

INSPECTION REPORT

**RICHARD HEATHCOTE COMMUNITY
PRIMARY**

Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 132043

Headteacher: Mrs S Rizak

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Schaffer
23698

Dates of inspection: 12 – 15 March 2001

Inspection number: 230492

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Drive Alsagers Bank Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST7 8BB
Telephone number:	01782 720 406
Fax number:	01782 722 986
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Royall
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23698	J Schaffer	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education Areas of learning in the foundation stage Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9736	J Brasier	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23319	V J Leary	Team inspector	English Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23290	R Wilson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	21
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	23
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a community primary school with a part-time nursery, which admits children in the year in which they are four for a morning or afternoon session. There are 129 boys and girls on roll and 19 part-time nursery pupils. This is smaller than most other primary schools. Most pupils live in the village of Alsagers Bank, an area identified with the pottery industry but now suffering some decline in employment. Nearly all the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage and the very small minority with a different cultural heritage speak English at home. There is 24 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, which is similar to other primary schools. Three per cent has a statement. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is much lower than most other schools. The pupils' attainment when they start school is average. Designated a Fresh Start school, it re-opened in January 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has successfully taken up the challenge of making a fresh start. The headteacher is very effective. She has enthusiasm and resolute commitment which is communicated well to others. Pupils are proud of their school and work hard. Teachers strive to improve the quality of teaching and they have been successful, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils aged seven are reaching satisfactory standards in English but are still below average in mathematics and science. Pupils aged eleven achieved results above the national average in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for 2000. Despite having an above-average income the school provides value for money.

What the school does well

- There is good teaching in English so that pupils are learning at a good rate to read and write.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils achieve a higher standard in music than in most other schools.
- The school has identified the right priorities for improvement and taken good steps to achieving their successful implementation.
- The very good co-operation between the school, local community and business provides pupils with insight into good citizenship.

What could be improved

- The attainment of pupils in information and communications technology and the use of computers in other subjects.
- The attainment of pupils aged seven in mathematics and science.
- The length of some lessons so that they do not go on longer than interest can be sustained.
- The management structure which allocates too many responsibilities to the headteacher, and does not allow for sufficiently frequent checks on how well improvements are progressing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In the year since the school opened as a Fresh Start school a great deal has been achieved. Transitional arrangements have been managed well. Very good attitudes to learning have been established, and considerable effort to improve attendance has had good results. The new national requirements for nursery and reception children have been implemented well in the reception class, and work is in hand to develop their implementation in the nursery. The school has improved the teaching of literacy and numeracy. In English and mathematics the quality of teaching has been regularly and purposefully checked. This has helped to correct any problems as soon as possible, and as a result pupils' learning in individual lessons is often good. The school has not been able to have such a rigorous approach to other subjects because there has not been time and there are still many challenges ahead. Overall improvement since last January has been very good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	-	-	B	C
Mathematics	-	-	B	B
Science	-	-	B	B

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
Well below average	E

The school's results in National Tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 were above those of other schools nationally, and in mathematics and science above those of similar schools. This year, the pupils are on target to achieve results in the national tests that are average, lower than last year. There are, however, more pupils with special educational needs in the current year. The school took this into account when setting targets for 2001. The target for English should be achieved, but real determination will be needed to achieve the higher target in mathematics. Children in the reception class are on course to meet or exceed the learning goals set for children by the age of five. The school's test results in 2000 for pupils aged seven were below the national average for reading and well below for writing and mathematics. Standards have improved at this age and pupils are on course to achieve the national average in reading and writing, although they are still below in mathematics and science.

Pupils aged eleven have not achieved the expected standard in information and communication technology as teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to use computers. Teaching in music is very good and pupils' attainment is above average. In previous years, pupils have not made sufficient progress in history, geography, art and design and religious education and standards of eleven-year-olds in these subjects are below average. Standards for seven-year-olds are below average in religious education and above average for art and design and physical education. In geography and history they are average. For both eleven-year-olds and seven-year-olds they are average for design and technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enter into activities with enthusiasm. They are interested and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is very good around the school, particularly in assemblies and at play times. In lessons, most pupils behave well, but a small minority of older pupils occasionally misbehave. Teachers deal with this well, but it does distract some from working productively.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form good relationships with each other and with the adults in the school. Pupils appreciate their teachers, and they are respectful.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory, although still just below the national average. There are very few unexplained absences and pupils arrive in good time so that lessons can start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons. It is good or very good in 47 per cent of lessons, very good in 21 per cent of lessons, and one lesson in the infants was excellent. There was seven per cent unsatisfactory teaching which was in the older age group.

Strengths in teaching: Good knowledge of how to teach reading, writing and mathematics ensures that pupils learn at a good rate; teachers provide work well matched to the different levels of pupils' previous knowledge and this benefits both those who learn more quickly and those who take longer to learn; teachers and classroom assistants work well together to support pupils who learn more slowly. In the reception, children learn quickly and listen very well because of the high expectations of their teachers. Specialist skills are used well, for instance teaching in music is very good and pupils enjoy music and improve their skills quickly.

Areas that could be improved: Activities or explanations are sometimes too long and as a result pupils lose concentration and their productivity declines. In some subjects such as art and design and religious education not all teachers are sure of the best way to teach the subject. Teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to work with computers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The emphasis on literacy and numeracy has been good, but in consequence some other subjects are not fully developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There are well thought-out plans to support pupils' learning, but teachers do not keep them sufficiently to hand to check whether targets have been achieved.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school very successfully encourages pupils to work together in harmony and to respect and celebrate each others' differences. There is good attention to pupils' spiritual awareness and their cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good care at all times for its pupils. Assessments of pupils' achievements are satisfactory, and the school has good plans to develop further its assessment procedures.

Although the school has comprehensive plans to develop its partnership with parents, this is already well established. The school provides good information to parents, particularly reports on their child's progress which clearly describe pupils' achievements. The role of parents helping in school, and the provision of homework are included in the school's plans for development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has successfully established clearly understood common goals for all to work towards, placing the well-being of pupils at the heart of the school's work. Senior staff, including those recently appointed have worked unstintingly in support. The headteacher has too many subject responsibilities to oversee them all effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Although new to their roles, governors have responded well to the challenge of their responsibilities. They are still in the process of setting up procedures for governance. These take proper account of ensuring that governors fulfil their legal obligations.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has paid due attention to the evaluations of outside agencies in the past year. She has monitored teaching well but checks on how well improvements are progressing are too infrequent.
The strategic use of resources	The school has only managed its budget since October. A good working plan has been drawn up to allocate finances but governors do not have sufficient systems to check on whether their spending decisions have produced successful outcomes.

The school has a greater number of teachers and learning support assistants than in most schools. The accommodation has been greatly improved over the past year. The attractive interior and good quality of displays make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and well-being. The school has further good plans to develop the accommodation including improving the size of the hall. It is not large, and when it is used for physical education some of the equipment housed there creates the possible hazard of collision. The reception class does not have the benefit of an outside play area and there is no space to provide for this. The nursery outdoor play area is used by both nursery and reception children to

compensate. The equipment provided is limited but the school has plans to improve this.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their child likes school.• Their child is making good progress.• Behaviour is good.• The good quality of the teaching.• The school expects their child to work hard.• The leadership of the school is good.• The school is helping their child to become more mature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities offered outside school.• The amount of homework given.• The involvement of parents in the work of the school.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by parents. The percentage of parents making negative comments was small. Inspectors could not support the criticism about the number of activities outside lessons. There is a good range of clubs offered which appeal to a range of pupils' different interests. The provision of homework is satisfactory, although not extensive, and the school has plans to contact parents so that they can be involved in further development. Similarly the school wishes to involve parents more in its work and currently there is no barrier to those who wish to be involved. A few parents expressed concerns about the progress of children in the reception class in reading. In the reception, children are making good progress in reading, particularly in developing the skills of comprehension and the use of letter sounds to work out words they cannot recognise by sight. These skills ensure that children become good readers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in the national tests for eleven-year olds in 2000 were above the national average for English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools they were above average for science and mathematics but average for English. This was a good performance for these pupils in comparison to how well they had done in the school's own test. In the spring and summer term for 2000 the school had given the pupils extra classes to boost their attainment, and this made a considerable difference. Many of the pupils were quick to learn and had not achieved good results in the school's tests because teaching in previous years had not provided enough challenge. In the current Year 6, attainment is not so high. For all three subjects standards match the national average. This does not represent a decline in the school's provision. The numbers taking the test, 21 in 2000 and 24 for 2001, are not high and so a relatively small change makes a significant difference to the value of comparisons involving percentages. This year there are more pupils with special educational needs, two of whom joined the school in recent months. There are also 17 boys to seven girls. Nationally boys are not achieving as well as girls and whilst the school is seeking ways to raise the attainment of boys this is still a factor explaining the lower standards.
2. Pupils' achievements in the school's own tests have been the basis for setting the school's targets for results in national tests for eleven-year-olds. The targets set for 2000 were exceeded and governors agreed that they had been set too low. Governors are now aware that targets need to be set a little higher than the school's own tests so as to raise expectations as much as possible. Current targets match the national average and should be achieved by the pupils in Year 6, if work is challenging in the coming months.
3. In the national tests for seven-year olds at the end of 2000, the school's results were below the national average for reading and well below for mathematics and writing. These results reflected the then unsatisfactory teaching in the infants. There are now new teachers in all classes in the infants and standards are improving significantly. Pupils in Year 1 are making good progress and their work reflects a standard similar to other pupils of their age or higher. The pupils in Year 2 still have some gaps in their knowledge because they did not have such a good start to their education. Reading and writing have improved and standards are now average. Standards in mathematics and science are still below average.
4. Children start in the school's nursery in the year in which they are four and are part-time. They start full-time in reception in September. Their attainment at the beginning of the reception year is similar to that of most four-year-olds. A significant number, however, are below average at expressing themselves through speech. Some lack confidence and others do not use complex sentence structures or the range of vocabulary that is generally expected. The children make good progress in the reception class so that by the end of the year they are above average in their personal and social development, language and communication, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical education. Their attainment is similar to others in writing, mathematics and creative development. The good standards children achieve in expressing themselves orally are because of the very good teaching for this area of

learning.

5. Pupils aged seven listen to their teachers and to each other well. Many do not express themselves in speech as well as expected for this age. Their responses often lack clarity of meaning because they struggle to use the right vocabulary and expressions. The teacher who is currently taking the class has identified this problem and gives pupils as many opportunities as possible to express themselves orally, before trying to write, a very necessary strategy to improve not only the pupils' skills in oral expression but their written work. Eleven-year-olds have average attainment in speaking and listening. The teacher has planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills through such strategies as "hot seating", a challenging activity when one or two pupils are asked to take on the role of a character and answer questions from the floor in the role they are playing. Throughout the school, there are a good proportion of pupils who are diffident as speakers and do not use sufficiently complex sentence structures to put forward their ideas. Teachers are aware of this, and as a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress in developing their skills in speaking.
6. In reading, pupils' attainment at seven and eleven is average. As a significant number of pupils were below the average for their year group when the school re-opened in January 2000, this represents good progress. Teachers plan good activities to develop pupils' reading using the methods recommended by the national guidance. Pupils are enjoying reading. Those at an early stage of learning to read take their books home and receive good help from parents in developing their skills. Seven-year-olds all use letter sounds effectively to help them make sense of words they do not know. Higher attainers can read with fluency. Whilst those of lower attainment are less fluent, they have acquired a good number of words they know by sight. Eleven-year-old pupils all read with accuracy and understanding. Those of higher attainment have become discerning readers with their own specific likes and dislikes. There is careful assessment of the needs of pupils who learn to read more slowly and support from classroom assistants is good so that they make similar progress to others.
7. The standard of writing of pupils aged seven and eleven is average. Most seven-year-olds can spell simple words accurately and their handwriting is correctly formed although letters are not usually joined except for those pupils of higher attainment. Most pupils can write interesting pieces of a reasonable length which follow a logical sequence. Higher attaining pupils use a variety of sentence structures, however, descriptive words are not used a great deal. Those of lower attainment only have a very limited range of sentence structures and punctuation is often forgotten. The school has placed a great emphasis on improving writing and all pupils have made satisfactory progress since September, and spelling, although still below average, is improving. Most eleven-year-olds are achieving the expected level in their writing, but few are achieving the higher level. Figurative language is enjoyed. Some pupils clearly understand that the right choice of word gains the attention of the reader. A good example of this was seen in a passage about an aeroplane crash: "The passengers cried out in horror as the ground came surging towards them. The plane spiralling hopelessly downwards". Pupils use punctuation satisfactorily and most have understood how to organise their writing into paragraphs. Spelling, however, still brings the standard of work down.

