explain why the body stores fat.

110. By the time they are eleven years old, pupils develop a growing awareness of how animals and plants adapt to different environments. As they study the human body, pupils accurately identify and name features of the skeleton and major internal organs. They explain the role of prominent features of plants and their functions. There are good links with geography as pupils explain the water cycle. They demonstrate an above average knowledge of processes such as the conduction of electricity and the filtering of materials and can explain how to retrieve salt from a solution. Sensitive teaching helps pupils to have a good knowledge of the damaging effects of alcohol, smoking and some drugs.

111. Standards of behaviour are good at both key stages, and are strongly influenced by the interest generated by teachers. In many classes pupils are self-disciplined and co-operative because they become totally involved in what they are doing.

112. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and insist on pupils using correct scientific words, for example to identify the bones of a skeleton or to classify animals by what they eat. Teachers' explanations are clear, so that when pupils in Year 1 are investigating whether height is linked to age, they are able to go through several processes by themselves. These pupils predict, measure carefully, use non-standard measures, record findings on a chart, and draw conclusions. Teachers prepare interesting displays in order, for example, to show the effects of cola on teeth. These topics interest pupils and help their understanding. Teachers' planning is well-structured and groups are organised effectively so that pupils have a variety of interesting experiences which reinforce their learning. Teachers used the expertise of friends of the school to bring relevance to science. Throughout the school, pupils acquire appropriate scientific skills to carry out and record activities but there is insufficient emphasis on pupils' ability to set up their own investigations, choose resources, come to their own conclusions, and determine their own method of recording. As pupils get older, many science lessons concentrate on pupils being able to recall knowledge. Because of the improved curriculum and teachers' increased skills, the school is well placed to develop an approach which encourages pupils to think for themselves and gain even deeper understanding of scientific issues.

113. The quality of assessment is very good overall but teachers' marking of work is not sufficiently detailed to pick up on pupils' ideas and extend their learning. There are very good procedures for analysing pupils' performance in tests. These analyses enable teachers to plan lessons which concentrate on the needs of individuals and groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. This has contributed to the very good rise in standards. The new co-ordinator has set clear targets for the subject and is well placed to achieve them with the evident strong commitment of colleagues.

114. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection which have contributed to the school's success in the subject. Science lessons are now regular and are planned so that they build on previous learning. Teachers' organisation and supervision are now consistently good. Teachers engage with pupils and ask probing questions which test pupils' thinking and develop their understanding.

ART AND DESIGN

115. Standards of pupils' attainment in art are above expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. This shows improvement since the last inspection, when standards were satisfactory in the infants and unsatisfactory in the juniors. Teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can do and have worked hard to plan and prepare challenging work which enables pupils to acquire a good range of artistic skills. The co-ordinator has led these improvements very well.

116. In the infants, pupils acquire good levels of skill in drawing, painting and picture composition. They become increasingly observant and gain confidence in using a variety of materials to communicate ideas and effects. From an early age, pupils explore a range of materials and textures and try out their ideas in sketchbooks. In Year 2, pupils produce sketches of high quality as they observe plants carefully and try to produce different shades of green. As they create a painted patchwork quilt, pupils consider different ways in which the sections can be decorated. When they listen to 'Carnival of the Animals', pupils imagine wild beasts and create bold and colourful paintings of animals. There are good links with literature as pupils make large group pictures to illustrate stories such as 'The Little Red Hen' and 'Handa's Surprise'. These pictures include printing and collage.

117. In the juniors, pupils explore the work of artists such as Bridget Riley and they experiment with stripes of colour as they create paintings of lines. As they studied the work of Lowry, pupils made an impressive class picture of a street, with groups of people set against the gaunt buildings of a northern town. In Year 6, pupils study flowers and create their own repetitive patterns in the style of William Morris. Pupils use their artistic skills effectively to enhance other subjects. In history, in Year 4, pupils drew hieroglyphics on painted material to make Egyptian fans. In Year 6, they made attractive silhouette pictures to hang on the wall of the room created for a Victorian concert. Pupils develop good skills in three-dimensional work as they work with clay to make attractive pots, figures and plaques.

118. Pupils are enthusiastic about their art lessons. They acquire confidence and a love of art because of the school's interesting provision and good teaching. Pupils concentrate well, take pride in their own work and respect each other's efforts. They collaborate and share equipment amicably. As they use a variety of materials and tools, pupils show regard for safety and they exhibit responsibility in the way they help to clear up after lessons. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from expressing their ideas in a subject where words are not needed.

119. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some excellent teaching in Year 5. Planning is good, time is well used and teachers are well prepared and well informed about famous artists and their important works. Resources are varied and easily accessible and classes are organised to ensure that all pupils have equal access to every activity. Very good links with other subjects bring relevance to the teaching and learning. Pupils are motivated to create big pictures; for example to illustrate a 'Goosebumps' story or the fairytale of 'The Snow Queen'. Very good use is made of opportunities offered in history to extend pupils' artistic abilities and increase their awareness of the importance of art through the ages. Assessments are made informally within lessons and appropriate records and portfolios of pupils' work are kept to show progress and attainment over time.

120. Resources are adequate but the high quality of much of the pupils' work calls out for more exciting materials and more examples of prints by well known artists to stimulate interest and raise standards further. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in the provision for art. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils' skills are developed in a more systematic way. This is because of improved leadership and guidance for teachers. Portfolios of pupils' work are now carefully annotated to indicate the context and level of attainment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is below that normally expected of seven and eleven-year-olds. This is mainly due to the limited provision and low expectation of what pupils can do. Two lessons were observed and pupils' work was scrutinised. The school does not build on the good work in the reception class, where pupils have a wide variety of experiences, for example in sewing, folding, baking and sweet-making. Pupils in the infants plan what they will make, such as simple puppets, but the breadth and demands of the work are somewhat limited. By the time they are eleven, there is little evidence of pupils enjoying the full range of experiences outlined in the school's curriculum. There are low demands on pupils' imagination and skills to generate ideas and to plan, design and make products systematically. There are few examples of pupils having opportunities to select and use a wide variety of resources and evaluate their work so that they can improve it.

122. It is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching because so little was seen. In Year 1, a lesson was well prepared and organised with good resources. The teacher provided challenging work and pupils were thoughtful and careful as they designed and made mobiles. The teacher intervened appropriately to support pupils who experienced difficulties so that they were successful. Food technology was thoughtfully included in a science lesson in Year 6, when the

teacher added relevance and interest by inviting a baker to make bread with pupils so that they could investigate the effects of yeast.

123. The quality and range of opportunities for pupils to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic way are unsatisfactory. The school has adopted national guidelines for the curriculum but the subject lacks leadership while the co-ordinator is absent. There is no monitoring to ensure that policy is put into practice effectively. As a result, provision, teaching and learning are not monitored adequately and there are no procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Information technology is used effectively in design projects. Resources are inadequate and are not organised for easy access by teachers or by pupils.

124. Standards of work have not been maintained since the previous inspection and the school has not addressed the issue of progression in the teaching of skills.

GEOGRAPHY

125. A limited number of geography lessons were observed. From these, and from analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, it is possible to judge that pupils' standards of attainment in geography are in line with those typically seen for pupils aged seven and eleven. The school's provision for geography remains much the same as at the previous inspection. Strengths identified last time, which were use of the local environment, photographs and maps, are still major features in teaching and learning. Areas for development, which were assessment arrangements and monitoring of the curriculum, are much the same. The adoption of a nationally recognised scheme of work which the co-ordinator has adapted to include a much fuller section on mapping skills, has gone some way towards improving teachers' planning and helps to ensure the right match of activities to the age and abilities of pupils.

126. Geographical skills develop appropriately in the infants. This begins with exploration of the school and local environment and extends to a wider view of the world. Pupils develop appropriate levels of fieldwork skills as they investigate features of the school buildings, the grounds and the neighbourhood. They identify and describe where places are and gain sound levels of understanding about features which are common to many towns and villages such as churches, shops and schools. Pupils in Year 2 begin to ask questions of a geographical nature as they look for similarities and differences in the way communities live and work. They develop appropriate skills for making maps as they study a fictional island and become increasingly aware of the importance of communications systems to sustain communities.

127. In the juniors, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding by looking more closely at natural and man-made features of world. As they take digital photographs and find out more about the area in which they live, pupils in Year 3 gain appropriate skills to plan routes and make maps. These skills are extended as pupils ask searching questions about features in aerial photographs of the local area. Pupils gain increasing understanding of the signs and symbols on Ordnance Survey maps and then use simple grids effectively to locate position in their own maps. In Year 5, pupils develop effective skills for fieldwork as they carry out a survey about whether their local high street should be closed to traffic. Skills of presenting and defending opinions develop effectively when pupils represent different sections of the community such as lorry drivers or parents. As they study the effects of traffic, pollution and litter, pupils become increasingly aware of how people can improve or damage the environment. Skills of recording develop well as pupils design their own worksheets and represent information in the form of graphs and pie charts. Information and communications technology is used well by pupils to collate and present their findings clearly and attractively. Pupils in Year 6 gain appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding about rivers through geographical enquiry and active fieldwork. They study photographic evidence to see where waterfalls occur and use atlases effectively to locate rivers in Britain and Europe. They gain good levels of first hand knowledge during a field trip to a local river when they study the ecology of the

area. Mathematical skills are used well as pupils measure the depth of the water and the rate of flow.

