

INSPECTION REPORT

ALICE INGHAM RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105832

Headteacher: Mrs M Byrne

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 7th to 9th May 2002

Inspection number: 226344

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided

School category: Infant and Junior

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Millgate
Halifax Road
Rochdale
Lancashire

Postcode: OL16 2NU

Telephone number: 01706 341560

Fax number: 01706 710261

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend J F Sweeney

Date of previous inspection: April 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11565	Mrs J E Platt	Registered inspector	English Physical education Music Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11457	Mrs J C Beattie	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30935	Mrs K McArthur	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3191	Mr J Curley	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

North West Education Services
Cheshire House
164 Main Road
Goostrey
Cheshire
CW4 8JP

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
 HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	 12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
 HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	 15
 HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	 17
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	 20
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	 21
 HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	 22
 WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	 24
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	 26
 PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	 30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic school situated in Rochdale. It is a smaller than average primary school having 124 boys and girls on roll, aged between 4 and 11 years. The school has identified 34 per cent of the pupils as having special educational needs; this is above the national average and six pupils have formal statements of need. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (39 per cent) is higher than average. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The area served by the school has high unemployment and areas of social deprivation. Attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected of children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides an improving standard of education and has many good features. Pupils feel valued in a warm and friendly community. The dedication of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body are reflected in a shared sense of purpose from all involved with the school. Standards of work vary from year to year but are currently below average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This is because the group includes a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are unlikely to reach the national level expected for their age. However, standards are rising in response to good teaching especially in Years 5 and 6. The school makes effective use of funds and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall achievement in mathematics is good in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 2 standards are above average.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and is leading to rising standards.
- Leadership is purposeful and is effective in bringing about improvement.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to play a full and active part in school life and make good progress.
- Christian values are promoted and this leads to good relationships. Pupils care for each other and their environment.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, are willing to work hard and have good attitudes to their school.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading and writing, especially for the higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards in information and communication technology and the use of these skills to support learning in other subjects.
- The use of assessment information to set individual targets for pupils so that they know how to improve their work.
- Subject leaders do not all have a full understanding of the standards achieved in their subjects.
- Attendance is below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 2000. Results of national tests have improved for eleven-year olds at a faster rate than the national trend. This was recognised nationally and the school has received a School Achievement Award. Trends in mathematics have been good in Year 2 national tests but this has been less apparent in reading and writing. The most significant improvement has been in the quality of teaching. This is now good and the weaknesses in teaching reported previously have been eliminated. Although all issues raised in the previous report have received attention, further improvement is needed in information and communications technology. Assessment of pupils' progress has improved although more work is needed to help set targets for individual pupils. Strategic planning is better and the school has a clear vision for the future. Staff with responsibilities for managing subjects understand their roles more clearly but most of them still need to monitor the standards achieved more accurately.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				<i>Key</i>
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	D	B	A	Well above average A above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	C	A	
Science	D	E	E	C	

The table shows that when pupils left school, test results were above average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. The comparison with similar schools shows pupils have been doing well and reaching very high standards in English and mathematics and results were average in science. In English, a very high proportion of pupils reached levels above average and this represents significant achievement. This was not the case in mathematics and science when few exceeded the level expected for their age and this held down overall standards.

Trends in results have been good. However, the school does not expect the same high standards this year because nearly two thirds of the Year 6 pupils have special educational needs. The school's targets are realistic and with the determined teaching in Year 6 the school is on course to achieve them. Although standards in Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory and improving in response to better teaching. This group of pupils suffered from a lack of continuity in teaching, identified in the previous inspection report, and consequently did not make the progress that they should have done.

At the end of Year 2 in 2001, results of national tests were well below the national average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools results were very high in mathematics and in fact were in the top 5 per cent in the country. Writing results were above average for similar schools and reading was average. Results over time have risen significantly in mathematics but not so in reading and writing. Current standards in Year 2 are good in mathematics which represents very good achievement for many pupils. Standards in reading and writing are below average. Achievement overall is satisfactory although higher attaining pupils are not achieving their full potential. Standards in science are average and this represents good achievement.

By the time children start in Year 1 they have not reached the learning goals expected for their age and hence standards are below average. However considering their well below attainment on entry to the school this represents satisfactory achievement during their time in the Reception Class.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive effective help from teachers and support staff. Pupils with behavioural difficulties flourish in this caring environment.

Standards in information and communication technology are below average in Year 6 mainly because the school lacks sufficient resources. Standards in other subjects are satisfactory and in design and technology in Year 6 are good. Singing is very good throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn. They are eager to be involved with everything the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in lessons is good and in school assemblies is often exemplary. A few pupils with behavioural difficulties are managed sensitively by staff so they do not disturb the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Personal development benefits from the strong Christian atmosphere that is very evident in the school. Pupils help each other and willingly accept responsibilities.
Attendance	Below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Almost all of the teaching seen was at least satisfactory. Teaching is best in Years 5 and 6 where the pupils are challenged to produce their best work and learning accelerates in these classes. This is enabling the pupils to overcome their previous underachievement caused by ineffective teaching at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory in the Reception class but tasks set do not always match the children's ability and this restricts their learning. The focus on extending their independence and confidence does much to settle the children happily into school.

The teaching of mathematics is good. Numeracy skills are taught very well and lively introductions and practical activities accelerate learning in numeracy lessons. The teaching of English overall is satisfactory. There is a good focus on speaking and listening which has raised pupils' confidence in explaining their ideas. They use their knowledge of letters and sounds well in their early reading and writing. However, the teaching of literacy could be improved. The time allocated to reading and writing in the literacy hour is not always used effectively and this hampers pupils' progress. Teaching of science is good and pupils enjoy investigation.

Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and work is set that closely matches their need and enables them to learn at their own pace. Patient support enables them to make good progress. The learning needs of higher attaining pupils are not always met in reading and writing.

A significant strength within the teaching is the variety of methods used that stimulates the pupils and makes learning enjoyable. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, pupils respond positively and learning takes place in an orderly atmosphere. Planning is satisfactory but when teaching was less than satisfactory the purpose of the activities was unclear and the pace was slow. Assessment is satisfactory. Marking does not always tell pupils how to improve and targets set for pupils are too general. As a result pupils are not sure how to improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The focus on literacy, numeracy and personal and social development is relevant to the pupils. Information and communication technology is not sufficiently promoted in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers identify these pupils promptly and they are well supported in lessons. Management of provision for these pupils is good and they have individual education plans with detailed targets to help them improve.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The Christian nature of the school is very evident in its work and daily life. Provision for social and moral development is good and is based on valuing the individual. Provision for cultural development is sound but the school does not celebrate sufficiently the pupils' own culture or the richness and diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has very good procedures to support a secure and happy learning environment. The use of information from assessment is insufficiently used to set targets for pupils.

Parents have positive views of the school and are happy with the education their children receive. They are kept well informed about what is happening in school and the progress their children make. A small group of parents offers valuable support in making resources and raising funds for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a strong team and provide purposeful leadership with a clear focus on raising standards. Subject co-ordinators are not always aware of the standards being achieved in the subjects they manage.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and fulfil their statutory duties. They are well informed and bring considerable expertise to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses national and other assessments well to monitor the school's performance and look for areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources, human and material, are used effectively to the benefit of all pupils. Spending decisions are considered closely and evaluated to check they provide good value for money.

The school is well staffed with experienced teachers and support staff. Accommodation is satisfactory although the classroom for the youngest children is small and they have no secure outdoor accommodation. Resources are adequate. The library has insufficient good quality books.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They feel comfortable approaching teachers with any concerns.• The school is helping their children accept responsibility and grow in maturity.• Children are expected to work hard.• Teaching is good.• The management of the school is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A more interesting range of activities outside of lessons.• More homework set.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors conclude the use of homework to support learning is satisfactory and the range of activities to extend the curriculum is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception Class is well below that expected for their ages, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and social skills. Overall achievement is satisfactory although standards remain below those identified nationally in the early learning goals¹ by the end of the Foundation Stage.² For a few children standards are well below those expected by the end of the Reception Class especially in their language and communication and mathematical development. The school puts great emphasis on developing personal and social skills and achievement is good with many growing in confidence and learning to share and help each other. Sound progress is made in reading and writing and many enjoy listening to stories although few are yet reading or writing simple words unaided. Children can count to ten and are starting to form their numerals correctly but cannot use this information in simple calculations. Good progress is made in extending children's knowledge and understanding of the world because the school provides a stimulating range of activities. For example, they enjoy exploring for worms and watching snails move. Satisfactory progress is made in creative and physical development. The classroom has little space for role-play and the outdoor play area is limited and this restricts progress in these areas of learning.

2. The school's results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were well below the national average in reading and below average in writing. When compared with similar school results were much higher and were average in reading and above average in writing. The proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age was low and this held down the school's overall performance. Test results in mathematics were much better and were well above the national average. In fact when compared with similar schools they were in the top five per cent in the country. Fifty four per cent of the pupils reached beyond the average level and this is a significant achievement. Over time test results have been rising in mathematics. This is not the case in reading where results have been declining and writing has shown minimal improvement. Teacher assessment for science was well below average and no pupils exceeded the level expected for their age.

3. Standards of the present Year 2 pupils are below average in reading and writing, average in science and above average in mathematics. Overall achievement for many pupils is good. Considering the pupils' low level of attainment in reading and writing when they leave the Reception Class their achievement is satisfactory. Standards are higher than last year's test results because more pupils are reaching the level expected for their age. However, few are reaching beyond this and the higher attaining pupils are underachieving. This is not the case in mathematics and the current standards reflect very good achievement and a significant achievement for the good proportion of pupils working at the above average level. Achievement in science is good and has improved with more focus on investigation.

4. In reading the great majority of pupils know their letters and sounds and use them well in their early attempts at writing and reading. Many are confident in putting down their ideas in writing but few use imaginative vocabulary to make their writing interesting. They all enjoy stories but few read books other than the school's reading scheme books and have limited knowledge of authors. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be well below average. Good improvement has taken place in speaking and listening because teachers plan many opportunities for discussion and achievement is now good and pupils reach the level expected for their age. Pupils in Year 2 are confident working with numbers and the teaching challenges them to use these skills to solve problems and standards are good.

¹ Early learning goals are the expectation for most children to reach by the end of the Reception Class.

² Foundation Stage starts when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the Reception Class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal and social development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

Since the last inspection standards have risen significantly as teachers are more confident with the National Numeracy Strategy. Improvement is also good in science and in response to a more exciting and carefully planned curriculum pupils are more confident carrying out investigations although they are unable to set up their own investigations.

5. The school's results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have shown significant improvement in recent years and the school has received a School Achievement Award in recognition of this improvement. The overall rise in standards has been above the national trend. Better teaching is the key factor for this improvement along with more detailed planning and higher expectations. National test results in 2001 were above the national average in English, average in mathematics and well below in science. Compared to similar schools the results show pupils have been doing very well in English and mathematics where results were well above average. In English a high proportion of pupils exceeded the level expected for their age and this led to the very high results. This was not the case in mathematics and science when few pupils reached higher levels. Standards in science were average compared to schools with a similar intake. Last year pupils exceeded the school targets in English and reached them in mathematics.

6. School targets for the current Year 6 are not as high and this likely dip in test results is recognised both by the school and by the inspection. Standards in Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. The lower standards do not represent a fall in overall standards but are linked to the differing ability of the pupils. Sixty per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and two pupils have formal statements of need. The progress of the pupils in Year 6 was previously affected by the weak teaching identified at the time of the last inspection and these pupils did not achieve as well as they could. The school's records show that many pupils marked time at that time and little progress was made. There is enough evidence to show that pupils are overcoming this backlog of underachievement and overall achievement is now satisfactory. In Years 5 and 6, progress has been good because of the improved teaching. Pupils in Year 5 have benefited from the more stable staffing situation and standards for this year group are looking much better. Overall standards have improved since the previous inspection when they were seen to be well below average.

