

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Deane, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105203

Headteacher: Mrs C Kilsby

Reporting inspector: Parveen Raja
6282

Dates of inspection: 3 - 7 December 2001

Inspection number: 239225

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Edale Road Deane Bolton
Postcode:	BL3 4QP
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor F A Rushton
Date of previous inspection:	15 September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6282	Parveen Raja	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9714	David Blanchflower	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?
22587	Jean Buswell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Science Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19709	Jean Fisher	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Information and communication technology Music Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, with pupils aged three to eleven, is an average sized primary school. It serves the community of Deane area in Bolton. Pupils mainly come from families living in council owned housing with some families living in owner occupied housing. There is higher than usual level of unemployment and social disadvantage locally. Some families are transient: 24 pupils joined the school at other than the usual time of admission during the last school year, while 34 left. The majority of children start nursery at the age of three. Most children start with below average attainment and well below average language skills. Assessments on entry to Year 1 show that attainment of pupils at age five is generally below average in language and mathematical skills and average in other areas of learning.

There are 256 pupils on roll (138 girls and 118 boys). These include 49 children who attend the nursery part-time. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (37%) is well above the national average of 19%. The school has registered 77 pupils as having special educational needs, six of whom have a statement of need. This is above the national average. About eight per cent of the pupils are from a minority ethnic background which is high compared to the national average; 18 pupils speak English as an additional language with three of these pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

From a relatively low starting point on entry to the school, most pupils in the juniors make good progress and achieve well, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils have good attitudes and are eager to learn. The school effectively meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language and enables them to make good progress. Most of the teaching is at least satisfactory with a significant percentage being good and some being very good. The school is appropriately governed. The headteacher is well supported by the two senior allowance post holders in taking the school forward. The aims and values of the school are demonstrated in the good relationships between staff and pupils. The purposeful and caring environment of the school and its policies and procedures to ensure equality of access enable all pupils to take advantage of the educational opportunities provided. The school uses its resources in a cost-effective way, providing at least satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of leadership provided by the headteacher and key staff is good and contributes to how well the school is achieving.
- It makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
- It effectively reflects its aims and values in all its work.
- It provides well for social development and offers good opportunities for moral development.
- Pupils are well supported in maintaining good standards of behaviour and discipline and sustaining good attitudes to work.
- It provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, which contributes, effectively to pupils' learning and personal development.

What could be improved

- The standards of attainment in English and mathematics achieved by seven-year-olds.
- The standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) achieved by eleven-year-olds.
- The effectiveness of monitoring teaching and learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection in 1997. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has contributed well to improving the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in the junior classes. Standards have been maintained, and in English and mathematics have improved significantly for the eleven-year-olds. However, standards in the infants continue to be well below average. Although there is still room for improvement in the infants, the quality of teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection with a much higher incidence of good teaching. The strengths of the school have been maintained. The school set about tackling the key issues identified at the last inspection in a systematic manner. As a result the percentage of eleven-year-olds, attaining higher than what is expected of this age in English and mathematics has improved significantly. Standards in music are now in line with expectations. The curriculum offered to the pupils meets the targets of the National Curriculum and planning cycles are established. The school has developed its assessment practice systematically but still needs to ensure that assessment is used consistently to plan what pupils will learn next. The school has worked hard to improve the quality and range of provision for ICT but as yet this has not had time to have a positive impact on standards, which continue to be below average for the eleven-year-olds. The commitment that all who work at the school show to raising standards indicates that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	C	E	B
mathematics	A	B	D	B
science	C	C	E	D

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

The 2001 National Curriculum tests for the eleven-year-olds show that the school has attained well below average results in English and science and below average in mathematics when compared to all schools and above average results in English and mathematics and below average in science when

compared to similar schools. The difference in results between years can be explained by the natural difference in ability between different groups of pupils; the high number of pupils with specific individual needs in the cohort and the high level of pupil mobility that is a feature of this school. Inspection findings show that pupils make good progress through the junior years and achieve well. Most of the Year 6 pupils achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science. They achieve average standards in art and design, history, physical education and music. In ICT standards are below average. Additional support is well targeted to support learning and development of basic skills. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently which foster good work habits, particularly in the top two classes and this contributes to the good progress made by pupils. In design and technology and geography no judgements are made due to insufficient evidence.

Most children make satisfactory progress during their time in the nursery and reception class. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, their attainment in personal, social and emotional development, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is likely to be in line with what children are expected to learn by the end of the Reception Year. However, attainment in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is below average. National tests and teacher assessments in year 2001 for pupils aged seven show that attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science is well below average when compared to all schools and average when compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher than expected level has increased progressively since 1999.

Pupils make steady progress through Years 1 and 2 and achieve satisfactory standards in most subjects. They attain average standards in science, art and design, history, music, physical education and design and technology. In both Years 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in number work and achieve average standards in this area of mathematical development. However, pupils' progress is constrained by over-reliance on workbooks and working within a narrow range of activities; consequently standards of attainment in English and mathematics are below average. Due to insufficient evidence, no judgements are made about standards of attainment in ICT and geography. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils achieve standards in religious education that are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

The school has set challenging targets for both English and mathematics. It is taking appropriate action such as providing booster classes and additional targeted support. It is on course to reach these targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are good overall. They work with interest and concentration. They like coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good, pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and helpful to others.