128. The quality of the teaching was good in half of the lessons seen and it was satisfactory in the rest. In the good lessons, teachers' planning of activities spring from their long and medium term plans, thus ensuring continuity. Teachers give very clear instructions and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to ask questions. They have high expectations of pupils and encourage pace and productivity in the pupils' work by setting precise time limits for tasks. Activities are changed to maintain the impetus of the lesson and maintain the pupils' interest. Teachers use praise well to encourage the learning of individual pupils and as an example to others. They use methods and support suggested in individual education plans to further the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

129. Teachers make very good use of geographical information currently in the news or with particular relevance to the school. This interesting approach combines well with the school's programmes of geographical study and draws effectively on pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils are asked to keep a news diary of events in the world and teachers take some of these items and use them as a basis for geographical study. Some events, such as the floods in Mozambique, not only led to a study of the country but also encouraged the children to organise fund raising events to help with flood relief. Correspondence with pupils who have left the school has led to study of areas as diverse as Cornwall and Chicago. It has also led to use of e-mail for correspondence. The use of information technology to support geography is underdeveloped but pupils are starting to use the Internet. A group of pupils accessed the website of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as part of their work.

130. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about geography. In their enthusiasm and genuine interest in lessons, younger pupils sometimes call out or start up conversations with other pupils when the teacher is speaking. Older pupils show good attitudes. They co-operate well in groups, are supportive of each other, share their findings and discuss ideas sensibly. This positive attitude helps pupils, especially those who have special educational needs, to increase their confidence and extend their learning.

131. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a very clear vision for the development of geography in the school. She has recently adapted national guidelines for the subject to guide staff and meet the needs of pupils and is now actively seeking to resource this scheme. Resources are adequate but atlases are slightly out of date and there are insufficient large maps of the United Kingdom, Europe and the World. The quantity and quality of photographic material and Ordnance Survey material are good.

HISTORY

132. Standards in history are above those typical of seven and eleven-year-olds. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection, when they were reported as average. The school's 'hands on' approach brings history alive for pupils.

133. By the time they are seven, pupils develop a growing sense of chronology by thinking about their own lives and those of their families. They have opportunities to handle artefacts and draw conclusions about the past from them. After looking at old household items, for example, pupils in Year 1 commented, 'You had to work hard then!' They gain a growing sense of how everyday life has changed and how technology has affected our lives. Careful observation and discussion of pictures and old photographs helps pupils to relate to people in other times.

134. In the juniors, pupils build well on their earlier learning and develop a good level of factual knowledge of a range of historical periods, including Ancient Egypt, the Tudors, the Victorians and World War Two. Pupils accurately sequence these periods on a line which shows the passage of

time. They know that Egyptian pharaohs were buried in intricate sealed tombs and were surrounded by items to help them in the afterlife. Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class drew a series of pictures to show the important process of mummification. Pupils are aware that we learn from the past by examining everyday objects, tombs and writing. Pupils in Year 6 draw on previous knowledge effectively to explain new areas of learning and their skills of historical research develop well. In one lesson they used their knowledge of domestic life in Victorian times to explain how a school might be maintained, heated and lit. They used extracts from Victorian school log books to explore how the school day might be spent and went on to act out a lesson. As they study important features of the Victorian era, pupils become more aware of historical figures such as Florence Nightingale.

135. Pupils behave well and make good gains in learning because of the school's relevant curriculum and practical approach. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development as they learn about their families and their local heritage. The systematic teaching of historical skills helps pupils to face new areas of learning confidently. The skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology are practised and used effectively in history.

136. The quality of teaching was good overall in the lessons observed. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they plan activities which stimulate pupils' interest so that they want to know more about history. Teachers' enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils and this positive atmosphere is used well to get pupils to ask questions, use their research skills and share their findings with others. Role-play is used imaginatively to deepen pupils' understanding of how people lived and worked in earlier times. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and build on what they already know. Work is usually planned to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, but this is not done consistently in all classes.