7. Many pupils in Year 6 are able to read at a level that enables them to read for understanding and research in other subjects. However, few are discerning readers and the lower attaining readers are still reading books from the school's reading scheme. In response to a wide variety of experiences, pupils recognise that the style of writing changes for different purposes. Many lack sufficient skill to write a well structured and imaginative piece of writing. As in the infants good progress is made in speaking and listening and many pupils are confident when speaking in front of an audience. Achievement is good in mathematics because the higher attaining pupils are benefiting from additional support and many of these are on course to exceed the average level. Most pupils have a range of strategies to solve problems but many struggle to do this mentally. Achievement is satisfactory in science. Pupils understand the principle of fair testing although many find it difficult to draw conclusions from their findings.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of effective support from teachers and dedicated support staff. When required individual education plans are provided and these have clear targets matched to pupils' identified needs. These plans are based on an evaluation of previous progress and so enable pupils to build successfully on prior attainment. This is most effective for pupils learning to read and write new words and regular checks and lots of praise encourage the pupils to learn their words. Pupils with behavioural difficulties make good progress because staff are patient and supportive and so pupils flourish and learn to accept responsibility for their actions. Test results suggest girls are doing better than boys in English but with small numbers these statistics are unreliable. There was no evidence of any inequality during the inspection and all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school does not identify any gifted or talented pupils.

9. Standards in other subjects are not depressed by numeracy and literacy standards.

10. Numeracy skills are promoted in information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils handle data to produce graphs. In design and technology, pupils work out how much material they need, then measure and cut out what they need to make their models. Pupils research information from the Internet in geography and have written extended topics in history.

11. In ICT standards are below average in Year 6 and this is because the school does not have resources for all aspects of the curriculum and the aspects of modelling and control are under-developed. Teachers are not always making the best use of resources to extend pupils' ICT skills. ICT is included as a priority in the school's improvement plan. Standards in all other subjects have greatly benefited from the improved teaching and are wholly satisfactory and in design and technology are good in Year 6. Singing is very good throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes continue to be good and to be a strength of the school. From the earliest years pupils work and play with enthusiasm and with a keen interest and awareness, so that they develop good skills of listening and communicating with others. In the Reception Class children settle well to their activities, working well in pairs and groups without direct supervision and free from any oppressive behaviour. Throughout school pupils concentrate on their activities well and do not waste time in lessons so that they make good progress with their personal development. Year 6 pupils show good attitudes and acceptance for their own learning. They know that homework must be completed and they are pleased with the opportunities they have for booster classes to give them extra help in developing their academic skills.

13. Pupils with special educational needs have many opportunities to work in small groups with the support of classroom assistants. This support enables them to grow in confidence and have good attitudes to their work. The minority of pupils who sometimes have difficulty in taking part in school life try hard and respond well to the individual care and warm and sympathetic environment provided by the whole community, adults and pupils alike.

14. Behaviour in school and in the playground is good. Lessons are not disrupted. Throughout the school pupils' conduct contributes to an environment in which they can work and play without fear of any physically aggressive or oppressive behaviour. The school takes action to re-inforce the rule that play fighting is not allowed in the playground. Pupils know that name-calling and any kind of racism is not acceptable. Occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour are always taken seriously and parents and school work closely together, devising individual programmes and special support to try to prevent a re-occurrence. The school has occasionally excluded a pupil for a short time, once in the last school year and twice this year.

15. Behaviour in assembly is exemplary. Every pupil responded to the special Ascension Day celebration of Mass. Pupils' participation and total devotion to the occasion was reflected in their beautiful singing and the part they took in the celebration, re-affirming the school's mission and purpose. In class they often respond well to the occasion. Following their class assembly, Year 6 pupils took part in a Circle Time³ session during which they talked about their feelings about the forthcoming national assessment tests. They thought about the ways in which they can raise their confidence and feelings of well being so that they will achieve their best. Their exemplary behaviour enabled them all to speak, to listen carefully to others and to think about their own individual feelings and share the aspirations of the whole class.

16. All pupils develop a strong sense of community and of pride in their school. As they progress through school pupils develop a good understanding of the needs and difficulties of others. In Year 6, pupils show a very high level of awareness of the part they can play in the school and the ways in which they can support and encourage each other, and the younger ones, so that their community is truly inclusive and every individual is valued. They willingly take on many responsibilities for the care and education of

³ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruption should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and so pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease free from interruption from other pupils.

others. Reading partners provide a regular opportunity for younger pupils to develop their skills and make friends outside their own immediate groups. Playground Pals are valuable helpers to the midday assistants and contribute very well to the happy playtime enjoyed by the younger pupils. All pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to take these responsibilities and they set a good example to the younger pupils throughout the school.

17. Relationships in the school are good. All the parents who completed the questionnaire say that teachers' expectations are high and the vast majority of parents say that their children like school. Pupils value the opportunity to make their own friends in the warm supportive family atmosphere in school and they extend these friendly feelings to the whole community. Every family is valued and supported by the staff. All who work in the school, whether employed or on a voluntary basis, play a valued part in the harmonious community, reflecting the school's strong Christian ethos.

18. Overall levels of attendance are below average and unauthorised absence is above average and gives cause for concern. Many pupils have very good and excellent records of attendance but a minority of pupils do not attend well enough to gain the most benefit from the education offered. The school is working very hard, in co-operation with the educational welfare officer to support families where children's attendance is below 90 per cent. The school has set targets to reduce the level of unauthorised absence and responds immediately to instances of unexplained absence. Some pupils do not arrive punctually and miss an essential part of the day. However, lessons start promptly and time is not wasted throughout the day. Pupils respond well to the requirements of a lively, busy community and of a full day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching is good and this leads to effective learning. During the inspection 30 lessons were seen and teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. In the lessons observed the teaching was very good in 10 per cent, good in 54 per cent, satisfactory in 33 per cent and less than satisfactory in one lesson. No poor teaching was seen. Teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection and is the major factor contributing to rising standards. The school now has a stable staffing situation and the previous weaknesses in the management of pupils were not evident during the inspection. Although overall the teaching seen was good there are aspects still requiring attention. The weakness in the teaching of ICT remains because the school does not have sufficient resources to teach all aspects of the curriculum and teachers are not making full use of the computers in their classrooms. Examples of good teaching were seen in most years but it is best in Years 5 and 6 where expectations are higher and learning accelerates in these classes. This has enabled many pupils to overcome the backlog of underachievement experienced in previous years and most have now made at least satisfactory progress between Years 3 and 6 and in mathematics overall achievement is good.

20. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. In the lessons seen teaching was good in 43 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the rest. Activities are planned to give children experiences in all of the recommended areas of learning. A positive feature is the good relationships and the focus on developing self-esteem. All staff are quick to spot opportunities to promote independence and encourage self-esteem. A suitable balance between teacher directed tasks and free choice leads to children gaining in confidence to accept responsibility for their own learning. The teaching of numeracy and literacy is satisfactory. Practical activities are used effectively and children get off to a good start in learning their letters and numbers. Insufficient opportunities are available for children to practise these skills throughout the day. Children learn a great deal about the world about them because teaching is good and interesting tasks capture the children's interest and accelerates their learning. The teaching of creative and physical skills is satisfactory but the cramped space restricts role-play and prevents tasks fully challenging children. A lack of understanding of the level at which the children are working occasionally leads to tasks being set that are too demanding and this is daunting for the children and restricts their progress.

21. In the rest of the school teaching and learning are good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge in most subjects. Teaching is especially good in science and mathematics and teachers are confident

supporting pupils while they work and in answering their questions. This improved teaching has led to higher standards in these subjects. The overall quality of English teaching is satisfactory with good teaching being seen in Years 5 and 6. The focus on speaking and listening enable pupils to make good progress in extending these skills.

22. A specialist music teacher in the juniors has a significant effect on the high standards in singing in the school. Teaching of physical education has improved in response to staff training. Teaching of design and technology is good in Years 3 to 6 because teachers provide exciting and challenging activities.

23. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is very good and pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress in learning how to solve problems. Lively introductions and quick-fire questions keep pupils working at full capacity and much new learning takes place in lessons. The teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory. Pupils are taught their letters and sounds effectively and many use this skill in their early reading and writing. Teachers do not make full use of the group reading sessions in the literacy hour to extend pupils' use of a variety of methods to tackle new words. Teachers are confident when teaching basic word processing skills and many pupils gain in knowledge to perform simple computer operations. Teachers do not extend these skills sufficiently because the school lacks resources for control and modelling aspects of the curriculum.

24. Teachers' planning is satisfactory. Teachers make effective use of the new planning guidelines to check on continuity of learning between years. They also check that in the mixed age classes pupils do not miss or repeat aspects of the National Curriculum. In numeracy lessons, teachers have a specific focus on what pupils are to learn in lessons and they share this with pupils so that they have a good understanding about the focus of the lesson. This is not always the case in other lessons where teachers focus more on the tasks to be completed rather than what pupils are to learn. When teaching was less than satisfactory in English it was unclear what the focus of the tasks was and over repetition of tasks led to little new learning taking place.

25. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' attitudes to work. Parents rightly identified that teachers expect their children to work hard. Expectations of standards are especially high in Years 5 and 6 and are the major reason for the very good teaching seen in these classes. In these classes teachers use questions to provoke thinking and deepen understanding. This was effective in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 with the teacher insisting on the correct use of terminology, such as 'inverse operations' and moving learning on at a fast pace. The higher attaining pupils receive additional support in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 and this is very effective in challenging and extending their learning. Teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of the presentation of work and some pupils do not always give enough attention to the neatness of their work. In Years 1 and 2 expectations in reading and writing are not always high enough for the higher attaining pupils.

26. Good teaching is characterised by the variety of activities teachers employ to capture the interest of the pupils. Standards in science have improved because the pupils are now given more opportunities to carry out investigations and find out information for themselves. Similarly, in design and technology, pupils enjoy a wide range of practical opportunities to design and make models and standards have significantly improved in the juniors. Lessons always include an opportunity for discussion and sharing ideas and this has been most effective in improving pupils' speaking skills.

27. Pupils with special educational needs particularly benefit from the variety of teaching methods to make learning interesting for them. In English, these pupils learn new words effectively because staff use small games and lots of praise so pupils are eager to learn. Regular checks are made on the progress these pupils make towards the targets in their individual education plans. When targets have been achieved new ones are set so that good progress is maintained. The overall quality of teaching for these pupils is good and pupils with behavioural difficulties flourish in this caring atmosphere.

28. Teachers' management of pupils is good. Most teachers and support staff show great tolerance when pupils find it difficult to maintain the high levels of behaviour expected of them. A quiet word is used

effectively to explain to pupils how their behaviour affects others and so they learn the importance of good relations. Behaviour is good and older pupils are especially skilful at working in groups because teachers make this a regular feature in lessons.

29. Effective use is made of support staff and they play a full and active part in lessons. The school has spent time on training these adults so that their support is skilful and advice is founded on a secure understanding of the needs of the pupils. Only occasionally do support staff offer too much advice and this restricts pupils' progress as they rely too much on the adult. This was a problem in a shared writing activity that led to pupils copying rather than attempting their own independent writing.

30. Resources have greatly improved since the last inspection and are now being used effectively in lessons. Teachers are not always making maximum use of ICT and these resources are underused to support learning across the curriculum.

31. Time is used well in most lessons especially in Years 2, 5 and 6 when teachers tell pupils how much time they have to complete a task and this leads to a buzz of activity and work being completed. The pace was too slow when teaching was less effective and too much time was spent being inactive and this led to a lack of interest and little new learning.

32. The use of assessment to improve learning is satisfactory. Lesson plans include an opportunity to record progress in lessons and many teachers use this effectively and adjust future lessons if a problem is identified. However, comments do not always identify the progress pupils are making and this leads to some tasks not matching pupils' ability. This particularly restricts the progress in writing of the higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are not always fully challenged. The school has started to identify individual and group attainment targets but as yet these are having little effect on standards because teachers are not referring to them in lessons or in the marking of work. Marking of work is variable. In a few classes it is done thoroughly and pupils are told clearly how to improve their work. A small number of examples show work is scantily marked and not given sufficient attention.

33. Although parents had a concern about the amount of work set to do at home it is generally satisfactory. It increases as pupils get older and prepares them well for their transfer to secondary education.

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

34. The quality of learning opportunities offered to all pupils is good. The school provides a rich curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Careful planning has led to a balanced curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on physical and creative as well as academic subjects. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum for ICT has developed although the lack of resources restricts the school giving enough attention to all aspects of the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities are now good and enrich the formal curriculum. In all areas of the curriculum, pupils have more opportunities to develop their investigational skills.

35. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and is developed around the six nationally recommended areas of learning for this age range. A new system of planning has been introduced, and activities are organised to meet the learning and developmental needs of pupils of all abilities. Priority is rightly given to personal, social and emotional development, and the development of language, literacy and numeracy skills because pupils enter school with very limited skills in these areas. The lack of resources and cramped space hampers the provision of stimulating role-play activities and limited outdoor provision restricts the imaginative use of outdoor equipment.

36. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 also places an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Curriculum time is suitably balanced to ensure each subject receives an appropriate share of teaching time. Additional numeracy and literacy lessons are provided and these

benefit both the higher and lower attaining pupils. The curriculum for all pupils is firmly rooted in the school's mission statement, which stresses the importance of educational, personal and spiritual development. Each subject has sound policies and a suitable programme of work, often based on a nationally recognised commercial scheme.

37. The school makes good provision for pupils identified as having special educational needs, and enables them to take part in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers take account of the needs of these pupils when planning lessons. The school ensures that equal opportunities for learning are available to all pupils, making good use of classroom assistants, volunteers, and resources. All pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement, an improvement from the previous inspection when groups were withdrawn from class and lessons were missed.

38. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The effectiveness of the teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory, and although standards in writing are beginning to rise, reading standards are slower to improve. An improvement since the last inspection is the opportunities planned into the curriculum to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills and this has led to many gaining in confidence to speak in front of an audience. This has a positive effect on standards in other subjects as pupils are able to share their ideas and gain in knowledge from each other. Strategies for teaching mathematical skills are good, and are helping to raise standards, particularly in the area of mental calculation. There is good provision for the pupils' personal social and health education. Working in a small group with a classroom assistant helps pupils who have difficulties or problems to feel confident and secure. The regular Circle Time in each class gives pupils an opportunity to consider their own and other people's feelings and emotional responses in a secure atmosphere. Parents and members of the parish attend some assemblies, making pupils feel part of a supportive community, and they look forward to the 'Golden Assembly' every Friday when awards for good work and behaviour are given and recorded in the head teacher's 'Golden Book.'

39. The school governors have approved the school policies for sex and drugs education. Most activities are included in the science curriculum, and the school nurse makes a useful contribution.

40. There is a good range of out-of-school activities that enriches the curriculum. Pupils eagerly attend the choir at lunchtime, and the music club held after school. Pupils participate in the local schools' Music Festival, and the choir has had great success, winning a prestigious position at this event. There is an art club and the news club produces a regular newsletter. Music tuition for the guitar, keyboards, recorder and flute is available to pupils at a small fee. Parents help by organising football training, and a team participates in the local boys five-a-side football. The school participates in an Arts Festival at the Catholic High School.

41. The curriculum is enriched by good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is similar to that reported at the last inspection.

42. There is very good provision for spiritual development. The Catholic nature of the school is very evident in displays around the school. Pupils take part in a collective act of worship each day either in the assembly or in the classroom. In assembly, a special reflective atmosphere is created with a focus on flowers and lighted candles. Each week there is a mass in school to which parents are invited. A special feeling of community is created by the beautiful hymn singing and the time for reflection which leads to a peaceful quietness. Religious education lessons are mainly Christian although world religions are studied so that the pupils know about Islam and festivals like Divali. Teachers provide opportunities for the pupils to reflect about life in many subjects. For example, in one science lesson the younger pupils showed a sense of excitement when they discovered worms in the soil and were amazed to see snails slowly move on the path. In another lesson the older pupils, who were enjoying investigating numbers, were fascinated with number patterns. The school encourages spiritual development by the way pupils are respected as individuals and in turn respect others.

43. The provision for moral development is good. All staff act as good role models and take every opportunity to emphasise right from wrong. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of what behaviour is acceptable in school and how their actions can affect others. In religious education, pupils become familiar with moral codes like The Ten Commandments and based on these rules pupils and teachers together devise classroom rules for the benefit of the whole group. Every Friday there is an Award Assembly where the pupils receive recognition for their good work and behaviour and this is recorded in the Golden Book. The house points system is also used to encourage the pupils to work hard and behave well. At the same time, belonging to a house develops a sense of community among the pupils. Moral themes are introduced in assemblies and discussed in religious education and Circle Time. The school belongs to the Fair Share Scheme promoted by the charity Cafod. Through this scheme the pupils support the concept that they should share what they have with others both materially, and socially. Pupils support charities, such as St. Joseph's Penny and are encouraged to care for those who are less fortunate than themselves. The school has an effective policy to combat bullying and discussions with the pupils indicate that this type of behaviour is rare and they know what to do if an unpleasant incident occurs.

44. The provision for social development is good. The school provides ample opportunities for the pupils to undertake responsibilities and this gives them a feeling of importance and raises their self-esteem. For example, in one class every pupil has a job to do in the classroom. Older pupils care for the younger pupils in the playground and this is effective in encouraging pupils to play happily together. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to act as prefects and carry out tasks like, setting out the hall for assembly and monitoring the cloakrooms. The older pupils go on a residential visit each year and this gives them the opportunity to live independently and accept responsibility for themselves. In lessons, pupils are made aware of the importance of safeguarding the environment. They know that too many cars cause pollution and that cutting down trees has an adverse effect on the environment. They also know that recycling materials and keeping our surrounding free from rubbish protects the environment. This is one reason why the school grounds are kept free from graffiti and litter. The school provides a feeling of community, belonging and equality for the pupils.

45. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school took part in an Arts Festival and the pupils won prizes in the choral speaking section. On World Book Day the local librarian comes to school to talk about interesting books. Music tuition is available in school for the keyboard, the guitar and the flute. In art lessons, pupils study the works of famous artists like Georgia O'Keefe and Gino Severini. The pupils go on educational visits to cultural centres like the Jewish museum, Toad Lane Local History Museum and the Science Museum. However, pupils do not read widely and have limited knowledge of classical texts and the school library does not encourage pupils to become enthusiastic readers. The focus in music is on performing, especially singing, and pupils have insufficient opportunities to listen to the range of music that is part of our western culture. The provision for multicultural development is satisfactory and similar to that reported at the last inspection. Only a few people come into school to demonstrate their culture. An Indian lady visited to talk about Divali and an African musician and dancer came into school for a workshop on African culture. In one art lesson, the pupils were studying the DreamTime art of the Aborigines from Australia and created their own paintings in a similar style. However, the pupils do not have enough experience of the art, music and dance from other cultures and are not sufficiently aware of the richness and diversity of the cultures that make up our present day society.

46. The school benefits from the strong links with the Catholic primary schools in Rochdale and the Catholic high school. The midday assistants have had the opportunity to share experiences and training with a nearby Catholic school. The headteacher visits the nearby nursery and the church playgroup and has good links with a cluster of Pennine schools. Year 6 pupils have good opportunities to meet their new secondary school teachers and to visit the Catholic high school before they start their secondary education. The schools take particular care that pupils with special educational needs make a smooth transfer to their next school. The high school will arrange as many visits as necessary to give pupils and their parents the information that is needed to re-assure them that they will benefit from all that secondary education has to offer. Many children attend a nursery or playgroup before entering school, but there are

no established links to provide information about children's pre-school experiences. The school is part of the local Catholic schools network and staff benefit from exchange of ideas and opportunities for joint training. The school takes part in a Diocesan group working on policies and strategies to counter racism in schools.

47. Pupils' personal development, education and well being are enriched by the strong links with the community especially the local churches. Governors and parishioners support special assemblies and celebrations of mass. There are good links with the parish, and parishioners come into school. Alice Ingham nuns come to school when pupils are working on their vocation project. This link has been extended to the Alice Ingham nuns in Kenya and Borneo, who provided altar cloths for use in school. Visits out of school support the school curriculum, for example, Year 5 pupils are to visit the 'Caribbean experience' at the Museum. Other visits are made to support history and environmental studies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. The school continues to have good policies and effective procedures that provide a high standard of care. The procedures to ensure pupils' welfare are very good and the staff work very well with specialist agencies and with the diocese on policies and procedures which will provide the best possible care in school. Pupils' overall personal development is monitored closely by class teachers and all the support staff in school.

49. Effective procedures to provide for child protection are in place and staff know what to do if they have any concerns.

50. Rigorous monitoring of the premises for health and safety issues and detailed risk assessments of every part of school contributes to a secure environment. The school's concern for safety remains but teachers no longer prevent pupils from undertaking challenging practical activities. The school extends the risk assessment procedures to activities outside school, such as when the older children talked to nearby residents as part of a history project. The procedures to care for pupils who have medical needs are very good and two members of staff have up to date training in first aid. The medical room provides a secure respite for pupils who may be temporarily unwell and any accidents requiring attention are recorded. The school medical service responds quickly and effectively to any concerns and provides expert advice to staff and parents.

51. The school has a good policy and effective procedures to make sure that behaviour in school is good. Pupils respond very well to the rewards for good and improved work and behaviour. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are recorded and may be discussed with parents so that pupils have the best support possible to live up to the school's expectations.

52. The behaviour policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and are applied consistently throughout the school and the school day. The school is well supported by specialists from the local authority and all staff contribute well to maintain the happy climate where pupils are free from fear of aggression and oppressive behaviour. The school ethos of kindness and care of others is constantly kept in pupils' minds during assemblies, Circle Time and in response to everyday incidents. Pupils are aware that name-calling as well as physical aggression and oppressive behaviour are unacceptable. In every class, the support staff are vigilant and very effective in their support so that lessons are not interrupted by any disruptive behaviour.

53. The midday assistants play a full part in the school's good procedures to promote pupils' social development. Consequently, at lunchtime, pupils play and talk happily with their friends. The supervisors know the pupils well and have their confidence and trust. In the playground, pupils play very well together under the good supervision. Play fighting is not allowed but occasionally a few pupils forget this rule. The playground would benefit from re-painted play markings and more equipment to encourage constructive

play.

54. The school has good procedures to promote pupils' attendance. Pupils have group and individual rewards for good attendance levels and the very large majority of parents say that their children enjoy school. The school and educational welfare officer work closely with families when their children's unauthorised absence gives cause for concern but the level of unauthorised absence is well above the national average. Immediate action is taken if absences are unexplained and the school has targets to reduce these absences year by year.

55. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection where it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment. When children start in school they are assessed and this information is used when planning the curriculum. The information is also being used to predict future targets for the school and to identify children who may require additional help. The assessment of English, mathematics and science is good. In these subjects pupils are assessed through the national tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. In the other years, the school also uses tests linked to the National Curriculum. The results of these tests are put onto record sheets from which it is possible to see at a glance how much progress the pupils are making and at what level they are working. The information is used to put pupils into target groups and then their progress is tracked and reviewed and, if necessary, pupils are transferred to another group. Teachers keep records of the books pupils have read but insufficient attention is given to identifying pupils' individual progress and this leads to pupils not always reading books at the current level and this restricts their progress. The procedures for assessing attainment and progress in ICT are satisfactory. A new system is now in place. This relates to the scheme of work and assesses and records the attainment of ICT skills. Assessment procedures in most other subjects are in the early stages of development and this makes it difficult for teachers and subject co-ordinators to monitor the progress of pupils.

56. The use of assessment information to adjust the curriculum is good. The results of national tests are analysed question by question so that weaknesses in specific areas can be identified. For example, in mathematics, the interpretation of data and the use of calculators were two aspects identified as needing attention. A special focus was placed on these areas and now pupils can confidently interpret line graphs, pie charts and bar graph and are confident using calculators where appropriate. The results of assessment are also used to identify special groups. This has been most effective for the group of higher attaining pupils from Year 4 who are now working with Year 5 pupils to give them more challenging work. Good use is made of assessment information to identify pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are then provided with additional help and have their progress checked in their individual education plans. This enables them to make good progress building successfully on their prior attainment.

57. The results of the assessments are recorded on a tracking sheet which indicates at what level the pupils are as they move through the school. The sheet also provides a visual interpretation of the standards of the whole group. For example, if most pupils are listed in the above average section then the group is of high ability and this is a useful indicator for setting future targets. The school has continued the practice of pasting individual attainment targets in pupils' English and mathematics books but there are weaknesses in this system. Firstly, targets are often too general and are not always worded clearly so that pupils understand them. Secondly, targets are not always linked to pupils' ability and pupils identified as being of different ability have the same target. Finally, teachers are not referring to the targets in lessons or in the marking of work and so they have limited effect on standards and pupils do not know what they need to do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. The school has good procedures to work in partnership with parents. The large majority of parents who completed the questionnaire and attended the parents evening express positive views about the quality of the education the school provides.