8. Lesson plans in mathematics are good and teachers throughout the school provide brisk mental arithmetic sessions which improve pupils' skills in mental calculations and quicken their thinking. Pupils aged seven of higher and average attainment can work in numbers up to 100, for example when doing additions to and subtractions from a multiple of ten. They can sequence numbers accurately and have a good understanding of the value of a number according to its position. Some are working up to 20 when adding or subtracting, but those with special educational needs still need adult support for calculations beyond ten. By the age of eleven, most pupils can calculate in numbers up to 1000. The majority of pupils can recognise equivalence in decimals and fractions and round numbers up or down to two decimal places. Those of lower attainment still have problems effectively using tables to calculate quickly and this delays their working out. Recent work on data handling has been done to a good standard and all pupils succeeded well at this. Teachers provide work at different levels to match pupils' understanding and this helps all pupils learn at a good rate in lessons. Pupils in the infants are making good progress. Those in the juniors make satisfactory progress but are sometimes held back because there are still gaps in their knowledge from previous years when their education was not as effective.
9. In science, pupils aged seven have not had many opportunities until recently to observe and ask questions so as to develop their skills in investigation. Earlier in the year, they had been taught about life processes and living things in some detail and about materials and their properties. Their teacher is now helping them to make observations and record them. Pupils of higher attainment are responding well. For instance, one pupil wrote after unpicking the threads of a piece of sacking "the more threads you pull out, the more you see" However, those of average and lower attainment are not able to make those kind of observations and record them without adult help. Eleven-year-old pupils carry out investigations well, recording their findings and checking to see if the results are correct. They have a good understanding of the need to make an initial hypothesis, as in the case of an experiment to see if air has weight, when a pupil noted with satisfaction that he had been correct in his prediction. The balloon, inflated with warm air, was heavier than the non-inflated balloon. This experiment needed careful accurate measurements in order to check the validity of any prediction. Pupils' progress in science is satisfactory. Teachers plan work to match the understanding of pupils of different levels of attainment. This benefits those who learn more slowly and so they make the same progress as others.
10. In information and communications technology, the attainment of pupils aged seven is average whilst that of the pupils aged eleven is below average. From Year 1 onwards pupils are now making satisfactory progress in information and communication technology. In the juniors, however, pupils are still not getting enough time on computers to develop their skills. Seven-year-old pupils can use the computer to produce text and pictures and they understand its purposes in every day life. They can enter instructions in a planned sequence to move a programmable toy. Eleven-year-old pupils are producing well thought out posters and other word processed pieces to a good standard. Their skills, however, in other areas are too limited. They have not had sufficient experience in exchanging information, finding information or classifying it and they will not have used a sensor until the summer term. As a result the standard of their work overall is below expectations.

11. Pupils' attainment in music is above average at seven and eleven, and all pupils make good progress throughout the school. This is because of the effective teaching by the teacher with specialist skills in music. For seven-year-olds attainment levels are above average in art and design and physical education; in history, geography and design and technology they are average and in religious education they are below average. No lessons were seen for pupils aged eleven in physical education and so no judgement was made on the standard they achieve. Attainment levels for eleven-year-olds are average for design and technology and below average for art and design, geography, history and religious education. Lower standards in these subjects reflect the fact that here has been insufficient whole school planning in them to develop pupils' understanding systematically as they move up through the school. This has now been put in place and learning is improving. In the juniors, pupils' progress in geography, history, and art and design is not satisfactory as lessons too frequently do not provide sufficient challenge to all levels of attainment. In physical education pupils do not make satisfactory progress because expectations of the quality of their work and the amount of effort they can make are not always high enough. Since January 2000, when the school re-opened there has not been time to give sufficient attention to improving work in all subjects. The school's emphasis has rightly been on improving standards in literacy and numeracy.
12. The school has not identified any pupils who are gifted and talented. During the inspection no difference was observed overall in the learning, attainment or progress of boys and girls. From Year 2 onwards, pupils' current achievements reflect the fact that teaching in previous years was not satisfactory so although there is sometimes good learning, teachers are having to make up knowledge which was not sufficiently well learnt in the past. In Year 1 pupils are making good progress in all subjects and this will provide a firm foundation for the school to move forward.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The attitudes of pupils to the school and their learning are very good. Behaviour, personal development and relationships are good.
14. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enter into activities with enthusiasm, for example when singing in assemblies where the quality and enjoyment are clear for all to see. They are proud of their school and take care of the building and their own and other people's possessions. When using equipment they are careful and treat it gently. These very good attitudes are due to the enthusiasm displayed by teachers and the efforts made to make learning an interesting and participative process.
15. There is a consistent approach to behaviour and this is applied calmly and fairly. In isolated instances pupils have to be reminded about what is expected, and very occasionally in the juniors a minority of pupils need to be kept on a tight rein. Teachers manage these pupils well but sometimes their interruptions distract from the productive working climate. In the playground behaviour is very good and there is a harmonious atmosphere. Pupils are polite and take an interest in visitors. There are no exclusions and the school has successfully integrated pupils who were at risk of exclusion, or had been excluded elsewhere. There is little aggressive behaviour.
16. Pupils work very well together when asked to work in pairs or groups. They have respect for each other and carefully listen to each other's opinions. For example, when pupils were participating in a history Workshop provided by visitors on the second world war, they devised their own playlets, and these were listened to by the other pupils with interest and appreciation. Pupils are well aware of the impact of their behaviour on others. Teachers and other adult staff have good relationships with

pupils and each other and are good role models.

17. Personal development is good. Pupils like to take responsibility and are expected to use their initiative. The prefects in Year 6 take their responsibilities seriously and the younger children are encouraged to be as independent as possible.
18. Attendance is satisfactory at 93.7 per cent, just below the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence and lateness is rare. Registers are well maintained. Lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Teaching in English and mathematics is of a better quality than in other subjects. Teachers have used the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well and they plan interesting and challenging lessons. In other subjects teaching sometimes lacked challenge and work was not well enough matched to pupils' level of attainment. There were also some lessons when teachers' explanations went on for too long for pupils to concentrate at a good level.
20. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons. It is very good or better in 23 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in seven per cent. The best teaching is in reception and the infants. Teachers are new to the school in both these age groups. They have been very well supported by the headteacher and longer serving members of staff so that they were able to settle quickly into effective teaching teams. Teachers make good use of each others' specialist skills and as a result teaching in music is very good and in religious education it is good. The subject leader for information and communication technology has good subject knowledge and is supporting other teachers well in improving their teaching in this subject.
21. The reception and nursery staff work very well together in their two teaching teams. The trained nursery nurse who leads the teaching team in the nursery has only been appointed since January 2001. Planning in the nursery is satisfactory and children are provided with activities which interest them and develop their understanding. Good relationships have been established but staff do not always direct questions well to improve children's use of language. In the reception class, the teacher has a very good understanding of how young children learn through talk and play. With high expectations of children's attention during whole class teaching time, all children, including those with special educational needs are challenged to put forward their ideas, answer questions or contribute to discussion. They listen extremely attentively, and confidently talk when it is their turn. As a result, their use of English and comprehension of texts improves rapidly. Children are provided with a range of activities which they are eager to try because of the interesting way in which they are presented. Lessons are very carefully planned to reflect the national guidance for this age range. Assessments are carried out meticulously to ascertain how well children are progressing with basic skills such as learning letter names, and knowledge of numbers.
22. In the infant and junior classes, the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teachers identify the objectives for their lessons from the literacy and numeracy national planning guidance. Lessons start well with teachers sharing these objectives with pupils so that they are aware of what it is they are expected to learn. At the end of the session teachers remind pupils of the objectives and together they assess how well they have done. In English, infant teachers are knowledgeable in their teaching of letter sounds, helping pupils to use these effectively both in spelling and reading. For example, pupils know that they must try to use the sounds they know before asking

for a spelling or for a word they cannot decipher in their reading book. Throughout the school, interest in stories is used well to teach sentence structure, grammar and punctuation. Pupils are taught to look at texts with care so as to fully comprehend the meaning. Teachers have paid attention to choosing texts that will interest both boys and girls, and as a result both are equally keen to learn. In all classes in mathematics teachers provide brisk well planned introductory sessions which develop pupils' skills in oral and mental work. For example, in Year 6 an introductory session on rounding numbers up and down moved at a good pace so as to challenge those of higher attainment. Those who learnt more slowly were given extra time to think and so managed to achieve a number of correct answers. By the end of the session rounding up, or down, to two decimal places was achieved by most pupils.

23. Almost all staff were new to the school in September 2000, and three members of staff joined barely two months before the inspection. Owing to staff changes, some classes had been re-organised so that year groupings were changed. On their arrival, or on taking up a new teaching group, teachers focused on establishing good routines and good relationships within the class. Nearly all lessons indicate that this has been done well. All teachers deal fairly with pupils and there is careful thought given to raising the self-esteem, particularly of those who learn more slowly or those pupils who have not enjoyed school in the past. Some pupils who have had unhappy experiences in other schools have recently joined the older classes. They have settled well, albeit with some difficulty in always managing their own behaviour without adult support. Proper habits of working have been established and pupils in most lessons listen to explanations attentively and respond well to questions. On a few occasions standards in this respect were not maintained throughout the lesson. Lapses in pupils' concentration and behaviour sometimes occurred when lessons were not well planned. In these lessons, objectives were either too challenging, and pupils became unsure of how they could achieve what they had been set to do, or not challenging enough and so pupils began time wasting and bothering each other.
24. The school has directed its energies on improving teaching in English and mathematics. This was an appropriate decision and will need to be maintained. There are, however, some weaknesses in teaching in the full range of National Curriculum subjects. This is more apparent in the junior classes than in the infants. For example, there is insufficient attention to the aspects of historical interpretations and enquiry; the aspect of design in the programme of study for art and design is not developed fully; sometimes scientific enquiry is not challenging enough and sometimes expectations of pupils' effort are not high enough in physical education. Teaching in information technology is effective in improving pupils' skills in the use of computers but teachers do not use computers sufficiently in other subjects.
25. Teachers assess pupils' learning well both as lessons proceed and when work has been completed. They use these assessments to plan future lessons. As a result, work is well matched to pupils' different levels of attainment. Teachers and the special needs co-ordinator identify together what support is needed for pupils with special educational needs. This means that work is generally well matched to their needs, especially in English and mathematics and pupils learn well. However, pupils' individual education plans are not always checked by teachers to see whether targets have been met. Teachers use praise and questioning effectively to encourage further effort and to develop pupils' thinking. In mathematics, teachers are careful to ask how pupils have arrived at a calculation and give appropriate support to those who have made a miscalculation or who are not able to grasp a concept. Marking is used well by some teachers who make useful comments to help pupils understand how they could improve. This is not consistent and occasionally misconceptions are not marked well so as to identify to pupils how they could put them right.

26. Staff and learning support staff work very well together. Learning support assistants are well trained. They have a very positive attitude to encouraging effort and extra thought. They make a positive contribution to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Sometimes support staff are not used efficiently enough so that lessons can move at a greater pace. On occasions time is not used well. For instance, teachers' explanations may be too lengthy or a lesson may extend for too long a period of time and in consequence, even when pupils have been very interested and motivated they begin to lose concentration and their work rate falls. Teachers do not often challenge pupils to complete work within a given period of time and so use time as efficiently as possible.
27. Pupils have a homework file or a homework book and they are given homework in mathematics and English. Pupils are given reading, spellings and tables to learn, together with small amounts of other work similar to work they have done in class. This is satisfactory provision. The school plans to develop the use of homework and is planning to involve the parents in deciding on what form it should take.