Aspect cont...	Comment
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to each other. They work co-operatively. Pupils take responsibilities given seriously, and approach the task with maturity.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported. They work well with support staff. Pupils support and help each other during lessons and in other activities. Many pupils take unauthorised absence during term time to travel with their families which adversely affects the overall rate of attendance in school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

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

The school has successfully introduced specialist teaching by coordinators in some of the subjects in the junior classes which is having a positive effect on raising standards. This is particularly effective in the teaching of music. Teaching is generally satisfactory in the nursery, reception and in the infant classes. In the junior classes teaching is good, especially in Years 5 and 6; teachers have high expectations, they plan a range of challenging activities and have introduced class routines which foster independence in learning. This results in pupils working with concentration for longer periods and subsequently making good progress. In the reception and infant classes, teachers manage their pupils well, they provide a caring environment in which pupils feel secure and form good relationships. However, they plan activities over a longer period, which encourages many pupils to take more time in choosing tools and materials. This results in lessons moving at a slower pace. Teachers plan appropriate work based on good understanding of the individual needs of the pupils with special educational needs and the language needs of pupils with English as an additional language, which results in pupils making good progress. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in the juniors and generally satisfactory in the infants.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The activities provided by the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. A wide variety of good learning opportunities are provided in Years 3-6. A good range of extra-curricular activities enrich and support the curriculum.
Aspect cont...	Comment cont..
Provision for pupils with	The school provides well for these pupils and this is reflected in the good

special educational needs	progress they make. These pupils are well integrated in the school and their individual needs are met effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are well supported by the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Pupils know right from wrong. They co-operate well with each other and work collaboratively. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has satisfactory arrangements in place to take care of its pupils. It has good systems for checking and promoting good behaviour.

Links with parents are satisfactory. The school has worked hard to develop a productive partnership with parents. It continues to examine ways in which it can more actively involve a greater number of parents in supporting the work of the school and their child's education but not all parents are responsive to this effort. It has recently allocated responsibility to one of the teachers for developing home-school links further.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership. She is well supported by the two senior allowance post holders in the absence of the deputy head who was on extended sick leave. There is a good team spirit in the school with all teaching and support staff sharing a commitment to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It is very supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has introduced systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The effectiveness of these systems in raising standards is not yet evident. The school is aware of the need to develop systems for coordinating the curriculum across the age range.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its available resources to help raise standards. Good use is made of accommodation to enhance learning. The school ensures it gets best value from its spending decisions.

The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. The school offers good training opportunities to the staff and has good induction procedures for new staff joining the school. The support staff are effectively deployed and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs. The school is adequately resourced except for ICT where it is waiting for the delivery of lap top computers.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Behaviour in the school is good. • Their children are well taught. • Teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. • It is easy to approach the school with questions or problems. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. • The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents think that the school does not work closely with them. • A few parents indicated the need to improve communication where children experienced some difficulty.

The parents meeting was attended by eleven parents and 26% of parents returned the questionnaire. The findings of the inspection confirm all the positive views expressed by parents and that the school has satisfactory procedures in keeping the parents informed. Overall, parents hold the school in high regard. The school is well aware of the dissatisfaction that a few parents have about communication and has taken appropriate action to address this concern. The teacher with the home-school liaison brief has introduced a monthly newsletter and the headteacher deals with individual parent's concerns directly.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average. Attainment covers a wide range of abilities and a significant number of children have English as an additional language. A significant minority start with well below average language and social skills; this was confirmed by baseline assessments and inspection evidence. Access to a broad curriculum and effective use of additional support allocated to the children at this stage ensures that most children make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Most children sort and match a range of equipment and materials when tidying up at the end of the sessions. They are developing an interest in books. Many know some letters of the alphabet and are learning to write their names, a few can write independently. Children are likely to reach the expected early learning goals by the time they are ready to start Year 1 except in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development where attainment is below the expected standards because of low starting point.

- 2 On the basis of 2001 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for the seven-year-olds, pupils' attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and science is well below average. The percentage of pupils that exceed the level expected of seven-year-olds in the national tests is below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared to all schools. However, when the school's results are compared to similar schools the overall attainment is average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Although test and teacher assessment results for the seven-year-olds have continued to be well below the average for similar schools, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels particularly the higher level has increased progressively since 1999. The school has carried out a very detailed analysis of attainment in English and mathematics and has set challenging year group targets for the pupils.

- 3 Inspection findings indicate that by the age of seven pupils' attainment in English is below average overall. While pupils are confident speakers, their speaking and listening skills are weak, resulting in their lack of ability to explain simple tasks. Pupils have insufficient planned opportunities to develop these skills systematically. In reading pupils' attainment is broadly in line with what is expected for this age. Higher attainers read fluently with growing accuracy and understanding. Average attainers use appropriate strategies for decoding unfamiliar words but the large number of lower attaining pupils have difficulty in reading simple words and generally struggle with their reading. Standards in writing are below average. Pupils are beginning to organise their writing but many need support. Higher attaining pupils, write at levels expected for this age, their writing is satisfactory. In whole class teaching, work is generally matched to the age rather than the abilities represented in class. When work is set according to individual abilities, the work is meaningful and most pupils make satisfactory progress. In mathematics, although standards are below average, there has been good improvement in the number of pupils attaining the expected level. Most pupils achieve average standards in the number and algebra programmes of study. However, pupils have limited opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in practical

situations to consolidate and extend their learning. There has been good improvement in science and pupils achieve average standards. The regular opportunities for investigative and experimental work help pupils to consolidate understanding and explore their ideas. In other subjects seen, progress is satisfactory and pupils achieve average standards.