59. The response to the questionnaire was limited but of these parents the majority are in strong agreement that the quality of teaching and of leadership and management are good. They feel comfortable approaching the school with any concerns and feel well informed about the progress their child is making. Parents say that their children are happy, are making good progress and are helped to become mature and responsible. The large majority say that behaviour is good and their children get the right amount of homework. A minority of parents feels that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons and children do not get enough homework. However, inspectors consider that the range of after school activities and school visits is good especially considering the small number of teachers. Homework supports learning and is satisfactory.

60. The school has good procedures to work in partnership with parents at all times and particularly to form strong links with families who need to help their children through any difficulties. Parents of pupils who may have any special needs are always involved in procedures to give them the support they need and enable them to access specialist help from outside agencies.

61. All parents receive a curriculum newsletter which gives them good, detailed information of what their children will be studying during each term. Parents are always welcomed into school to discuss their children's progress and to raise any concerns. They have termly opportunities to see their children's work and to discuss their progress with the class teacher. The report sent home at the end of the year gives a clear picture of what their children have achieved, how well they have worked and targets for the future. Pupils add their own views of their progress and parents are welcome to discuss the report in school.

62. Parents are welcomed to special celebrations and assemblies in school and they provide valuable classroom support. Parents of children starting school attend a meeting during the term before their child starts school and a welcome assembly given by Year 6 pupils in September. This leads to children settling happily into school.

63. Several parents have taken further training and gained qualifications which enabled them to become staff members, both at Alice Ingham and in other schools. The small but very enthusiastic group of parents who meet weekly in school have made a highly valued contribution to the school as well as developing their own skills and helping their children's learning. The group have made resources for pupils such as story sacks and baking aprons and jackets for the Playground Pals and Litterbugs. Parents organised the highly successful Friends of the School social events. The school continues to welcome all parents into school and values their contribution to the community.

64. The parents' contribution to their children's learning is satisfactory. Most parents support their children's homework well and encourage them to read at home. They respond generously to their children's charity fund raising activities and to school fund raising. A few parents do not give sufficient attention to their duty to ensure their children's regular attendance at school.

65. The school always welcomes parents' views and has good plans for a regular consultation meeting to discuss any issues affecting the whole school and their children's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

66. The leadership and management of the headteacher, senior management team and governing body are good and have been successful in remedying the previous weaknesses and leading the school forward. The purposeful leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher has been the driving force in raising morale and improving teaching. As a result of these successful strategies, standards have risen. These changes have been brought about through collaboration and the school has maintained the family atmosphere and Christian values recognised in the last report. The aims and values of the school are clearly reflected in its life and work.

67. The role of subject managers has improved in response to a clearer definition of their responsibilities. However, more remains to be done. English and mathematics are now managed effectively because they are led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who carry out a monitoring role and so have a clear overview of standards in the school. Other co-ordinators have successfully introduced new planning guidelines and given good attention to improving resources. As yet many are not giving sufficient attention to the standards being achieved in their subjects. The further development of this management responsibility has been hampered by the change of staffing and several subject co-ordinators being new to their role. It is unclear who has the overall management of the Foundation Stage and so aspects, such as the accommodation and resources are not receiving sufficient attention.

68. The deputy headteacher has a heavy load of responsibilities including teaching pupils in Year 6. These are carried out diligently setting a good role model for colleagues. Management of special educational needs is good. The school now allocates time for the co-ordinator to carry out the required administrative work and records are maintained diligently. The school has already adapted their practice in line with the new Code of Practice.⁴ The focus of learning for these pupils is based on a review of previous targets and this is enabling them to make good progress. Pupils no longer miss numeracy or literacy lessons and the employment of additional support staff is evidence of the school's focus on including pupils in all activities.

69. The contribution of the governing body to the work of the school is good and has improved since the last inspection. Governors are more involved in the strategic planning of the school and committees meet regularly and check that statutory requirements are being met. They are well informed about what is happening in school. More detailed information is available on literacy, numeracy and ICT because the governors are linked to the school's co-ordinators. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs and the co-ordinator meet regularly and the governor is involved in the current changes in the Code of Practice. The governor has followed up concerns with observation in classes. This has proved effective in checking that the school is getting best value from its decision to increase the number of classroom assistants. The chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school and provides much support to the pupils and advice to the headteacher.

70. The school improvement plan has been the vehicle for tackling the issues from the previous inspection and, to some extent, this means it has not been focussing on weaknesses that recent national test results have revealed. For example, the plan does not identify how the school was to tackle the weakness in investigation and practical activities that occurred in the mathematics and science tests and assessments in the infants. However, in practice the school has put effective strategies in place and standards have improved. The headteacher has re-visited the document and identified clear priorities for the school with the main focus on raising standards. This plan is well drawn up and identifies action, criteria for success and costs.

71. The school has given considerable attention to monitoring teaching and these arrangements are now good and have led to the improvement in teaching. The local authority has been involved and when weaknesses were identified additional training has taken place. This has led to better use of support staff to help pupils with behavioural difficulties and this has a positive effect on maintaining a happy atmosphere in the school. However, there is still scope for more sharing of good practice especially looking at the marking of work and expectations of the pupils' presentation of work.

72. The school is giving good attention to assessing how well the school is doing. Staff and governors scrutinise test results and use this information to adjust the curriculum when a weakness is identified. This has led to improvement in national test results and the school has received an Achievement Award in recognition of this.

⁴ Code of Practice – this gives advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development.

73. Procedures for performance management are in place. The school places significant emphasis on staff development and training is linked to the school's identified need. This has led to teachers having a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. ICT is identified for further training. The school has been awarded Investors in People status in recognition of its support for all staff and the encouragement of their career development. The school offers placements for students on teacher training, nursery nurses and students from the local secondary school. Monitoring arrangements are in place and the school has a pack of useful information to help these students and temporary teachers. This enables the school to get maximum benefit from these people.

74. Financial administration is good. Recommendations made by the most recent audit have been addressed. Spending is closely monitored and the school administrative staff provides very effective support making good use of ICT to keep a close check on spending. The budget is based on future numbers in the school and advice from the local authority. Governors are fully involved in this process and are very aware of the difficulties caused by falling rolls in the school. Responsible action has been taken to avoid future redundancies if the numbers continue to fall. Additional funding is spent correctly. Funding to support pupils with special educational needs is used effectively to provide additional support which enables these pupils to make good progress. The school has only recently been in a position to have surplus funds and this money is being spent prudently and governors ensure that best value is obtained. For example, they compare their results with other schools, consult with parents and the local authority and have used assessment data well to set realistic targets for improvement. Research is carried out and extra quotations are sought for any major spending decisions.

75. Learning resources are satisfactory and have greatly improved since the last inspection. The school has plans to further extend ICT resources and books.

76. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school has done much to improve the condition of the building with new window frames and decoration. The classroom allocated to the youngest children is small and they lack a secure and stimulating area for outdoor play. Classrooms are tidy and the attractive displays enhance the learning environment. However, there are still pockets of outdated and poor quality books which need discarding. The library is spacious but is not Dewey classified and so pupils are not learning these essential library skills. Also the range and quality of books is very limited and so it is not fulfilling its purpose to provide for independent learning.

77. The school has a good number of teachers and support staff. Additional teachers for literacy, mathematics and music provide specialist help and do much to boost standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to continue the improvement and further raise standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Continue to raise standards in reading and writing by:
 - making better use of the time allocated to group reading in literacy lessons;
 - assessing and recording more thoroughly the progress pupils are making in reading so that books are more closely matched to pupils' ability;
 - providing a wider range of books to create more enthusiasm for reading;
 - making sure that higher attaining pupils are always fully challenged in writing activities and that more attention is given to the presentation of work;
 - improving the quality of books in the library and extending its use for independent research.

Discussed in paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 7, 23, 24, 25, 32, 38, 45, 55, 76, 89, 90, 91, 94, 95, 97.
This issue has already been identified by the school.

- (2) Improve standards in information and communication technology by:

- providing resources and training so that sufficient attention is given to developing the skills of modelling and control;
- making better use of computers in classrooms;
- using ICT to support learning in other subjects.

Discussed in paragraphs 11, 23, 30, 73, 75, 97, 105, 116, 124, 131, 133, 142, 145, 147, 148, 149.

This issue has already been identified by the school.

- (3) Extend the use of information gained from assessment to set individual attainment targets for pupils which they understand. Referring to these in lessons and marking.
Discussed in paragraphs 32, 55, 57, 98, 105, 106.
- (4) Extend the role of co-ordinators of subjects other than English and mathematics so that they have a clearer understanding of standards being achieved in their subjects.
Discussed in paragraphs 67, 71, 80, 98, 117, 125, 133, 143, 156, 163.
- (5) Further promote attendance by making parents more aware of the educational implications of children missing school.
Discussed in paragraphs 18, 54, 64.

In addition to the key issues above, the governors may wish to consider including the following minor issues in the action plan:

- improve the outdoor accommodation for children in the Reception Class;
Discussed in paragraphs 1, 20, 35, 76, 80, 82, 83, 87, 88.
- extend the pupils' knowledge of their own and other cultures.
Discussed in paragraphs 45, 94, 153, 162.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	16	10	1	0	0
Percentage	0	10	54	33	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	124
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	48
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Na
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
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 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	10	3	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	85 (81)	100 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	12	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	92 (89)	69 (89)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

** figures not included because they are 10 or less*

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	9
	Girls	13	10	13
	Total	19	17	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (75)	65 (54)	85 (82)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	9
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	19	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (64)	65 (57)	81 (64)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	345470
Total expenditure	337777
Expenditure per pupil	2125
Balance brought forward from previous year	7223
Balance carried forward to next year	14916

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	124
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	38	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	41	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	47	9	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	32	18	0	0
The teaching is good.	74	20	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	17	15	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	29	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	41	6	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	26	6	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	26	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	32	23	6	15

Other issues raised by parents

Parents have positive views of the school.

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

79. The school has continued to make satisfactory provision for children in the Reception Class. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with good elements in the teaching of personal and social skills. The broad and balanced curriculum covers all the six areas of learning for young children and they enjoy a varied range of activities. Their progress in each area is carefully monitored to enable the teacher to provide suitable tasks and to track the progress of each individual child. The planning system was introduced as a positive response to the findings of the previous inspection and shows clear learning objectives, but sometimes the activities are too demanding for the learning needs of different children. The teacher and classroom assistant provide good role models and have good relationships with the children, and this helps the children to develop their confidence and social skills. Children with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress because they receive sensitive support and guidance, and when required individual support is provided following carefully planned programmes. Currently, no parents volunteer to help in class, although their help would be welcomed. Most parents listen to their child read when they take a book home, and a good proportion attend parents' evenings.

