

INSPECTION REPORT

STUBBINS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ramsbottom

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119196

Headteacher: Miss P Braddock

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Waters
13827

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th May 2002

Inspection number: 230435

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and Junior
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Bolton Road North Ramsbottom Bury Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J P Dunne
Date of previous inspection:	24 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
13827	Mrs A Waters	Registered inspector	English Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What could the school do to improve further?
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17543	Mr R Coupe	Team inspector	The foundation stage Geography Religious education Equal Opportunities	
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Physical Education Special educational needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?
17767	Mrs S Power	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
25352	Mrs G Taujanskas	Team inspector		

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stubbins Primary School is an average sized primary school situated on the outskirts of the town of Ramsbottom in Lancashire. There are currently 216 pupils, 116 boys and 100 girls on roll. Just over 9% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Twelve per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. All but two pupils are of white ethnicity, and none has English as an additional language. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average and the socio-economic circumstances of the community are favourable. The school is very popular and enjoys a good reputation.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a rapidly improving school with some very good features and its strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. Despite the many significant changes in senior management during the last four years which have had a negative impact on the school and the standards achieved, it has successfully maintained many of its strengths and has continued to care well for its pupils. The relationships between staff and pupils are of a high quality and the school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well. This, together with the stability of a new headteacher, the high incidence of good and occasionally very good teaching, is making a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and helping to pull the standards back up again. By the time that pupils leave the school they are likely to attain above average standards in English and mathematics. The leadership offered by the headteacher is very good and she has an excellent grasp of where improvements in the school need to be made and has already put into place strategies to tackle some of the identified weaknesses. There are still some unresolved staffing issues and co-ordinators and governors will need further guidance to raise their awareness of how they can support her in moving the school forward. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She has a clear vision for school improvement and the skills and determination to make it happen.
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good, leading to improving standards.
- The school provides a good range of learning opportunities.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural and personal development is very good.
- Procedures to ensure pupils' welfare and well being are very good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and their learning, and their behaviour is good.
- There is a very good range of out of school activities.
- The parents think highly of the school and are very supportive. There are good links between the parents and the school.
- Attendance is very good.

What could be improved

- The management structure of the school and the role of the subject leaders.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and the use of assessment information to inform curriculum planning.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the quality of education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Since then the school has suffered from many staffing changes resulting in much instability especially in the leadership and management of the school. As a consequence of the lack of consistent and direct leadership, procedures to monitor and evaluate the performance of the school and to gather information about the teaching and learning have not been established. This has had a negative impact on the school's ability to continue to improve. The school's high performance in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests had started to slip, especially in mathematics and science and to some extent in English. It is to the great credit of the teaching staff that, despite these difficulties, many of the positive features highlighted in the last report have been sustained and some progress has been made towards addressing the areas for improvement. The curriculum planning is improved and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good. The newly appointed headteacher is providing very good stability and has already had a beneficial impact which can be seen in the improving standards. She has the necessary skills and vision to move the school forward. The governing body is supportive and keen to work with the headteacher and staff to put into place the necessary structures and systems to enable the school to move forward. There is a strong sense of team spirit and shared commitment within the school and a keen determination to bring about the necessary improvements. The school is now well placed to move forward.

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				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A*	B	B	B	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	A*	A	C	C	average C below average D
Science	A	A	C	C	well below average E

The table shows that the school's results in the 2001 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests were above the national average in English and at an average level in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools the picture is the same. The pattern of

attainment over the last three years, on the basis of the test results, has shown a decline in these three subjects, although standards in English have remained above the national average. The trend of improvement is below the national average. The school sets targets for pupils in English and mathematics based on statistical information provided by the Local Education Authority and these targets, whilst challenging, are unrealistic and the school has failed to meet them in 2001 and is unlikely to meet them in the current year. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls.

The 2001 end of Year 2 National Curriculum test and assessments results are similar to the national average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Over the last few years, standards in writing have shown some variation but attainment has remained above average. During this period, standards in reading have declined each year. There has been greater variation in the standards in mathematics which improved from a below average point to above average and fell again to being close to average.

The inspection findings show standards are now beginning to rise. The current Year 6 pupils are attaining similar standards in English and science to those of the previous year but standards in mathematics have improved and are now above average. Similarly, the pupils currently in Year 2 have also shown an improvement in mathematics and reading. Attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. It is average in science.

Standards in art and design are above the national expectations and in all other subjects are in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages.

Pupils join the reception class with broadly average levels of ability. They make good progress and by the end of their first year in school the current pupils are likely to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of their learning and to exceed them in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well for their abilities because they are well supported and given tasks that are matched appropriately to their abilities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Pupils enjoy school and are attentive in class. They take part in activities with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good.
Personal development and relationships	Good relationships exist amongst pupils and staff and the whole school community, contributing to the pupils' good overall personal development.
Attendance	Very Good

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
33 lessons	Good	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and examples of good teaching were seen in almost every class in the school. Teaching is particularly effective in Years 4 and 6 where there are excellent features. In the best teaching seen, the lessons are well planned, have a clear learning focus and move at a brisk pace. The teaching ensures that pupils' interest is captured quickly and that they remain fully engaged and eager to find out more. On a few occasions, the pace of lessons is slow and teachers do not make enough use of assessment when planning their lessons and do not meet the needs of the pupils of different abilities in the class. All teachers have good relationships with pupils and maintain good classroom management. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. A particular strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is the hard work and enthusiasm of the staff and the way in which they and a number of willing voluntary helpers work together to ensure a consistent approach to children's learning. This good teamwork is a key feature of the teaching throughout the school.

The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and the general principles of the national strategies are followed. Pupils are helped to make good overall progress in reading and writing but more systematic use of the structured reading programme and more opportunities for pupils to practice reading in school would help to raise standards even further. The teaching of mathematics is good and is leading to improving standards but more attention still needs to be given to ensuring that the mental sessions in each lesson are used to best effect for all pupils. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good. Effective use is made of support staff and there is good teaching of small groups and individual pupils and this helps to ensure that all pupils progress at a similar rate to their classmates.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum that is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Provision is greatly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities that provide enrichment for many subject areas. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and enables them to make good progress and achieve in line with their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils and good provision for their cultural development. This makes a strong contribution to their overall personal development
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures in place for child protection and arrangements to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils are very good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory but the information gathered is not yet being fully used to help teachers plan for their classes. Until very recently not enough attention has been paid to tracking pupils' progress and identifying where extra attention needs to be given.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents have very positive views of the school and provide significant practical support for teaching and learning. The information parents are given about the activities provided by the school is satisfactory. The end of year reports have improved since the last inspection but the school acknowledges that there is need for further development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership which gives a firm direction for the work of the school. She has quickly recognised its strengths and areas for improvement and has a very strong sense of how to improve the school. She displays a strong personal example of commitment and dedication. In the absence of a deputy and some key subject leaders she is very well supported by the staff who are working together as a team to bring about significant improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils all statutory duties with diligence. Governors are fully supportive of the school, visit regularly and their contribution in a practical way is very good. However, as a consequence of the instability of senior staff, the governing body has not been enabled to fully develop its role in shaping the direction of the school and actively holding the school to account for the quality of education. This is now being rectified and effective working relationships and practices are being established. The headteacher is providing the governing body with good information, including an analysis of assessment data, which is enabling them to gain a clearer view of the school's performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. At present there are few formal arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher has already identified the need to establish systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and introduced new initiatives to ensure that greater use is made of the assessment data to monitor pupils' progress and set priorities for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Effective use is now being made of the school budget and additional grants for the benefit of pupils' learning. The school applies the principles of best value in an appropriate manner. All factors taken into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources;	Satisfactory overall. There are several teachers on temporary contracts or on supply and there is not a permanent senior management team or subject leaders for some key areas. The accommodation is bright and well organised and a new library is soon to be developed. Resources are adequate in most areas but there are some shortages, particularly in the range of both fiction and non-fiction 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"> • The fact that their children enjoy coming to school. • The good progress that children make. • Parents are pleased with the overall quality of education their children receive. • The good quality of teaching. • Parents feel that the school is very approachable. • The leadership of the new headteacher. • Most parents think that the school has the right approach to homework. • They like the attitudes and values promoted by the school and feel that the children are encouraged to show respect. • Most parents think that things had slipped but are now much better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel that they are not very well informed and they receive very little curricular information. Meetings have been held to explain literacy and numeracy strategies. • Some parents feel that they are not well informed about how their child is getting on. • A few parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with parents. • Parents are concerned about the need to have so many temporary teachers and the many staff changes.

Parents recognise that the school has seen many staff changes and these have been disruptive. All agree that the new headteacher has made a considerable difference and the school is now much more approachable. The inspection team endorses the positive views expressed by the majority of parents and agrees that the new headteacher has worked hard to redress the problems caused by the instability within senior management. She has made every effort to improve communications with parents and to continue to involve them and the community in the life of the school. Parents are welcomed into school and very good efforts are made to consult parents on important issues. Good opportunities are now provided for parents to have open and full discussions about their children's progress. The school acknowledges the fact that the end of year written reports, although much improved, are in need of further development. The school also hopes that the staffing situation will soon be stabilised.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in the National Curriculum assessment tests for 11 year olds for the year 2001 were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools the picture is much the same. The percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected Level 4 is above average in English and science and average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above average in English and mathematics and average in science. The trend in attainment in all three subjects when averaged together is below the national trend but this masks a complex set of results. Pupils' attainment in English has fluctuated but has been consistently above average. Attainment in mathematics shows most variation and standards have declined markedly and fallen from being very high in 1999 to being average in 2001. In science, attainment has been consistently above average and has risen steadily in line with the national trend over the last four years until last year when it dropped to an average level. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The school is aware that the falling standards especially in mathematics are a cause for concern and has taken practical and sensible measures to improve pupils' performance. This is already showing signs of success with an evident improvement in pupils' attainment in mathematics. These results reflect the difficulties in staffing that the school has faced. The members of staff who have remained in school throughout the many changes have worked hard to prevent standards from slipping further.
2. In the National Curriculum assessment tests for 7 year olds for the year 2001, the school's results, when compared to all schools nationally and to schools with similar characteristics, were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Nearly all pupils achieved the national expectation of Level 2 in all three areas. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in writing was above average and it was close to average in reading and below average in mathematics. Standards in writing have remained consistently above average but standards in reading have steadily declined. Standards in mathematics have shown the most variation having improved from a below average point to reach above average to fall again in 2001 when they were average. On the basis of teacher assessment, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in science was close to the national average but the percentage reaching the higher level was below average. The school's results over the last three years have not shown an improvement but this reflects the changing nature of the school's intake with fewer children now entering school with above average attainment. Standards are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection and this can be attributed to the very unsettled staffing situation and lack of continuity in the teaching.
3. The targets set by the school in English and mathematics for last year and for the current year are unrealistically high and not based on secure assessment information. Consequently, the school failed to reach them last year and is unlikely to reach them this year. The newly appointed headteacher recognised that the school did not have secure assessment and recording procedures in place and that this was an aspect of the school's work that urgently needed to be developed. She has quickly undertaken a thorough and detailed analysis of all available assessment data and is starting to implement a good tracking system. This will enable the school to set informed targets for the school, for year groups and for individuals.

4. Inspection evidence and the school's own baseline assessments show that the overall level of attainment of children when they first join the Reception class is broadly average for their age. The school has noted some decline in the level of attainment on entry over the last few years and most certainly since the last inspection when attainment was reported to be above average. During the first year in school the children make good progress in all areas of their learning. The good quality provision that is made for the children in the Foundation Stage and the good teaching support their good progress and enable them to achieve well. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children achieve the early learning goals in all the areas of their learning and many exceed this level in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal and social development.
5. The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 6, standards are above the national expectation in English and are improving in mathematics. The attainment of the pupils currently in Year 6 is above average in English and mathematics and is average in science. The improvement is also evident at Year 2 where almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and a significant number reach the higher levels. The attainment of the pupils currently in Year 2 is above average in all aspects of their work in English and mathematics and is average in science.
6. In English, throughout the school, pupils achieve well in most aspects of the work. The good standards that were found at the time of the last inspection have for the most part been sustained. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and achieve above average standards. They are able to express themselves clearly and show a good understanding of what is said to them. Pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. The content of their work is good and pupils have a secure understanding of grammar, parts of speech and can write in various formats and produce both factual and imaginative pieces of work. However, pupils' spelling and handwriting skills are weaker and work is not always well presented. In reading, although the standards achieved by the pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are good, reading standards overall are not as high as they could be. This is mainly because pupils do not have a suitably wide range of reading material to choose from and the library is not as yet used extensively for reference purposes to develop pupils' independent learning. The school is aware of this deficiency and intends to rectify the situation as soon as possible. Already this year, a considerable amount of money has been spent on new books, and plans are in place for the development of the library.
7. In mathematics, at the time of the school's previous inspection standards at the age of 11 were well above average but current standards are not as high as they were then. Close attention has been given to identifying the reasons for the declining standards and careful analysis of results, increased resources and more structured use of the numeracy strategy are having a beneficial impact. Standards are now improving and pupils throughout the school are making good progress.
8. Standards in science throughout the school are broadly in line with those found nationally. By the age of seven and by the age of eleven, the great majority of pupils acquire a secure and satisfactory level of scientific facts but their knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry is weaker. Since the time of the last inspection standards have remained consistently above the national average until the last year when there was a drop in overall performance at the end of Year 6. As a result of the recent instability in staffing, less emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry methodically across the school.