- 4 On the basis of 2001 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in English and science the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 and above was well below the national average. In mathematics standards were below average. The results for this year are a sharp decline over the year 2000 when standards in English and science were average and in mathematics they were above average. The test results and teacher assessments vary from year to year depending on the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the level of pupil mobility that is a feature of this school. The percentage of pupils that exceed the level expected of eleven-year-olds in the national tests is at an average for English and mathematics and below average for science when compared to all schools. However, when the school's performance is compared with similar schools a far more positive picture emerges, with overall attainment in English and mathematics above average and in science below average. The school has rightly set challenging targets for the next year at 75 per cent of the pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English and mathematics. The school is carefully examining teaching strategies to ensure that the targets are achieved and is on course to meet the targets set for the pupils.
- 5 In lessons and work seen, eleven-year-olds' standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection. In English, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop to a satisfactory level and most pupils achieve standards expected for their age. They know the conventions of discussion and practise these effectively in class discussions. Most pupils communicate confidently, although lower attaining pupils have difficulty in articulating their ideas. Pupils continue to make good progress in developing their reading skills and most achieve standards that are marginally above the national average. Higher attaining and average pupils read a range of demanding texts from different sources with fluency, accuracy and understanding. This area of development is well supported by effective learning strategies that are carefully monitored by the headteacher, coordinator and class teachers. In writing most pupils make satisfactory progress through the junior years and the lower attaining pupils make good progress. Standards in writing are below average. There is now a clear focus on writing for a variety of purposes in different forms. Standards in handwriting are unsatisfactory; the impact of the newly introduced scheme is as yet not evident. In mathematics pupils make good progress through the junior years and achieve standards that are close to the national average. The school has carried out a very thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses in mathematics and has identified areas for further development. The school's recent focus on developing problem-solving skills has contributed well to consolidating and extending learning. Higher attaining pupils show good levels of mental agility when making numerical calculations. Pupils use table facts, fractions, decimals and percentages accurately in solving problems.
- 6 Standards in science have been maintained and pupils achieve average standards. Regular opportunities to carry out investigations and experiments contribute well to pupils developing skills systematically and applying what they know in practical situations which consolidates learning, although pupils need to record their work in more varied forms. Good

improvement has been made in music. Most pupils now make good progress and achieve average standards. In ICT, although the quality of teaching and learning, and the provision in general have improved, pupils have not had sufficient access to computers to achieve the expected standards, which continue to be below average in Years 3-6. In all the other subjects where judgements on standards were made, pupils achieve average standards.

- 7 Trends in attainment over the past four years show that standards in English have fluctuated between being well below average, average and above average from one year to the next. In mathematics there has been good improvement from 1998 to the year 2000 when most pupils achieved above average standards to a sharp decline to below average standards. Similarly standards have risen steadily in science from 1998 to a decline in standards in the latest reporting year. The school attributes this variation to the natural ability of the cohort, the number of pupils with learning difficulties in a particular year and the mobility rate. This is supported by inspection evidence. Taking the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects, it is below the national trend. Overall, girls' standards of attainment on leaving school are rising slightly more rapidly than those of boys. The school has set challenging targets for maintaining the average and above average standards achieved over the years and is making good progress towards them. The specialist subject teaching strategy, additional teaching support and strong emphasis on providing well for pupils with special educational needs is having a positive effect on driving standards forward. The school is aware of the need to deploy effective strategies that accelerate the rate of progress in the infants and the Foundation Stage.
- 8 Pupils with special educational needs in the infants and the juniors make good progress in relation to prior attainment and within their developing capabilities. The pupils for whom a statement of special educational need exists make good progress towards the target set for them in their individual education plan. This is due to the additional focused teaching by the special educational needs coordinator and the good provision by the support staff. Pupils with English as an additional language also progress rapidly in their confidence in English. This is because of the focused intervention by teachers and extra help by support staff.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 9 This is an area of strength throughout the school. The consistently good standards of behaviour, together with the pupils' positive attitudes towards school and good relationships, make a significant contribution to their learning. The good standards seen in the last inspection have been maintained and developed further.
- 10 In the nursery and Reception Years children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The children are happy, confident and enjoy good relationships among themselves and also with the very supportive staff. They work well together, are attentive and eager to learn.
- 11 Throughout the school pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning. They show high levels of enthusiasm and enjoy school. They are interested in their work and share and co-operate well with one another. High levels of good manners and courtesy to others were observed during the inspection.