80. Children start in the Reception Class at the beginning of the autumn term of the school year in which they become five. Before they start school, nearly all the children have attended a nursery or other form of organised pre-school activity. There were 22 children in the class during the current inspection. When they join the class, attainment is well below that normally seen in children of their age, especially in the key areas of language development and mathematical understanding. Overall achievement is satisfactory although by the time they leave the Reception Class many children still have a long way to go to reach the early learning goals in any of the areas of learning. Overall attainment is below, and in some cases well below, that normally seen in children at that age. There is significant emphasis on developing the children's personal and social skills and pupils make good progress in this area of learning although few reach the level expected for their age. Many children start school with limited knowledge about the world around them and their progress in this area of learning is good because they are introduced to a wide range of experiences. Although there is satisfactory provision and resources for the education of the children in the Foundation Stage, the classroom is small, storage space is cramped and there is no separate, secure outdoor area for the children, an issue identified at the time of the previous inspection. It is unclear who has overall management of the Foundation Stage as the headteacher and classteacher currently share this role. This means that some aspects, such as improving resources, are not always receiving enough attention.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. There is good emphasis on the development of social skills and teaching and learning are good in this area of learning. The teacher and the classroom assistant provide a welcoming, secure environment in which the children develop self-confidence and self-esteem. The teacher establishes the atmosphere of the weekly Circle Time by speaking in a calm, quiet way. This sets an example as a good listener, and gently encourages the children to express their thoughts and feelings when they quietly say what makes them special. The children are gradually becoming more confident, and although hesitant, are willing to share their ideas with the group. Children are encouraged to consider and respect other people's ideas and thoughts, and to be kind to each other. A few children do not yet find this easy. Opportunities to choose activities in 'free choice' sessions help children learn to take decisions and develop independence. They get themselves ready for physical education lessons, are taught to use equipment with care and to tidy up after themselves. Routines to settle children to work quietly, or gather on the carpet quickly are not yet fully established, which means that occasionally time is wasted. Although children make good progress in this area, their personal and social development does not meet the early learning goal when they move into Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

82. Most children have poorly developed language skills when they start school. Many responses are limited to single words, or short phrases, and their vocabulary is narrow. Overall achievement is satisfactory with children gaining in confidence although attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing are below, and for a few children well below, the level expected for this age group. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and all staff encourage children to talk about their work in small groups to develop their skills and extend their vocabulary. The children enjoy discussing the events in the book, 'Each peach, pear, plum,' although many find it difficult to express their ideas. To encourage the children to listen well, staff set a good example by listening to their responses carefully, and giving clear instructions for all activities. There are limited opportunities for children to develop their language skills when acting out roles because the cramped role play area, currently arranged as a travel agency, does not inspire their imagination.

83. The teacher uses carefully chosen books and stories to stimulate the children's interest in reading during literacy lessons and story time. She captured the children's interest well by using real fruit to introduce the story 'Each peach, pear, plum'. Children are beginning to recognise the terms 'title' and 'author', and about half can point them out on the cover of a book, although they need a great deal of help. Only one child could suggest a favourite story and only a few children read a variety of books at home. There is an adequate supply of books for the children, but limited space in the classroom means these are not displayed in a way that attracts them to select and read a book, and there is no area where they can look at a book quietly. All children have a reading book, and parents are encouraged to hear them read regularly at home, although not all do so. All children recognise that print carries meaning, and many are beginning to recognise the words that they meet frequently. Lower attaining children only recognise a few words, such as 'look' or 'help' whilst the few higher attaining children are starting to read easy stories. Sounds and letters are taught effectively through practical activities and many children are beginning to know that letters have individual sounds, and recognise a few at the beginning, but not at the end, of words. Higher and middle achieving children know that 'c' and 'k' sometimes make the same sound, and that letters can be blended together to make the new sounds 'sh' and 'th', and can read new 3 letter words by breaking them into individual sounds.

84. Nearly all the children recognise and write their own names unaided. They copy beneath the teacher's script, and their handwriting is usually legible. There is a writing table, but this is in a rather inaccessible position and children often colour pictures rather than use the opportunity to extend their writing skills. A weakness in the teaching is the insufficient opportunities for children to practise their free writing and few are able to write independently.

Mathematical development

85. Considering children start school with limited mathematical skills, achievement is satisfactory although the majority do not reach the early learning goal by the end of the Reception Class. A few children have standards which are well below average when they leave the Reception Class. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and lessons incorporate ideas from the National Numeracy Strategy. Children count to 10 and back. Practical activities encourage learning and children are confident using number cards in a number ordering activity. Using these cards, children quickly found the number that came after 7 but had difficulty working out which number comes before, because they were not given enough opportunities to practise and reinforce their learning in this activity. Few are able to carry out simple calculations. The children are beginning to write the numbers 1, 2 and 3 legibly, and are given good opportunities to develop their hand-eye co-ordination skills by tracing lines on large digits. In one task, children could match dots with the correct number digit, but the extra task for higher ability children, to find the correct number word was too difficult for their reading level. A good range of mathematical equipment enables children to practise matching, sorting and counting, but few opportunities for naming and recognising shapes were observed. The water and sand trays are often used outdoors and children enjoy practising weighing and measuring, whilst discussing which container holds the most water and how to make the waterfall work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. The children have limited experience and knowledge of the world around them when they come into school and they make good progress and achieve well although they do not reach the early learning goal by the end of the Reception Class. Teaching and learning are good and a wide range of activities is provided to stimulate the children's interest. These include outdoor activities to support learning, making good use of the school grounds. The classroom assistant took groups of children onto the field to dig for worms, after reminding them about safety, 'Do not put the soil near your mouth'. There is a great sense of excitement and wonder when the children discover some worms, promoting a spiritual response to the natural world. Children watch the snails in the vivarium with great interest, feed them carefully with fresh leaves and observe them closely through hand lenses. They enjoy looking at the information books about small creatures, but limited previous knowledge meant that lower attaining pupils could not name a ladybird in the book. Children have planted beans and carefully observed their progress and they know they need water to grow. They learn about their own bodies through activities on the five senses. Although the role-play travel agency is limited in resources it is successfully developing the children's understanding of a wider environment when they think about planning holidays. Children learn about changes over time when they illustrate the four seasons of the year, and look at the changes from an egg to a chicken. There is a range of suitable programs for the computer that the children use confidently, and they use the mouse to access different games. Large building and model-making equipment encourages the children to learn about how things work, and they make model vehicles with wheels on axles. Weekly religious education lessons are planned in accordance with the Diocesan guidelines, contributing to the children's growing spiritual awareness.

Physical development

87. Achievement is satisfactory in this area, and by the end of the year, the majority of children have nearly attained the early learning goal for physical development. The small classroom and the lack of a stimulating outdoor space restrict progress for the children. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and effective use is made of a good range of small equipment to encourage the control and the development of skills. The children are taught to cut, stick and glue and use tools, paintbrushes, and scissors with care. Large wheeled toys, balls and ropes are used regularly on the paved area outside the classroom, but this area is too small for the provision of a full range of activities, such as a slide or climbing equipment. The limited classroom space restricts the use of the large building equipment. Children have a weekly physical education lesson in the school hall, and can get themselves ready in their kit. Although they know they must change for physical education, a large number of children do not bring their kit regularly. The children warm up by moving round the room safely with regard for others. They hop, jump and skip although many struggle to control their movements. The teacher makes the activities fun in order to teach the children to listen to her instructions carefully, 'Put your nose on a red mat' but does not show them how to improve their skills or movements.

Creative development

88. Although sound progress is made standards are below those normally seen in children of the same age. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area. Children have access to a range of tools and materials, which they use sensibly. However, opportunities for role play are very limited, due to the lack of space in the classroom, and there are no puppets or small toys provided for children to devise their own stories and games. There is no large space for a 'wet' area where children can express their ideas with paint and other materials. Children can use the computer to create linear coloured pictures of faces. After looking at the Van Gogh paintings, they have used paint effectively to make bold, three-dimensional sunflowers. They create collages using brightly coloured paper and card. In a music lesson, children compose a tune, using a picture of 'The hungry caterpillar' made from coloured circles of tissue paper. Different musical instruments are linked to each colour and the children play when the teacher points to

their colour. This effectively introduces them to early composition skills. The children are very interested in the sounds made by each instrument, and respond enthusiastically, but the activity is not developed to teach children to clap the rhythm of their tune.

ENGLISH

89. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are below those expected for pupils of this age in reading and writing. Considering pupils start in Year 1 with below average reading and writing skills the current standards show satisfactory achievement. The school has put significant emphasis on promoting speaking and listening skills and the great majority of pupils reach the expected level. This is a significant achievement for many pupils who start school lacking confidence and with limited vocabulary. The pupils' confidence in expressing opinions and sharing ideas has a positive effect on standards in other subjects. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them because they receive effective support from teachers and support staff. The school makes effective use of additional funding to provide more teachers and pupils benefit from the extra attention they receive in small groups.

90. Current standards show good improvement since the last inspection in speaking because lessons include many opportunities for pupils to take part in informal discussions as well as formal debate. Standards in reading and writing have fluctuated because of the differing abilities of each year group. The results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 show standards have improved slowly in writing but have fallen in reading. Test results showed standards in reading were well below the national average and writing was below the national average. Compared with similar schools results were better and were average in reading and above average in writing. The proportion of pupils who reach the level expected for their age is close to the national average. However, many pupils only just reach this level and few reach beyond it and this is holding down the overall standards in Year 2. Current standards reflect these results and show underachievement of the higher attaining pupils.

91. Analysis of the test results at the end of Year 6 show a more positive picture of rising standards. The overall trend since 1999 has been above the national trend. The test results in 2001 were a significant achievement for the school. Results were above the national average and well above the average of similar schools. Thirty five per cent of the pupils exceeded the level expected for their age and this was higher than standards found nationally. The school does not expect the current Year 6 to reach these high standards and has set much lower targets. The class includes a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs who, although making good progress, do not reach the average level. The overall progress of the Year 6 pupils has been hampered by the weaker teaching identified in the previous inspection. During this difficult time the school's assessment records show many pupils marked time or made unsatisfactory progress. Over the last two years progress has picked up in response to good teaching and many pupils have started to close the gap and reach the national average. However, few reach beyond this and overall standards are below average. Current targets for Year 5 pupils are higher and inspection evidence shows the school is on course for standards to rise again.

92. The school's test results indicated that girls outperform boys in English. However, with small numbers the picture fluctuates from year to year and there was no evidence during the inspection of disadvantage to either gender.

93. Standards in speaking and listening are average. In Year 2, pupils listen attentively to stories and to instructions and enjoy the opportunities to collaborate in groups. They listen to each other and share their ideas, showing an understanding of the need to take turns in conversations. A few have too limited a vocabulary to explain in detail what they are doing. In Year 6, pupils have gained in confidence to speak in front of an audience because teachers provide ample opportunities to develop this skill. Pupils read prayers in front of pupils, parents and visitors with assurance and clarity of speech. In discussions pupils extend their opinions with information and are able to speak at greater length about their ideas. Many pupils use technical terms correctly in other subjects. For example, they talk about 'condensation' and

‘evaporation’ in science. Through careful listening pupils follow the thread of debate and show good recall of previous work. In the conclusion of the lessons pupils offer constructive comments to their peers because the teacher insists that they are ‘critical listeners.’ The lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs ask few questions and often rely too heavily on the other pupils and this restricts their progress.

94. Standards in reading are below average. The great majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 progress confidently through the school’s reading scheme and overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are taught their letters and sounds carefully and use this skill to tackle new words. However, a few rely too heavily on this skill and have problems with more complicated words. Higher attaining pupils are given insufficient range of reading material to be challenged and few pupils have opinions about a range of stories. The pupils who read to the inspectors understood the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and when prompted used the index to find information. They were less confident reading the text for information. This skill improves in Year 6 and higher attaining pupils can find information on a page, read it silently and then explain the main points in their own words. Most pupils can read independently and show an understanding of the text. However, the weakness in lack of enthusiasm for reading remains and few pupils have favourite authors. Pupils are still opting to read books from the reading scheme and refer to these as their favourite stories. A contributory factor for this is the school’s reading records which lack sufficient detail about the difficulties pupils are encountering in their reading and how these can be overcome. This leads to pupils reading books which do not match their prior attainment. The school library does little to stimulate reading because of a lack of good quality fiction and non-fiction books. This is an area of development identified by the school.

95. Standards are below average in writing in Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, many pupils are writing independently and able to put down their ideas in writing. They understand when writing a story it needs to have a structure and many make a good attempt at retelling the story of the Goldilocks and The Three Bears. Although many pupils are reaching the level expected for their age few reach beyond this and higher attaining pupils lack sufficient skills to express their ideas fluently. Higher attaining pupils are underachieving because of the lack of emphasis on the varying forms of writing. Pupils are developing their early punctuation skills and many understand the need for capital letters and full stops but are not always using these correctly in their free writing. Spelling is satisfactory and many are making effective use of their knowledge of letters and sounds in their spelling. Most have a legible style of handwriting although upper and lower case letters are mixed and writing is not always as neat as it could be. Teachers’ expectations of presentation are not always high enough in Years 3 to 6 and marking does not identify to pupils when their work is not as neat as it could be. In Year 6, about a half of the pupils have a joined-up style of handwriting while others are less consistent in style and mix print and joined-up writing. This is not the case in Year 5 where the great majority of pupils have a neat style of handwriting. Pupils in Year 6 have a clearer understanding of the different styles of writing and have written instructions, playscripts and newspaper articles. The higher attaining pupils are skilful in writing a letter of complaint and list their concerns and have a strong conclusion, for example, ‘you obviously do not understand...’ The lack of variety in language is the difficulty holding down standards for the other pupils and many still rely heavily on their spoken language in their writing. In Year 6 many pupils are not always using punctuation correctly to structure their writing.