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

28. Since its re-opening in January 2000, the school has put in place appropriate planning for all subjects of the National Curriculum. In religious education, the newly agreed local syllabus has not been implemented fully. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and there is sufficient provision to teach about health, sex education and awareness of drug misuse.
29. Planning in the nursery and reception classes is based on the nationally recommended planning for this age range, now termed the foundation stage. In reception provision is very well matched to the level of children's interest and maturity. There is a wide range of activities which develop children's thinking as they pursue their own interests and learn as they play. In the nursery, the organization of the classroom has not yet been fully developed to reflect the requirements of the national guidance but activities are satisfactory for children's learning needs. Planning for the two classes is on a two-year cycle so that there is no repetition and activities are properly matched to children's level of development. The lack of an outside play area, is a limitation in reception but well-thought out alternatives provide adequately for physical development. As yet there is insufficient planning from the National Curriculum for those children of higher attainment who are near to reaching the end of their work on the foundation stage.
30. Whilst increasing the emphasis on English and mathematics in response to national priorities, the school has generally maintained broad provision in most other subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being well implemented. Teachers' planning is consistently based on their guidance. Medium and short term planning is generally good in all subjects and most teachers use the same format. This provides a consistency of approach and is proving effective not only in raising standards achieved by pupils, but also in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do. There is, however, too little use of writing in subjects other than English, as the school has not identified planning to improve writing skills throughout the curriculum. There is also insufficient planning for the use of information and communication technology in other subjects. Mathematics is used well, for example, in data handling which has been an effective link between mathematics and other subjects. The organization of the daily timetables does not take sufficient account of

the need to provide a change of activities so as to maintain pupils' interest as far as possible.

31. Provision for personal, social, and health education is good. There is a policy and a good programme of personal and social education which is taught through the infants and juniors. It includes some good elements of health and sex education, for example, learning about the dangers of substance misuse. Assemblies and times when pupils sit in a circle for discussion make a significant contribution to the sustaining of good behaviour. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils and care is taken to ensure that what the school has to offer is available to all pupils.
32. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by well trained learning assistants who know the pupils well and give good encouragement without lowering pupils' confidence or self-esteem. Difficulties are identified at an early stage and individual education plans set out clear targets showing how pupils should progress, what should be provided, and how and when progress should be evaluated. Teachers are involved in this process but do not keep a copy of the individual plans where they can refer to them when planning class work. In the main, this affects planning in subjects other than English and mathematics where teachers know pupils needs well and so generally plan effectively for them. However, by not using the plans sufficiently often, teachers sometimes fail to notify the special educational needs co-ordinator so as to move pupils on when they have achieved a target.
33. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There is a comprehensive range of after-school activities for junior pupils. These include a choir, dance, computer, guitar and art groups. There are sporting activities such as football, netball and cross-country running. These activities are generally well attended. Useful visits are made to areas beyond their locality, for example the Valley Heritage Centre at Cannock which extends pupils' awareness in history. Pupils also explore the local vicinity to carry out geography surveys.
34. Links with local industry are excellent. The school approached Wedgwood pottery because of past links with the Heathcote family. This contact has resulted in a strong partnership where pupils have been involved in designing china plates, one being selected as a commemorative plate to celebrate the school's fresh start. Other initiatives include a local community project where the pupils are involved in environmental issues such as designing a school shrubbery for the village and planting trees within the school grounds. School netball and football teams take part in a range of inter-school fixtures, and relationships have been established with Stoke City Football Club and Keele University netball team. Although only re-opened a short while, the school has invited the local community in to celebrate with it on special occasions, such as the official opening in September and Christmas festivities. This strong foundation for community and school co-operation is developing the pupils' awareness of their own community, fostering citizenship and pride in their school. A very good relationship exists with the main receiving high school. Pupils from the high school have come to work on writing with the whole school, and Year 6 make visits there. Curriculum information and pupils' records are passed on.
35. There is good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school provides a welcoming and caring atmosphere in which all pupils are encouraged to work together in harmony and learn to respect and celebrate each others' different beliefs and customs.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. In assemblies the carefully

prepared and effective acts of collective worship allow pupils to reflect and pray in their own manner. Music is very well used to provide a spiritual uplift for the beginning and end of assemblies. Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their relationships in the community, in the family and with their friends. Themes on other world religions have been introduced in assemblies to develop pupils' awareness of the faiths and beliefs of others. There has not been a great deal of teaching in this respect in religious education but good plans are in place to rectify this. The school uses opportunities well to make pupils aware of their own distinctive personality and specialness. In an assembly on 'Who am I' pupils were provided with an opportunity to reflect on their own identity and personal worth. Visits from professionals in the performing arts such as the History Workshop Theatre and the Camerata ensemble and visits to local churches are also very effective in promoting pupils' spiritual awareness. A notable feature is the practice of ending the school day with a prayer, providing further opportunities for pupils to reflect on important values and attitudes.

37. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. It is promoted effectively through the teachers' high expectations of behaviour and relationships. The school's creed and rules are displayed prominently in corridors and each classroom. Staff are good role models showing respect and concern for the individual needs of all pupils, and class assemblies led by the class teacher are used to develop important values which include tolerance, trust and respect and sensitivity to others needs and rights. A strong feature of pupils' moral development is the way they are taught to discuss personal feelings and wider issues through the personal and social development programme. Pupils in Year 6, for example, shared with their teacher the importance of feeling valued and its positive impact on raising self-esteem and improving relationships with others, in the context of their own lives and the lives of others.
38. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Good relationships are a substantial feature of school life and are a significant strength of this school. Co-operation between pupils is very good and they are given plenty of opportunities to work together in pairs and groups. Pupils are encouraged to move around the school in an orderly manner, are courteous, polite and prepared to help others. Achievements in work and behaviour are celebrated daily with pupils' personal successes and developments in school work or relationships often noted by teachers and lunch-time staff and recorded in the class 'happy book'. The weekly 'highlight' assemblies provide a good opportunity for reinforcing and celebrating pupils' social development, with certificates for good work and behaviour. Opportunities are provided for pupils of all ages to take on responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school. In all classes there are special helpers who carry out responsible tasks such as taking the register to the office and delivering messages. Older pupils are given extra responsibilities in their role as prefects. They take their responsibilities very seriously and enjoy this leadership opportunity. They monitor behaviour in the corridors, meet and greet, on special occasions, visitors to the school and look after the younger pupils at lunch times, helping to organise playtime equipment. They have regular meetings with the headteacher. There are occasions for pupils to develop further their understanding of citizenship. They were involved in leading discussions with staff and younger pupils in the designing of the school's uniform. Pupils throughout the school are involved in community activities, which also help develop their social awareness. For example, the 'Tree for Life' project where pupils are to plant trees within the school and plan and design a shrubbery to be sited on an approach road in the village. Charity work, such as fundraising for cancer sufferers and children in need is a regular feature of school life. Educational visits are an effective aspect of social provision. For pupils in Year 6, there is a residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre in Staffordshire which provides significant experiences for developing pupils' initiative and independence.

39. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils are provided with a curriculum which promotes an understanding of their own country and gives opportunities to discover and understand other cultures. Assemblies and music lessons incorporate a variety of songs and hymns and opportunities to listen to the work of classical and modern musicians. In art they learn about the work of famous painters and designers. The curriculum for religious education makes a valuable contribution to this with studies of world faiths. Strong links with a school in Gambia in Africa and a diversity of educational visits and visitors, including professional sportsmen, musicians, artists and local ministers has had a positive effect on pupils' cultural development. However, the school has identified the need to improve this provision further so that pupils can develop a deeper appreciation of the richness and diversity of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school cares well for its pupils. They feel at ease in the school surroundings. There is good supervision at break times and before and after school. All the usual safety requirements are in place and effective. Regular safety inspections are carried out by a team of governors and staff. When the hall is used for physical education there are currently some difficulties because some of the equipment necessarily housed there creates possible collision hazards. There is to be an extension to the premises which will alleviate this problem in the near future. In the short term, the school has re-arranged equipment so as to avoid dangers. Welfare provision is good with careful attention for pupils with medical and other problems.
41. The designated person for child protection is the headteacher, who has been trained, is familiar with the local procedures and has contacts with all necessary agencies. Some staff, including newly qualified staff, have not yet received training on what to do if a child starts to disclose details of abuse or what warning signs to look out for. They do know who the designated person is. At the present time none of the pupils is registered as being at risk. Children are known very well by their class teachers, who keep records of their development. All teachers care for their charges, talk knowledgeably about them and provide good support and advice about their personal development. Pupils are able to discuss personal problems with staff and know that they will receive a sympathetic hearing. A good example of this awareness is the decision to bring forward next year's residential visit for Year 6 to the start of the Autumn term, because the pupils are seen to need an opportunity to develop their social inter-actions if they are to be a responsive class.
42. The improvement of attendance has a very high profile in the school. Parents are notified weekly of the attendance performance and the best classes. The best class each week earns the custody of a large favourite toy rabbit for the next week and this is a much-appreciated privilege. Telephone contact is made with home on the first day of absence if no message has been received. If necessary, letters are also sent and occasionally the support of the Education Welfare Officer is needed. Absences are closely monitored on a weekly basis and a special log book has been designed to allow trends and concerns to be easily spotted. These are very good practices.
43. The achievement of good behaviour was seen to be of the utmost importance when the new school started and the new headteacher provided strong leadership from the outset. The new school uniform and the physical improvements to the buildings were important features of the campaign, together with great emphasis on rewards and on the way children are treated by the teachers. Adults are encouraged to smile and

generate welcoming atmosphere, and midday supervisors are encouraged and reminded of the important part they can play in determining attitudes, with frequent meetings with the headteacher. A place of refuge is provided for those pupils who find it difficult to cope. Every Friday there is an awards assembly, with its own special song composed by one of the teachers, and behaviour, attainment and effort feature strongly. These are very good procedures. The elimination of oppressive behaviour is encouraged by the above procedures and is also promoted in assemblies and personal and social education lessons.

44. The school has implemented the nationally required tests for children starting in the reception year and these are now the starting point for the school to track pupils' progress year-on-year. There are good procedures in reception for assessing, on a daily basis, how well children are learning. Staff use them well to plan activities to improve children's learning. Not all planning, however, is matched against the "stepping stones" in the national guidance document. As a result, teachers are not sufficiently aware of how far children have progressed through the different 'steps'. Assessments at the end of the nursery year in summer 2000 were not very accurate or helpful in indicating how much children knew or could do. As a consequence, there was contrary information when the assessments were done in the first term in reception as required nationally. The school has plans to improve the end-of-year assessment procedures in the nursery and currently there are satisfactory assessment of children's daily achievements.
45. The school has satisfactory assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science. Teachers use these well to provide the right level of work with reference to pupils' previous attainment. Each pupil has a file to build up a picture of their achievements in these three subjects. Teachers keep careful class records and these are passed on at the end of the year and are used to inform parents as to how well their child is progressing.
46. A member of staff appointed in January has particular knowledge and experience in developing good assessment procedures. She has already drawn up an action plan to address aspects of assessment in need of development throughout the school, and there is a draft policy in place providing helpful guidance. The school has identified the setting of individual targets for pupils as the next step forward. There are also good plans to improve the use of marking in supporting pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing. The school is aware that a simple system of assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science will be needed. The school has made an analysis of the data they have on pupils' achievements in national tests and the school's own tests and used this to plan work for pupils and monitor progress. They do not, however have a computerised system to support their own analysis and the headteacher is currently being trained in using data in the most effective way.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Partnership with parents is good. The response to the parents' questionnaire, the parents' meeting prior to the inspection and the discussions with parents during the inspection confirm that parents think well of the school and are full of praise for the improvements since the Fresh Start. Parents particularly appreciate the good behaviour, the expectation that children will work hard, the good teaching and the fact that their children enjoy school. A minority of parents is concerned about the range of activities outside lessons, homework and the involvement of parents in the school. The inspection team agrees with the positive comments, but is not able to support the criticism about homework and the number of activities outside lessons. The school

provides a satisfactory amount of work for pupils to do at home but there is room for this aspect of teaching to be improved. Plans have been made to contact parents to involve them in deciding on the best way to extend the provision of homework. This is a good way forward which should result in greater satisfaction for parents. The range of clubs provided after school is good and represent a significant commitment by teachers.