- 12 The pupil's personal development is well supported by the school. The recently introduced Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship programme is having a positive impact on the children's personal development. However, opportunities for pupils to develop personal responsibility within learning are constrained due to lessons being too directed by the teachers. However the introduction of circle time provides opportunity for the pupils to develop personal responsibility in a constructive manner. The formation of a School Council with pupils in each class elected to it has enabled the pupils to participate in the decision-making process. This has a positive impact on the life of the school. The range of topics discussed by the Council and the conclusions reached demonstrate the maturity and responsible thinking of the pupils involved.
- 13 The wide range of extra-curricular activities also supports the pupils' personal development. The school takes part in fund raising for various national charities and is currently supporting the Christmas Shoebox appeal for needy children in the Third World. The school choir also participates in local music festivals and has recently sung with Wingates Brass Band at such an event. At Christmas the choir sings in the local community centre. All these activities, for which the staff give freely of their time, help the pupils grow in confidence and have a positive impact on their learning and personal development.
- 14 Behaviour in lessons is good overall and very good in some of the lessons seen. Examples of these positive attitudes and good behaviour were seen across the school. During the inspection no evidence of bullying, sexism or racism was observed. Parents and staff rightly hold very positive views about the high standards of behaviour in the school. Both within and outside lessons, behaviour was consistently good and at times very good, reflecting the school's mission statement and Christian ethos. This ethos of good behaviour ensures a positive impact on pupils' learning. On the rare occasions where this high standard was not maintained the teaching was not appropriately targeted to pupils' needs and they quickly lost interest. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs was also good, with these pupils showing interest in the planned activities. Pupils play well together in break and lunchtimes. In the dining room pupils behave well and talk openly to each other and adults.
- 15 Attendance levels as at the previous inspection remains well below the national average. The latest attendance figures indicate levels of 92.6% for the school. A significant number of pupils take holidays in term time. No pupil has been permanently excluded from school but there have been three pupils temporarily excluded during the last academic year, as they did not respond to the support provided in school for persistent unsatisfactory behaviour.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 16 Pupils are organised in single age groups throughout the school. Class teachers are responsible for teaching all the subjects with the exception of some variation in the teaching of science, music, history, geography and religious education. In Years 4 and 5 art and design and design and technology are taught by the coordinator as are some physical education lessons in most of the junior classes. The coordinators teach their subjects in the

junior classes mostly, except for religious education and music, which are taught by the coordinators in the infant as well as the junior classes. The school has worked out a detailed timetable which generally works well. The specialist teaching of subjects has contributed significantly in raising standards, particularly in science and in music. The school's approach to most of the subjects being taught by the coordinators is working well in the juniors but in the infant classes, the time allocated is too long and there are some missed opportunities for making links with other curricular areas. The headteacher teaches the booster groups which provides valuable additional support.

- 17 The school has organised two breaks in the morning session for the reception and infant classes, which results in more time being used for settling in and getting ready for going out and leaving less of the prime time for learning.
- 18 During the inspection the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. Teaching was very good in 14 per cent of lessons, good in a further 30 per cent of lessons, satisfactory in 51 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent of the lessons seen. Examples of good teaching were seen in all the classes but examples of very good teaching were only seen in the junior classes. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching is an improvement over the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in 13.4 per cent of the lessons. The most significant strengths are demonstrated in the junior classes, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- 19 Teaching is good in English, music and in physical education. Teachers have sound subject knowledge of what they teach and have gained confidence in the teaching of ICT through the in-service training provided from the specified national grant. Only the music coordinator was seen teaching music in the school.
- 20 The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. A calm, purposeful and orderly environment is maintained in the nursery and the reception class. The reception class has two teachers working for most of the time with support from a nursery nurse and a teaching assistant. Additional support is used well but the impact of the additional teaching time is not clearly evident as yet. Planning is securely based on the nationally recommended areas of learning and an appropriate range of activities is offered in both the nursery and the reception class. These plans clearly identify what children are expected to learn and often link these well to activities for basic skills development, but not as effectively to the structured play. The teachers and support staff effectively use lesson times to extend and consolidate children's learning through explanations and repetition based on children's experiences. However, on occasions this practice limits the opportunities for children to explore their ideas and draw their own conclusions; subsequently they listen for longer periods and have less time to develop oral language. Time is generally used well by adults for focused work with targeted groups of children but insufficient attention is sometimes given to extending children's learning in structured play activities.
- 21 Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes. Teaching varies from good to unsatisfactory. When teaching is most effective, such as seen in the science, music and the physical education lessons, teachers plan stimulating and challenging activities and have high expectations of the pupils. Lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils make good

progress. Teachers use questioning well, to check understanding and develop ideas. They vary their questions and comments according to pupils' different abilities and provide constructive feedback. When teaching is unsatisfactory, the time taken by the teachers in introducing the activity, explaining the task and giving instructions is too long. Discussions in these lessons become unrelated to the objectives and work for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is too directed by the adult. This hampers the quality of learning and results in most pupils making slow progress. Planning for morning sessions takes account of assemblies after registration and two breaks, which generally constrains the continuity in the flow of ideas in activities and pupils developing the habit of working with sustained concentration for longer periods.

- 22 The quality of teaching is generally good in the juniors and has contributed significantly to raising standards in the juniors since the previous inspection. There is substantial good practice in all classes, but particularly with the older pupils. Of the 23 lessons seen at this stage, six were very good, seven were good and the rest satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers have high expectations. They plan a range of challenging and stimulating activities to match a wide range of abilities in classes. When teaching is most effective as seen in the mathematics lesson where Year 6 pupils had good opportunities to learn the processes involved in solving problems, they worked collaboratively in small groups on challenging but achievable tasks. They demonstrated good use of mathematical vocabulary in discussing the problems with each other and answering questions, and experienced terms such as 'flat fee' and 'redundant information'. Teachers use the additional support effectively and work closely with them. They manage pupils well by treating them with respect and they in turn respond with maturity, develop good attitudes to work and concentrate for long periods. A strong feature in junior classes is the routines teachers have established which foster independence in learning. Through discussions and in their questioning teachers support pupils in making links with other subjects. Teaching, although satisfactory lacks the same pace and challenge in the sessions that cover the whole of the afternoon. Whilst teachers plan appropriately challenging and stimulating work, pupils generally work at a leisurely pace. For example, in the Year 4 design and technology lesson, pupils took a long time to choose materials and make decisions as to what making skills they applied, and some pupils pondered over whether they would sew or glue together pieces of felt or another fabric.
- 23 The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy across the whole school. This has had a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers are confident in teaching literacy skills and use the literacy framework well to guide their planning. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in developing basic literacy skills. However, in the infants, opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills are not provided as regularly as in the juniors. Younger pupils have fewer opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills for a wide range of purposes. The activities provided on occasions lack sufficient challenge and pupils spend longer on simple tasks. The National Numeracy Strategy is well launched in the school. Teachers use the framework well in the juniors and use it in combination with a commercial scheme in the infants. The numeracy lessons are well established in all the classes. The junior class teachers use the structure effectively to develop mathematical skills. In the mental calculation sessions pupils develop a range of calculation strategies. The higher attaining