9. Pupils make good progress in art and design and achieve above average standards at the end of both key stages. Although the standards are creditable, they are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection, when they were judged to be excellent by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in design and technology are generally in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. This represents a slight drop in standards from the time of the last inspection when they were found to be above expectations. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
10. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information and communication technology, geography, history and physical education and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is at the level expected nationally for pupils of that age. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
11. Standards in music at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. There was no judgement made about standards in music at the last inspection.
12. In religious education pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, and at the end of Year 6, is in line with the standards expected within the locally agreed syllabus. Knowledge of Christianity and other great faiths is appropriately developed.
13. The school has a good programme for support of pupils with special educational needs and the pupils make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. They are provided with good levels of support from their teachers and the teaching assistants. Pupils' targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed, and new targets are set to aid progress, when required.
14. The raising of standards in all subjects is at the forefront of the school's priorities and already there is clear evidence of improvements at all levels.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils have good attitudes to school and to their work. The majority of pupils show a positive attitude to school and demonstrate a willingness to learn and develop an awareness of their responsibilities for themselves and others. They generally display a good involvement in lessons and, where the lessons are particularly interesting or are well presented, pupils respond very well and engage themselves fully with the task in hand. Some pupils in some classes have a tendency to be inattentive at times and this detracts from their own learning and impedes the pace of the lesson. A very small number of older pupils are restless and show a reluctance to contribute in some lessons. Teachers manage these situations well and encourage pupils to become involved and try hard to capture their interest. Younger pupils in the Reception class enjoy coming to school and know the routines well and quickly settle to their tasks and activities. They have quickly developed the ability to listen attentively, follow instructions promptly and demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and social interaction with other members of their class. Throughout the school, pupils are confident in making responses because the good relationships in the classroom encourage them to do so. Almost all parents responding to the inspection survey stated that their children like school.
16. Pupils are well behaved in and around the school. They are generally polite and enjoy engaging adults and one another in conversation. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions and these are usually positive. There have been no recent

exclusions and oppressive behaviour is unacceptable to pupils and adults. In the Reception class the children are becoming increasingly aware of what is expected of them in terms of behaving in class, around the school and with one another. Parents agree that behaviour throughout the school is good.

17. Pupils with special educational needs pay close attention to adults and they persevere well with their tasks. They are very well behaved, they get on well with other pupils and they contribute well to group activities.
18. Pupils' personal development is good. The good attitudes and behaviour of pupils contribute to the good relationships throughout the school. In all classes, pupils are prepared to help and co-operate with their friends to make the lesson more easily understood. In some classes there is a clear team approach to lessons and the teacher is seen to be a part of that team. This is particularly effective when sensitive issues are discussed as part of poetry lessons or circle time, which provides opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and share thoughts without fear of ridicule or misunderstanding. This confidence extends to assemblies where pupils from all age groups contribute to the discourse.
19. Relationships throughout the school are good, with pupils showing a willingness to help and encourage each other in a wide range of activities. Many pupils are involved in the daily routines of the school, such as preparing for assemblies. Older pupils take responsibility for the well being of younger pupils and readily accept duties at break-time and lunchtime. A successful team system has been introduced and this is popular with pupils who work co-operatively together to gain points and work towards the reward.
20. Attendance is very good. During the last year the rate of attendance was 96%, which is well above the national average, and there were no unauthorised absences. The school has maintained this level of attendance over a number of years. Registration is conducted promptly at the start of each session with registers being returned to facilitate the monitoring of the few instances of lateness.
21. Parents expressed the view that the attitudes and values the school promotes contribute to the positive ethos and community spirit which is prevalent in the school. Parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching overall is good and enables pupils to achieve standards that are at least in line and sometimes above those expected for their age.
23. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in two thirds of the lessons observed and approximately half of this was very good. The remaining third was satisfactory and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Good teaching was observed in almost every class in the school. Teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. Teaching in Key Stage 1 varies but is good overall. In the lessons observed, more consistently good teaching was seen in Year 2 leading to good learning and enabling the pupils to achieve well, especially in writing. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall but again very variable with consistently very good teaching in Years 4 and 6. Despite the many changes of staff and three classes being taught by supply teachers, the quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection

when a similar proportion of very good teaching was observed. Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the week of inspection, close examination of the pupils' written work over the past year does show some variation in quality. Some classes have experienced more than one teacher during the course of the year and this variability is evident in the expectations and quality of the work produced. Work set over time for pupils, particularly in Years 1, 3 and 5 has not always been at a challenging enough level.

24. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. There is good communication between the teacher, the support staff and a number of willing voluntary helpers. They are deployed well and know what is expected of them. The very good relationships between staff members have led to the formation of a good team spirit, through which the knowledge, care, understanding and development of the children is a shared priority. The well organised classroom provides a stimulating learning environment that encourages play, investigation and the development of independence. The teacher and the assistants intervene productively in children's play and engage the children in conversation. They make the most of opportunities to reinforce basic skills of literacy, numeracy and personal development throughout the day and in a range of well-planned activities. This enables the children to make a very good start to their education and prepares them well for the beginning of the National Curriculum in Year 1.
25. Throughout the school the teaching of English and mathematics is generally good. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
26. The teaching of the basic skill of reading is given suitable emphasis and through the regular teaching of letter sounds and word patterns pupils develop their reading and writing skills simultaneously. Pupils with lower levels of ability in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 are given extra support and receive very good quality additional help. As yet, however, there is no additional Literacy Support available for pupils in need of extra help at Key Stage 2. In mathematics, teachers make good provision for pupils to undertake practical and problem solving activities. This helps to interest pupils and they gain much pleasure from learning about number. Most teachers provide appropriately challenging work for pupils of different ability within their class. However, in some classes there are times when teachers do not expect enough of their pupils in the literacy and numeracy lessons. This is particularly true for some of the higher attaining pupils who are capable of undertaking more demanding tasks than they are given.
27. Teachers make use of the national guidance to help them to plan their lessons and they follow the general principles of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy when deciding the structure and content of their lessons. Good improvements have been made in the way numeracy lessons are taught although there is still scope for further improvement in the mental session at the start of each lesson. However, in the literacy lessons, teachers do not always follow the prescribed format and on occasions some teachers omit important activities such as the guided reading or the shared text work and this limits pupils' progress in reading.
28. The quality of teaching in science is generally satisfactory and there is some very good teaching in some classes in Key Stage 2. The most effective teaching focuses clearly on developing pupils' skills of investigation with a firm emphasis on the need to carry out a fair test and to support the findings with secure evidence. However, sometimes the teaching depends heavily on the completion of worksheets and too few opportunities are presented for pupils to make predictions, to find things out for themselves and to record their findings in their own way.

29. The teaching of art and design is good across the school and teachers demonstrate skills and techniques well. This enables pupils to achieve good standards in this subject. The teaching of information and communication technology, history, geography, music, design and technology, religious education and physical education is mainly satisfactory at both key stages, with good features in some classes, particularly in Key Stage 2. The good features that characterise the teaching in these classes are evident in all lessons. Teachers have high expectations in respect of work and behaviour and create a positive atmosphere within their classrooms. Pupils enjoy the good range of activities provided and learn well as a result.
30. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teachers and teaching assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils, they work closely together and they arrange a most suitable range of activities and work for them. Positive relationships are established and help and support are readily provided. The teaching and support provided for the pupils with statements is very good.
31. At both key stages teachers generally have secure subject knowledge which they put to good use to promote pupils' learning. The good and very good teaching is typified by clear planning based on good understanding of the subject. This good subject knowledge is seen in a variety of ways, for example, in the clear and detailed explanations and instructions and in the use of subject specific terminology. A particularly good example of this was observed in an English lesson when the teacher explained the meaning of colloquialism and helped the pupils to understand that what is said in an informal way may well differ from the written version. Pupils quickly grasped the idea and suggested that phrases such as "gob smacked" could be replaced by a synonym such as "amazed". Another good example was observed in a numeracy lesson on probability where the teacher very competently increased the level of difficulty in the questioning and led pupils to provide not only the correct answers but to use the correct terminology when doing so.
32. All teachers plan their work carefully. The medium term planning is securely based on the national guidance and most teachers use it well to help them plan their lessons. In the better lessons the planning clearly indicates the learning objectives and provides good detail about how these are to be achieved. Teachers take care to explain the purpose of the lesson to pupils ensuring that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. Interesting starting points that capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm are chosen and this sets a challenge for pupils and whets their appetite to learn. Another feature of the most effective teaching is the way humour is introduced into the lessons. This was evident in a history lesson when pupils were amused by the fact that Mr and Mrs McCawber were against the introduction of the railways because it would affect their bicycle business.
33. The concluding part of lessons is often well used to check with pupils whether or not the learning targets have been realised. Teachers use this time well to share pupils' achievements and celebrate success as well as to clarify any misunderstandings. However, this good practice is not as consistent as it could be and as a result opportunities are sometimes missed to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. When the planning is not as strong and the focus of the lesson is not clear, the activities provided do not have any real sense of purpose. On occasions the work and tasks set for pupils of differing ability are not well matched to their needs.
34. Teachers make effective use of a range of teaching methods. Most are successful in striking a balance between whole class direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to

work on their own or in groups. Whilst pupils are engaged in these tasks, teachers use their time very productively to provide intensive teaching for individuals or small groups whilst still maintaining an overview of the rest of the class. During practical lessons, such as art and physical education, teachers are competent in teaching skills and giving good demonstrations to help pupils learn new techniques.

35. The quality of relationships between the pupils and staff is good. The way teachers manage their pupils is a strength of many lessons and pupils respond well to the positive encouragement and praise. Teachers value pupils' efforts and often thank the pupils at the end of the lesson for their hard work and good attention. Another significant factor is the contribution made by support staff and voluntary helpers. Strong teamwork begins in the Reception class and is sustained throughout the school. All staff work hard and show a commitment to ensuring that pupils grow in confidence and receive the support they need to make the most of the opportunities provided and make good progress in their learning. Teachers use the available resources well and the productive use of time is a key feature of the most successful teaching.
36. Most teachers make good use of ongoing assessment to check what pupils know and can do. They target their questions well and make effective use of resources such as individual white boards to help them to ascertain how well pupils' understanding and skills are developing. Most teachers use this information well to provide the next step in learning or to modify their questions and give further practice if necessary. Teachers are conscientious in the marking of pupils' work. Good examples of marking are seen and on these occasions teachers make useful comments that indicate why a piece of work is good and also identify how the work might be improved. Homework is used effectively to support the work pupils do in class.

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

37. In spite of the many difficulties experienced, the school has done well to maintain a curriculum that is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Although the systematic monitoring and development of the curriculum has not been as thorough as at the time of the last inspection, good attention has been given to maintaining the breadth of learning experiences. Provision is greatly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and learning opportunities that provide enrichment for many subject areas. All pupils in Year 6 receive tuition in French as a regular part of curriculum provision.
38. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good. At Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils benefit from a good range of learning opportunities. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and religious education is taught in accordance with the Locally Agreed syllabus. The curriculum is effectively planned so that it meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school is particularly successful in providing its pupils with a relevant and coherent curriculum that gives appropriate emphasis to the pupils' personal and social development. An effective health programme is taught in all classes and includes appropriate attention to drug misuse and sex education. The school is presently part of the Healthy Schools project and is working towards its Healthy Schools Award.
39. The school is successful in providing good quality, interesting and practical learning experiences for the reception class children. The programme of work is planned carefully to support the children's progress towards the nationally agreed Early

Learning Goals for each area of their learning. Emphasis is placed not only on developing the children's early language and mathematics skills but also on personal and social development. Children follow a structured timetable where groups with similar attainment work with a teacher or independently on focused tasks. The curriculum is well planned to cover the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals for children of this age. Activities are suitably practically based and include the appropriate elements of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy, enabling children to learn well. The school has identified the need to improve the quality of provision for physical development and has recently purchased some large outdoor play equipment.