137. The headteacher has recently taken on responsibility for the subject and his enthusiastic approach has raised overall attainment in the school. Teachers join in his enthusiasm. Work is organised in units and follows the recent national guidelines for skill development. This provides a helpful basis for the planned assessment of pupils' progress. Professional training for teachers is planned in order to maximise the use of educational visits. These are used imaginatively to help pupils to develop their sense of history. Pupils visit York, Middleton Grammar School, Bury Textile Museum, Ironbridge and smaller local sites of historical interest. Parents and friends are generous in lending items for pupils to have first-hand experience of old artefacts. The school is aware that its own resources are insufficient for pupils, especially those who are higher attaining, in order to extend their skills of research.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Pupils' levels of attainment in information and communications technology (ICT) are above those expected nationally for seven and eleven-year-olds. This concurs with findings in the last inspection. This is because of good leadership and effective planning for pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic way. The co-ordinator for ICT has a clear vision for the development of the subject in the school.

139. By the time they are seven in the infants, pupils operate the computer mouse confidently. They follow instructions, move images effectively and recognise the importance of giving precise instructions. Pupils write simple text to the screen and save and print their work. As they use a simple graphics program, pupils create pictures and select appropriate tools for the task. They support their learning in other subjects with attractive text and imported illustrations. Lively programs stimulate pupils' interest so that they learn at a good rate. In geography, pupils designed a town by placing buildings and road features in different ways. Pupils gain increasing skill with the control of programmable toys. This links well with work on direction and distance in mathematics and geography. Pupils in Year 2 practise their spelling and try to improve on their times for learning and writing new words.

140. By the end of the juniors, pupils use CD ROMs with increasing skill and go to them as an automatic source for research. They access the Internet confidently and look for information, for example to support work on micro-organisms in science. In history, pupils explore programs about the Egyptians and the Victorians. Word-processing skills are practised in a range of subjects. Simple desk publishing skills develop well as pupils plan, prepare and print simple publications for use in school. As pupils explore simulation programs, they predict what might happen and give reasons for their choices; for example in an adventure in a rain forest. Pupils develop knowledge and understanding of control and monitoring. They enhance their scientific expertise and gain appropriate skills to show variation in temperature, light or sound.

141. Pupils enjoy using computers. ICT is a subject which raises pupils' self-esteem and creates a positive 'buzz' in the school. Pupils are inquisitive and keen to learn more about the possible operations within programs. As they work together in pairs and groups, pupils' develop good levels of social skills. Older pupils develop a sense of responsibility and service as they work in lunchtimes to prepare worksheets for use in other subjects such as design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from repetitive practice of letter sounds and spelling and from manipulating figures in simple number programs.

142. Because ICT is increasingly integrated into the life of the school, children develop and use skills and are advised by teachers in a range of circumstances in school. The quality of teaching is good and teachers have adapted well to the new mode of teaching in the recently completed computer suite. Planning of lessons in the suite is good as pupils are introduced to new ideas and are then given time to practise what they have learned. As they teach classes and groups of pupils, teachers choose interesting programs which engage pupils' interest and extend their expertise. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they advise, support and encourage pupils so that the subject holds no fear for them.

143. The school has a useful policy for the subject and the co-ordinator has adapted national guidance and advice from the local education authority to form a comprehensive and helpful scheme of work. In the computer suite, skills are taught in half-termly units which ensure pupils' full entitlement to the National Curriculum for ICT. Plans include useful guidance on programs which link well with work in other subjects, such as history, but ICT is not systematically included in teachers' everyday planning. The co-ordinator recognises that this is the next stage in the development of ICT in the school and plans are already in hand. Assessment procedures are also being developed to take into account the new circumstances. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work and is always ready to 'drop in' to advise colleagues.

144. Resources are good and the co-ordinator keeps a good overview of equipment and software. Professional training for staff has been of high quality. It has been provided partly by the local education authority and partly by the school's co-ordinator, who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The school has its own website and staff enthusiasm inspires pupils. Parents are sensibly informed of their children's possible use of the Internet and electronic mail.

MUSIC

145. Overall standards in music are typical of those seen for seven and eleven-year-olds. No judgement was made on standards in the last inspection.