pupils work out complex problems with growing mental agility. However, in the infants classes teachers rely heavily on worksheets and scheme workbooks. Whilst the introductory oral sessions are taught appropriately, there are some missed opportunities for pupils to work out simple problems and apply their mathematical skills.

- 24 When compared to the national average the school has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Some of the older pupils with special educational needs have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers apply early identification procedures effectively. Pupils' statements of need identify clearly what pupils need to learn and the individual education plans (IEPs) are well matched to these objectives. The support assistants target individual special educational needs pupils and together with other support staff, are effectively deployed and work well with class teachers. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) provides good support for staff and pupils. The school has a high percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language. These pupils are well supported in class by support staff. Teachers are generally aware of their needs, particularly where some pupils have little or no English. This level of support enables both pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to make good progress.
- 25 Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge to adapt their teaching and response in lessons to the different levels of attainment. They provide evaluative feedback and make constructive comments. A few examples were seen when teachers' marking is used to outline to pupils what they need to do to improve. However, teachers generally do not mark pupils' work in such a rigorous and effective manner. Homework is used appropriately in most of the classes. The system of rewards for pupils to do their homework promptly are used very well in the oldest classes and homework also makes an effective contribution to these pupils' learning. ICT skills are used appropriately in English, mathematics and science but less consistently in the other subjects.

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

- 26 The Foundation Stage curriculum for the under-fives provides a satisfactory range and variety of opportunities in the six areas of learning in both the nursery and the reception class. Overall, this curriculum continues to provide the children with an education that promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares for the next stage of their education. Planning shows that themes and topics of interest to the children are selected and developed across the nursery and reception class. In reception the school has implemented a literacy and numeracy session each day to provide effective early learning in these two curriculum areas. This provision builds on and extends the learning evident in the assessments completed when the children start the nursery.
- 27 The curriculum for pupils in the infants and the juniors has improved since the school was last inspected. It is now broad, balanced and relevant. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, except in relation to ICT in the junior classes. Here the lack of sufficient hardware restricts

the teaching and application of ICT skills and does not support teaching and learning across the curriculum well enough. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils of all interests and aptitudes. The school pays particular attention to ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of the significant numbers of pupils identified as having special educational needs. The targets set for these pupils are clear and the support and learning experiences provided for them are good.

- 28 Children with special educational needs make good progress in the Foundation Stage, they are identified at an early stage and provided with support and appropriate learning activities. Considerable attention is given to children's social skills, which develop well through the encouragement, guidance and care given by all the adults who teach and come into contact with them.
- 29 Curriculum policies are in place for all subjects. A good degree of collaboration has evolved between staff in planning the curriculum to ensure improved consistency. Since the last inspection much work has been done to revise the curriculum to meet new national requirements. The school has made good use of national guidelines to help revise both policies and schemes of work. These are used effectively as the basis for teachers' medium-term planning in all the subjects other than English and mathematics. The scheme of work for music is compiled by the co-ordinator. The effective development in policies and schemes of work has successfully addressed the weaknesses identified in the last report and now ensures appropriate coverage of different aspects in the subjects such as English, art and design and music. Subject specialists now teach the foundation subjects to pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. This has contributed positively to the quality of experiences pupils receive, particularly in music and physical education.
- 30 Teachers' short-term planning is good in literacy, physical education and music and sound in other subjects. Learning objectives are identified and the learning activities that pupils of different abilities will undertake are consistently shown in literacy and numeracy. However, planning for science and other foundation subjects is more variable and this makes it difficult for the school to be sure that all pupils, especially higher attainers, are provided as consistently as possible with challenging learning opportunities.
- 31 The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The development of literacy skills is satisfactory overall. Good opportunities are provided in Years 3-5 for speaking and listening, however, more opportunities need to be provided to develop pupils' research skills in reading for the purposes of research and study. Pupils have opportunities to work in a variety of genres. For example, pupils write reports and instructions in science; letters, accounts and stories in history. However, for many pupils the skills acquired during literacy lessons are not always applied consistently enough to significantly improve their standards of attainment. The development of numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics is satisfactory, with dates and timelines in history, graphs and data interpretation in science and measurement in design and technology.
- 32 The school allocates appropriate time to the teaching of the subjects of the National Curriculum with the exception of ICT. In both the infants and juniors generally whole afternoon sessions are allocated to the teaching of a subject. Whilst this organisation works

well for specialist teaching in the oldest classes, in the infants in particular, time allocated for subject teaching in some areas of the curriculum is too long. It would be useful for the school to review the length of some lessons because currently where an afternoon has been designated to the teaching of a subject, for example, science, the pace of learning is adversely affected. Some of the activities undertaken in these lessons are not always sufficiently subject-specific. Good examples of ICT being incorporated into individual lessons were seen during the course of the inspection, for example, in mathematics, science and history. However, lack of hardware results in too few opportunities for all pupils to apply their ICT skills to support learning across the curriculum particularly in the junior classes. As a result the unsatisfactory provision is adversely affecting standards.