40. The school has introduced the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. The monitoring of the way these strategies are implemented, however, has not been rigorous enough to ensure that they are securely put into practice. As a result, there are some slight weaknesses in the way in which these are implemented and consequently they are not having as much impact on standards as they might. For example, in the numeracy lessons, the way in which the mental mathematics element is taught does not always ensure that all pupils are fully involved. The principles of the literacy strategy are followed but, in some classes, not enough attention is given to the text and word sections of the lesson and the independent group tasks do not necessarily reflect the learning objective. In addition, the literacy and numeracy lessons are often overly long and this sometimes results in a loss of pace to the lesson and learning slows.
41. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed sufficiently through other subjects, such as science, information and communication technology and geography. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities for extended writing and investigative mathematics. Pupils are capable of taking responsibility for their learning but the opportunities for them to develop independent research skills could well be extended. At present the library facilities do not support this aspect of pupils' development. Information and communication technology is sufficiently emphasised across the curriculum although there is scope for improvement in all curriculum areas.
42. Good improvements have been made to the planning for the foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and information and communication technology which was highlighted as a weakness at the last inspection. Long term planning for these subjects now follows the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the school improvement plan identifies the intention to review these curriculum plans and check that the content is securely providing for continuity and progression in pupils' learning before the start of the next academic year.
43. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Clear procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils are in place. The new Code of Practice has been carefully and effectively implemented. Individual education plans are provided for pupils, and these are of very good quality. They are reviewed each term. Care is taken to ensure that the work provided for pupils is closely suited to their needs. Pupils with statements are provided with most suitable support, in line with the requirements indicated. Their statements are reviewed annually. Pupils are involved in the full range of school activities.
44. A very good and varied range extra-curricular activities, well attended by boys and girls, effectively enhances the statutory curriculum. Members of staff give willingly of their own time to teach pupils a variety of sporting and musical activities. In addition, the school provides a rich programme of curricular enhancement through visits and special focus weeks. The annual art week makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in

art by providing a much wider range of activity than the National Curriculum requires. The world awareness week provides an exciting programme of events that is very successful in teaching the pupils about many aspects of other countries and cultures. A carefully planned programme of visits to such destinations as Wigan Pier, Blackpool, theatres and concerts provides considerable enhancement to classroom learning. Dance workshops and a health week provide further valuable enhancement. The wide range of extra activities makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

45. The governing body's policy for equal opportunities is fully implemented throughout the school. Boys and girls are treated fairly and given equal opportunity in all aspects of school life. The curriculum provides opportunities for the pupils to develop positive attitudes towards the achievements of both men and women. This is helped by the fact that pupils observe good male and female role models throughout the school. Care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are able to participate and benefit from the full range of school activities. There is one pupil for whom the National Curriculum is disapplied and no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
46. Good links have been established with the local community and these provide a further source of curriculum enrichment. The special focus weeks involve visits to school by many people from the local community who are able to contribute their own specialisms to the pupils' learning. These include visits by local clergy, a representative of a local travel agent and parents who talk to pupils about their own field of work. In addition, the pupils visit a local church as part of their learning in religious education. Good links are established with local primary and secondary schools and a smooth system is in place for the transfer of relevant records and attainment data. Good induction procedures help pupils to feel confident about moving to new schools.
47. Overall, the school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
48. The school clearly fulfils its aims, by providing in partnership with its pupils, parents, staff and governors, a warm, caring and welcoming environment. The strong sense of community spirit is underpinned by a positive ethos and parents strongly support the aims and values offered by the school. The school meets the statutory requirements for the Act of Collective Worship. Regular assemblies are well structured and planned. They reflect an on-going weekly theme and contribute to the very good spiritual provision offered to the pupils. The teachers make very good use of spiritual occasions as they arise in lessons, such as when Reception children discover mini-beasts, or in a Year 6 poetry lesson. When opportunities for spiritual development are planned they are often outstanding. For example, in a Year 4 "circle-time," the class teacher's excellent preparation and management of pupils enabled them to explore and share feelings and emotions, in a highly charged spiritual environment.
49. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to develop a moral code which enables them to distinguish right from wrong. They become aware of their actions on others. Once again, the regular use of "circle-time" provides a useful means of promoting pupils' personal growth. There are good relationships throughout the school. From the time they start school, pupils learn how to behave properly. They quickly adapt to the school's behaviour policy, which is reflected in well conceived school and classroom rules. Pupils come to respect their teachers and each other, and the attitudes, feelings and values they display are very good.

50. The school's provision for the development of pupils' social skills is very good. This is reflected in pupils' very high levels of confidence and an appropriate understanding of the world in which they live. Pupils are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the community in a number of ways, such as fund raising for charity, and singing for the local elderly people. The school has a very good range of extra-curricular activities in which a large number of pupils participate. Boys and girls mix well together in school, and pupils of all ages, attainment and creed are fully included in all aspects of school life. Educational trips, for example to Turton Tower, are provided to enrich the curriculum and older pupils benefit through the school's provision of an extended visit to Wales for outdoor pursuits.
51. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Through the geography, history and art curriculum, pupils develop a sound appreciation of their own western European culture and are familiar with lifestyles of the people in these countries. Cultures of people throughout the world are also similarly studied and religious education further helps pupils to become familiar with the customs, traditions and practices of others. The speciality weeks provide pupils with additional opportunities to develop cultural awareness. Sometimes these are enhanced through visiting artists, such as a wood sculptor and a Trinidadian artist, who provide pupils with "hands-on" experiences. The school choir shows exceptional talent, as does the school band. Often the pupils are provided with opportunities to hear the band and the choir perform and also individual pupils are confident to display their talents.
52. Since the time of the last inspection, curriculum provision has much improved because of the implementation of the national programmes of work in all subjects. This is helping to provide clearer structure in the development of learning in each subject and provides a secure basis for teachers' planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

53. The school makes very good provision for the health, safety and welfare of its pupils. The headteacher has been nominated to deal with any issues of child protection. She has received recent training for this role, and is supported by the acting deputy headteacher, the chairman of the governing body who has special responsibility for child protection, and a governor who is a social worker.
54. A risk assessment is conducted regularly. A group of teachers conduct a health and safety audit which is presented to the governing body for evaluation. Hazards that have been identified are addressed, if appropriate, and the actions needed for resolution are included in the School Improvement Plan. Security checks are carried out annually, with fire drills taking place termly.
55. One of the teachers holds a current first aid certificate and all classrooms are equipped with suitably stocked first aid kits. Pupils and adults are aware of the routines to be followed if someone is taken ill or has had an accident, and where necessary, the school secretary informs the parents by telephone or sends a letter home informing the parents of the incident.
56. There are no formal procedures in place for monitoring pupils' personal development but, through circle time and tutorial activities, teachers provide satisfactory support for their pupils. In some cases, teachers have worked effectively with parents to help children to come to terms with emotional crises such as a family bereavement. The headteacher has conducted a survey of the junior pupils to ascertain their perceptions

of the school and the personal available. This has helped to identify those attributes which pupils value most.

57. The school secretary monitors attendance closely and informs the class teachers if there are any concerns. Serious concerns about poor attendance are referred to the headteacher and arrangements made for the Education Welfare Officer to investigate. Good behaviour is effectively promoted across the school. Teachers manage pupils well and pupils understand and respond to the established expectations for behaviour. There have been no recent incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour.
58. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. A range of assessment procedures has been introduced including the use of the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in addition to the statutory tests at Year 2 and Year 6. Standardised reading tests and PIPs assessments are undertaken from Year 1 to Year 6. Baseline assessments are carried out at the beginning and end of the Reception year and good use is made of the information gleaned to group the children and to plan appropriately challenging activities. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, assessments are undertaken at the end of suitable topics or units of work, and teachers keep their own records. However, there are some inconsistencies in the way that teachers maintain their records, and the quality and relevance of the information varies considerably. In the best practice, useful and detailed records are kept, that record the performance of individual pupils. However, some records only provide general comments about the work covered and the overall outcomes of the lesson, rather than the attainment of the different pupils. In other subjects of the curriculum similar assessment procedures are in place, with the same lack of consistency in the way that information is recorded. Assessment opportunities are listed in teachers' planning, and individual names are sometimes added to the evaluations that teachers make of the work that has been done. Usually, however, records only provide general comments, and, as a result, little information is available, either to judge pupils' present attainment, to illustrate their progress or to help provide suitable work for the future. The school has already identified the need to improve the consistency with which teachers record the results of assessments, as well as the need to improve the use of assessment information in planning lessons.
59. The use made of assessment information is unsatisfactory. Until very recently there has been little analysis of the data and the assessment information has not been systematically used to identify strengths and weaknesses and to set targets for improvement. The headteacher has begun to analyse the data from the standardised tests and discuss the results with the staff. Since the beginning of this year emphasis has been placed on developing methods of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards in the National Curriculum assessment tests. A very good system to monitor individual and class performance is just being introduced. It is a very effective method of tracking pupils' academic attainment and progress as they move through the school and will be very useful in highlighting any underachievement or lack of progress year on year. However, as yet it does not contain enough information to allow teachers to fully track the progress being made by pupils.
60. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed and a wide variety of information is recorded to help identify pupils' current attainment. The information gained is used effectively to provide suitable new work for the pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61. The school has good links with parents. The headteacher has made very good efforts to establish good communication with parents and reassure them following the difficulties that had arisen following the disruption of staffing. Parents are welcomed into school and the headteacher and staff make very good efforts to consult them on important issues. For example, the views of parents have been sought to help identify possible improvements to the school curriculum in addition to the current teaching of French to older pupils. Good opportunities are provided for full and open discussions about the children's progress. The good partnership between the school and the parents provides significant practical support for teaching and learning.
62. Parents have very positive views of the school. Parents responding to the inspection survey state that the school expects their children to work hard and are pleased with the progress that their children are making. They appreciate the extra lessons that are provided after school to help pupils to catch up with work or to improve their performance. Parents believe that the teaching is good, that the school is now well led and managed, and that they would feel comfortable about approaching the staff with questions or a problem. Parents have also stated that matters of concern are taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
63. The school provides parents with a satisfactory range of documents to keep them informed about the school and its activities. Formal documents, such as the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents, are supported by newsletters, letters and surveys. Parents are invited to attend consultation evenings to discuss the progress that their children are making and parents who are unable to attend are offered alternative opportunities. The headteacher has an open door policy, encouraging parents to make their views known to her. Additionally, she has canvassed parents' opinions on healthy eating and the strengths of the school during recent months. The quality of pupils' progress reports has improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory, but the school acknowledges the need for even further development of the reports.
64. The school benefits from the support of an active Parent Teacher Association, which has a significant impact upon the work of the school. Social and fundraising events are organised regularly with the aim of providing those extra resources which enhance school life, such as the toaster, which, as part of the Healthy School initiative, provides healthy snacks at break-time. The Parent Teacher Association organises the Leavers' Disco and gives a present to each school leaver. It also provides sufficient funds to enable each class to select their own special resource, which generally is an educational trip. Parents regularly form working parties to provide practical help such as maintaining the beautiful school gardens and helping to paint the school. Recently, they erected a secure outdoor store to house the large play equipment for the Foundation Stage children.
65. A number of parents regularly help in school and many more give incidental support by accompanying pupils on trips, helping at fetes, and using their skills to carry out minor repairs. Parents support their children in their studies at home by listening to them practising their reading and supporting project work. Reading and homework diaries provide relevant correspondence upon pupils' progress.
66. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of the reviews of their children's individual education plans, so that they are fully aware of the provision being made for them. All parents are provided with a copy of their child's individual

education plan so that they can be fully involved in helping their child to make progress towards the targets.