48. The school's written and verbal communications with parents are good. There are frequent newsletters and a good annual report from governors. Pupils' end of year reports are analytical, describing achievements rather than activities, contain sensible targets for pupils and some contain comparisons with national levels of achievement. There is no advice to parents on how they can help their children reach their targets, but often the action is self evident because the targets have been carefully chosen. These are good reports. There are three open evenings when parents come to talk about their children's progress, and parents are welcome to come in after school to discuss any aspect of their child's education with their teacher. The school provides curriculum information for parents and has just started to produce a range of information sheets, the first four covering the school's aims, communications, rewards and sanctions and target setting. The school is campaigning to involve parents more. There is no barrier to those who wish to be more involved but as yet not many parents help in school. The headteacher has wisely chosen to wait until there is sufficient time to organise support effectively before making this an area for development. Parents are supportive of the school, attending functions and contributing to their children's learning by hearing them read and helping with other home tasks, both of which have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
49. The school has involved parents in assessing the need for a breakfast and after-school club, and parents have been involved in decorating parts of the school. There is an active association of friends of the school that raises surprisingly high amounts of money through its summer and Christmas fairs and other activities, events that are open to the whole community. It also holds discos for the children. These activities contribute well to pupils' regarding their school as family community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. In the short time since the school re-opened as a Fresh Start school, the headteacher, who herself was newly appointed, has established a clearly understood common purpose for all to work towards. Her first priority, to develop good attitudes in pupils, and an expectation that they will work hard at school has been achieved, so that raising academic standards can be carried out in an orderly and purposeful atmosphere.
51. The school has not yet produced a great number of written policies, agreed by the governing body, and there is still a need for a school prospectus, but school aims have been established and agreed which put high expectations for all pupils to achieve their full potential at the heart of the school's work. The headteacher makes it clear to all that she expects staff to value pupils and develop good relationships in an atmosphere of trust and contentment. She sets the standard herself by treating pupils fairly and openly. In consequence pupils feel valued, they respect school property, the property of others and are enthusiastic about what their school has to offer.
52. Although some staff members only joined the school in September 2000 and January 2001, the different teams within the school already work well together as does the whole staff team. Non-teaching staff are clearly valued and included as members of

the staff team. Some subject leaders have developed useful action plans for the improvement of their subject but this has not been done in every case. Similarly there have been good audits of resources in some subjects but not in others. There have been good reasons for this, but now the headteacher needs to clarify what is expected for subject leadership and to give staff a clear understanding of the date for which they should aim for completion of agreed tasks. Training in subject leadership has been arranged for this term and this should be beneficial in developing the staff's knowledge of leadership. There is a relatively high proportion of inexperienced members of staff leading subjects or stages and more experienced staff have a heavy subject load. The headteacher has planned to have six monthly interviews with all staff for in depth staff development review. However, to check that subject and stage leadership is on the right track, and to give staff confidence that they are doing the right thing, short meetings at more frequent intervals would be more productive.

53. The roles and responsibilities of the senior management team have not yet been drawn up, but this has been proposed for action at the start of the summer term. Both staff members who have been identified as senior managers are already contributing expertise and a generous amount of time to developing the work of the school. The Raising Achievement Plan has sufficient detail and tackles appropriate priorities. A number of proposed developments was started before the school was informed that an Ofsted inspection was going to take place in the spring term. Even without that intrusion on the school's time the workload was heavy and in danger of placing too great a burden on staff and headteacher alike. Some developments planned for the past year have not been carried through with complete success, mainly because the workload has been far too high. For instance, the headteacher has taken on the role of co-ordinator for special educational needs within the school. The individual education plans for each child have been improved considerably, but a system of ensuring that they are used regularly when teachers plan lessons is not fully in place. Much has been achieved, but if improvements are not checked and monitored regularly, and if new projects are undertaken before others are completed improvement may slow.
54. The chair of governors has had a long association with the area and with the school through his family. He and the vice chair of governors served on the governing body during the period of transition which in itself carried a good measure of responsibility. However, most governors were only appointed in September 2000. They are relatively inexperienced and it was an indicator of their commitment to succeed that all attended training in the autumn term after their appointment. They are keen to learn and keen to make a success of the school. One governor has been very active in developing links with the business community having rightly understood that it was important for the school's effectiveness to re-establish itself after closure. Appropriate action has been taken by the governors to ensure that the school meets statutory requirements. A number of committees have been drawn up and governors identified to serve on them, but as yet there has been insufficient time to make decisions. There is a good understanding of the need for governors to have good information about the school and to evaluate its performance objectively. It is, however, very early days to judge the effectiveness of governors' intentions.
55. The school has only been responsible for monitoring its spending since September 2000. It has not had a full financial year in which to judge whether its spending plans were well considered. The services of the local Education Authority have been sensibly retained to oversee the monitoring of spending on a month-by-month basis. Proper use is made of specific grants and funding. The school has a three year financial plan. It is adequate but does not provide sufficient detail. For example, the amounts for all subject resources are included within a global sum, and there are no

time scales to indicate when amounts should be spent or when improved resources implemented. As a Fresh Start school, a large amount of extra monies was allocated to the school in October from the DfEE. The governors are aware of their responsibilities with regard to this funding. They do not, however, as yet have procedures in place to evaluate the effectiveness of their spending, or to judge whether the outcomes match the objectives. This is all the more important because the school's costs will be much higher than those of most other schools.

56. As part of the drive to raise standards, the school employs a greater number of teachers and support assistants than in most schools. This has the beneficial effect of smaller numbers in classes. Staff are well qualified to teach the curriculum, but at the moment there is a higher than usual percentage of staff who are new to teaching. They are well supported by the headteacher and more experienced teachers and their enthusiasm is a positive aspect. The accommodation has been greatly improved over the past year. The attractive interior and good quality displays all contribute to pupils' learning and well-being. The hall is not large but structural improvements are planned for the near future. The reception class has no especially designated outdoor play area, but good use of the nursery facilities is made by the reception staff. Currently outdoor play equipment is not satisfactory but the school has good plans to improve this area. Resources are at least satisfactory and often good in all subjects. The school has a computer suite with good workstations but in the larger classes pupils have to share a computer or take turns. This limits the amount of time they have to develop their skills, and should class sizes increase this could become a limitation on pupils' progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. The governors, headteacher and senior management of the school should continue to raise standards in the following:-

Information and communication technology by:-

- * implementing the co-ordinator's action plan; (paragraph reference: 124)
- * seeking ways to increase the time for pupils to use computers more frequently, including developing the use of classroom assistants more fully and using computers more during lessons such as literacy, numeracy, science and history ; (paragraph references: 24, 123)
- * all curriculum co-ordinators identifying links with their subject and ICT; (paragraph reference: 30, 77, 115))
- * increasing the numbers of computers in the school and the range of software. (paragraph reference: 124)

Mathematics and science by the end of the infants by:-

- * Continuing to support the good teaching in the infants; (paragraph reference: 3, 20)

The school should also continue to raise standards by:-

- * improving the organisation of the time tables so that lessons do not go on too long and the organisation of daily time-tables makes efficient use of time (paragraph references: 26, 30)
- * organising the management of the school so that there is a reasonable allocation of responsibilities and frequent checks on how well improvements are progressing. (paragraph references 52, 53)

In addition to the key issues above, the following weaknesses should be considered by the governors for inclusion in their action plan:-

- * the below average standard in religious education in both infants and juniors and pupils' achievements in the juniors in geography, history, art and design and physical education; (paragraph references 11, 97, 110, 115, 131, 138, 139)
- * the irregular use of individual education plans by class teachers; (paragraph references: 25, 32)
- * the lack of procedures for governors to evaluate whether their spending decisions have been well-judged and provide value for money, with regard to the standards pupils achieve; (paragraph reference: 55)
- * the lack of planning to develop skills in English through other subjects of the curriculum. (paragraph references: 30, 74, 77, 96, 118)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
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
2	21	26	44	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	6	129
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	22

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	7	7	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	11	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (n/a)	79 (n/a)	86 (n/a)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	11	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (n/a)	79 (n/a)	100 (n/a)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	9	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	13	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (n/a)	71 (n/a)	86 (n/a)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67(n/a)	67(n/a)	71(n/a)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

The numbers of boys and girls achieving above expected levels was below ten and so are not required.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	127
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	116

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
--------------------------------	---

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	325,136
Total expenditure	330,628
Expenditure per pupil	2,296
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	(5,492)

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	129
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	49	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	32	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	39	17	0	0
The teaching is good.	54	46	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	44	12	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	39	10	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	49	15	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	51	41	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	54	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	34	7	17	7

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

58. The children join the nursery either in September or January in the year in which they are four. They attend for either a morning or afternoon session. They start full-time in the reception class in the September of the year in which they will be five. The assessments which were undertaken last autumn in reception, as required nationally, indicate that children's attainment on entry is average. Planning in the nursery and the reception appropriately follows national guidance for this age. The reception teacher oversees all planning and in this way the nursery and reception are now working closely together, which was not the case up until September 2000. Although the classrooms are not side by side, communication is good and a two year programme of topics has been devised so that there is no repetition. The reception team work very well together. This is also the case in the nursery, although the trained nursery nurse who leads the nursery team is a temporary staff member. Assessment of children's individual progress is carried out very effectively in the reception. However, as yet there has not been an identification in nursery and reception planning as to what levels children have reached when different tasks are achieved. The assessments which were carried out in the nursery in the summer term 2000 were inaccurate as to the identification of levels of attainment. The school has identified the need to implement effective assessment in the nursery so as to draw the foundation stage together, and improve the tracking of children's achievements.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. The attainment in this area for children in the nursery is what you would expect for three and four year olds. Few are confident, but they are nearly all keen to please, just one or two not yet ready to put their own interests to one side and listen fully to stories or instructions from adults. They are ready to learn rules about washing hands and other matters of hygiene which their teachers stress. Teaching is satisfactory. As yet, it is early days for both staff and children to have fully established class routines so that expectations can be raised. The teacher has used the gathering together of items for a display on a colour theme, for example white for winter, as a good link with home. Children have brought in items eagerly, glad to have something at school to remind them of home. Planning is not very detailed and insufficient use is made of the recommended areas of learning in the organisation of the classroom.
60. In the reception teaching in this aspect of learning is very good. As a result children's attainment at the age of five is above average. Some excellent strategies for helping children develop their understanding of their own and others' needs are very well established. Adults exclaim in delight when children have achieved a new goal. Because children feel valued they can appreciate and value others. During the times when the whole class sit in a circle, children listen and watch whoever's turn it is to 'shine'. They are patient and wait for their turn far better than is usually found at this age. The teacher has high expectations. He promotes politeness, for instance the use of "please" and "thank you" by children to adults and the classmates alike. After snack-time, names and a matching job were called out rapidly by the teacher for the task of clearing up. The speed was such that many older children would have missed their name and task and have been still asking what they should do by the time these four and five-year olds had cleared every trace of food or plate away. At many points during the day, class routines are used effectively to develop pupils' personal and social skills alongside their skills in listening and thinking. Planning is nearly always

good. The only time when children did not achieve a high standard in this aspect was when four were trying to agree on how to take turns in a challenging game based on mathematics. They needed to negotiate with one another but they found this difficult, mainly because the activity itself was difficult and ten minutes was spent unproductively.