- 33 The school gives specific curriculum time to developing pupils' personal and social skills. This has had a positive impact on improving their attitudes to learning and underpins the school's approaches to behaviour management and plays a significant role in raising standards of behaviour. Effective policies are in place for sex education and for ensuring that pupils understand the dangers of drugs and substance abuse. Involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative has exposed pupils to a wide range of relevant aspects dealing with issues such as diet, decision-making and exercise, as well as the need to respect others and the places where we live. This approach towards developing pupils' personal skills and attitudes by raising self-esteem has effectively contributed to a good understanding of what citizenship means.
- 34 The school continues to be fully committed to equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils and has regard to all statutory requirements. However, pupils being withdrawn from some lessons for additional support, for example, in reading, ICT or music tuition are not always fully integrated back into the lesson to access the same learning opportunities as their peers.
- 35 A good range of educational visits and a range of extra-curricular activities enrich and support the curriculum. Pupils of all ages gain valuable historical, musical and scientific experience from visits locally and further afield. Pupils take advantage of the extra-curricular activities during the year. These include a music and recorder club, knitting, art and computer clubs and opportunities to be involved in sports such as football, rounders and cross-country running. The school also provides boxes of equipment at lunch times to enhance the quality of play and co-operation.
- 36 The community makes a satisfactory contribution to the curriculum and pupils' learning. A number of visitors come into the school to support and enhance learning and promote pupils' awareness of their role in the local community. For example, there is close involvement with the local church. Clergy and other religious leaders contribute to assemblies. The local policeman and the school nurse visit to develop deeper understanding of issues related to health and safety. Pupils benefit directly from opportunities to join with the pupils from other schools in events such as music, arts festivals and sport tournaments. The music coordinator and other staff provide many opportunities for pupils to perform at local venues. For example, pupils sing at the community hall at Christmas for local residents, and the school choir sings at concerts for charity.

- 37 Good links exist with the local secondary school and help ensure a smooth transition for pupils at the end of Year 6. A bridge project in science for Year 6 pupils involved them in interesting and challenging activities in addition to familiarising them with the routines of the secondary school and its staff. Biannually the secondary school organises an arts festival for its local feeder schools, which culminates in a performance. The school makes effective use of the Internet to establish links beyond the immediate community and enhance lessons.
- 38 Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is sound overall. Since the previous inspection, social development has improved and is now good. The school has addressed the weaknesses in the provision for cultural development, which is now satisfactory.
- 39 The provision for pupils' spiritual development continues to be satisfactory and is largely promoted through assemblies, religious education, PSHE and daily acts of collective worship provide some opportunities to reflect on the effect of religious celebrations and festivals on the lives of believers. Events organised to celebrate festivals, which focus on special moments past and present, such as Diwali and Christmas, are effectively approached to help pupils develop spiritual awareness. Pupils are taught to have respect for other religions and they develop an awareness of other faiths. Pupils say prayers in assembly and sometimes write their own. These occasions use quiet reflection, stories and hymns to encourage spiritual insights.
- 40 The provision for pupils' moral development is good and underpins much of the work of the school. Considerable attention is given to ensuring pupils know right from wrong. The consistent application of classroom rules by all staff ensures a good framework for the pupils' moral development. The school has made impressive efforts to ensure pupils are made aware of the consequences of the actions, not only for themselves but for others as well. The headteacher and other adults in the school provide good role models by demonstrating qualities such as patience and tolerance. Pupils understand that systems of rewards and sanctions are based upon fairness and a willing acceptance by pupils that merit has been earned. Pupils are encouraged not only to empathise but also to practically support less fortunate people through supporting very good causes including Operation Christmas Child, the NSPCC and the Royal National Institute for the Blind. Parents recognise that these values have a positive effect on their children and believe that pupils generally show good standards of behaviour.
- 41 The provision for pupils' social development is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school works hard at creating a community where everyone feels valued and respected and this is reflected in the good relationships around the school. Pupils are encouraged to support each other and applaud each other's efforts, as demonstrated in the achievement assembly held each week. Opportunities are given for pupils to take responsibilities, for example, showing visitors around the school, organising library areas and setting out the daily resources in the music room. Circle time discussions help pupils to consider other's views and develop strategies for getting along together. The School Council provides some pupils with further opportunities to take on additional responsibilities by representing the views of their peers in discussion with teachers and governors. For example, as a result of these consultations aerosols have been provided in the school toilets.

In addition pupils have been able to debate and make a decision on whether bicycles can be ridden to school. Pupils help each other and co-operate well together in lessons, however, limited examples were seen of pupils being encouraged to use initiative in their learning. Consistent praise, encouragement and recognition of achievement by teachers help raise the pupils' confidence and increase their self-esteem.