67. There are good arrangements to induct new pupils. There are good opportunities for parents and children to visit the school in the previous term so that they are familiar with the school environment before they start. Parents are provided with useful information about the school routines and procedures.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

68. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The leadership of the new headteacher is very good and has already had a positive impact on the overall quality of educational provision at the school. However, there are still some weaknesses which need to be addressed. The school has suffered from a lack of direction and strong and consistent leadership for a considerable time. There have been many temporary managers in place in the last four years. This, together with substantial staffing changes and the lack of any systems for monitoring or evaluating teaching and learning has had a negative impact on the work of the school and standards started to decline. Some of the very good features highlighted at the time of the last inspection are no longer so evident. This is a consequence of the lack of structures and systems to enable the school to look critically at its performance and put in place the necessary strategic planning to enable the school not only to sustain its high level of success but also to continue to grow and develop. The situation is now beginning to stabilise and there are clear signs of improvement.
69. The new headteacher has a clear vision and provides very effective leadership which gives a firm direction for the work of the school. She has quickly recognised the strengths within the school and has capitalised upon them. She has also identified the areas in need of development and has a very strong sense of how to improve the school. Already she has put several initiatives in place which are having a beneficial impact both on pupils' academic attainment and their personal development. She has drawn up a very detailed improvement plan which is carefully prioritised and sets realistic yet challenging targets. She displays a strong personal example of commitment and dedication and her personable and open approach is encouraging the good team spirit within the school and enabling staff to continue working together to bring about significant improvements. However, at the present time she does not have a permanent deputy and, because several of the teaching staff are either on temporary contracts, on maternity leave or on supply, there are no subject leaders for key areas of the curriculum including mathematics and science. Furthermore, those co-ordinators that are in place have had little opportunity or training to help them play a full part in leading and managing their subject areas. This is placing a considerable onus upon the headteacher to carry out the responsibilities for developing the teaching and learning with only limited support. Nevertheless there is clear evidence of improvements already in some areas especially in mathematics.
70. Good improvements have been brought about for the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. The children now benefit from a bright and stimulating learning environment and a secure outdoor play area. New furniture and equipment including some large wheeled toys have been purchased and the curriculum is firmly rooted in the Foundation Stage Guidance for children of this age.
71. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is another area of where improvements have been quickly accomplished. The management by the special educational needs coordinator is very good. The new Code of Practice has been most

successfully introduced. Pupils are identified quickly, through a variety of procedures, and placed on the special needs register, which the school has chosen to retain. Pupils are provided with individual education plans which set clear targets for improvement. These plans are reviewed each half term, with new targets being set if appropriate. The special needs coordinator keeps extensive records and the progress made by the pupils is carefully checked. The governor appointed to monitor the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs carries out her work efficiently, effectively and thoughtfully.

72. The Governing Body is fully supportive of the school, holds it in high regard and has great confidence in the new headteacher. All statutory duties are fulfilled with diligence and many governors visit regularly and their contribution in a practical way is very good. However, whilst governors are keen for the school to succeed, their ability to work as a "critical friend" to the school is under-developed. As a consequence of the instability of senior staff, systems and procedures for monitoring teaching and learning have not been established, nor has the school consistently monitored and analysed its standards. This lack of secure and consistent leadership has meant that the governing body has not been enabled to fully develop its role in shaping the direction of the school and actively holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides. The governors have had too little involvement in monitoring the work of the school and this has resulted in the overall needs of the school not being clearly identified. There is a need for more focused evaluation to identify what needs to be done to bring about future developments. From the information provided by the headteacher, including an analysis of performance data, governors are beginning to establish a clearer view of the school's performance. They are now better placed to take a firmer role in strategic planning and ensure that the school moves forward.
73. The headteacher, in consultation with staff and governors, has recently devised a school improvement plan which is of a very good quality and identifies immediate educational priorities. The plan provides details of the resources needed to achieve tangible and specific improvements, and it is supported by a 5-year projection of aims and objectives.
74. The school is now making good use of its income and all available resources, including grants for specific purposes to support pupils' learning. The previous report stated that financial planning and control were very good. However, since then, in the absence of stable leadership, there were no effective systems in place to ensure that spending matched educational objectives and that outcomes were effectively monitored. Prior to the appointment of the present headteacher and over much of the intervening period, little money was spent on renewing and updating the equipment and learning resources. This resulted in some shortages in subject areas, such as English and music, and inhibited pupils' progress. A large reserve and more than 21% of the allocation for the financial year ending March 2001 was carried over to the following year. A significant amount of this has now been spent on resources and accommodation, and more is allocated. This is already having a beneficial impact on raising standards and improving the learning environment. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the need for prudence in effecting this expenditure, and within their set priorities identify plans to re-structure the staffing establishment to help address curriculum issues in science and mathematics. The school derives full benefit from available grants for specific aspects of its work, and the governing body has taken the decision to use some of the general budget allocation to augment the special educational needs grant to provide the co-ordinator with half a day per week to fulfil that role.

75. There are good systems in place to ensure effective financial control and administration. The headteacher and school secretary, both of whom have received training in the financial aspects of school management, closely monitor daily expenditure. The governing body and headteacher are well aware of the need to spend the accumulated reserves wisely. The school has a good understanding of the principles of best value and applies them to all significant decisions. Formal tenders are invited for major contracted works and the school is aware that best value for money embraces aspects beyond the basic costs. The service contract for computer maintenance has been replaced by the purchase of the services of an information and communication technology technician. Good use is made of new technology to monitor finances. It is well used by staff for generating and tracking medium term planning and will soon to be used to track individual pupils' attainment and progress.
76. The school has a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The headteacher does not have a class teaching commitment but regularly teaches groups and covers for absence. At the time of the inspection two teachers were on temporary contracts and there were two supply teachers in school. Three of the nine teachers have less than five years teaching experience, and five teachers including the headteacher have joined the staff in the last three years. In the last two years five permanent teachers have left and there have been a number of acting headteachers and deputies. This has had a detrimental effect on providing for the consistent development and progress in pupils' learning.
77. The new headteacher has brought a significant measure of stability to the school, and is addressing the need to appoint permanent teachers where there are currently temporary or supply teachers in post. She is also aware of the lack of expertise in some areas, and of the need to improve the role of the subject leaders for which there are development plans in place. The site manager and other support staff help to provide pupils with a clean and safe environment in which to work. The school secretary provides very good administration and financial support for the headteacher, is a friendly point of contact for parents and visitors, and makes very good use of the local press to chronicle school life.
78. The school is well situated within spacious grounds which are well used to support physical education and investigative work. Hard and grassed areas are appropriately marked to encourage organised play and the environmental area also provides a quiet area for contemplation. The access to the Year 1 classroom is through the Year 2 classroom, and this tends to cause a minor disturbance whenever children or adults need access. Plans exist for the development of the building which will provide for an improved library and make better use of the common areas between classrooms.
79. Recent expenditure has raised the quality and quantity of resources in most subjects to a satisfactory level but, with the exceptions of art and the Foundation Stage, there is still a need for further acquisitions in all subjects. Specifically, there is an inadequate range of percussion instruments for whole class participation in music lessons and, although a complete new reading scheme has been purchased, the present library and the shortage of general reading books do not encourage pupils to read for pleasure.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

80. **In order to build upon the school's many strengths, the headteacher, staff and governors should:**

1) strengthen the leadership and management of the school by:

- establishing a secure management structure;
- developing the role of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the quality of education the school provides;
- enabling the governing body to develop a more critical approach to what is happening in the school and to take a greater part in shaping its future direction;
- fully developing the role of the subject leaders so that they have a full understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' attainment in all subjects.

(paragraphs 68, 69, 72, 77, 115, 144, 175)

2) implement a thorough system of school evaluation which:

- involves all members of the school staff and governors in frequent and rigorous analysis of the school's performance;
- leads to the identification of improvement priorities;
- ensures the continuous raising of standards.

(paragraphs 3, 14, 59, 72, 73)

3) improve the consistency of assessment procedures to:

- provide a clearer picture of pupils' attainment and progress;
- ensure that all teachers use the information more rigorously when planning the next steps in pupils' learning.

(paragraphs 3, 58, 59, 114, 125, 154, 159, 165, 170)

4) make better use of the valuable assessment information and data that has been collected and analysed to:

- inform curriculum development;
- provide a clear focus for the monitoring of teaching and learning;
- track pupils' progress and set appropriate targets for groups and individuals.

(paragraph 59)

Minor weaknesses

In addition the governors should also consider the following areas for improvement for inclusion in their action plan:

- broaden the range of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms and the library *(paragraphs 6, 79, 90, 111, 116)*;
- ensure that worksheets that constrain pupils' learning opportunities are not overused *(paragraphs 28, 111, 113, 130, 132, 146, 153)*.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	13	12	0	0	0
Percentage	3	21	40	36	0	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	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		27

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	10	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (97)	94 (97)	94 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	17	20
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	30	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (97)	84 (97)	94 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	19	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	15
	Girls	18	13	17
	Total	29	24	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (82)	71 (95)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	13
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	27	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (86)	85 (95)	91 (91)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	
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		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	
Total number of education support staff	
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	403,820
Total expenditure	378,550
Expenditure per pupil	1,753
Balance brought forward from previous year	62,583
Balance carried forward to next year	87,853

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

50%

Number of questionnaires sent out	216
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	4	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	40	3	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	54	6	1	0
The teaching is good.	58	39	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	46	15	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	26	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	39	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	42	41	11	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	50	39	3	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	45	2	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	50	8	2	9

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

81. Children start school in the Reception class in the year of their fifth birthday. When they start school their attainment is broadly in line with that expected for children of similar ages. No child has been identified as having special educational needs, and none has English as an additional language. By the end of the Foundation Stage children attain the Early Learning Goals in physical and creative development and attain beyond the expected level in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal and social development.
82. The overall quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage is not quite as high as indicated in the last report. Nevertheless, provision is good and is improving. Teachers' planning reflects the stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals and careful attention is paid to providing good quality learning experiences in all areas of learning.
83. The management of pupils by the teacher and support staff is generally very good. The teacher's hard work and enthusiasm has ensured that the quality of teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. However, there remain one or two areas that could still be improved. The overall planning of the timetable means that some lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy are too long for children of this age. Whilst pupils learn effectively in these sessions, it restricts their regular access to some other areas of the curriculum, particularly in the development of their creative and physical skills. On some other occasions, teachers over-direct children in their work so that they do not always have enough opportunities to experiment, choose and pursue their own ideas. Nevertheless, children make good progress in their learning and are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
84. There is good communication between the teacher, the support staff and a number of willing voluntary helpers. They are deployed well and know what is expected of them. The very good relationships between staff members have led to the formation of a good team spirit, through which the knowledge, care, understanding and development of the children is a shared priority.
85. Assessment procedures are good. The baseline assessment measures children's attainment when they enter school and again when they transfer to Key Stage 1. Other procedures for measuring pupils' progress in mathematics, language and personal and social development are effective and regularly recorded. Day-to-day records of what pupils do and achieve are conscientiously maintained and this helps to ensure that all their needs are met.
86. The accommodation is good. Children benefit from a large airy room, which is bright, cheerful and enhanced with appropriate colourful furniture and good quality displays. There is a separate safe outdoor play area although this is lacking in suitable markings to support imaginative play. A new shed, erected by parents and very recently stocked with a good range of new outdoor play equipment will be beneficial in promoting the children's physical development. The school grounds are of high quality. They are safe and accessible and are used effectively as a valuable resource. Considerable sums of money have recently been released to support teaching in the Foundation Stage and resources are plentiful and their quality is good.

87. Good relationships with parents are well established. Parents are provided with useful information about their children's progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

88. By the end of the Reception Year, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in terms of their personal, social and emotional development and many attain beyond that level. The quality of teaching and learning is good, enabling children to make good progress. Teachers and support staff show care and concern for the children, whilst simultaneously supporting their independence. They do this through well-crafted questions which encourage the children to think and respond sensibly. They mostly balance the level of teacher intervention well, but occasionally this is not so and then children are over-directed and not given enough freedom to choose for themselves. The children enjoy coming to school and appreciate what it has to offer them. They grow in confidence, by learning to co-operate with each other and becoming responsible for what they do in class. For example, during "Topic" time, children are expected to register their visit to specific activities, such as when using the computer or when listening to the tape. Children are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene and to become more able to dress themselves.
89. The children are encouraged to use their curiosity and develop inquisitive minds. Through carefully studying and identifying the changes taking place in the wide range of seedlings and tadpoles, they learn how to look after them properly and show high levels of interest as they watch and talk about their growth. In lessons, they show good concentration and perseverance skills. One child, although having only limited reading skills, spent a long time laboriously but enthusiastically copying out a story because he had enjoyed it so much. Children are taught the importance of looking after resources. They respond well by showing care when helping to put them away and tidying up. Behaviour is very good and children respect their teachers and each other. On the odd occasion when inappropriate behaviour is observed, the teachers deal firmly but sympathetically with the situation and effectively turn it into an opportunity for the development of good relationships. "Please and thank-you" are common occurrences, enabling children to display good social skills in the dining room.
90. Aspects of Christianity are taught through stories, particularly around Christmas and Easter. An awareness of other world faiths and traditions is also encouraged through opportunities to celebrate festivals such as Eid and Chinese New Year. However, there is a shortage of books and stories to help children to become more familiar with the culturally diverse nature of Britain and towns in the nearby locality.