146. In the infants, as they listened attentively to music about a starry night, pupils responded well when the teacher asked them to raise their hands when they heard the 'tinkle of stars'. At the end of the lesson, they demonstrated an appropriately robust style when they sang the 'Duck's Song' enthusiastically. Other pupils showed a good sense of rhythm as they copied the teacher's clapping patterns. As they played instruments by scraping and tapping, pupils became more aware

of the different ways in which sounds are made. Pupils took up the mood of songs well; for example, in a song about a river floating by the singing was sweet and well pitched.

147. By the time they are eleven, pupils sing well. In assemblies, music is of good quality and pupils develop valuable skills for performing in ensembles when they accompany songs on the recorder, flute, guitar and percussion instruments. Pupils' good listening skills are a strength in the school and they listen critically to well-known pieces of music. They recognise the music of composers such as Holst and Vivaldi. Skills in composition are not developed systematically throughout the school and there is little evidence of pupils' own written pieces in graphic or traditional form. In Year 5, when pupils were taught by the co-ordinator for music, they created accompaniments to a song and recorded their compositions in a range of ways for other pupils to follow. In Year 6, pupils practised complex rhythmical patterns on percussion instruments. In singing, pupils follow simple traditional scores effectively and perform a good range of songs, including a rousing African song, 'Nsasa Consele'. Pupils recognise a good variety of styles in music, including ragtime and blues and know of famous musicians such as Scott Joplin and Louis Armstrong.

148. Most pupils concentrate well and enjoy music lessons. They share classroom instruments sensibly and work together co-operatively; pupils listen well to each other and appreciate the sounds they make together. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy making music and contribute well to lessons. Pupils who have instrumental lessons from a visiting teacher benefit from the specialist input and try hard to improve breath control and playing techniques. These pupils contribute effectively to the musical life of the school when they play their instruments in class lessons and assemblies. In moments of reflection during collective worship, pupils listen thoughtfully to well-known modern and classical music.

149. In the lessons seen, the teaching was of good quality and pupils made good gains in learning. In all lessons, teachers encouraged pupils to listen well and to value the importance of silence in music. In Year 1, the teacher played a recording of an owl and the chimes of a church clock. Pupils linked this to night-time and stars. Teachers make good use of recorded lessons to develop singing and enhance instrumental work with percussion. In a good lesson for older pupils the teacher, by imaginative use of her voice and hand gestures, encouraged pupils to respond appropriately to the mood of the song and to improve the quality of their performance. Teachers follow the taped programmes effectively but they do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to create and record music of their own.

150. The co-ordinator for music has secure subject knowledge and she provides a good level of support for colleagues. She has taught alongside them and encouraged them to attend courses run by the local education authority. This has boosted their confidence and improved provision in the school. A well-organised scheme of work is linked to a series of taped programmes which includes a satisfactory range of activities. Most areas of the curriculum for music are planned well in lessons, but the co-ordinator is aware that composition is an area for development throughout the school. Wisely, the school is considering recent national guidance for the teaching and learning of music and will review the situation next year. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to sing in choirs but there are regular recorder clubs which extend pupils' skills and increase their interest in music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

151. The standards of attainment for pupils aged seven are in line with those expected nationally. The standards of pupils aged eleven are generally in line with national expectations but are higher than expected in swimming. This represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when standards, particularly of the older pupils, were judged to be below those expected nationally.

152. The improvement can be traced to improved management of the subject. The co-ordinator, by adopting a nationally recognised scheme of work and modifying it into themes to aid the development of skills, by monitoring teachers' planning and by organising training for the teachers has given clear educational direction for the subject. These measures have led to an improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly in the classes of older pupils where teaching was previously judged to be poor. Teachers' expectations are now higher and teachers have a clear understanding of National Curriculum requirements. Whole-school planning has meant that there is now a better balance to the curriculum, all aspects being covered, including adventurous activities for pupils in Year 6.

153. Throughout the school, pupils understand the reasons for warming up and warming down activities and are aware of the healthy effects of exercise on the body. Pupils in Year 1 respond to music sensitively in dance lessons; they explore space imaginatively and listen attentively. As they dance, pupils enjoy pretending to be fireworks, particularly rockets, as they start low, roar up, stretching and pointing and eventually fizzle out. Pupils in Year 2 build up a sequence of gymnastic movements on the floor, although they are less successful when trying to transfer the sequence to apparatus. In Year 4, pupils show a developing awareness of tactics and an increasing ability to dodge and find space in games. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils work effectively in groups of four to build an extended sequence of movements, including some which are synchronised.