- 42 The school's provision for cultural development has improved and is now satisfactory. The curriculum offers a satisfactory range to develop pupils' local knowledge and cultural awareness. Knowledge of local culture is developed through subjects such as geography. This is extended to other cultures when pupils make comparisons between their own locality and an Indian village. Through art and design they study the work of famous artists from their own background but work of artists from other cultures is less accessible. Music and dance of the Javanese culture were experienced when pupils took part in an arts festival organised by the local secondary school. Pupils in the school choir have sung at festivals and performances in a concert hall. Visits to the school by a theatre company and an artist in residence have widened the pupil's experiences together with opportunities to visit a mosque, museum and the theatre. Some evidence of aspects of other cultures can be seen in displays around the school such as different places of worship. Currently, however, classrooms and libraries provide insufficient examples of books and posters, which reflect a variety of cultural settings including the rich diversity of the many cultures in this country.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 43 The school offers a warm and welcoming environment where the pupils are safe and well cared for. The pupils from ethnic minorities are well integrated into the school. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school and are actively supported by staff. As a result they display good attitudes to the school and their learning. The inclusion and educational provision for these pupils is a strength of the school.
- 44 Effective procedures exist for ensuring the pupils' health, safety and welfare with all staff having a genuine concern for the well being of all the children. The school has effective child protection procedures with the PSHE co-ordinator holding the position of designated person. The concern in the last inspection about the need for additional staff training has been addressed satisfactorily. Appropriate training and instruction has been provided and all staff are now aware of child protection issues. The school has appropriate health and safety procedures in place. All the necessary routine safety checks and fire drills are carried out on a regular basis. Risk assessments are undertaken and identified hazards responded to in an appropriate manner. Good working relationships are maintained with appropriate agencies.
- 45 Procedures for monitoring behaviour are good, with the involvement of all staff. The lunchtime supervisors nominate a class each week to receive the lunchtime good behaviour award. Class rules are displayed and the pupils having agreed the rules, are aware of the need to observe them. The school strives for high levels of good behaviour and the governors have recently agreed a behaviour and discipline policy. The policy document indicates that school rules exist but does not state them. The school takes any reports of bullying seriously, and parents and pupils are confident that should incidents occur, they

would be dealt with promptly and effectively. The school views excluding a pupil as being the last resort and will take every possible step to avoid such action. Following exclusion all possible steps are taken to involve the parents of the child in the process of reintegrating the child back into the school.

- 46 The school places emphasis on its programme for PSHE, which contributes effectively to the pupils' personal development. The school offers formal lessons for PSHE and circle time throughout the school. These sessions provide valuable opportunities for the pupils to discuss personal, social and other relevant issues. This programme is at an early stage of implementation but already has proved its worth in promoting the pupils' personal development. Praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage effort and good behaviour, and significant achievements are celebrated at the weekly awards assembly. Formal procedures for monitoring personal development do not exist but class teachers and support staff have a sound knowledge of the pupils in their charge.
- 47 Attendance levels of 92.1% at the last inspection compared with a national average of 93.5% were seen as unsatisfactory. Attendance for the 2000/2001 academic year at 92.6% is still well below the national average of 93.9%. The school is aware of the need to further improve attendance levels and keeps close contact with outside agencies in order to reduce instances of absence. The attendance registers are marked promptly at the start of each session. However, the marking of registers does not always meet statutory requirements. The school would benefit from further developing procedures for monitoring and analysing attendance. Parents are aware of the requirement to provide written reasons for absence and generally meet this requirement. Most pupils are punctual but small numbers are regularly late for school. The decision by many parents to take term time holidays greatly increases the absence rate. Individual pupils withdrawn for term time holidays at times exceed the statutory number of days allowed. The introduction of a system of comprehensive incentives and rewards for improving attendance could assist the school in realising its objective of improving attendance levels.
- 48 There are effective procedures throughout the school for promoting and recording pupils' academic attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. The school uses a number of national assessment procedures. The assessment coordinator analyses the data thoroughly, in order to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and where extra support is needed in order to enable both boys and girls to achieve the next step in their learning. The good assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are used effectively to inform future teaching and learning and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Groups of pupils are 'tracked' effectively, but this good practice has not been extended to 'tracking' of individual pupils and the progress of their individual targets recorded year on year. Ongoing records are detailed and contain a summary of individual pupils' progress in all subjects. Records of achievement show pupils' progress over the years, but examples of their work need to be analysed more comprehensively to ascertain, such as in writing, their abilities according to National Curriculum levels and the progress they make during their time in school. There is a clear action plan for the development of assessment throughout the school in all subjects. This offers a good basis for developing assessment practice in the non-core subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 49 The school works hard to encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's learning, but many parents do not take the opportunity to be involved directly with the school. A small number of dedicated parents are very supportive, helping in classrooms and assisting the school with fundraising activities. The school does not have a parent teacher association but a small number of parents are active in fund raising.
- 50 The small number of parents who attended the pre-inspection parents meeting all agreed they felt comfortable in approaching the school with problems. They expressed their confidence in the headteacher and the school's ability to enable their children to make academic as well as personal progress. This was supported by the questionnaire that contained mainly positive replies. There was general agreement among parents that the school had improved since the last inspection. Inspection evidence confirms the views held by parents. However, a few parents at the meeting and a few in responding to the inspectors' questionnaire indicated the need to improve communication where their children experienced some difficulty; they also felt that the school does not work closely with them. Inspection evidence shows that the school is well aware of the dissatisfaction that a few parents have about communication. The headteacher works closely and regularly with a small group of parents. The school has organised external support for a minority of parents to develop further their parenting skills. The teacher with the home-school liaison brief has been given the responsibility for further strengthening links with parents.
- 51 The school works effectively in partnership with parents to support pupils' academic progress and personal development. Parents are provided with a wide range of information about the life of the school in general, and how well their children are doing in particular. The school keeps parents informed of the topics and curriculum content to be covered each term. Meetings and training courses such as the numeracy course run by the local college have been arranged to explain curriculum content to parents but have not always been well supported by them. The school has provided a range of opportunities for parents to develop skills in supporting their children's learning, such as a trained counsellor to support a group of parents experiencing difficulty managing their children's behaviour. Parents are also encouraged to be actively involved in the homework the pupils are given by the school with parents being particularly encouraged to help younger children with reading.
- 52 The school has recently appointed a teacher as the home-school liaison coordinator, who has plans to enhance the already effective links with parents. Parents are provided with regular information about school's activities via letters and the recently introduced monthly newsletter. The school also has its own website, which contains comprehensive information about the school. The website serves to inform not only parents but also the wider community about the school and the educational opportunities it provides.
- 53 Written reports to parents are informative and give a clear and informative account of their children's progress and include targets to assist further learning. The school provides two formal evening consultation sessions each year for parents to meet class teachers. These sessions are by appointment at a time to suit the parent and every encouragement is given for parents to attend to discuss their child's progress. If a parent is unable to attend on the