Communication, language and literacy

91. Good quality teaching and a wide range of interesting and relevant activities allow the children to make good gains in their learning so that by the end of the Foundation Stage many children attain standards above those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy. Children develop good standards of speaking and listening. All communicate in sentences and many hold an extended conversation, often displaying enthusiasm about what they have to say. They also have learned how to listen to others speaking within their groups so that communication is good. They listen well to their teachers' instructions and are attentive to stories, such as "The Gingerbread Man", and when they are in assembly. Planned opportunities for the development of listening and speaking are regularly observed through well-prepared questions in discussion at the beginning and end of lessons, such as "What do you think will happen when..." or "What did you find under the stone?" Other occasions, such as when children are

directed to the “Market Garden”, provide children with the stimulus and opportunity to converse during imaginative play.

92. The staff use a wide range of strategies, including direct teaching of letter sounds to develop children’s early reading skills. Children enjoy books and listening to stories. They know that the print and the pictures convey meaning. They talk about the pictures and can remember the names of the characters in their favourite stories, what comes next and join the teacher in repeated refrains. A third of children are confident readers and a further third also read books with more repetitive lines of print. The better readers recognise some phonic blends, but on the whole they read through word recognition. However, most children are well on the way to identifying accurately all first and last letter sounds. An appropriate number of books and other reading materials are accessible for pupils to use independently and they are encouraged to enjoy them on their own or with a friend. They are enthusiastic and enjoy sharing reading with adults. The good co-operation and links established with parents help children’s progress as they practise and extend their reading skills at home.
93. Children are introduced to the element of free writing through making marks and lines, developing into patterns. This provides a good foundation for children to form the letters correctly. All children in the Reception Class write their names without help. They use their knowledge of simple letter sounds and blends to write simple words such as pin and pen. Nearly all produce recognisable letters when writing and often, when playing, produce “pretend” words with clearly identifiable features. About a third are writing in short sentences, some of which contain capital letters, though not always in the correct place. Some well-planned play activities have resulted in children producing café menus and shop price lists, and these help to promote pupils’ progress and understanding of the need to communicate through writing.

Mathematical development

94. Teaching is good, enabling the children to make good progress and by the end of the year their attainment is above that expected for pupils of a similar age. Almost all children can identify and match objects with numbers up to 10 and about three quarters can similarly achieve with numbers up to 20. Children demonstrated good counting skills by going round the circle with each child speaking the next consecutive number up to 108. Pupils benefit from well-prepared, well-taught and interesting lessons. For example, in order to add $8+5$, the teacher introduced children to the principle of mentally holding a number before counting on to 13. She did this by placing 8 plastic mini-beasts in a tin and then counted on the remaining 5. The children soon grasped the concept and were able to achieve success independently. Appropriate mathematical vocabulary is regularly used to increase children’s knowledge and understanding, so that they can identify big, biggest, shorter and longest in practical situations. They can recognise shapes, such as squares, circles and triangles, and have a growing awareness of the value of money. This is often developed in role-play situations as they buy fruit, flowers and sandwiches from the “shop”. Children have created a block graph through measuring each other, cutting a strip of paper to the corresponding height and sticking it to the wall.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

95. Children’s attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world exceeds that expected for their age and because of good teaching they make good progress. The teachers plan a wide range of interesting and often practical activities that stimulate interest and learning. Children are developing an early introduction to geography

through investigating exotic fruits. For example, they visited the local shops to find varieties of fruit, such as pineapples, bananas, kiwi fruit and pomegranates. On the way they studied local features and buildings so that they could become familiar with their surroundings. They understand how the weather affects the clothes they wear and what they wear in summer as opposed to winter. A sense of time and the past is developed through stories and children can talk freely of their own experience of change when they compare themselves as babies to what they have now become. They understand that their grandparents' toys were often quite different from their own.

96. The outstanding natural beauty of the area and the very good environmental features within the school grounds provide an abundance of opportunities for teachers and pupils to explore many aspects of nature. For instance, having found and explored the habitat of a range of bugs, the children made "mini-beast hotels" out of old wood, rocks, grapefruit peel and similar attractive materials before placing them in well thought-out situations. It was a joyful experience the next day when they discovered how many guests had checked in overnight. The children record their work well and eagerly talk about what they have learned.
97. The classroom is equipped with a computer and children are encouraged to use this effectively to support learning. They can recognise the meaning of icons, control and direct the cursor to appropriate points, and click on the mouse to achieve specific tasks. They are dexterous when using construction kits and making junk models, such as a robot.

Physical development

98. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children attain the Early Learning Goals in terms of their physical development. Teaching is satisfactory and children of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress, although there is scope for improvement. Until very recently the school did not have sufficient large, outdoor and wheeled play equipment and this restricted the opportunity for children to develop this aspect of their education. The teachers have now started to address this deficiency and intend to make it a more regular aspect of their weekly teaching programme. The school hall is a useful resource. When using it, children make good use of the space to extend and develop running, jumping and balancing skills. They use small apparatus effectively as they learn how to control a ball and throw for direction. The children enjoy music and move appropriately as they interpret its sounds. Fine motor skills are well developed. Children hold their pencils correctly and handle a variety of tools, such as spreaders, brushes and scissors, to make imaginative and well proportioned models.

Creative development

99. Teaching in this area is satisfactory and most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in their creative development by the time they begin Year 1. The children are provided with a good range of opportunities to develop their creative skills. These they enjoy and participate in with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. They are sometimes particularly excited when they mix two colours together and find that they make a third. They paint pictures of themselves, which have appropriate features and proportion. Sometimes a particular type of art is the focus of the activities. For example, when the school held its "Worldwide Week," the children learned about Australia and studied the work of Aboriginal artist Kwarik Waringa before producing pictures using simple free shapes and a series of painted dots. Similarly, after studying the exotic fruits, they produced pictures in the style of Guiseppe Archimboldo. To do this, they made plasticene models of fruit and arranged them to make faces. Sometimes, however,

teachers are too much in control of children's learning and the tasks provided; the prescriptive use of colour and choice of materials constrains children's imagination and opportunity to experiment and discover new horizons.

100. Children enjoy singing and making music. They are enthusiastic when singing jingles and simple songs in class and when making music using percussion instruments. They recognise that drums vibrate to make a sound and they can copy a beat when playing or when clapping.

ENGLISH

101. On the basis of the National Curriculum tests in 2001, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national average and above average compared with similar schools. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, based on national tests, was at an average level in reading and above average in writing when compared to all schools and to similar schools. Although standards at Key Stage 2 are similar to those at the previous inspection and have been consistently above average, they have declined rather than improved over the last four years. Standards in reading at Key Stage 1 have also slipped since the last inspection but standards in writing have remained steadily above average. The school's results have not improved over the last few years at the same rate as that found nationally. The declining results can be attributed to the very unsettled staffing situation and the lack of direct leadership by senior management to monitor and develop the teaching and learning.
102. Inspection findings show that throughout the school, pupils achieve well in most aspects of the work. The good standards that were found at the time of the last inspection have for the most part been sustained. By the age of eleven pupils' attainment in English is above average. By the age of seven pupils' attainment in reading and writing is above average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their individual targets. The school has done well to maintain the standards at this level in the light of the many difficulties that it has faced.
103. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average at the end of both key stages. Many pupils are eager to engage in conversation and listen attentively to the views of others. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress because the teachers listen to them and encourage them to think about what they have to say and give them good opportunities to air their views. Pupils communicate clearly with each other and with adults. Throughout the school, pupils' listening skills are well developed and pupils show a good understanding of what is said to them. They listen well to each other and treat the opinions of other pupils with tolerance and understanding. Speaking skills are also well developed and this is demonstrated in the clear manner in which pupils express themselves in the good opportunities provided for discussion and debate. Teachers develop pupils' speaking skills as they skilfully draw out pupils' ideas and challenge them to give more thoughtful answers. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher stretched pupils' ideas and responses and urged them to give fuller and more precise answers. Similarly, in a Year 4 poetry lesson the teacher skilfully led the pupils to use their imagination prior to declaring their thoughts about the sensations they appreciate. This resulted in the use of some very good descriptive language such as "seeing glasses like starlight shine". Pupils respond to teachers' questioning in a very positive manner and, even from an early age, they are confident in explaining their ideas and opinions using a suitable vocabulary. This is because their contributions are valued by their teachers and are treated with respect. By the age of eleven, most pupils speak

with increased fluency and confidence and can adapt their speaking skills to meet the challenges of different situations. They develop a good vocabulary and they become familiar with subject specific and technical language across the curriculum. Discussion times and personal and social development sessions are valuable in encouraging the pupils to talk about their own experiences and feelings and these are managed well by teachers.

104. Pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is above average. The majority of pupils achieve the nationally expected level and over a third of them achieve the higher level. Pupils of all levels of ability become competent readers but their progress in becoming avid readers is somewhat restricted because they are not presented with a suitably wide range of reading material from which to choose. Higher attaining pupils read with accuracy and fluency. They can talk about what is happening in stories and what might happen next. They understand how to tackle new and more complex words by breaking them up into syllables and in this way read such words as "enormous" and "mischievous". They also use this method to help with the pronunciation of difficult words. Average attainers are beginning to blend sounds together to help them decipher unfamiliar words. Lower attaining pupils tend to rely on recognising whole words, but also use pictures and initial letters to help them to read simple texts. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in class to help them to take a full part in lessons and make good progress towards their individual targets. Those receiving the Early Literacy Support are making good progress especially in word recognition.
105. In reading, the standards achieved by the pupils currently in Year 6 are good. By the age of eleven, most pupils cope well with any text including fiction and non-fiction books. Higher and average attaining pupils read expressively and fluently and can talk about their preferences for particular authors. Lower attainers read with a degree of accuracy but some hesitancy and a lack of fluency. During many literacy lessons they make good progress in appreciating how authors use language for effect. For example, during the inspection the Year 6 pupils were using books by Jacqueline Wilson as a basis for their literacy work. They made good progress in appreciating the author's strategies to develop characterisation. Pupils were able to refer to the text to identify examples of the techniques used to engage the reader including the use of humour, metaphors and similes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall especially when they are supported in small groups. However, at present, there is no opportunity for pupils who are finding reading difficult to benefit from the Additional Literacy Support materials.
106. All pupils throughout the school are encouraged to take their reading books home and the home reading record helps parents to become more involved in their children's learning. Those parents who listen to their children reading regularly at home make a valuable contribution to their children's progress in reading. The more competent readers make good use of the local public libraries and many have a good range of books at home. This is effectively supporting the reading standards.
107. Pupils are developing their writing skills alongside their growing ability in reading and spoken English. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are writing independently and using joined up handwriting. The higher attaining pupils write at length and are beginning to revise their work and to correct spellings and punctuation. Average attainers can retell familiar stories such as "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Cinderella". They can write in chapters and produce a book with title, author and illustrator. Lower attaining pupils make a good attempt to recount stories and use simple punctuation to demarcate their sentences. In Year 2 especially, the teacher's enthusiasm for language is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Pupils are making noticeable progress in spelling,

writing and handwriting. They are encouraged to think of themselves as authors. They talk about their own writing and, because of the quality of the teaching and marking, are able to evaluate their own work and think about how it can be improved.

108. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have gained a satisfactory understanding of how to structure different styles of writing. When writing stories they understand that it is important to capture the interest of the reader quickly and they make good use of descriptive language to gain effect. They write reports and accounts of their work in science and factual and imaginary pieces relating to their work in history, geography and religious education. Good examples of writing in a journalistic style provide evidence of their developing understanding of the different genres in writing. Throughout the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Emphasis is placed on developing pupils' understanding of grammar and parts of speech. In their writing of a modern version of a fairy story, pupils demonstrate their ability to use a good mix of narrative and dialogue and produce written work that is well punctuated and grammatically correct. Pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. The content of their work is good and pupils have a secure understanding of grammar, parts of speech and can write in various formats and produce both factual and imaginative pieces of work. In most classes pupils are given appropriate opportunities to apply their skills and to produce some good examples of written work. However, in some classes there is a preponderance of work sheets and only limited evidence of extended writing.
109. There is not a consistent approach to the teaching and practising of handwriting and this is having a detrimental effect on the quality of pupils' presentation and handwriting towards the upper end of the school. Older pupils, particularly in Year 5, are still mainly writing in pencil and their work is sometimes untidy and not neatly presented.
110. Pupils' attitudes to English are good throughout the school. Pupils enjoy reading and are willing and keen to read to adults. They listen well, are usually attentive and show interest in their work. This was particularly evident in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were totally engaged and even excited, as they prepared to write poems based on the use of their senses. In the best lessons, when teachers provide an interesting stimulus through well chosen shared reading texts, they capture pupils' interest and this results in pupils working productively and putting in a great deal of intellectual effort. In all classes, pupils are confident to answer questions and make contributions to class discussions. However, when the work set is unchallenging or the pace of the lesson slows, some pupils tend to lose interest and become restless.
111. The overall quality of teaching in English is generally good and it is good for the teaching of pupils with special needs especially at Key Stage 1. The teaching of basic skills of reading is given suitable emphasis and the systematic teaching of letter sounds and patterns gives pupils the confidence and the appropriate skills to decode print and read unfamiliar words. However, since the introduction of the Literacy Strategy, the school's structured reading programme is being used less widely and this is inhibiting the standards in reading from being much higher. A new reading scheme has recently been purchased and the pupils take these books home daily and really enjoy reading them to parents and other adults. This consistently emphasises the importance of reading and provides good practice. However, the scheme is not being consistently followed or used sufficiently well in school to teach reading. Furthermore, pupils are not being encouraged to develop a love of books because there are too few books available for them to enjoy. Suitable attention is given to the teaching of the basic skills and techniques in writing and pupils make good progress. Teachers are giving appropriate attention to encouraging pupils to write independently and to develop their

own style. However, at both key stages, pupils' writing efforts are sometimes constrained by the need to fill in and complete photo-copiable worksheets. Pupils are competent in applying their knowledge and there are some good examples of extended writing and empathetic writing across other areas of the curriculum.