96. Standards in other subjects are not depressed by lack of literacy skills because support staff offer effective help so all can complete the written tasks and follow written instructions and texts. Teachers effectively promote these skills and this enables pupils to practise what they have learnt in literacy lessons. For example, in Year 5 pupils label diagrams showing how a strawberry seed grows into a plant. In Year 2, pupils write a short prayer of thanks showing an understanding of writing for different purposes. ICT is used effectively for research especially in the juniors when pupils have compiled topic folders for history. Many pupils are confident word processing their work and older pupils are beginning to edit their work on the screen.

97. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. The best teaching seen was in Years 5 and 6 and learning accelerates in these years. Teachers are using the National Literacy Strategy for their

overall planning and this is leading to better continuity of learning between years. The overuse of worksheets identified in the last inspection was not evident and most lessons are conducted at a lively pace that maintains pupils' enthusiasm. Management is based on positive relationships and behaviour is good. Many teachers now make better use of ICT to support learning although this is not always the case and this is an identified area for further development. Teachers inform pupils about the tasks to be covered but do not always make clear what it is they want the pupils to learn. This was a weakness when teaching was unsatisfactory and planning was unclear about the focus of the activities and little new learning took place. Teaching of literacy is satisfactory but teachers are not always making best use of the group reading sessions in the literacy hour. Limited time is allocated to actual reading as a group, and the lack of any assessment makes it unclear how pupils are extending their reading skills in this time. Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in Years 1 and 2. For example, pupils of differing abilities complete the same worksheets. This restricts the progress of the more able pupils who could be working at a higher level. Most teachers give good attention to marking pupils' work but this is not always the case with some work scantily marked and not informing pupils how they can improve.

98. Management of the subject is generally effective. Test results have been scrutinised and this has been very useful in setting realistic targets and tracking the progress of pupils. The school has started to set individual and group attainment targets but these are not always understood by pupils. Teachers do not refer to them consistently in lessons or marking and so, as yet, they are having limited effect on progress. Monitoring of teaching and analysis of work has been effective in identifying areas for development and improving teaching. However, there is still scope for sharing some of the good practice seen to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching. The previous inspection identified a weakness in resources and the school has spent wisely extending books but still has a way to go. The library remains poorly stocked and is underused for independent research.

MATHEMATICS

99. Standards of work in Year 2 are above average and this is very good improvement since the last inspection when it was reported that attainment was below average. Achievement is very good considering the low level at which the pupils enter the school. Standards are below average at the end of Year 6 and are similar to the last inspection. However, there are specific reasons for this low level of attainment. Firstly, 60 per cent of the pupils in the class are on the school's register of special educational needs and, although these pupils are making good progress, they are not working at the level expected for their age. Secondly, the ineffective teaching recorded in the last inspection adversely influenced the early education of these pupils and many pupils made little progress at that time. The standards reached by the pupils in the class who are not on the special educational needs register are above average because these pupils benefit from additional teaching and many are reaching levels higher than those expected for their age. Overall achievement in Year 6 is good and often better for the pupils working at levels higher than those expected for their age.

100. The results in the national tests for seven-year olds in 2001 were well above average when compared to all schools and very high when compared to schools with a similar intake. The number of pupils reaching beyond the level expected for their age was very high. Test results have risen significantly over the last two years. In the national tests for eleven-year olds the results were average when compared to all schools and well above average when compared with similar schools. Trends in results have been good over the past three years and the school comfortably reached their target for the year. The number of pupils reaching above the level expected for their age was well below average when compared to all schools but average when compared to similar schools. There was no significant difference in the standards of boys and girls.

101. Through the effective methods used in the numeracy hour in Year 2 the pupils manipulate numbers confidently and are developing good methods of solving number problems. For example, in one lesson the pupils were counting on and counting back in two's and fives. They could think about counting on numbers in their heads because of the effective methods used by the teacher. During one activity the pupils closed their eyes and counted backwards from 40 in fives in time to the sound of the teacher

dropping wooden blocks into a tin. At irregular intervals the teacher stopped dropping the blocks and asked the pupils what number they had just counted. As a result, most pupils could give the correct answer. Pupils in Year 2 easily double number between one and ten and using this knowledge they quickly calculate $7+8$ because it is a near double. Pupils know their 2,5,10 times tables and in their books add together four numbers including two digit numbers. They are confident with place value up to 1000 and are able to add and subtract two digit numbers. Pupils also have an understanding of multiplication and division. Pupils are used to investigating in mathematics and can classify shapes according to the number of faces, edges and corners. The lower attaining pupils made good progress in this lesson because they worked with simpler shapes and were supported by the classroom assistant. The teachers ensure that the pupils use the correct vocabulary and they use mathematical terms like "square based pyramid" and "triangular prism". Pupils are also familiar with a range of two and three dimensional shapes and classify shapes that are symmetrical and non symmetrical.

102. In Year 6, pupils have developed effective strategies for solving problems. Many can calculate mentally. For example, many can double numbers like 40 and then use this knowledge to double numbers like 39 although the lower attaining pupils find this difficult. Most pupils have quick recall of their multiplication tables although many struggle with their 7,8 and 9 times table. The great majority of pupils are confident with the four rules of number and the higher attaining pupils do long multiplication and long division. Pupils have lots of practice in using their mathematical knowledge. For example, they are encouraged to find more than one way to solve problems. The higher attaining pupils confidently apply their skills to problems including several calculations, while the other pupils find this more difficult, but with adult support, are able to investigate problems involving ratios. The school invests in additional staff to lead a booster class for the higher attaining pupils. This is very effective and pupils are working at high levels applying their mathematical skills to problems. After analysing the results of national tests teachers found that handling and interpreting data was a weakness. This has been given a higher focus and pupils are now able to interpret line graphs showing, for example, sunrise at different times of the year and pie charts recording birth weight. The pupils have a wide range of mathematical experience and knowledge. They are familiar with fractions and higher attaining pupils can change them to decimals and percentages. Pupils enjoy resolving number sequences. They understand probability and one group of pupils confidently solved a problem about the number of times a dice is likely to fall on a six when thrown a certain number of times. The teacher insists that the pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary and most are familiar with shapes like trapezium, triangular prism and heptagon. The standards in Year 5 are above average and in one lesson half the class was able to use long multiplication with confidence. The school has set high targets for Year 5 and current standards show the school is on course to return to the high standards reached in the 2001 national tests.

103. By its policy and in practice the school provides inclusive education and there is full access to the curriculum for all pupils. Although the topic in each class includes all the pupils so that the National Curriculum is covered, the work is thoughtfully matched to cater for the varying abilities and ages in the class. As a result, in the daily mental mathematics session, less difficult questions are directed to the pupils with special educational needs so that they are fully involved in the lesson and make good progress.

104. Other subjects are supported by numeracy and this helps to consolidate learning and makes mathematics more relevant. For example, in science the pupils use mathematics to record pulse rate changes on a bar graph. In design and technology pupils measure accurately and one class made a graph to present the findings of a favourite biscuit survey

105. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with the teaching of basic numeracy skills and mental mathematics being very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The lively lessons keep pupils interested and the boredom reported in the last inspection was not evident. The teachers' knowledge of mathematics is good and they organise the numeracy hour effectively. Pupils enjoy learning how to manipulate numbers in their heads and are eager to learn about strategies that make calculating easier. Another strength of teaching is the planning of work to meet the various ability groups and this has an important influence on learning. Teachers use assessment well to guide planning and to track pupils' progress. Overall marking is satisfactory but does not often enough inform pupils how they might improve.

The teachers have a warm relationship with their pupils and, as a result, their confidence is bolstered so that they are prepared to tackle problems that they thought initially were too difficult. Often the teachers create a working atmosphere in the classroom where pupils concentrate and behave well and this makes an important contribution to the improving standards. Teachers' expectations are realistic and they set work that challenges the various ability groups in the class and this stimulates learning. Homework makes a valuable contribution to the improving standards. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 ensure that the pupils have instant recall of their tables and this is one reason for the improvement in numeracy. Teachers do not make enough use of ICT to support learning in the subject.

106. Management of the subject is good. The effective monitoring of teaching has had a positive effect on the improvement in teaching and learning. The work produced by the pupils is scrutinised to see how successful the learning has been. A significant factor leading to improvement has been the introduction of effective assessment systems that enable teachers to track pupils' progress. The analysis of test results shows the teachers where difficulties are so that it is possible to plan to resolve them. For example, the use of calculators was a weakness and, with an adjustment of the curriculum, this has now been remedied. Currently, individual and group targets are being set but they are not always clear to pupils or referred to in lessons and so are not having any major effect on standards.

107. Mathematics makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils as they learn to work in groups, join in discussions and realise that challenging mathematics can be interesting and enjoyable.

SCIENCE

108. Standards of work are average at the end of Year 2, and below average at the end of Year 6. This is good achievement for pupils in Year 2, who have progressed well from a well below average starting point when they entered the school. The great majority of these pupils are reaching the expected level for pupils of their age and a small number are reaching the higher level. This is an improvement on teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 last year which showed standards were well below average. The improvement has been brought about by better teaching with an emphasis on investigation.

109. Test results at the end of Year 6 were well below average although trends show a picture of steady improvement. The pupils in the current Year 6 have not reached the level expected for their age for two reasons:

- a high proportion of them have special educational needs;
- they were affected in previous years by the unsatisfactory teaching identified at the previous inspection.

110. In response to the present good teaching these pupils are now making better progress, and their overall achievement is satisfactory. About half of the class are on course to attain the expected level in the national tests this summer, and several are predicted to achieve the higher level. The pupils currently in Year 5 are working at the levels expected for their age, and this will improve the school's future results in science. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

111. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in science, because class teachers provide appropriate work to meet their needs, and deploy classroom assistants and volunteer helpers well to provide them with good support. Pupils often work in mixed ability groups in science lessons, giving them good opportunities for personal development.

112. There has been good improvement in science since the previous inspection. This found that although teaching was satisfactory, standards were below average in Year 2 and Year 6, the science curriculum was not fully covered and pupils had few opportunities for investigation. The school responded positively to these findings and teaching is now good overall, standards have risen, the curriculum is fully

covered and well planned, and there is an appropriate emphasis on pupils developing pupils' skills of investigation.

113. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy investigation and explore the properties of different materials to discover which make the best insulators by wrapping ice cubes in foil, newspaper, egg boxes and fur fabric. In response to effective questioning the pupils make predictions and express their ideas about the different materials in order to encourage the development of scientific skills. In one lesson pupils were given an additional challenge when they were asked to investigate the best place in the classroom to melt an ice cube. Many accomplished this task but were less confident in suggesting reasons why some materials made better insulators than others. Each group of pupils made a lively presentation of their findings to the class, using scientific vocabulary. This gave them good opportunities to consolidate their scientific knowledge whilst improving their speaking and listening skills. Pupils record their findings in a variety of ways, for example higher achieving pupils give good written accounts and use accurately drawn illustrations to show different sources of light. Middle achieving pupils make lists of plastic or paper items, and lower achievers are able to write brief accounts in their own words. When studying forces, whilst all pupils recognised the difference between a push and a pull, their learning was limited because they did not fully understand the task. The standard of pupils' work is often limited because they find it difficult to draw conclusions or make generalisations or comparisons.

114. Teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are good. Activities are planned very carefully in order to provide suitable challenge for both year groups. The teacher stimulates and develops natural curiosity by providing good opportunities for pupils to participate in interesting practical investigations, and they begin to learn the importance of making their tests fair. Pupils' thoughts and ideas are stimulated through good use of challenging questions. On some occasions, printed worksheets are used more than necessary and pupils of all abilities are expected to carry out tasks at the same level.