Communication, Language and Learning

61. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is average and when they start in reception it is similar. By the end of reception children's attainment in speaking and listening and reading is above average. Their attainment in writing is average.
62. Nursery children are able to listen to stories and their teachers in a manner similar for most three and four-year olds. However, their vocabulary and use of sentence structures is below average. Teachers provide good encouragement to improve children's confidence but do not focus sufficiently on developing more complex speech patterns. Teaching in reception is particularly good at developing children's speaking and listening. Teachers and other adults use and repeat patterns of speech in their explanations, questions, songs, rhymes and stories and this has a very positive effect on the progress children make. Children sit and listen to stories well and teachers have high expectations of how well they will respond to their challenging questions. As a result children are learning to think and talk about the sequence of events in stories and the reasons behind those events. For example, when listening to the story about the 'Gingerbread Man's flight from his pursuers, children could explain why he should not have trusted the fox. They make very good progress in understanding story conventions. For instance, knowing that traditional stories took place in the past and that they may be retold in different ways.
63. In the reception class, the teaching of letter sounds and letter formation is good; in the nursery it is satisfactory. Teachers have good knowledge of how to develop children's interest in sounds and to get them to reproduce them so they will be confident to use them in building words when they read or spell. At the time of the inspection, many children in the reception knew all of the letter sounds. Some can form most letters correctly. Those of lower attainment have taken longer to learn them but many are now quickly improving the list of letters they recognise and can write. Many children are using sounds effectively to puzzle out words they cannot read. Children learn to form their letters correctly, but lack the confidence to build words as they write. The teacher provides good opportunities for children to choose to express their own ideas in writing, for instance suggesting a letter to "Mr. Muddle" an imaginary classroom character they all like. Children are keen to write to him but are still dependent on an adult to structure their sentences for them. This is because the teacher has not given them enough encouragement to use the sounds they know. Also as children begin to write, adults do not support at the crucial moment when the child ponders on how to spell a word with the question: "What sound does the word begin with?" Children have acquired a good number of words they can spell from memory and about half can use these, with help to write simple sentences but confidence in using words they can build using letter sounds would help them to write more. The teaching of reading has focused very strongly on improving children's attainment in the comprehension of what they read. Some parents are concerned that their children do not have books with sufficiently challenging text. Some children could cope with more text but this would not necessarily improve their reading. There are very careful and regular checks on pupils' progress in reading and in learning letter sounds and pupils' are achieving well in reading.

Mathematical Development

64. Children in the nursery have similar knowledge and understanding of numbers and mathematical words as is usual for their age. They start in reception with average attainment. They make satisfactory progress in some aspects with good progress in others, such as learning to count beyond ten.
65. In the nursery children are given good opportunities to count and match using play equipment, singing songs and rhymes and listening to stories. In the reception children are given good activities to begin to make their own mental calculations. By the age of five, most children's attainment is average but a few are above average and have achieved all the goals identified in foundation stage planning. They are ready to start work from the Year 1 National Curriculum programme of study. The school has not planned for this, although aware that this needs to be done. Teaching is good. The teacher has high expectations of children. For example, he rapidly challenges each child in turn as they wait in line to go to lunch to identify which number lies above or below another. Those of higher attainment can do this with numbers from 10 to 20, whilst others use numbers up to ten. In a well planned activity on taking away, children learnt to use terms such as "less than" and "more than" when subtracting a group of objects from a larger group. Working on shape is planned for the summer term but the children have already learnt to identify the different shaped tables in the room and can say how many sides there are on the hexagonal table. The well-stocked 'shop' provides many opportunities for mathematical language to be used with the amount of different boxes checked and counted when the shopkeeper undertakes "stock control".

Knowledge and Understanding

66. Teaching in this area is good in both the nursery and the reception so that by the end of reception children's attainment is above that of most children this age. In both classes teachers plan well to give pupils a wide range of experiences. In the nursery, a focus on the seasons had produced some good work on what the weather is like in the winter and the clothes that people wear to keep warm. In outdoor play teachers' use a variety of road signs, traffic signals and vehicles to develop children's understanding of road safety and the meaning of words related to traffic. They ask good questions to help children redesign their 'roadway' and to think of what other ways they could solve problems. In the reception, the teacher provided children with opportunities to think in more detail about the weather than the nursery children and observe, for example, the strength of the wind.
67. In reception, many classroom displays and resources support learning in this area. An appropriate computer program supports children's learning about control of the mouse and cursor keys. Children are eager to choose the well-established area for constructing models from junk materials. They discussed what they had chosen to build, a castle, for instance during the topic on homes, and how they were going to fix other pieces to their base. An excellent display in one corner drew attention to the difference in household appliances used in modern homes to those in the past. One child lifted up a heavy iron, made of cast-iron. "This is old" he said because it is "rusty". "My mum wouldn't use it" said another. The teacher had developed pupils' thinking by asking them for what purpose some of the old appliances were used. Their answers written on labels showed a good level of ideas, both about the past and in their general knowledge. A label attached to an old paraffin heater read: "I think this was used to put gunpowder in" an amusing thought to an adult but a reasonable assumption for a child as the heater did look somewhat menacing.

Physical Development

68. Children's attainment both in the nursery and reception are above expectations for their age, because the teaching is good and careful planning ensures that their needs are met. There is no outdoor play area for the reception class, but there are two visits a week for reception children to use nursery equipment, including the outdoor play area. On other days good use is made of the hall by the teacher to increase children's confidence and skills in physical movement. In the nursery children run about in the play area showing respect for others' personal space. They can collaborate by pushing or pulling a wheeled vehicle together. They steer bikes and trolleys around a winding track and stop suddenly in response to a playmates signal to stop. In reception the children play with the older children on the playground and have time in the hall for physical education. In physical education lessons they judge the space between themselves and others well when they run and skip. They understand how to follow in a long line. Those chosen lead a line confidently, finding their own winding pathway, for instance when they pretend to be an engine pulling a train. In a very good lesson children learnt the connection between how their heart beats and the way they moved. All identified faster beats after an energetic run. In this lesson the teacher had high expectations of their attainment and moved the lesson at a good pace to capture their enthusiasm and interest. All could skip, leaving the ground in well-judged jumps and using their arms to help. They could move imaginatively, miming the flopping movements of the gingerbread man. They make good gains, during activities and play, in controlling tools such as scissors, cutters and implements for modelling so that when making a jointed figure most could managed to push a split pin into card and open it up without adult help. This latter activity they found difficult but many achieved showing the determination the class teacher has promoted.

Creative development

69. The attainment of children in the nursery and at the end of reception is similar to most children of this age. In both the nursery and the reception children have good opportunities to express themselves through a wide range of picture making. Displayed work showed examples of their own imaginative paintings, printing and splashing paint or making patterns through swirling thicker paint. Opportunities to choose crayons and paper for their own drawings are always available. They have opportunities to explore malleable materials such as clay and to cut out figures in dough. In the nursery, children were excited at decorating the gingerbread men they had made. Enjoyment in music was promoted well in a session in the nursery using percussive instruments. Children controlled their instruments very well, listening to the sounds that others made and only one or two were tempted to tap or bang when it was not their turn. They could all keep time to the steady beat of a song. In reception, children's singing was of a high standard. The good guitar playing of the teacher lead a narrative song about Goldilocks very effectively. Children sang tunefully and learnt to control the volume of their singing to match the size of the "bears". The teacher introduced the concept of pitch and children quickly learnt to use words such as "high" and "low" to describe sound. Good opportunities to extend children's imagination are provided through adults sharing in a puppet play, role play in the classroom shop and the encouragement given by adults to children to take charge and develop their ideas as much as possible as they use the play areas.

ENGLISH

70. Standards for pupils aged seven and eleven are similar to the national average. In the national tests for pupils aged eleven in 2000, the school's results were above the national average. When compared with the results of similar schools they were average. The standard of pupils' work in Year 6 is not as high as last year. There are, however, more pupils with special educational needs in this year group and a large proportion of boys to girls. In common with most other schools, girls achieve a higher standard than boys in English at eleven. The school is looking for ways to address this problem but is at an early stage in finding answers. Overall, pupils throughout the school achieve a higher standard in reading than in writing. The school has given good attention to improving writing in literacy lessons, but has not developed sufficient opportunities to encourage good writing in other subjects to help pupils practice their skills. The school has set a target for their test results for this year in line with the national average and pupils are on track to achieve this.
71. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 the school's results were below average for reading and well below average for writing. The improvement in standards in the work of pupils currently in Year 2 reflects the good introduction of the literacy strategy and the improvement in teaching. In writing, most pupils are achieving a satisfactory standard in the content of what they write and in forming letters accurately. Pupils' attainment in spelling is not as good as in other aspects of writing.
72. In reading, pupils of all attainments achieve well throughout the school. By the age of seven, most average attaining pupils read with understanding and can predict with reasonable accuracy 'what will happen next'. Higher attaining pupils know the difference between 'fiction' and 'non fiction' whilst those with lower attainment are developing strategies to solve unfamiliar words. By the age of eleven most pupils read accurately and with understanding whilst a few are very fluent readers and show real enjoyment in the challenge of reading a demanding text. For example one pupil reading Douglas Adam's 'The Hitchhikers 'Guide to the Galaxy' was able to talk about the book with good understanding of the plot and main characters. All pupils, including those who learn more slowly know how to find information in reference books, using an index or contents. Many understand the difference between a dictionary and a thesaurus and use them appropriately. The good progress and the improvements in standards of reading are due largely to good teaching during literacy lessons and also to the way in which teachers and parents work well together to encourage pupils to read at home as well as in school. Pupils enjoy books and hence practise and develop their reading skills. This was evident in the range of authors popular with Year 6 pupils. These included Charles Dickens, Ted Hughes, J. K. Rowling and Douglas Adams.
73. In writing, all pupils, including those who learn more slowly make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 and 2. By the age of seven, most pupils spell simple words accurately. However pupils do not always use the sounds they know to help them spell words that have regular spelling patterns, or remember the rules that help them with more exacting spellings. Their handwriting is usually well formed and easy to read although often it is not a joined script. Most seven-year-olds write interesting stories and accounts made up of sequences of ideas. Only a few are adventurous in the way they construct their sentences and in the language they use. Descriptive words are not used frequently when pupils write their own stories. Lower attainers frequently misspell common words, such as bac [back], luv [love]. In the junior classes pupils continue to build on their knowledge and understanding at a satisfactory rate. Some in the present Year 6 produce lively, well-structured work. High attaining pupils really know how to produce short descriptive sentences that 'grab the reader's attention', including 'She had a cargo of oil and raw disgusting

alcohol.’ and in Year 5 poems in the style of a William Wordsworth’s sonnet:

London is cloudy with smoky air....
Day and night with a dull sky...

Spelling skills are not yet up to the standard of punctuation, however, and this brings down the overall standard of work for many pupils.

74. There are few examples of pupils writing well in other subjects such as history and religious education. Pupils write up experiments in science well in Year 6, but in other classes writing in science is rather limited because teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to record in their own words the sequence of events in an investigation. Pupils are not given many opportunities to use computers to develop their skills in writing.
75. Standards in speaking are below the expected levels at age seven, although pupils listen well. At eleven pupils achieve expected standards in both speaking and listening. Teachers place high value on spoken language activities, working hard and skilfully to build good relationships and promote confidence. Pupils in Year 1 listen attentively to their teacher, but only a minority make extended contributions, providing details in their responses. By the end of the infants, higher attaining pupils offer more lengthy and relevant answers, but many have a limited vocabulary and some pupils are still not making their meaning clear by using a good range of sentence structures. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening in the juniors as many opportunities are used to raise attainment in this aspect of English. The majority of teachers are good at questioning, expecting extended responses rather than single word replies. This encourages the pupils to consider their answers or justify their opinions. For example, pupils discussed the reasons for and against having a school uniform. The higher attaining pupils expressed with clarity their well considered reasons for having a uniform. Individually and in groups, pupils recited their poems from memory, both in lessons and to whole school audiences. In drama pupils create characters and situations and evaluate their performances. These very good practices enhance pupils’ oral and listening skills, refine their reading skills and raise their self-esteem.
76. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers generally have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. The way in which they use questions to draw out meaning and develop pupils’ understanding is particularly effective. In a Year 4 and 5 lesson on myths and fables, pupils were really forced to think and interrogate the text about a Chinese myth and provide suitable ‘antonyms’. They worked hard and provided a range of high quality adjectives such as ‘microscopic, ‘miniature’ and ‘minute’. At this point, the teacher praised their efforts greatly; just one example of the ways teachers establish very good relationships in lessons. In lessons where pupils of different attainment are grouped together, teachers plan work that matches pupils’ attainment. As a result pupils are challenged to learn and they respond by working hard and productively. Those of lower attainment and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and pupils learn well as a result. Very occasionally in the seven to eleven age group, the teacher takes too long to settle pupils during whole class sessions and this results in less progress than usual being made. Teaching of spelling is generally satisfactory but does not consistently lead to improvements in pupils’ written work as teachers have not devised strategies to link learning spelling with writing activities. Teachers assess pupils’ progress closely and effectively in lessons. This helps them to set challenging targets for improvement for individual pupils and groups of pupils. For example, a teacher’s planning in Year 2 provided very accurate weekly evaluations of pupils’ progress, with

written comments about additional support needed. Marking of work identifies clearly what is needed to improve standards and gives pupils a good understanding of their teachers' high expectations. The evidence of pupils' response is seen in the generally good quality of their work. For example, In Year 4 and 5 the quality and range of poetry is impressive with pupils able to use literal and figurative language, with developing skill.