112. Most lessons loosely follow the principles set out in the National Literacy Strategy and some teachers make flexible use of the text, sentence and word sessions and plan work that is appropriate to the needs of their pupils. However, not all teachers follow the prescribed format and some important elements, such as the word level work or the guided reading session, are omitted. In addition, the literacy "hour" sometimes stretches to 75 minutes and the work is extended to fill the time, which slows down the learning.
113. In the most effective lessons, good use is made of the introductory session to set a clear focus for the learning. The purpose of the lesson is explained clearly to the pupils, so that they understand what is expected of them. The teachers use the plenary session effectively to assess and reinforce learning as well as to share successful outcomes with the class. Teachers usually explain to pupils what they are going to learn and this helps to keep pupils well focused on their tasks. However, on occasions teachers do not set sufficiently high expectations for all pupils in the class. The tasks set rely too much on worksheets and these exercises are sometimes too easy, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. They do not provide stimulating, challenging language activities that enable pupils to make sufficient strides in their learning.
114. There are some good examples of marking when teachers make useful comments that are encouraging and also identify areas for development for pupils. However, because pupils are not always expected to make corrections to their work, the good guidance can sometimes go unheeded. There are formal assessments each year and national assessments at the end of the key stages. Until very recently the information provided by these results has not been thoroughly analysed or used to set targets for future years.
115. The co-ordinator for English is an experienced teacher and has a great interest in the subject. However, because of the frequently changing staffing situation and lack of leadership and management from senior staff she has not been enabled to fully develop her role as subject leader and the management of the subject is, therefore, unsatisfactory. She has had very little opportunity to gain a comprehensive overview of the teaching and learning across the school. There has been limited opportunity for the monitoring of planning and little evaluation of pupils' attainment and progress. Furthermore, not all of the staff presently in the school have had literacy training and no-one is trained in providing the additional literacy support at Key Stage 2.
116. Resources for English are unsatisfactory. A considerable amount of money has recently been spent to improve the resources but there are still some significant deficiencies. The school does not have enough big books for shared text work in the Literacy Hour and there is a need for more reading scheme materials to guide pupils in their every day reading. There are insufficient books in classrooms and the book areas are not organised in a way that encourages pupils to pick up and explore books for the sheer pleasure of doing so. The library is soon to be relocated and developed and when this is functional it should encourage pupils to develop their independent learning skills. The use of information and communication technology to support pupils in their writing endeavours or for research purposes is not a regular feature of literacy lessons. However, pupils have used word processing to present their work for display and many use their own computers at home to gather information for their project work.

117. Overall, because of the many changes in senior management and the general disruption to staffing since the time of the last inspection there is little evidence of improvement. However, it is to the credit of all concerned that despite some decline in standards against the national picture, pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school has remained above average. The further development of English is a current priority of the school improvement plan and the school is soon to benefit from a Local Education Authority consultant.

MATHEMATICS

118. In the 2001 end of key stage national tests, the school's results were in line with the national average and those of similar schools. The headteacher carefully analysed these results, which were lower than the previous year, and identified the areas of particular weakness in pupils' performance. She also recognised the need to provide more resources to support pupils' learning. With some improvements in planning, teachers have successfully addressed these weaknesses, with the result that standards have improved since last year. However, at the time of the school's previous inspection, standards at the age of 11 were well above average, and current standards are not as high as they were then.
119. Inspection findings are that at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment is above the national expectation and pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress.
120. At the age of seven, pupils successfully carry out a range of practical and problem solving activities, and many confidently try to discover their own ways to find solutions. Most are confident in handling numbers. Pupils have a clear understanding of addition, including carrying figures, and subtraction. Most know the multiplication facts relating to 2, 5 and 10, and can undertake a range of multiplication exercises accordingly. They have a good understanding of place value to three figures, and they recognise odd and even numbers. They successfully identify halves and quarters and, whilst a number find it difficult, the majority can find a fraction of a whole number. Pupils confidently carry out addition and subtraction of money, in the context of shopping bills. Most pupils can correctly identify right angles, two- and three-dimensional shapes and reflective symmetry, and they have a good understanding of time on the hour and half hour. A number of pupils are less confident with time on the quarter hour. In measuring activities, most pupils are able to confidently use both standard and non-standard units of measure. Pupils successfully collect data, for example, on pupils' favourite colours and pets, and they carefully represent their findings in bar graphs.
121. At the age of 11, most pupils successfully develop their own strategies for solving problems. Most readily identify the information they need, and then draw their own conclusions from their work, but some pupils find it more difficult to carry out the activities when more than one step is involved. Pupils confidently undertake work in addition and subtraction, and most are also confident working with a range of multiplication and division exercises. They have a good knowledge of place value to seven figures, and many can identify and order negative numbers. Most pupils are confident in saying the times-tables and in readily recalling individual multiplication and division facts to 10×10 . Pupils have been introduced to decimals to two and three places and most use them confidently in addition and subtraction, as well as in the context of measurement and money. Most pupils have a good understanding of fractions, and they readily identify equivalent fractions. Pupils use and interpret

coordinates in the first quadrant, and higher attaining pupils confidently produce work involving all four quadrants. Pupils successfully tell the time, both in analogue and digital display. Most pupils name a range of angles, including acute, obtuse and reflex angles, and most use protractors successfully to measure angles to the nearest degree. Some pupils, however, find this difficult. Many pupils are able to identify and calculate perimeters and areas of regular and compound shapes, using an appropriate formula when required. Many readily compare two simple distributions, confidently identifying, for example, the range and mode. Most pupils understand the concept of probability, and they confidently use the appropriate terminology to describe their observations.

122. The quality of teaching and learning are good, overall. Some very good examples of teaching were also observed during the inspection. Lessons are suitably planned, based on the structure of the National Numeracy framework. All teachers make use of mental activities, at the beginning of lessons, but at present there is a tendency in most classes for teachers to take answers from a small number of pupils, and not fully involve them all. On occasions, the introductory sessions are too long, and some pupils begin to lose concentration. A good feature of the teaching is the most careful allowance that is made for the provision of practical and problem solving activities. Teachers are fully aware, however, of the importance of continuing to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary, and they are careful to address this issue during lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge, generally provide clear instruction and much help and support is given, both by teachers and support staff, with the result that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their overall mathematical ability. However, on occasions not enough care is taken to ensure that all pupils receive work that is suited to their particular needs. Where teaching is very good, and where subject knowledge is particularly secure, expectations are high and a wide variety of stimulating methods is used to instruct the pupils, they are helped to make very good progress. The plenary sessions are generally appropriately used to check pupils' understanding and celebrate some of the work done.
123. Most pupils enjoy the work. They settle to their written and practical tasks with interest and enthusiasm, they work well with other pupils when required, they know what they are expected to do, and they are keen to accomplish their tasks. Pupils are well behaved, and this enables them to concentrate well on the written work provided. Most pupils take suitable care with the appearance of their work. Teachers mark pupils' work promptly, and most provide regular written comments of advice or praise. Good use is also generally made of homework to support learning.
124. The school utilises the National Numeracy document as its scheme of work, with the staff making appropriate additions where they believe they are needed. Teachers use the scheme well in producing their planning, but the length of some lessons is overlong, and the mental sessions do not always fully involve all pupils. The overall implementation of the strategy, however, is now satisfactory. The subject coordinator is currently the headteacher, in the absence of a permanent post-holder. However, she is enthusiastic and well-informed, and in carefully analysing the national test results, identifying weaknesses and providing a range of most suitable resources, she has played an important role in helping the school to improve its standards since last year.
125. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. However, there is little consistency in the way that teachers keep records. Some teachers clearly identify pupils' attainment, but others generally record little more than the work covered by the class. This makes it difficult to monitor pupils' attainment and progress. In addition, the information is not always used effectively to provide work that is suited to the particular needs of pupils

and sometimes all pupils in the class are provided with the same activities. Furthermore, limited use is currently being made of this information to plot the progress that individual pupils make as they move through the school, and to provide them with targets for improving their work. The school has already identified the need to improve the consistency of recording assessment information, as well as making more appropriate use of this information. Also, there are indications, from lessons seen during the inspection, that teachers are now starting to provide pupils with work that is appropriate to their current knowledge and understanding. Many pupils find mathematics an exciting subject, and the excitement generated, when identifying solutions to problems, helps develop pupils' spiritual awareness. Mathematics is used appropriately in other subjects, such as science and geography, and suitable use is also made of information and communication technology to further develop pupils' mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

126. On the basis of the 2001 Key Stage 2 national test results, pupils' attainment in science is close to the national average and is average in comparison to similar schools. Since the time of the last inspection standards in science have followed national trends and statutory test results have remained consistently above the national average. However, the latest available test results indicate a drop in overall performance at the end of Year 6.
127. Inspection findings are that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are broadly in line with those found nationally. This is due substantially to the recent instability in staffing experienced by the school during which time less emphasis has been placed on practical scientific enquiry and standards in this area of the subject have dropped significantly since the last inspection.
128. By the age of seven, the great majority of pupils reach the nationally expected level in all areas of the subject although few pupils reach the higher level. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior levels of learning. The pupils develop satisfactory levels of knowledge about how plants grow and about how they can keep themselves healthy. They are able to identify the properties of familiar materials and suggest why they are suitable for different purposes. They know about the dangers of electricity and that a complete circuit is necessary for a bulb to light. They know that a force is a push or pull and can identify some of the forces acting in different situations. They reinforce their understanding of forces and develop satisfactory scientific enquiry skills through practical investigations, such as how the height of a slope affects the distance travelled by a toy car. Pupils record simple data based on their observations of events such as bean growth. However, only a small number of pupils understand the concept of predicting and their ability to suggest why things happen as they do is not well developed. Pupils are not secure in their understanding of fair testing
129. By the age of eleven, most pupils achieve standards of scientific knowledge and understanding that are at least in line with those expected for their age and a significant number exceeds the expected levels. However, in scientific enquiry, the achievement of most pupils is unsatisfactory because of the lack of emphasis placed on this aspect of the subject during frequent staff changes. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding in relation to their previous levels of learning. However, progress is uneven during this key stage and is better in Year 4 and Year 6 in all areas of the

subject. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the functions of different parts of a plant and how plants reproduce. They have a good range of knowledge about the structure of the human body and can describe the functions of the principle organs and know how muscles and bones interact in body movement. They know about solids and liquids and can suggest ways in which mixtures might be separated. Through practical investigation of the thermal properties of different materials, they know that some materials act as insulators of heat while others conduct heat. They develop a good understanding of how forces act in different situations and know that forces are measured in Newtons. In their work on electricity, pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of how different components function in a circuit. Although most pupils know about fair testing, their ability to apply the basic principles systematically and carefully in practical situations is not sufficiently well developed. This is due mainly to insufficient opportunity to engage in practical investigation in order to find the answer to a scientific question. Many pupils do not appreciate the need for careful collection of data and require support in interpreting their findings in scientific terms.