115. Pupils in Year 6 carry out investigations and teachers emphasise the use of scientific vocabulary and methods, but although pupils know that their tests must be fair, they are less confident in making predictions, or devising their own tests and investigations. By the time they are eleven, pupils can write out an investigation using the accepted scientific format. However, only higher attaining pupils are able to draw conclusions from their findings. In a good lesson, pupils tested sugar to investigate ways of helping solids dissolve more quickly. One group of pupils found that their results varied, so the teacher used careful open-ended questions to help them resolve the anomalies. At the end of the lessons, these pupils could clearly explain the importance of carrying out a test more than once to obtain secure results. All pupils are very interested in micro-organisms, and know that they can be both beneficial and harmful. Lower attaining pupils devise a clear chart that shows what happens when cheese is exposed to the air, but they cannot draw conclusions from their results. Higher attaining pupils make good use of scientific vocabulary to explain the force of gravity in well-written accounts. However, pupils do not always discuss possible outcomes before they carry out their investigations, or use their knowledge from previous work to look for patterns. They find it difficult to draw conclusions from their results. This is also evident when pupils study life processes and living things, and they do not use keys to assist them when classifying plants or animals.

116. The quality of teaching for older pupils is also good and pupils are learning at a good rate in lessons. This is helping the pupils to overcome their previous underachievement and has led to sound achievement over time. Work is planned carefully, investigations are relevant and practical, and different activities are provided for pupils of all abilities. Teachers are careful to use their pupils' previous knowledge to help them develop their learning, and give very clear instructions to ensure all pupils know exactly what to do. They employ good open-ended questioning techniques that help pupils use their existing knowledge, and think carefully. Lessons move along at a good pace, which keeps pupils actively involved. For example, in a good lesson about life cycles, Year 5 pupils learned that flowers have both male and female organs. The teacher provided real lilies, tulips and freesias, large diagrams with a good display of appropriate scientific words that made learning interesting. Effective questioning led the pupils on to hypothesise from their knowledge of previous work on plants. Teachers' expectations of presentation of work are not always high enough and carelessly drawn diagrams impair pupils' work.

Throughout the school, although pupils are able to gather equipment and organise their work, they do not have many opportunities to devise their own tests. This skill is hampered by the use of use of printed worksheets which give too much guidance to the pupils and does not encourage the recording of information in a variety of ways. This restricts the progress of the higher attaining pupils. Pupils access the Internet for research and information but ICT is not always used to support learning in lessons. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their science lessons because teachers provide interesting activities. They co-operate well and support each other in their work. Teachers manage their pupils well, and behaviour is good in lessons.

117. Management of science is satisfactory. Commercial planning guidelines are used ensuring the curriculum is broad and balanced and teachers plan their work using a shared format. Currently, the subject is being jointly managed by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have carried out monitoring of teaching in a general way but not with a specific focus on the teaching of science. Assessments of pupils' progress are made regularly, at the end of each unit of work. The information is used to ensure pupils are acquiring knowledge and skills as planned. At the end of some lessons, pupils may be given informal opportunities to assess their own work, for example when they test materials for insulation. Science is now well resourced.

118. Science makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development and helps pupils to become more aware of the wonder of the natural world when, for example, they gently examine the parts of a flower with great care. They consider moral issues when they learn about the harmful effects of drugs, and about caring for the environment. They are taught to work with regard to safety, for example not to inhale the pollen from the flowers being examined.

ART AND DESIGN

119. During the inspection only two lessons were seen and judgements are therefore also based on examination of work and discussions with pupils and teachers.

120. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are at the level expected for pupils of these ages and achievement is at least satisfactory with some examples of high quality work showing good achievement. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards and progress at the end of Year 6 were unsatisfactory. The reason for the improvement is that a comprehensive scheme of work has been introduced together with an overall plan so that the teachers know which aspects of art to teach and when, in order to ensure that the pupils make progress. A further reason is that better quality resources are now available in school for the pupils to use.

121. In Year 2, pupils create good quality portraits, using bright poster paint, and to embellish their work make attractive frames for the pictures using pasta, pulses and seeds to decorate them. The range of materials includes textiles and pupils make bright weaving patterns using paper strips, whilst another group creates warm patterns using wool on a card loom. In order to raise the pupils' self-esteem and improve social skills, pupils contribute to large class pictures on display in the classroom. For example, in response to the story of the Hungry Caterpillar pupils created a beautiful display illustrated with colourful caterpillars. Pupils use ICT and have produced some colourful pictures of boats and fish swimming in the sea on the computer. However, not enough use is made of 3 dimensional art, for example, pupils do not use clay frequently enough to create malleable shapes. There is much direct teaching of skills, for example how to mix paints to produce a range of colours, and this method improves the standard of work pupils produce.

122. In Year 6, pupils use their sketchbooks to good effect. For example, in the week before the inspection the pupils sketched the urban landscape of houses and industrial buildings around the school. They used soft pencils and charcoal and their initial drawings were of a high quality. By using these sketches, the pupils were able to create beautiful pictures in the classroom, using good quality watercolour, and the results were of a high standard. The work was of good quality because the teacher very effectively demonstrated the required skills and techniques. A further reason was that the pupils had

been well prepared and had investigated landscape painting by famous artists like L S Lowry. Clay work was seen in Year 5 and pupils were so interested and motivated that the finished pots were attractive and a success. The pupils experience a wide range of art experiences that include design as well as different techniques. For example, Year 6 pupils were involved in a series of art activities on the theme of movement. Pupils made attractive body shapes using black paper and blue chalk and others created detailed observational drawings of sportsmen and athletes. Figures incorporating movement were made from plaster bandages and coloured with silver and gold paint and these made an attractive display. Pupils also study the works of famous artists and have made an attractive display of pictures of dancers using brightly coloured gummed paper in the style of Gino Severini.

123. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are fully included in all activities. The pupils with behavioural difficulties often make good progress because both the teachers and their peers value their efforts and this raises their self-esteem. For example, when making coiled pots the pupils were pleased with their results that compare favourably with their peers.

124. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6 with teachers setting challenging tasks for the pupils that extend their artistic skills. In these classes teachers encourage critical analysis and pupils are learning how to evaluate and improve their work. Teachers have an enthusiastic knowledge of art and teach specific skills directly and this has a beneficial effect on standards especially in the use of sketchbooks. However, not enough use is made of art packages so that pupils can use the computer to create pictures. Teachers have a good relationship with their pupils and, as a result, behaviour is good. Teachers create an atmosphere in the classroom that encourages creative activity. Lessons are planned and organised effectively with adequate resources and this ensures that the lessons run smoothly and pupils enjoy their work. Teachers plan for art to support other subjects. For example, when studying the Blitz in history, the pupils painted sombre pictures in blue, grey and black depicting bright searchlights scanning the sky for enemy aircraft. When teaching was less effective too much talking in the introduction led to a slow pace and pupils losing concentration.

125. The management of the subject is satisfactory because a comprehensive scheme of work with a clear overall plan has been introduced and good quality resources have been provided. However, there are no effective assessment or recording procedures to check that standards in art are high enough and that pupils are making the best possible progress. As yet there is no regular monitoring of teaching or of the work done by the pupils by, for example, looking at sketch books or evaluating the art work produced by them.

126. A visiting artist extends the formal curriculum and a workshop was held in school where the pupils worked with clay. The weekly art club makes a useful addition to the creative enjoyment of the pupils. Art make a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Pupils have some experience of art from other cultures and in Years 3 and 4 pupils were investigating Aboriginal art. The pupils created attractive paintings that reflected well the Dreamtime Journey paintings of the Aborigines.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. No lessons were seen in the subject and judgements are based on examination of work, photographs of models made and discussions with teachers and pupils.

128. Attainment in Year 2 is at a level expected of pupils of this age and standards in Year 6 are above that level. The achievement of seven-year olds is satisfactory and of eleven-year olds is good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection that found that overall standards were below average. The reasons for this improvement are that the pupils are now taught effective methods for designing and making models, the curriculum is wider and better established and resources have improved.

129. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all of the activities and thrive on the wide range of experiences offered to them. They make good progress and have learnt good methods of designing and making models.

130. In Year 2, pupils design and make a winding mechanism out of cardboard by which models of spiders are winced up as though they were climbing up a spout. These models were satisfactorily made and worked well. There is insufficient evidence to show that pupils selected their tools or suggested ways to improve their models. The pupils are about to embark on a project to make a range of puppets to be used in literacy and other subjects. A puppet theatre comes to school each year for a puppet workshop so the pupils are familiar with these toys. Pupils learn about food technology and design and make corn flake cakes and ice buns. In connection with the theme of healthy eating the pupils designed and made a fruit salad in the summer term. An interesting experience for the pupils was when they made picora or vegetable somosa with students from the Kashmir project.

131. Standards in Year 6 are above average because the pupils have acquired good methods of tackling design and technology topics. For example, when discussing with these pupils how to make a small box to contain chocolates for a birthday present, they knew exactly what to do to make a successful model. This included research and making a design sheet to include a detailed drawing and a list of materials. To achieve a good finish pupils explained the need to practise how to score the folding edges to make them neat before cutting out, gluing and finally decorating. Pupils have a wide of experience in designing and making objects. For example, they designed and made a question and answer game that included an electric circuit so that a bulb lit up when the correct answer was chosen. The pupils in Year 6 are designing and making a pair of slippers. The design process they have followed is thorough and the finished products are both attractive and fit for their intended purpose. Pupils extend their understanding of food technology and have investigated how biscuits are made. Pupils use a range of techniques and know that different tools are suitable for specific tasks. For example, they use resistant materials and know how to saw wood safely using a bench hook. Skills of evaluation and suggesting ways to improve are good. Pupils explain how to make structures stronger they glue cardboard triangle to the joints to provide additional support. These structures were used to make a chassis for a small vehicle that the pupil said worked well. However, the pupils do not have enough experience in using control systems in the subject. For example, although the pupils have used cams to make objects move up and down, they do not use electric motors to drive pulleys so that vehicles move in a controlled way. The school does not have the equipment to operate controllable models through a computer.

132. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. It is better in the juniors because pupils are given more challenging tasks. The basic design and making skills are thoroughly taught and pupils learn good methods to tackle design and technology problems. Pupils are taught basic skills like scoring cardboard so that it will bend easily and accurately sawing wood using a bench hook. Management in lessons is good, so pupils work safely and behave well. However, the teachers do not teach the pupils how to use control systems using an electric motor and pulleys.

133. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is a good quality scheme of work in place so that teachers know what to teach and when. There is no effective assessment system in place that can be used to discover difficulties or to monitor the progress of the pupils. The quality of teaching is not monitored and pupils' work is not regularly examined to check the standards achieved. Resources have improved since the last inspection although there are no control units in school to use with the computer. The subject makes a worthwhile contribution to the pupils' social development as they learn to share and work together.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

134. During the current inspection, timetable arrangements meant it was possible to observe only one history and one geography lesson. A thorough scrutiny was made of pupils' books and project work, and discussions were held with the subject co-ordinators. This evidence indicates that by the ages of 7 and 11,

standards broadly match those expected nationally for the pupils' ages. Achievement in both subjects is satisfactory and enables the pupils to develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

135. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in history and geography because they have opportunities to work in mixed ability groups and are well supported by all staff. Teachers also include many practical activities and discussions that enable these pupils to play a full part in the lessons.

136. There has been good improvement in geography since the previous inspection, which found that standards of pupils' work were below average, pupils made little progress and had limited geographical skills and knowledge. The quality of teaching in geography was unsatisfactory. Standards have improved because planning is more secure and resources have improved and the focus on speaking and listening enables pupils to play a more active part in lessons.

137. There has been satisfactory improvement in history since the previous inspection found that pupils' progress varied through the school, resources and procedures for assessment were unsatisfactory. There is now an adequate supply of resources, and the curriculum is enriched by some good visits, for example to the Air Raid Shelter Living Museum in Stockport. Assessment takes place at the end of each topic but these procedures are in the early stages of development.

138. In history, by the age of seven, the pupils show an understanding of the passing of time and how changes have affected the way people live. In a good history lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher used a well-known song, 'Oh I do like to be beside the seaside' as a lively introduction to the idea of seaside holidays in the past. Pupils are learning about different ways to find out about the past. The nursery nurse supported learning well by using an interactive web site on the computer to show the pupils the promenade at Scarborough as a source of evidence. The teacher developed this with a selection of photographs. With good help and guidance from all staff, the pupils learned to identify the differences between pictures taken in the past and in the present, and know why people travelled to their holidays by steam train in the past, whereas today, most people travel by car or plane. Whilst pupils have a sense of past and present, they are not yet able to place events in a sequence.