77. Teachers do not make sufficient use of pupils' interest in other subjects to develop their skills in reading and writing. There were some examples of this being done well; pupils in Year 1 used phonic and spelling strategies in building captions to compare past and present domestic appliances in history; those in Year 4 and 5 wrote descriptive accounts of life as a Tudor mariner. The school has not yet had time to plan the development of English through other subjects nor through the use of computers.
78. When the school re-opened in January 2000 there were still weaknesses in English. These have been remedied rigorously and effectively. The way in which test data is analysed has helped the school identify very accurately just what needs to be improved. This has been followed by well -designed strategies for improvement. The number and quality of books has improved, helping to stimulate pupils' interest in reading. There has been thorough and effective monitoring of teaching and learning both by the headteacher and by the adviser from the local authority. The subject co-ordinator, who is recently in post, has a very accurate understanding of what needs improving and how to go about it. All this results in an effective focus on improvement throughout the school, which is having a strong impact upon raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

79. Standards for pupils aged eleven are similar to the national average. For those aged seven they are below average. The school's results in the national tests for eleven-year olds in 2000 were above average and they were above average in comparison to similar schools. In the current Year 6, there are more pupils with special educational needs and some have joined the class recently and this explains why standards are not as high as last year. The results for pupils aged seven in 2000 were well below the national average. Teaching in the infants was not of a high enough quality. There are new teachers in both infant classes and standards are improving. Currently pupils' work in Year 2 is still below average but pupils are learning at a good rate.
80. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good quality of teaching in the infants are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Most pupils in Year 1 are achieving at or above standards expected for six year olds. Teachers are using the structure and methods of the numeracy strategy well, and pupils like the clear, brisk approach. As a result they enjoy mathematics, work hard and make good progress.
81. By the age of seven, pupils of average and higher attainment can add and subtract two digit numbers from multiples of ten up to 100, using mental strategies. They can sequence numbers correctly, add to number patterns, and solve simple problems in money and in weight. These pupils can collect and present data in simple charts and most can name common two-dimensional shapes. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs can do simple addition and subtraction with numbers to ten. They can count to numbers to 100 accurately, but need adult support when working in addition or subtraction above ten. As a result of the teacher's support and well thought out questions, most pupils attempt to explain how they have worked out their answers to a problem.

82. Throughout the junior classes, teachers are using the methods recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy well and pupils' ability to make mental calculations is improving. However, weaknesses resulting from gaps in pupils' learning before the opening of the new school can still cause errors in some basic use of calculation, particularly for those of lower attainment. Pupils are learning well in lessons. Teachers are having to plan work that gives pupils the chance to develop skills and learning which were not taught well in previous years and their progress year on year is now satisfactory.
83. By age eleven most pupils can calculate confidently in numbers to 1,000. They know and use a range of number facts, including their times-tables, and three quarters are able to add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately. They can use multiples and factors to solve problems, and many can explain their reasoning or discuss their ideas. For example, pupils interpreting a line graph giving information on the distance covered by a walker within a set time were able to make several sensible suggestions as to why the distance lessened as time passed. Some pupils can calculate fractional parts of numbers, convert whole numbers to percentages, use approximates and use conversion graphs to make comparisons. The majority of pupils can recognise equivalence in decimals and fractions, round numbers up or down to two decimal places, and can find the area and perimeter of shapes. Pupils can use data handling methods to solve problems, including use of line graphs and pie charts, and some can interpret results and use their answers to form opinions or make decisions. Lower attaining pupils still need support to work at the level expected for their age, for example when using numbers above 100, or mental methods that need accuracy in more than one step to find the answer.
84. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively within their classes, and usually work at specially prepared activities, although in junior classes, individual action plans are not always used to plan work. This means that sometimes they tackle work which does not match their current learning needs. However, pupils are all well supported by assistants who have been trained to work in the National Numeracy Strategy, and this ensures their progress is satisfactory. In Year 6 they have additional lessons taught by a specialist numeracy teacher in small groups with a focus on specific skills which need improvement. These have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning.
85. Teachers plan well. Lessons begin with a lively question and answer session, which sharpens pupils' mental skills. Some questions encourage pupils to explain their ideas, for example a pupil in Year 3 was asked, "How do you know 1,000 will go in the 2s?" when sorting odd and even numbers as a data handling exercise. Pupils enjoy these sessions and join in with enthusiasm. Teachers use strategies which pupils find exciting, and a good range of resources and methods. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils combined movement and actions to reinforce learning, and in Year 6 pupils displayed answers to quick-fire questions on their individual white boards.
86. Teaching in the infants is predominately good and in one lesson was excellent. In the juniors teaching is never less than satisfactory, and in one lesson teaching was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Their explanations are clear so that pupils learn quickly and with enjoyment. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve, how well they are doing and what they can do to improve their work. Most teachers write objectives for the lesson on the board. In Year 6, the objective is the title for the work, which pupils write in their books as they begin. Teachers review work done in the previous lesson, and often refer back to earlier learning. For example, the Year 1 teacher asked, "Do you remember when we were explaining why we couldn't take

away five fingers if we were only showing three?” and the Year 6 teacher asked, “Can you remember when you learned about that sort of graph? What data were you using?” Lessons end with a review, which helps the children to see what they have learned, and often they are told what they will be learning or doing in the next lesson. Marking usually gives pupils good understanding of how well they have achieved and what they need to do to improve further.

87. Teachers generally have high expectations of behaviour and work habits, and the majority of pupils do not allow the lapses of a few to interrupt their learning. Occasionally in the juniors, teachers do not provide enough challenge for those of higher attainment to move on at a quicker pace. Teachers praise pupils, telling them how well they are doing, so pupils have very good self-esteem and enjoy their achievements. Work is usually based on what teachers know pupils can do, which means pupils make good progress in lessons, and are pleased with their success. In a Year 6 booster lesson, for example, pupils used dice to investigate probability and made comments such as, “I’ve really understood that!” and “I can work it out easily.” Most pupils use resources carefully and work with others sensibly. Teachers use questions skilfully to make sure all pupils are involved and able to show their understanding, and ask challenging questions to give higher attaining pupils opportunity to explore their ideas. In the Year 3 and 4 class, pupils were asked what other criteria could be used to sort in a Venn diagram, and in Year 2 one boy said, “I added 6, but then I took away the number I started with, to check my answer.”
88. Teachers use opportunities in other subjects for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills, such as in collecting and organising information in science and information and communication technology, in measuring in design and technology, and in studying weather in geography. For example, in an art lesson, pupils in Year 2 named mathematical shapes they could see, when doing observational drawing in the classroom.
89. The subject is well led. The headteacher is the co-ordinator. She has many other responsibilities but has seen the leading of mathematics as a priority. The school has recognised the importance of effective teaching in mathematics and has worked hard to make sure that all teachers understand and can use the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. Thorough checking of pupils’ progress and teachers’ planning by the co-ordinator has resulted in an improvement in pupils’ learning throughout the school. Good use has been made of a numeracy consultant in raising standards of teaching in mathematics.

SCIENCE

90. Standards for pupils aged eleven are similar to the national average and pupils are generally making satisfactory progress in junior classes. The school’s results in the national tests for 2000 for pupils aged eleven were above the national average. Current assessments by teachers, and inspection judgements indicate that the pupils should achieve an average standard. This does not represent a decline in standards for the school. There are not a large number of pupils taking the tests and there are a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6, two of whom joined the school in the present year.
91. Standards for pupils aged seven are below the national average, a similar picture to the results of teachers’ assessments at the end of 2000. Pupils are now making good progress in each year group because teaching is good, but this has not been the case in the past when teaching was not effective. Teacher assessments in 2000

showed that all pupils achieved the expected level for their knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, materials and their properties, and the physical process in the programme of study. A much smaller proportion achieved the expected standard in experimental and investigative science. There were also few pupils who achieved above the national average.

92. An analysis of the work of pupils currently in Year 6 shows that they have been engaged on some good investigative work during the current year and that this has significantly raised their standard of knowledge and understanding. In September, their work was at a much lower standard. They made few predictions before carrying out an investigation. They did not record findings well and there were few accurate measurements. Their work improved rapidly, the teacher's marking clearly leading them to work at a higher standard. After making comments designed to encourage a pupil to improve their explanation, the teacher praised the pupil's efforts with; "Your write-ups show good understanding and you are beginning to think about why results occur." Pupils were given good opportunities to take part in experiments to prove the facts they were learning. As a result, they gained a greater understanding of the process and were able to use scientific terms knowledgeably. For instance, when learning about solids, liquids and gases which is often presented to pupils in a 'text book' lesson, one pupil wrote after a simple experiment with a sponge "We have looked at how air can fit into gaps of some solids, for example, a sponge. This supports the theory that materials can have air in the gaps between particles".
93. The teacher in Year 2 only joined the school in January. She assessed pupils' scientific knowledge carefully and discovered that they were well behind in their understanding of investigative work. She planned a good programme of work to give pupils the opportunity to develop their knowledge about materials and about pushes and pulls and the force of movement through observation and investigation. During simple investigations such as finding out what happens when you bend or twist malleable materials the pupils made their own observations and recorded them in a very simple way. In a more challenging experiment in a lesson on forward motion pupils tried to record the differences in the distance a car would travel down a ramp at different inclinations. Many found this too difficult without very close adult support. Currently their attainment is below expectations. They are making good progress in their lessons but they have knowledge and understanding to catch up on because teaching was not effective in the past.
94. Teachers throughout the school are working hard to develop a more balanced programme of work in science so that pupils learn the recommended content of the National Curriculum through the context of scientific enquiry. From Year 2 onwards, this is making up for knowledge pupils have not acquired sufficiently in previous years, and in Year 1 it is laying a firm foundation for future learning. In an exciting lesson in Year 1 on light sources, the teacher skilfully developed the pupils' understanding of the need to make a prediction by asking the class to vote at the start of the lesson as to whether lights can be seen better in the night than during the day. Work was planned carefully so that although adults supervised investigations, pupils made their own observations and were encouraged to think of reasons why things happened. They were always interested and actively involved so their learning increased. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some of it good and very good. In a very good lesson in Year 3 and 4 pupils were given as much control of the investigation as possible and challenged to arrive at conclusions, record them accurately and in a variety of ways. In this lesson there was a buzz of interest and a desire to achieve well. Pupils' knowledge about Venn diagrams from their mathematics work earlier in the day was effectively used as a means of recording the materials and objects they had categorised as insulators or conductors of electricity. Occasionally investigations

were too involved or too difficult for pupils to proceed without adult support. Teachers gave step-by-step instructions and as a result pupils were not lead to think things out for themselves but became anxious to get their investigation “right”. They learnt the content of the lesson but did not increase their understanding of scientific enquiry.