130. The quality of teaching in science is generally satisfactory, although the quality varies throughout the school and there is some very good teaching, particularly in some classes in Key Stage 2. The best teaching is very well planned to give maximum opportunity for the pupils to take part in practical investigative work that fully challenges and extends their scientific thinking. Very skilful questioning and well led discussion prompt pupils to suggest ideas and they are guided to secure conclusions based on their investigational findings. In a lesson about the human skeleton, pupils in Year 4 were given very good opportunities to develop their scientific enquiry skills and were able to plan a reliable investigation that enabled them to find the answer to their question from the data they collected. However, the teaching of pupils in Year 6 has recently concentrated on securing pupils' factual knowledge and the development of their scientific enquiry skills has been limited. Too few opportunities have been presented for pupils to plan and carry out investigations for themselves. In the less successful lessons, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and teachers do not give sufficient opportunities for the pupils to think for themselves. In some lessons the teachers rely too heavily on worksheets or textbooks and this practice does not sufficiently extend the pupils' scientific understanding.
131. In most lessons the teachers ensure that all their pupils are fully included in the learning. Pupils with special educational needs are often given extra support according to their learning targets. Boys and girls are given equal opportunities to be included in lessons. Occasionally, however, all pupils are given the same task and this sometimes fails to provide sufficient challenge for the more able pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
132. Science lessons provide good opportunities for the pupils to practise and extend their numeracy skills in activities, such as measurement, data collection and graph construction. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through good questioning techniques. Literacy skills are developed well when pupils are given opportunities to communicate their science learning in their own words. However, pupils make less satisfactory progress when the tasks they are given are limited to prepared worksheets.
133. The management of science is unsatisfactory. The subject does not have a designated coordinator and consequently standards and teaching in science are not sufficiently well monitored. The school has recently adopted the national scheme of work as a basis for science teaching but its implementation is inconsistent because of the lack of

clear leadership. Considerable recent expenditure has ensured that resources for teaching the subject are adequate to meet the needs and more expenditure is planned in the near future. The targets identified by the school are appropriate for further development of the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

134. The great majority of pupils throughout the school achieve standards that are above the national expectations for their age by the end of both key stages. The exceptionally high standards reported at the time of the last inspection were not evident during this inspection but the school has been entirely successful in maintaining good standards during a prolonged period of staffing instability. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior levels of learning.
135. By the age of seven the pupils have made good progress in the development of their artistic skills and knowledge. They are able to use an appropriate range of media with confidence to produce satisfactory drawing, painting, print and collage effects. They develop very good levels of awareness about the work of well-known artists and make credible attempts to imitate different styles of expression. For example, the pupils in Year 2 used the work of Mondrian very effectively to stimulate their own angular studies using bold colour interspersed with black lines. Computer generated images in bold colours explore and imitate the work of Paul Klee to great effect. Pupils create collages using paper and card and develop modelling skills through the use of clay and dough.
136. By the age of eleven the pupils have widened the range of expressive media they can use to include three-dimensional work. Their drawing and painting skills are developing well and pupils show an increasing awareness of line and tone. The school's annual Art Week provides very good opportunities for pupils to practise sculptural skills, such as willow weaving and wood carving, to great effect with the support of visiting artists. Sketchbooks are used effectively to note observations and develop ideas for later studies. The pupils develop a very good range of knowledge about the work of other artists and are able to evaluate and express preferences about a range of images in different styles. They experiment successfully with different media and styles of expression, for example, in the representation of movement in drawings of footballers.
137. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and fully inclusive to give all pupils an appropriately wide range of learning opportunities. The teachers make high demands of their pupils and use stimulating and relevant starting points to promote high levels of interest in the subject. They have good levels of subject knowledge and expertise and this has a beneficial impact on the way in which they teach the necessary skills to enable all pupils to make good progress. In a good lesson in Year 1, the pupils were taught very effectively, by example and demonstration, how to use collage to represent the stages of growth of a bean plant. Drawing and painting skills are taught well at both key stages and pupils demonstrate good understanding of how to use shading to convey fine observational detail and texture.
138. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills, for example, in written art appreciation. The work in art effectively promotes pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support learning.

139. The subject is very well led and managed. The coordinator has a thorough knowledge of the subject and is deeply committed to developing art in the school. She has spent a substantial amount of time in applying for funding and in managing and developing events, such as the annual Art Week, to enhance and enrich the quality of pupils' learning. This event contributes much to the good progress made by the pupils and provides very good opportunities for them to experience a wide range of different media outside the normal classroom setting. Much work has already been carried out to ensure that the subject has a secure basis for teaching. Future plans to develop further the subject planning, monitoring and reviewing processes are entirely appropriate to move the subject forward.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

140. Standards are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. This represents a slight drop in standards from the time of the last inspection when they were found to be above expectations, and is due mainly to the recent instability in staffing experienced by the school. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
141. By the age of seven, the pupils have gained appropriate designing and making skills, using simple materials and tools. They cut and join paper and card effectively to construct model houses and paper kites, which they test to evaluate the success of their designs. They construct moving parts successfully in 'pop up' Easter baskets and cards, producing attractive finished products. They gain a satisfactory level of understanding about moving mechanisms and structures using construction kits. In food technology they successfully combine ingredients and use the appropriate implements to make bread.
142. By the age of eleven the pupils have built successfully on these early experiences and have widened their understanding of the designing and making process. They are able to evaluate existing products, such as biscuits, in order to develop their own design proposals that successfully encompass the appearance, taste and texture of the biscuits. In work on designing 'the perfect football shirt', the pupils in Year 6 tested different fabrics for wind resistance, strength and waterproof qualities in order to select the most appropriate fabric for their designs. The pupils' making skills develop at a satisfactory rate. They are able to cut and join materials with reasonable accuracy using appropriate tools. In making working models of vehicles, they were able to construct a simple wooden chassis and incorporate an electric motor linked to an appropriate drive mechanism. Insufficient emphasis is placed on evaluating the finished products according to suitability for purpose and on refining the designs. As a result, the pupils' design proposals often lack precision and their evaluative skills are not sufficiently well developed for their ages.
143. The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory throughout the school and promotes high levels of enjoyment in designing and making activities. However, there are indications that some teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge and understanding to teach all the required aspects to the appropriate levels. Lessons are carefully planned but expectations of what the pupils can do are sometimes too low and, as a result, the planned activities do not sufficiently extend the necessary skills outlined in the National Curriculum programme of study. There are too few opportunities to evaluate the success of the designs against the original design proposal. Designs often do not incorporate measurement and the pupils do not have

sufficient opportunities to cut materials to the required dimensions using appropriate tools. Specific learning about mechanisms is taught well, for example, the use of simple pneumatics to make a moving part for a monster and an electric motor to propel a model vehicle.

144. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall but the coordinator does not have sufficient opportunity to gain a comprehensive overview of standards and teaching. The national programme of work has recently been modified to meet the needs of the school but its impact on standards has yet to be evaluated. There is no overall school approach to tracking the progress of individual pupils in the development of their design and technology skills. The coordinator has undergone recent training in the subject and has the capacity to provide professional development for her colleagues but to date has had insufficient opportunity to do this. Resources for the subject are adequate but there is a need for more tools and materials in order to meet the full range of the subject requirements.

GEOGRAPHY

145. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. All pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs. There are satisfactory cross-curricular links, particularly through literacy, numeracy and through occasional use of information and communication technology. Some good display work in classrooms is used to enhance and consolidate pupils' learning in lessons. As a result of their learning, older pupils talk sensibly about what they have learned and are able to display their geographical knowledge in conversation.
146. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are satisfactory. Pupils make and draw simple plans and maps. Sometimes these are of fictional places, but more often they are of the local area in which they live. They are able to show important features and landmarks, such as the school, houses, shops and the church. They can describe what they see on the way to school and identify key points and features on photographs. Pupils know the names of some nearby towns and can compare differences between them and where they live. They understand the need for some of their parents to travel to their place of work. Pupils know about weather, and some higher attainers can suggest, through cloud observation, whether it may rain or is more likely to remain dry. Year 2 pupils have studied Kenya and know how much hotter it is there. They understand how the climate affects peoples' lives. Pupils recognise that the clothes the people wear, the food they eat, and their work is different from that of people in Stubbins. The extent of their learning is somewhat restricted, however, by the over use of worksheets, which constrains their response and opportunity to express their individual ideas.
147. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of maps and can use them to locate places and features, although they are not very clear about the purpose and significance of contours. They can identify symbols and locations on a map using four figure co-ordinates, and higher attainers are comfortable using six figures. Pupils understanding of water and rivers is secure. They are able to describe the journey and course of a river from source to estuary, and their growing vocabulary enables them to talk about meanders and erosion. They are able to explain how life styles of people in the United Kingdom can vary because of where they live. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of European countries and they can name, for example, several of the countries joined to France and Germany. They understand why the countries near to

the equator are hot. Because the school's annual "Worldwide Week" effectively supplements the pupils' regular programme of study, their acquired knowledge of other countries is broad and they have a good understanding of the cultures, customs, and way of life of the people who live there. This makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development.

148. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and some good teaching was observed during the inspection. The good teaching seen in a Key Stage 2 lesson was particularly enhanced through the use of well-chosen information and communication technology programmes, videos and an increasing level of challenge throughout the lesson. In most lessons, pupils' response to learning is good. Effective measures, such as a new policy and programme of study, and an improvement to the range and quality of resources, have started to have an effect upon the raising of standards.
149. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the subject leader's role is clear. However, she has not yet been given the opportunity to establish good subject monitoring procedures, nor has she been able to establish an agreed system for consistently assessing and recording pupils' progress. There are very few opportunities for pupils to gain first hand experience of learning through practical activities, such as geographical field trips.

HISTORY

150. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Pupils' progress is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the school's previous inspection.
151. By the age of seven, pupils know suitable details about the past. Through looking at pictures and photographs, and handling historical items, pupils successfully identify some of the changes that have taken place in homes, hospitals and forms of transport, for example. By sequencing the development of items, such as cars, and events, such as those in their own lives, most pupils are developing an understanding of chronology. Some pupils, however, find this concept difficult. Most pupils are also confident in using appropriate historical terminology, such as 'old', 'new' and 'long ago'. Pupils have a sound knowledge of a number of historical figures, such as Florence Nightingale, and they know interesting facts about important past events, such as the Great Fire of London. Pupils in Year 2 also understand the historical significance of 'Poppy Day'.
152. By the age of 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of a range of historical periods. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the Aztecs, Ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as the Tudor, Victorian and World War II periods of British history. Pupils in Year 6 are particularly knowledgeable about many aspects of World War II, especially relating to how people managed to survive in the Blitz. Pupils in Year 4 confidently identify the advantages and disadvantages of the railways in Victorian times. Many pupils through Years 3 to 6 are confident in identifying some of the changes that have taken place throughout history, and they readily place the periods they study in a proper chronological framework. They successfully use time-lines for this purpose. Pupils confidently explain some important events that have taken place, such as the Spanish invasion of South America, and they can recall the lives of famous people, such as Winston Churchill and Henry VIII.
153. The overall quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, with examples of very good practice also being seen. Lessons are generally well planned, and teachers provide an

appropriate range of information for pupils. On occasions, however, too many facts are included within one lesson, with pupils being asked to listen for too long. As a result, some pupils lose interest and become restless. Teachers successfully use photographs, artefacts and visits to foster the pupils' interest. Pupils generally enjoy the subject, study artefacts, books and pictures with enthusiasm, settle well to the variety of tasks provided and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory gains in their historical knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is very good, and where, for example, a particularly good range of resources and information is provided, the teacher successfully stimulates interest, expectations are high and pupils make very good progress during the lesson. Overall, teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they make appropriate use of dates, personalities and events to help develop pupils' understanding of the past. However, too little use is made of extended writing activities to further develop pupils' work, with too many worksheets being used in some classes. Pupils usually show good, and sometimes very good, attitudes and this enables them to concentrate on their written work and to make suitable progress. Most pupils present their work well, taking considerable care with the presentation of their work, both writing and drawing. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and useful comments of advice and encouragement are also sometimes added. Teachers take the opportunity to further encourage pupils by providing colourful displays of their work.

154. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator is well informed about the subject, and she sees some samples of pupils' work. Currently, however, she has little opportunity to observe classroom practice, to see for herself the standards being achieved. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, based on government curriculum guidelines, and all areas of work are suitably covered. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and are satisfactory. The school also makes good use of the local museum service. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but there is considerable variation in the amount of information recorded by different teachers. As a result, most are unsure of either the attainment or the progress of their pupils. The writing activities undertaken, in various aspects of the subject, make some contribution towards the development of pupils' literacy skills. Pupils successfully use information and communication technology to increase their historical knowledge, such as searching CD Roms and the Internet for historical facts, for example, on the Romans in Year 3 and the World War II period in Year 6. The work undertaken in history also makes a significant impact on pupils' cultural development, through the studying of aspects of both British and other cultures.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

155. Standards at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the time of the school's previous inspection.
156. By the age of seven, pupils readily name items of computer equipment such as screen, mouse and keyboard. They successfully use a keyboard to type text, including their names and short stories, for example, about the "Cream Bun Disaster"! Pupils readily place gaps between words using the space bar and most are able to introduce capital letters and full stops into their writing. Using an appropriate paint package, pupils produce an interesting range of pictures, such as the maps and plans produced in Year 1 and the trains in Year 2. Pupils independently access the menu to print their finished work. Whilst a small number of pupils find it difficult, most pupils successfully undertake simple modelling activities, exploring aspects of real and imaginary situations presented on the screen. They also readily give instructions to a floor turtle to make it

move over varying distances. With some help from adults, pupils save their completed work on their own disc.