154. Most pupils dress quickly into appropriate clothing for physical education and are keen to get on with lessons. A number of older pupils are not able to join in lessons because they forget to bring their kit. This has a negative effect on their progress and is not addressed satisfactorily by the school. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are rare and pupils generally have good attitudes in physical education. Throughout the school, pupils are quick and efficient in getting out apparatus and maximising the time for gymnastic activity. They concentrate well and compete fairly in games. A large number of them take part enthusiastically in the good range of events and after school clubs organised at the school.

155. Teaching is good. Teachers dress appropriately for lessons to set a good example and emphasise the importance of the subject. All lessons start appropriately with warm-up activities but these are often rather perfunctory and do little to raise the pulse rates of pupils. There is a good emphasis on safety and pupils have been trained to remove any objects likely to cause injury or impede movement. Teachers often make effective use of demonstrations by pupils to raise their self-esteem and illustrate teaching points to the rest of the class. Older pupils are given opportunities to evaluate the performance of other members of the class and they often do this sensitively and perceptively. 'The movements were a little heavy', observed one pupil, while another suggested that more changes of direction would increase the interest of the sequence. In the best teaching, teachers demonstrate secure class management and confidence when they allow pupils to show an appropriate degree of independence and creative thinking within effectively structured lessons. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly, quietly and efficiently to ensure inclusion of the culprit and lack of interruption in the learning of other pupils.

156. Good use of the co-ordinator's expertise in lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6 has a positive effect on the learning and progress of these pupils. Pupils in Year 5 visit the local swimming pool for an intensive four-week course of daily swimming lessons. These are followed by weekly sessions to learn about water safety. The cost to the school is justified by the high achievements of the pupils, which indicate that the scheme provides good value for money. The school has football, netball, cricket, cross country, swimming and athletics teams which provide opportunities for pupils to use and extend their skills in competitive situations. Teams are open to both boys and girls except in netball, where local rules dictate girls-only games. The programme for physical education is enriched by visits from local sporting professionals who offer intensive football coaching over several sessions. The school has plans for a residential trip for pupils in Year 6 to provide them with opportunities to try a variety of adventurous activities such as rock climbing and canoeing.

157. Good quality equipment for physical education provides effective support for the curriculum; items are well-organised and accessible to pupils. Outdoor provision is variable. There is good-

sized playing field for games but the hard playground area is too small and the surface is in need of attention. This has a negative effect on pupils' learning at times when the field cannot be used because the ground is too wet.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. By the time pupils are seven years old in the infants and eleven in the juniors, their attainment is in line with the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Overall progress is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

159. By the age of seven, pupils know the importance of the Bible in the life of Christians and how parts of it tell stories about Jesus. They talk about what Jesus did and taught and are aware of some of the most important Christian festivals, including Easter. Higher attaining pupils begin to understand the symbolic significance of bread and wine. Pupils know about special features in Christian churches, such as the altar and the font. Most of their religious knowledge is limited to the Christian faith.

160. By the age of eleven, pupils know many of the basic Christian beliefs. They can recount some of the events in Jesus' life and his teachings and recognise that He has great significance in many people's lives. Pupils' knowledge of the New Testament increases and is more detailed so that they become more aware of the religious and moral messages in stories. Through visits, pupils gain increasing knowledge of places of worship and special books. Pupils know about Judaism and Islam but have a limited understanding of the importance of religion in many peoples' lives. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. They are interested in religious education, especially when it is presented in an exciting way.

161. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of good practice within lessons. In the best examples, teachers adopt methods which engage pupils' interest well. When pupils in Year 5 learned about the story of the Tower of Babel, the teacher asked searching questions to elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Pupils are not always encouraged to question the purpose of religion, however and teachers do not always emphasise how it can influence the way people live and offer answers to deeper questions about life. In Year 2, the teacher got pupils to question their own behaviour and recognise their occasional selfishness in not wanting to share things. In a very good lesson for seven and eight year-olds, the teacher inspired pupils by enacting a Jewish Shabbat meal. The sense of occasion, made special through the use of interesting resources, enabled pupils to make good gains in their learning. Some pupils record what they have learned in interesting ways but inconsistent use is made of recording as a means of reinforcing learning in all classes.

162. The school makes good use of visits and visitors. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience of visiting an exhibition about the Bible and learned a great deal in the process. A survivor of the holocaust in World War Two provided pupils with a poignant experience which has deepened their understanding. Pupils visit a church, a mosque and a synagogue to learn more about the way people worship.

163. Satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection but the co-ordinator still does not have sufficient opportunities to monitor classroom teaching and learning so that good practice is shared and the best features in the school's provision are drawn together more effectively.