95. The co-ordinator has developed the school’s planning so that teachers can clearly identify how to provide work for different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from this, as work is well matched to their needs. They learn at a similar rate to others in all lessons. Skilful support from classroom assistants ensures that pupils try to puzzle out problems for themselves before assistance is given.
96. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and a good practitioner but she has a heavy load of responsibilities. She could not have been expected to have achieved more than at present since the opening of the school in January. She has given teachers good guidance and encouragement when overseeing planning, and monitored teaching throughout the school in the Autumn term. The curriculum is now planned to reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum for 2000 and resources are good, including an additional scheme to provide support for planning investigations. There is an action plan to address the areas which now need attention. The school has not yet considered sufficiently the links with other subjects which would develop pupils’ learning. For instance, at present there is no common format for recording investigations to support learning in writing, and there is no guidance on how and when pupils carry out research in science, particularly on the computer.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Two lessons were observed, and work was examined in displays, sketchbooks and art folders. Seven-year-olds achieve standards above expectations in art. The standard of work of pupils aged eleven is below expectations. Pupils work in a range of media, including pencil, crayon, paint, information and communication technology, 3D construction materials, clay and other modelling media. Work displayed in classrooms and corridors is well presented. In junior classes pupils have sketchbooks but they are not using them well to try out their own ideas, develop and extend their skills, or make choices when investigating media.
98. In the infants, pupils make good progress and work in a variety of media. They draw and paint from observation and imagination, including drawing self-portraits, using viewfinders to make selective studies of a part of the classroom, and investigating colour and pattern in paint and other media. Pupils talk about the work of other artists and attempt to use their styles in drawing. Teachers help children to reflect on what they have done, and to talk about their work, suggesting ways it could be improved. As pupils move through the juniors, progress becomes unsatisfactory in knowledge and understanding, interpreting and investigating, and in developing their own creativity. Art is often linked to work in other subjects, especially history. For example, pupils observe and draw artefacts, copy Tudor portraits and use clay to make Greek urns. These are good links within subjects but do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop their understanding of design within their own art work. Eleven-year-olds have not developed an understanding of the use of a sketch books. There is not enough work undertaken, and it is mainly line drawing of a low standard.
99. Teaching in the infants is good. Teachers have high expectations and pupils work with great concentration and talk about their work knowledgeably. For example, in a lesson where children selected their own part of the classroom to draw or paint, two pupils explained confidently why there were differences between what they had drawn through their viewfinder, and what was in the similar view on a Polaroid photograph they had each taken. Some teaching in the juniors shows a lack of understanding in the subject. For example, a lesson intended as poster design in Year 6, concentrated on the content of language and historical information, in posters from the Second World War. The teacher chose the media for all pupils, which was pencil, felt tips and paper, and the design was provided on the white board. The lesson did not result in pupils developing or improving skills or knowledge in art, making choices, evaluating design elements of the stimulus posters used, or applying their own creative ideas.
100. All teachers have good expectations of behaviour, and pupils throughout the school enjoy art and work hard, even when there is not enough challenge in the activity. The quality of displays is good and they contribute to the atmosphere of learning and to the environment looking attractive. Work is well mounted and arranged, neatly and clearly labelled and often with the purpose.
101. The headteacher, who has an interest and knowledge in the subject is the co-ordinator. She is aware that the subject is in need of development but appropriately has chosen other areas as a priority. Subject training is planned for teachers in the Summer of 2001. There are good resources. The school has adopted the revised National Curriculum through the national guidance provided, and this provides a good foundation for future development of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, both in the juniors. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and information from the subject's co-ordinator. An examination of all the teachers' planning and discussions held with the co-ordinator show that the subject is now appropriately covered. Standards at the age of seven and eleven match the levels expected nationally.
103. By the age of seven, the quality of the pupils' learning is satisfactory, and they make sound progress. They learn an appropriate range of skills and techniques, for example how to cut and join a variety of materials. In Year 1 pupils are taught to use tools safely as they design and make waistcoats for teddy bears, first drawing what they proposed to make. In Year 2 pupils examine types of vehicles, discuss such features as wheels, axle, chassis, body and cab. They then design and make their own wheeled vehicle. Pupils are expected to consider ways of improving their model and this develops their understanding of their own learning well. For example, a pupil decided to double the wheels on the rear of his lorry to support heavy loads. They are expected to draw and label diagrams of their work.
104. Progress in the juniors is sound as pupils build on and extend their skills to a satisfactory standard. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 class extend the design skills learned in the infants. They are taught a basic understanding of 'levers' and 'linkage' when they produced story books with moving parts. Pupils in a Year 4 and 5 class are studying the Tudors. In their design and technology lessons they have made some very impressive Tudor houses incorporating some of the aspects and characteristics of the period. They chose appropriate materials for their construction. They have also designed and made musical instruments, examining how they are made and how they make their sounds. These projects make good use of links with science, history and music. In Year 6, pupils have been practising construction skills. They first tested and selected appropriate materials for strength making good use of this information to construct models of Anderson shelters. Some of the models were completed at home and are of a very high standard. During the week of the inspection they were making good use of their design and technology experiences to evaluate their shelters against the criteria presented to them.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are planned carefully. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is satisfactory. Effective use is made of discussion to help pupils evaluate their own designs and models. For example, pupils in a Year 3 and 4 lesson discussed their 'pop up' models for their books and decided a simple model with strong joints would be easier to control. Pupils are taught skills systematically and opportunities are provided for them to experiment using a range of tools and techniques. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up through the classes. Good relationships with pupils and encouragement of pupils to evaluate their work were significant features of the lessons observed, resulting in most of the pupils working with enthusiasm on their tasks and enjoying the practical nature of the subject. A strength is the mature manner in which pupils are able to work together in groups and this supports the learning of pupils with special educational needs who make the same progress as other pupils. Homework is used effectively to reinforce learning.

106. There is no co-ordinator for the subject. The headteacher has had to take on leadership of this subject together with several others because of the lack of permanent staff or staff with sufficient experience. The school has adopted the government's recommended guidelines for the subject and planning shows these are now central to the teaching of design and technology throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY

107. No lessons were seen and judgements are based on pupils' work, and discussions with pupils, teachers and the temporary co-ordinator for geography. Pupils' work by the age of seven is similar to standards expected nationally. By the age of eleven pupils are below the standard expected. There is a satisfactory range of geographical activities undertaken in junior classes but the quality of work in each year group is too low.
108. Pupils in Year 2, are able to identify geographical features from pictures and photographs. They have a good knowledge of how to make a map or a plan. They begin to use their knowledge to compare life in other places with their own lives, and to give opinions. For example, they can talk about what it might be like to live on a remote island, and describe simply how it might be similar to their life, and how it might be different. They can name natural features of the island, including a bay, beach and hill, and are beginning to use their knowledge to plan routes across their island. Pupils of all levels of attainment and those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress.
109. Pupils in Year 6 are able to make links between scientific and geographical facts when talking about the weather, but most are not certain about factors that affect the weather. They record ways that people change the environment and recognise that human activity can be damaging. Some pupils give interesting explanations for why they would worry about swimming in a river near a factory in discussions, but they do not put the same detail into written work, which often comprises short, simple answers to questions.
110. No teaching was seen during inspection, but teachers' planning is satisfactory with some good aspects such as the use of links between subjects to make learning more relevant for pupils. For example, pupils learnt about Greece in geography while studying the Ancient Greeks in history. The local area is used beneficially; pupils have good knowledge of its main features, and can say what they like and do not like about it. Pupils' work shows that the challenge of knowledge increases as they move through the juniors, however it does not show development of map reading skills, or of independent research skills to the level expected. Work is often very similar in content and achievement from every pupil, regardless of their ability. As a result, pupils do not make satisfactory progress through the junior classes.
111. The headteacher has had to oversee this subject in a similar way as for a number of other subjects. The school makes good use of the locality, including visiting a residential centre for field study. Resources are good. A whole-school study of the local area in the summer term is planned in order to provide an opportunity for teachers to look at pupils' progress in knowledge and skills throughout the school and this is a good decision.

HISTORY

112. By the age of seven pupils are working at a standard expected nationally. However, although most pupils continue to learn a range of historical facts, and increase their historical knowledge as they move through the junior classes, their skills and understanding are not developed well enough, and by Year 6 standards are below those expected for eleven-year-olds.
113. In both infants and juniors, pupils use pictures, diagrams, words and phrases to record information. They use information from books, pictures and artefacts to find out about ways of life in the past, and many pupils can talk about things they know about people in different times, for example the Ancient Greeks, the Tudors, the Victorians and children in the Second World War. They are given good opportunities to visualise the past by visits and visitors to the school. For example, a group of actors presented a Greek story as a play to Years 3 and 4 which greatly developed the pupils' understanding of the period.
114. In the infants, teachers provide good artefacts and pictures to help pupils learn about the past and compare life in bygone times with their own. For example, in their topic on light pupils in Year 1 considered life with candles and lamps for lighting. The good classroom display helped them to come to conclusions. They were quite sure they would not have liked to live in times before electricity was used to power appliances in the home. In Year 2, pupils have begun to develop a good sense of the order and sequence of events in history. They understand that some things are happening now, some things happened before they were born and some things happened a very long time ago. They are able to put some of the personalities from history into a correct time frame and to talk about significant differences between their life and that of their grandparents.
115. In the juniors, pupils continue to progress in their knowledge of individual periods, but do not develop their knowledge of how to place events and people into correct periods of time. They cannot confidently compare sources of information, or use a range of historical knowledge to explain differences between interpretations of things that happened in the past. They have been given insufficient opportunities to research using reference books, documents or the different resources on computers. Pupils in Year 6 do not have enough opportunity to extend their skills in English through recording or reporting in detail, what they understand, conclude, or believe might have happened.
116. The quality of teaching seen throughout the school was satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic and prepare their teaching and materials well. They use effective resources, lively discussion and questioning to interest children in the subject, so that children are eager to learn. However, some activities planned for the children are of low challenge, and do not give pupils the opportunity to extend their learning. Marking does not always inform pupils of how they have achieved, or how they could improve their work. Too much time is spent filling in worksheets and teachers do not match work well enough to pupils' abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by classroom assistants. On occasions lessons are over lengthy. Most pupils enjoy history and behave well, even when they lose concentration because of the amount of time spent on activities. However, pupils' progress through the junior classes is not satisfactory.

117. The school makes good use of historical visits, for example to The Valley Heritage Centre, and pupils thoroughly enjoy the performances of a visiting theatre company, who make their learning come alive through drama. Teachers make good use of the Resource Centre provided by the local Education Authority, to obtain good quality artefacts, books and other materials. These are well displayed and used in the opening of lessons, and are often used in art lessons for observational study or as a stimulus for other work, such as writing in English lessons. Some teachers use the World Wide Web as a source for learning, and pupils use computers to record information, but they do not have enough opportunity to use information and communication technology in their own research.
118. There have been insufficient permanent staff to allocate a co-ordinator to lead history. The headteacher has overseen curriculum planning for the subject and the school has adopted the national guidance for history, to ensure that there is sufficient breadth in the topics studied. However, there is no overview of the development of skills and understanding and this is needed to improve learning in the subject and to make effective links with literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology. A whole school study of the Victorians earlier in the year was a good start to focus teachers' discussions and consideration of how pupils will build up their knowledge in a systematic way.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. The standard of pupils' work in information technology is similar to expectations for pupils aged seven. Pupils aged eleven produce some work which matches national expectations but some does not, so overall standards are below. The school has recently installed new computers on a network in a purpose built suite. There are enough for half a class to work on a machine whilst the remaining pupils work on related tasks at desks. Lessons in the computer suite are now providing good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in information and communication technology and pupils in Years 3 and 4 are attaining levels one would expect for their age.
120. By the age of seven, pupils have gained confidence in the use of the mouse and can click on icons to open programs and to select options. They use simple word processing packages and understand that work can be presented in different ways using computers. Teachers plan effective lessons based on pupils' previous experiences, providing activities which interest pupils and further develop their thinking. A good example was seen in a session in Year 2, on developing ideas and making things happen using a programmable toy. Most pupils had remembered that you have to clear the memory before entering instructions. The teacher gave concise but thorough explanations of the next steps and assessed pupils' understanding with questions. By the end of the session, pupils could plan a sequence of instructions, write them down and enter them accurately. When the toy moved around the squares of a grid, on a large floor map of an imaginary island, in response to their instructions and arrived at its planned destination, there were smiles of satisfaction. Those pupils of higher attainment were better able to puzzle out errors when they occurred but all pupils, including those with special educational needs were successful in their sequencing of instructions, including a ninety degree turn to left or right. Pupils are learning at a good rate to control the mouse, use the keyboard and produce text and images. Their understanding of the use of computers in everyday life is satisfactory.
121. By the age of eleven, pupils are able to use word processing programs at a level

usually expected for this age. They can, for example produce posters and other forms of public information bringing together text and pictures in a style appropriate for the message. A certificate for rewarding good behaviour at playtime showed skill in choosing a design and presentation to catch the eye of a younger child. Pupils are aware of the opportunities that using the internet brings for sharing and exchanging information. Some have sent e-mail and are able to access a schools' information service, others need step-by-step instructions from the teacher to move from the start-up screen. They were all keen to visit the web site to discover about rationing in war time but some were too hesitant because they lacked experience to benefit from the choices they were offered. Some pupils are more knowledgeable because of help at home, but the majority of those with higher attainment have attended the computer club after school. At the moment the club is providing them with greater opportunities to develop their skills than lesson times because there is still too little time allocated to information technology during lessons.