157. By the age of 11, pupils show satisfactory skills in word processing, being confident in changing the font, colour and the size of their work. Most pupils can successfully move portions of text from one place to another when necessary. Pupils in Year 4, for instance, have written out information about the class goldfish, 'Rodney and Del Boy!' Pupils in Year 6 have merged photographs and art work into their writing when producing newspaper articles on, for example, the Titanic. Many pupils confidently access the Internet, as well as a range of CD Roms, to provide a variety of information for subjects such as history and science. Pupils successfully develop their modelling skills through producing a range of spreadsheets involving, for example in Year 6, the organisation of a party. Pupils develop their skills in control technology through using a screen turtle to produce patterns, and through using the computer to control a set of lights. Pupils in all classes collect data and present it in graphical form. For instance, pupils in Year 4 produce graphs on different noise levels found in the school. Pupils in Year 6 readily use sensors, and they have produced suitable information about changes in temperature. At present pupils are generally less confident in using electronic mail.
158. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers are generally enthusiastic, providing pupils with many suitable opportunities to use the computers. Teachers and classroom assistants provide clear instructions for pupils, as well as careful demonstrations on using the machines. Planning is good, showing secure subject knowledge, and a most appropriate range of activities and support is provided, enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory progress in developing various computer skills and techniques. Teachers generally plan for the use of information and communication technology in other subjects, although currently more limited use is made of the subject to enhance the writing aspect of English. Pupils respond to the opportunities provided by showing good attitudes. They are keen and interested, they settle well to their work and they show suitable levels of concentration. They clearly enjoy the subject, they share computers amicably and they are careful in their use of all forms of equipment. Teachers provide suitable displays of some of the pupils' work.
159. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school now has an appropriate scheme of work based on the government's curriculum guidelines, and all aspects of work are adequately covered. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Resources have also improved since that time, and they are being used most effectively to further develop pupils' skills. The school employs a technician to help ensure that the computers are always working correctly. Teachers plan for information and communication technology to be used in a variety of other subjects, including science, history and geography, and this enhances pupils' work in a number of directions. The coordinator is keen and enthusiastic and she knows what work is being covered. At present, however, she has no opportunity to observe work in the classrooms, to see for herself the standards being achieved. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but the information kept by teachers varies considerably from class to class. As a result, most teachers do not have a clear view of pupils' attainment, nor is there consistent use made of this information to set new work for pupils. Many pupils find the use of computers exciting, and the excitement generated when producing images on the screen or printing out completed work, for example, helps enhance pupils' spiritual development.

MUSIC

160. Standards in music at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations and all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all ages are provided with opportunities to sing both within assemblies and in class music lessons. They sing in a satisfactory manner and remember a good range of songs. They enjoy singing and benefit from the good example and encouragement of their teachers who also sing with pleasure and enthusiasm.
161. Pupils in the both key stages are given appropriate opportunities to gain experience in performing, listening to and appraising music at levels expected for their age. Younger pupils sing songs and chant rhymes with a developing expression. They show an increasing ability to control their voices and recognise that the voice is an instrument. They are able to clap a steady beat and sustain a rhythmic pattern. They participate well in activities involving the use of the voice and body sounds to accompany a song. For example, when singing about the building site, they imitated the sounds of the electric saw, the hammer and the cement mixer. They demonstrated well their ability to control their voices and move the sound up and down and make loud and soft sounds.
162. The younger pupils know the names of untuned percussion instruments and they know that they can be shaken, tapped or scraped to produce the sound. Pupils learn about dynamics and come to realise how they can be used to achieve atmosphere and effect. They show a good understanding of how to control percussion instruments, such as a tambourine and a cymbal, to make loud and soft sounds. They respond to instructions to change the dynamics either suddenly or gradually and recognise the symbols used in written music to indicate these instructions to the performer. During practical work on composition, pupils realise the need for recording their work and learn how to produce simple graphic scores. Their knowledge of notation and composition skills are developing steadily. By Year 6, the pupils are able to appreciate and comment on different types of music. They learn about the different genres of music, including jazz and boogie. For example, in one lesson pupils concentrated on the context of the music hall. The teacher used his own voice well to engage pupils' interest and to lead them to sing "Daisy Bell". Opportunities were provided for pupils to play instrumental accompaniments and to practise both individually and as a class. Pupils learned more about presenting a performance to different audiences.
163. Pupils of all ages and abilities respond well as they listen to a range of music at the beginning and end of assembly and become conversant with the names of famous composers, such as Mozart, Vivaldi and Rimsky-Korsakov.
164. At Key Stage 2 the pupils are given the opportunity to benefit from peripatetic music teachers who visit the school and provide tuition, on a fee-paying basis, for instruments, such as the flute, clarinet, saxophone and drums. A good number of pupils take advantage of this facility and this enhances their musical skills. They play together in the school band and have been very successful in several local music festivals. They enjoy playing and regularly go out into the community to entertain. The higher attaining pupils are able to read music and many pupils show a good level of competence when performing. The choir is trained by a parent who is a music teacher. She also comes into school and plays for assembly and offers good help and support to the school and to individual children who are willing to perform in assembly. The choir has entertained elderly residents in a nearby nursing home and sung in local shopping areas. The visits that pupils have made, for example, to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester to listen to the Halle orchestra, and visiting musicians to the school

enrich the pupils' experience of live music and make a good contribution to their spiritual, social and cultural development.

165. The quality of the teaching in music is satisfactory overall. Music sessions are usually well planned and much of the work is directed by the video programmes which incorporate the elements of listening, appraising and performing. Teachers generally use these tapes flexibly, stopping them at appropriate times and checking that pupils understand or sometimes giving further information or offering the opportunity to practice a skill. Suitable emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to find ways of improving their performance. Assessment of pupils' attainment is carried out informally in lessons but there is no formalised system of recording progress.
166. In the absence of a specialist music teacher, the headteacher has temporarily assumed the role of co-ordinator. Although she gives as much support as possible to her colleagues, this is not a satisfactory arrangement. There has been no monitoring of the teaching or of the learning in the subject and consequently it has not yet been possible for the new headteacher to obtain a picture of provision across the school or to establish a view of standards. This is inhibiting the possibility of standards in music rising to a higher level. The range and quality of resources to support the teaching of music is limited and there are not enough instruments for all pupils in the class to be actively engaged in making music and choosing the appropriate instrument to achieve the desired effect in their compositions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

167. Standards at the age of seven are in line with national expectations. Pupils' progress is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the school's previous inspection. At the age of 11, pupils achieve standards in games that are also in line with those expected. During the inspection no other aspect of physical education was observed for the older pupils, and so no overall judgement is made. A study of teachers' planning, however, shows that all areas of work are fully covered during the year.
168. By the age of seven, pupils move confidently around the hall, running, skipping and jumping, and showing suitable awareness of space and other pupils. Pupils in Year 1 successfully perform a range of dance steps, moving imaginatively to music and developing a series of movements, such as 'packing' and 'exploring the rocks', in relation to an imaginary visit to the seaside. They show appropriate variation in shape and gesture in their movements. Pupils confidently develop their games skills of passing, receiving and travelling with a ball, and most of those in Year 1 successfully bounce a ball, sometimes to a partner, whilst those in Year 2 show satisfactory accuracy when attempting to use a bat. Pupils understand the need to warm up for, and recover from, exercise. By the age of 11, pupils in Year 6 develop their skills in throwing, striking and catching a ball, and they successfully improve these skills by taking part in relays, and small-sided team games based on cricket and rounders. Most pupils are competent in these skills, although a small number have difficulties with catching. Pupils in Year 4 similarly improve their skills in kicking and moving with a ball, paying particular attention to their dribbling ability. Pupils understand the importance of being active, and they can explain some of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Pupils in Year 4 attend swimming lessons during the year. All become suitably confident in the water, and by the end of the year, at least 80% of pupils are able to swim twenty-five metres unaided. Pupils in Year 6 develop their outdoor and adventure skills during an annual residential visit to Wales.

169. The overall quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, with examples of good and very good practice also being observed. Teachers undertake good planning, and they make suitable use of an appropriate, and much improved, range of resources to help pupils develop their skills. Clear instruction and demonstration are provided, and this allows all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in their skills. Members of staff change appropriately for lessons, and they all join in with the pupils. They have sound subject knowledge, and make suitable demands of the pupils' performance. Where teaching is better, particularly clear advice is provided, the pace of the lesson is brisk, careful demonstration is given, and pupils are enabled to make significant progress during those lessons. Pupils join in appropriately, enjoying themselves and making a satisfactory, and sometimes good, physical effort. Teachers often use pupils to demonstrate good performances, but the opportunity is not always taken to discuss the quality of the work seen, which would help pupils identify the areas where they might improve themselves. This weakness in teaching was also identified at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers provide help and support to pupils in all aspects of their work, and in particular they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show good attitudes, behave well overall, work well alone and with a partner or group, and carry equipment carefully and safely.
170. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator has only recently taken up the role. He is enthusiastic, and he keeps records and photographs of some of the work covered in the school. At present, however, he has no opportunity to observe lessons taking place, which would help him identify the progress the pupils are making. Activities involving counting and measuring, especially in games activities, give support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The school now has a relevant and improved scheme of work, and all aspects of work are suitably covered. At present, although assessment procedures are satisfactory, the amount of information collected on individual pupils' performances varies between teachers. Therefore, little information is generally available to either identify pupils' current attainment or to help develop their skills further. The school makes good arrangements for the provision of extra-curricular sporting activities for pupils, and the school has a number of successful sporting teams.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

171. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, and at the end of Year 6, is in line with the standards expected within the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the last inspection. Knowledge of Christianity and other great faiths is appropriately developed. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. There is no difference in attainment between boys and girls. Overall, the teaching of religious education makes a good contribution to pupil's spiritual, moral and cultural development.
172. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils concentrate on learning about Christianity. Pupils learn stories of Jesus and complete a study of Christian places of worship. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the features of churches, such as the altar, the pulpit, candles, the cross and stained glass windows. They know that Christians pray in churches and that they are used for the celebration of special occasions, such as christenings and weddings. Good displays in class often enhance pupils' learning. As they move into Year 2, pupils' knowledge is extended. Pupils learn about people of other faiths and gain a satisfactory knowledge of some of their practices and traditions. Through a study of Islam, for example, they have learned that the special place of worship for Muslims is the Mosque and that they face the holy city of Makkah when praying on their prayer mats. Good use of artefacts by teachers provides pupils with a clearer understanding about people of other faiths.
173. Throughout Key Stage 2, the teaching builds effectively and constructively upon previous learning. Consequently, by the time pupils are eleven they have a secure knowledge of Christianity and of other great world faiths. In all classes pupils learn how to interpret the teachings of Jesus into people's lives and actions. For instance, in Year 4, they realise that sacrifice can be recognised through the action of soldiers, firemen and policemen as they tackle dangerous situations. By Year 6 they can talk about commitment, courage, forgiveness, justice and peace as Christian virtues and precepts. Knowledge of other faiths is also increasing and pupils are able to compare the holy books, such as the Christian Bible, the Islamic Qu'ran and the Jewish Torah. By Year 6, pupils have acquired a satisfactory awareness of other faiths and beliefs, and are developing an understanding of the need for tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. Pupils show interest in religious education and have good attitudes to their learning.
174. The quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. There is generally a sufficient allocation of curriculum time to religious education. The school has successfully adapted the new locally agreed syllabus and is seeking ways to ensure that teaching is more closely and regularly aligned to its programmes of study.
175. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has specialist knowledge and has recently been working away from the school for the Local Education Authority. This has restricted her from being fully involved in monitoring teaching and learning and the development of the curriculum in the school. The school's action plan shows that her skills are to be used to further develop the subject. There is a need to ensure that effective measures are put in place to improve curriculum monitoring and teaching and to establish sensible procedures for the monitoring and recording of pupils' progress as they move from class to class. Effective spending on resources and artefacts has made sure that they are sufficient and has enabled teachers to be better equipped in lessons.