139. By Year 6, the pupils show satisfactory understanding about several major events of the past, especially in their current study of The Second World War. Practical activities make history very real for pupils and the pupils taste wartime recipes, they learn about food rationing and how to 'Make do and mend'. During their visit to the Air Raid Shelter Living Museum, they dressed as wartime evacuees, and considered how unhappy these young children must have felt. They recognise how artefacts provide information about conditions at that time and how war affected everybody and not just the soldiers.

140. In geography, by the age of seven pupils recognise the physical and human features in their locality. Higher attaining pupils can give more detail about their own locality, but other pupils limit their observations to identifying only houses and roads as distinguishing features. They draw simple maps when they study the local area, and use their mathematical skills well to draw a graph to represent the ways pupils travel to school. From this graph, they can identify walking as the most popular method. This topic involved pupils in some research at home when they looked for ways of crossing the roads safely. They listed the lollipop lady, the subway and the zebra crossing as examples. Pupils have researched information about Scarborough to compare a coastal town with Rochdale. They can identify the features of the seaside but lack the experience to make comparisons.

141. In geography, Year 6 pupils have made a detailed study of mountain environments in different parts of the world and show a developing awareness of geographic patterns. They use a world map well to locate the main mountain ranges and can make comparisons of areas, and know, for example that Ben Nevis and the Rockies have different employment possibilities. They communicate evidence and information well, and make use of a range of sources for research. Work completed at home is often good with an impressive presentation that included a model of a mountain range, information from the Internet and useful facts handout for the members of the class. Pupils use their literacy skills well to write accounts, showing an understanding of the use of bullet points and descriptions. Their speaking and

listening skills and self-esteem are developed well when they present evidence to the class. Through their studies in geography, pupils show increasing awareness of the influence of man on his environment. When planning a mountain holiday, they considered whether bear hunting is fair as bears are an endangered species, and extended their awareness of moral issues.

142. Insufficient evidence is available to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching and learning. In the lessons seen the teaching was good with a focus on practical activities which were interesting and led to good learning. Pupils' work shows insufficient attention is given to using ICT to support learning other than for research.

143. Both history and geography co-ordinators have only recently accepted responsibility for the subjects and have had no opportunity to monitor what is happening in lessons. Management is satisfactory in both subjects. Assessment in both subjects is at an early stage of development and so co-ordinators have no way to monitor progress or identify areas that need further development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

144. It was not possible to see any lessons being taught during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based on discussions with teachers and pupils, examination of work, surveys of the use of computers in the classroom and observations of whether ICT is used to support the other subjects of the curriculum.

145. Standards in Year 2 are at a level expected of pupils of this age and achievement is satisfactory. For many pupils who do not have computers at home achievement is good as they grow in confidence with the basic skills to operate a computer. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Overall attainment is below that expected of pupils at the end of Year 6 because the pupils do not have sufficient experience of all the aspects of the National Curriculum. For example, the use of computers for modelling and controlling, and achievement in these areas is unsatisfactory. However, in those aspects which are covered standards are satisfactory and achievement in word processing and data handling especially are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

146. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in the aspects covered and often use ICT to help with specific targets in their individual educational plans. This was helpful in Year 5 when the program taught and checked spellings so that the pupils could work independently at a pace that matched their ability.

147. The great majority of pupils in Year 2 switch on the computer and use the mouse to operate programs. They write single words and simple sentences with capital letters and full stops. However they still require help from an adult they are able to save their work, retrieve it and print it. With help some pupils wrote short pieces and illustrated them with pictures using an art program. However, not enough time is spent on the computers to support literacy. Pupils are able to use data handling programs and, with help, they made a pictogram indicating whether they travelled to school on foot, by car or on the bus. Other pupils made a block graph showing their favourite colours. However, the computers are not used frequently enough to support numeracy. Pupils are able to use art packages and some pupils drew delightful pictures of a boat with fishes in the sea below it. The school has two programmable toys and the pupils are able to insert programs into them to make them operate. Unfortunately the pupils only use these for one session each year and would benefit by using them more frequently. The pupils are being introduced to the idea of collecting information through the computer and, in one lesson, the teacher used a white board to display a map of Scarborough during their topic on the seaside. There is a better focus on ICT now than at the time of the last inspection and standards are improving.

148. In Year 6, in word processing, data handling and monitoring, attainment is at the level expected and achievement is satisfactory. However, overall achievement is unsatisfactory because the pupils do not experience all the aspects of ICT and because they do not spend enough time using the computers to support the other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils are able to use a word processor and can save their

work, retrieve it and print it. An after school club publishes a newspaper called the 'Alice Ingham Times.' In this are interesting pieces of word processing produced by the pupils. This is a good example of the use of word processing in the school. The pupils are familiar with data handling and in one lesson used spreadsheets to estimate the cost of a holiday abroad using a suitable program. When investigating probability, the pupils drew a bar graph to present their findings relating to a dice being thrown. The school is connected to the Internet and the pupils are able to download information. For example, in geography pupils were downloading information on their topic on mountains. The pupils know how to use monitoring equipment and in Years 4 and 5 used a sound sensor to collect information. They dropped a ruler from various heights and recorded the results on a bar graph. However, the pupils do not experience the control aspect of ICT because there are no control units in school. The pupils are not familiar with modelling programs where they can explore problems and make decisions because the school does not have suitable programs with which to do this. Although the pupils can access the Internet they are not able to send e-mails because the system will not allow this at present. Pupils sometimes use ICT to support other subjects. For example, in history the pupils in Years 4 and 5 downloaded information about the Egyptians and in design and technology they made a survey of favourite biscuits and presented the results on a bar graph.

149. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is better in Years 1 and 2 where attention is given to all aspects of the National Curriculum. Teaching has improved in most aspects of the curriculum and teachers are more confident supporting pupils as they work on computers. Teachers have the knowledge to teach word processing, data handling monitoring and the Internet but do not have the expertise in the use of computers for modelling and control. Not all teachers are planning to use ICT in their lessons. Teachers are starting to use ICT to support learning, for example in art and design, although computers were underused during the inspection. An assessment system has been introduced and this will be valuable in tracking pupils' progress.

150. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the development of ICT is a school priority. The hardware in the school is adequate except that there are no control units. The range of software needs extending to include modelling programs and programs to support literacy and numeracy. Staff training has been arranged, is ongoing and has improved teachers' knowledge. A comprehensive scheme of work with an overall plan has been introduced so that all aspects of ICT will receive enough attention.

MUSIC

151. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach standards similar to those found in most schools by the age of seven and eleven. Pupils with special educational needs appreciate the practical aspects of the subject and make satisfactory progress. As at the time of the previous inspection the quality of singing is very good. Satisfactory improvements have been made in other aspects of the subject because the school has more structured planning guidelines. These are having a more positive effect on standards in the infants where more attention has been given to composing. Pupils benefit from being taught by a music specialist in the juniors. However, this means that lessons are short and it is difficult to fully extend pupils' composing skills.

152. Singing in assemblies is of a high standard and brings a spiritual element to these and other special occasions. Pupils change the quality of their singing to match the song. For example, 'Lord you are so precious to me' is sung with great depth of feeling reflecting the words. In comparison, pupils sing 'Shine on me' with great vigour and pace while successfully maintaining the tune.

153. In Year 6, pupils sing tunelessly and are able to repeat a given pattern. In response to good teaching they understand musical terminology and recognise 'pitch' and 'pulse' in their performance. They are aware that the pulse of the music is the beat and maintain a steady beat to a given rhythm. Higher attaining pupils recognise repeating patterns in the music. Appraisal skills are developing and pupils can identify that the music is 'sombre' and suggest ways to improve their performance. They can follow musical notation and clap a pattern identifying short and long notes. Time limitations mean insufficient

attention is given to improvising and recording their own compositions. Similarly, the opportunity to listen to music and learn about famous composers is not always given sufficient attention.

154. Although it was only possible to see a small amount of music in Years 1 and 2, pupils' work shows they have found different ways of making sounds and recognise spiky, smooth and short notes. They have used instruments to make patterns, such as clapping the beats in their names. Early composition skills have been introduced using arrows for high and low sounds and different symbols to show when the music gets louder and softer. In Year 2, pupils recognise high and low sounds and can repeat a given pattern. They can click their fingers and sing in time to the music, listen closely to a music tape and respond correctly to the different parts. Many understand music can represent feelings and images and suggest calm music could be the sea. There was no evidence of pupils making improvements to their work.

155. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching and learning in the infants. The specialist teaching in the juniors is good and accelerates learning in these lessons. These lessons concentrate on singing and performance and as a result achievement in these aspects are better than in composition and appraisal of music. The teacher has good subject knowledge is shared effectively with the pupils so that they are aware of the need to warm up their voices and how to improve their singing. Tasks challenge pupils. For example, after hearing the pulse, pupils' learning was extended to identifying the number of beats in a bar. The pace of lessons is satisfactory but too much repetition of the same song for pupils not involved in playing instruments led to some pupils losing interest. Class teachers support the specialist teacher and the shared enthusiasm means that pupils enjoy these lessons and behaviour is good.

156. Management is satisfactory. It is unclear about the overall co-ordination of the planning because the school has different co-ordinators for the juniors and infants. As a result there is a lack of clarity about standards in the school or a check to see all that all aspects of the curriculum receive enough attention. Currently, assessment is based on teacher observations and the school has no formal assessment system to provide teachers with information about pupils' progress.

157. The formal curriculum is extended by opportunities to sing in the school choir or to play in the music group. The school has had several successes in the local music festival and this does much to enhance pupils' self-esteem.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

158. During the inspection it was only possible to see dance in Year 2 and gymnastics in Year 6. Standards of work seen in these lessons show pupils reach the level expected for their age and achievement is satisfactory. This reflects good improvement since the previous inspection in the juniors and is linked to more confident teaching. Teachers and support staff are effective in enabling pupils with special educational needs to be fully included in these lessons and their progress is satisfactory.

159. In Year 2, pupils listen attentively to the music and many skip and jump in time to the music and stop when requested. They understand they can represent images and feelings through movement and make good attempts at being caterpillars. They respond well to the teachers' advice to 'arch your back' and so improve their movements. Many change the quality of their actions, and so responses are lighter when the caterpillar becomes a butterfly. Pupils are not as good at varying their ideas to show heaviness and many continue to move quickly. Pupils have a basic understanding that exercise is beneficial for them.

160. In Year 6, pupils have a more detailed understanding of how exercise affects their body. They know it makes the heart beat faster and this is good exercise because the heart is a muscle. In gymnastics, many pupils show co-ordination of their movements as they find different ways to travel and change the direction and level of their actions. The great majority understand the need to have tension in their body when balancing and are beginning to understand 'counter balance.' Most appreciate this involves trusting each other, but not all understand that both have to be applying equal pressure. More

skilful performers produce some good work with creative shapes and effective partner work. Many are able to combine movements into a short sequence but over direction from the teacher leads to insufficient thought about how to link movements. In response to the teacher's request for evaluation, pupils are beginning to compare and comment on the way their peers are performing. Most comments refer to the completion of tasks rather than the way it is performed or how it can be improved.

161. As at the time of the last inspection pupils have the opportunity to go swimming and the great majority of pupils are able to swim by the time they leave school.

162. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and reflects a growing confidence in teaching the subjects in response to training. Dance training is planned and pupils identify this is not given as much attention as the other aspects of the subject. Teachers manage pupils well and behaviour is generally good. A few pupils find it difficult to control their exuberance. When any misbehaviour occurs teachers deal with it patiently so that pupils learn how their actions affect others. Lessons include an opportunity to warm up and cool down and teachers place an appropriate emphasis on safety. Pupils are not always fully challenged and tasks are often over directed and this restricts pupils' creativity. Demonstrations are used effectively to celebrate good work but teachers do not always allow pupils a chance to reflect and try out new ideas.

163. Management is satisfactory. Resources have improved since the last inspection and the school has adopted new planning guidelines. Currently, the co-ordinator has not had an opportunity to observe lessons to check on implementation of the new planning or to identify the current standards being attained in the subject. Pupils have the opportunity for after school training in football and to play in matches against other schools. This contributes to their social development as they learn the skills of teamwork and fair play.