122. Pupils in Year 6 have a very limited understanding of how computers are used to sort information, for example through a class database. They have entered information for the production of a graph but mainly with the support of the teacher so that they have not yet checked for themselves to see if information is relevant or whether there were errors through omissions. Work is planned for them to cover the programme of study, for example to use sensors in the summer term but they have not had sufficient experience to reach a high enough level.
123. Teaching in the juniors is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. In Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils are taught by the co-ordinator. Lessons are well planned to build on pupils' knowledge and understanding systematically. For example in the Year 3 and 4 class pupils entered data about themselves on a program the teacher had set up on the computer and worked on a card data base to sort pupils into different fields. In the Year 4 and 5 class pupils were given the more complex work of using a branching data base. In both lessons pupils were given work which matched their ability, with appropriate challenge for both higher and lower attaining pupils. Overall pupils made good gains in their knowledge about data handling, but in one lesson too much time was spent on the initial explanation and pupils had only a short time to work at the computers. As a result, they did not develop their use of the keyboard and computer facilities to a great extent despite their eagerness to do so. In general, staff are not planning to use information and communications technology sufficiently in other subjects. For instance in history and science it is not used enough by pupils to find out information. In mathematics and English it is not used enough to support work on basic skills. The co-ordinator is very aware that as yet the computer suite is not used as fully as it could be. Pupils in the juniors, who have not had sufficient opportunities in the past to develop skills and knowledge are making satisfactory progress. In much of their work they are reaching the level expected for their age, but there are still a good number of pupils who are hesitant in their use of computers because of too little experience.
124. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is developing the skills and knowledge of staff through informal guidance when overseeing their planning and in discussions about pupils' achievements. The nationally recommended scheme has been adopted and extended by a useful method of providing for pupils' different levels of attainment. An action plan to ensure further development includes providing training for staff in the summer term and developing assessment. At present, however, teachers are not making sufficient use of the computer suite. There is no timetabling to enable teachers to plan more opportunities for pupils to work on computers, and classroom assistants and voluntary helpers could be used more effectively. The current number of computers is satisfactory, but nevertheless there are limitations on the

time pupils have to practice skills. As a result of having to take turns on the computers during whole class sessions, pupils are not making as much progress as they could. There are enough programs to develop all areas of the curriculum but more software would provide teachers with greater opportunities for planning, especially for those pupils who learn more slowly.

MUSIC

125. Standards at the age of seven match the levels expected nationally and are above expectations at age 11. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and pupils with special educational needs achieve at a similar rate to others in their year groups.
126. By the age of seven, pupils sing clearly and in tune. They perform well together in singing practice. By Year 2, pupils are able to sing simple songs with changes in pitch and tempo. For example, in their singing practice they sang a range of songs, from memory, keeping good time, and remembering that the chorus is repeated after each verse. The majority of pupils can remember and repeat a simple pattern by clapping correctly and keeping to the beat. Using untuned percussion instruments they make up their own short rhythms and sound patterns. Many pupils are able to recognise the difference between pulse and rhythm by creating sequences of sounds on percussion instruments. Composing skills are a developing feature and pupils in a Year 2 lesson showed skill in producing vocal sounds when mimicking machines. Pupils listen attentively to a wide variety of music, which includes music of other cultures and times and they respond well, pondering on the sounds they hear and describing them.
127. Pupils in the juniors are introduced to a wide range of music from different traditions and cultures, such as, Western classical, Tudor, folk and war songs. They are developing good listening skills being able to identify many instruments being played in an orchestral arrangement and some pupils are able to classify them into groups such as strings, percussion and woodwind. They are able to perform their own rhythmic patterns and repeat them using a range of percussion instruments. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the creative element of music making. However, in singing, progress is consistently good. Pupils sing clearly and in tune. By Year 6, pupils sing songs in two parts with good expression, clear diction and improved voice control. For example in a Year 6 lesson they performed to a good standard 'partner' songs.
128. A significant number of boys and girls from Years 4, 5 and 6, learn to play string, woodwind and brass instruments. In Year 6 there is approximately a third of pupils who are learning to play instruments. They skillfully and confidently play their chosen instrument with a degree of competence. The extra-curricular junior choir attains a good standard. The skills, which are developed in these music sessions, have a positive impact on standards achieved in their class lessons.
129. The quality of teaching is very good. The high quality teaching is a result of a recently appointed specialist music teacher whose subject expertise is used well throughout the school, and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are well planned. Pupils' previous knowledge and understanding are used particularly well to extend and develop skills. Performing skills, in particular singing, are well taught. There is a good pace to the lessons and practical opportunities for pupil involvement. The teacher evaluates skillfully what the pupils are able to do and ensures that pupils improve on their earlier compositions. For example, pupils in a Year 2 lesson improved their rhythmic patterns by creating their own patterns for other pupils to copy. The pupils respond to the good teaching and enjoyment of the teacher by

listening and trying their best. They are well behaved, attentive and interested, and persevere to improve both their individual and group performances. The pupils are confident when performing in front of an audience knowing that their contribution is valued. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson pupils sang a two-part Second World War song with competence and real enjoyment. They generally select and handle instruments with care.

130. The subject is very well led. Although only recently appointed, the co-ordinator, has a very good understanding of what needs to be developed. She has effectively promoted the subject and raised the profile of music in the school. There is an action plan and long term plan overview incorporating material from the government's recommended guidelines. There is no formal assessment as yet, however. The school is aware of this and record keeping and assessment of pupils' work are to be addressed. The school has a flourishing dance club and choir. Also the school takes the pupils to concerts and invites professional musicians in to perform and involve the pupils in musical activities. Resources are good. The use of information technology in music is a developing area.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Standards by the age of seven are above national expectations, with pupils developing skills thoughtfully and well. During the inspection, the work of pupils aged eleven was not seen and so no judgement was made on their standards. Pupils are given good opportunities to extend skills in games as they move up through the juniors, mainly through after-school activities. However, they do not make enough progress in developing skills of planning together, or in discussing and working to change and improve their performances.
132. Teachers in the infants plan good learning opportunities, and pupils are challenged to reflect and improve on their previous work. Lessons are well organised with a good warm-up activity to prepare children, and well planned activities keep pupils interested and working hard. Pupils are reminded of what they had learned in the last lesson and told how they are making progress. Because teachers focus on skill development, pupils can be seen making progress. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils developed their first linked sequence, learned to change movement as they travelled along the bench, linked their dismount and improved their balance in a final shape. They were excited by their own learning and eager to show their performance to the class. In this lesson, the cool down was followed by a short reflection on how their bodies felt now they had completed exercise, and why exercise is good for them.
133. As pupils move up through the juniors, opportunities for pupils to understand what they are doing, why they are doing it and how their performance might be improved, are not always planned or used. Because the purpose of what they are being asked to do is not always clear to children, they pay attention to things that are less important than the development of skills. For example, in the Year 4 and 5 class, pupils worked with two friends to demonstrate actions from a game of their choice. Pupils spent a long time discussing different games they might choose, and each pupil produced one action in a repetitive mime, which was not further developed or improved. The class then guessed what the game was, rather than identifying skills used and suggesting ways to develop them.
134. Teachers do not always stress the importance of safety or give clear instructions on how to avoid hazards. Pupils in the infants were well prepared in suitable physical education kit, and girls had earrings taped over. Teachers gave pupils clear

instructions on how they should behave and work, and acted quickly if a child became distracted. In the lesson in the juniors, many pupils had not changed for physical education, and a few were wearing unsuitable shoes. In this lesson a small number of pupils were badly behaved and sometimes ran round in an uncontrolled and dangerous way, and pupils with special educational needs were not well enough supported.

135. The school hall is used for many purposes, leading to furniture and equipment, such as the overhead projector and the television set on a stand, being stored round the edges. These items form a safety hazard and pupils were not reminded of the possible dangers, nor was equipment screened off, although one teacher did place cones in front of the stored dining tables to form a barrier.
136. The co-ordinator, who joined the school in September and is not experienced in leading a subject, has made a very good impact on providing after-school activities in a short time, mainly in games. School teams take part in a range of inter-school fixtures, including cross-country running, and the football team is currently unbeaten. The majority of pupils are very interested and excited by these activities. The school has also built extremely good relationships with other organisations, for example, Stoke City Football Club. Very good links have been established with parents, and these have resulted in such initiatives as a combined parent/child sponsored walk, collection of vouchers for equipment, and permission to use Alsagers Bank Football Club's field when their own is waterlogged. The profits from the varied fund raising activities have provided new kit for both boys' and girls' teams. This has been the focus of the co-ordinator's work since his appointment and it has been very beneficial in raising pupils' pride and interest in their school. The co-ordinator now needs clear guidance on raising standards in lessons, particularly in the juniors.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. The standards achieved by pupils at the ages of seven and eleven in religious education do not meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and pupils' achievements are not satisfactory. The syllabus introduced in September has not yet been incorporated into whole school planning. There has not been a continuous programme of work for some time and so pupils have too little knowledge and understanding of the subject.
138. The pupils in Year 2 had been learning about Palm Sunday. They had learnt well from two lessons and so they knew that it was a significant story about Jesus told by Christians before Easter. They could explain that Christians make a cross out of a piece of palm leaf to remind them of that day. This good explanation was because their present teacher had successfully begun to develop their awareness of religious symbols and how people relate to them. However, they have only had the opportunity of a well-planned programme of work since January and in consequence their knowledge and understanding is limited and sometimes muddled. Some knew a few facts from well-known Bible stories, but to illustrate their confusion for instance, they recalled a story when "Jesus and Moses travelled to a new home". Their interest in discussing issues presented by religious studies was good. They could say why their families were important to them and how they thought they should treat others. They all tried really hard to explain what they thought was the difference between God and man, perhaps reflecting that they have been listening well during assembly time; one pupil said: "If God wasn't in the world it would be really bad".
139. The pupils in Year 6 were similarly able to discuss their thinking about God and about

issues in their own lives but they had limited knowledge of religious beliefs, practices and stories, including the Christian religion. They were able to identify a number of different world faiths and to describe some of the main features of those faiths but in a very limited way. Higher attaining pupils were able to point to the parallels of Christians' observance of Lent and the fasting of Muslims but others were not able to give any clear explanation as to why these religious practices were undertaken. Their lack of knowledge reflects the fact that they have not received a well-planned programme of study to develop their understanding.

140. Most of the teaching in religious education is now being planned and delivered by a teacher with specialist knowledge. An analysis of the work in Years 3, 4 and 5 indicated that lessons are now providing pupils with good opportunities to learn about religion and to reflect on religious issues in the light of their own experiences. A good example of this was in a Year 4 and 5 lesson when pupils learnt about the devil's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. The teacher had used music and 'fantasy' to develop pupils' understanding of "temptation" so that the story would gain in meaning. At the end of the lesson pupils were able to say in their own words what they had learnt from the story. One pupil said: "I've learnt that you should have a mind of your own and not be influenced by others". In most lessons pupils, including those with special educational needs are now making good progress because work is well planned and they are able to relate the issues discussed to their own experiences. However, not all teachers have adequate knowledge of how to teach this subject. In one lesson on the parables of Jesus the work was too advanced for even those of higher attainment and as a consequence pupils gave up trying and made little progress.
141. The headteacher has been overseeing the management of the subject. The teacher with specialist knowledge who has begun to raise standards in the subject is not a permanent member of staff, but is nevertheless helping to establish whole school planning. This should make a significant improvement in teaching and learning, but as yet there is no action plan or means to monitor whether this occurs.