designated evenings then the school encourages the parent to make alternative arrangements with the class teacher to meet at a mutually agreeable time. The vast majority of parents are satisfied with the arrangement for informing them of their child's progress.

- 54 The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. IEPs are in place and are reviewed regularly and parents kept fully informed of the child's progress. Children with special educational needs are given high levels of support. Parents are fully involved in the statutory review process. The educational provision afforded to pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school.
- 55 The school's links with parents make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning at home and at school. Although parents are very supportive of the school their attendance at many of the events organised by the school is not so high. The school organises a series of class assemblies and encourages the attendance of parents at these events. Parents are also invited to the annual Christmas Concert. A number of outside agencies including the police and fire service visit the school and make a valuable contribution to its life. Ministers from local churches also visit and take assemblies on a regular basis.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 56 The leadership provided by the headteacher and the senior allowance post holders is good and has made a significant contribution to the improvement of the school since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff and governors have a strong commitment to raising standards of achievement and providing quality education for the pupils in the school. They have successfully established high expectations in the junior classes and are aware of the need to extend the good practice in the infants and the Foundation Stage. The headteacher knows where the school is heading and this is clearly communicated to the school community. The headteacher, in close collaboration with the staff and with support from governors, is effective in creating a caring and purposeful environment. The school is successful in fostering a positive ethos, which is reflective of its aims and values, resulting in good relationships throughout the school. The individual is valued highly and the school is proud of its aim to promote equality of opportunity.
- 57 There are effective procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress. A clear management process is in place for reviewing pupils' performance and setting targets. The school has set challenging targets and progress in meeting these is monitored efficiently by the English and mathematics coordinators. The information the school accumulates through its assessment procedures is carefully analysed and the information is used constructively in setting targets for pupils' performance in the national tests. The school has recently introduced target setting at individual, group and class levels to move towards achieving end of key stage attainment targets, it is at an early stage of setting objectives and devising strategies to meet these targets. Progress against the year group targets is set to be reviewed twice annually and additional support to be allocated accordingly. The school recognises the need to review the targets on a regular basis and adjust them to ensure that they provide appropriately high level of challenge, particularly in the infant classes.
- 58 The roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined and updated job descriptions are in

place. The range of additional responsibilities allocated to all the teachers and the deputy headteacher are well set out. The overall role of the coordinators is well established but the monitoring aspect of their role is at an early stage of development. The effectiveness of the deputy headteacher's role in school management and school improvement is not clearly evident. In the recent period, the school has experienced extended absence by a number of staff. The headteacher has managed the staffing changes very well to ensure minimum disruption to pupils' learning. However, this has resulted in a heavy burden of responsibilities for the headteacher. During the extended sick leave of the deputy headteacher, the senior allowance post holders staff have stepped in. They have worked hard and provided good support for the staff and the headteacher. They have effectively carried out management duties and school development work over and above their range of responsibilities.

- 59 Some monitoring of standards of pupils' work and the quality of the curriculum they experience has been undertaken by the senior management team and core subject coordinators. This has taken the form of observing teaching and learning and monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work. However, some of the observation notes do not identify specific strengths and weaknesses with sufficient precision. Consequently the time and energy spent on useful monitoring activities are not effectively used to spread good practice and improve the consistency in quality of teaching and learning.
- 60 The school improvement plan covers a four-term period and is seen as an important management tool by the headteacher. It is used to address implementation of curriculum initiatives, policy development and general school development. Each area for development has a detailed action plan with appropriate timescales, success criteria and the person responsible but is set within the overall budget allocation for the whole period. Although the development plan covers all aspects of the school, there is no clear order of priorities. The school carries out a review of what has been achieved at the end of the period, which forms the basis of the next plan. However, it is unclear what the long-term school improvement priorities are, or the strategies that build year on year towards its long-term goals. The school has made steady progress in implementing the performance management requirements. This work is greatly enhanced by the school's 'Investor in People' award. However, due to staff absences some aspects of performance management implementation have been delayed. The governors have set annual performance objectives for the headteacher and review these regularly.
- 61 The governing body is suitably led and organised, and ensures that the school meets statutory requirements. The governing body has a wide range of expertise and knowledge amongst its members. Members have taken advantage of training to ensure that their knowledge and understanding of national issues is up to date. There are governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs and some visits are undertaken. The governors' annual report to parents currently does not divulge the increased spending on support staff and teaching staff that has improved the effectiveness of learning support. Governors are kept informed and are generally aware of the strengths and areas of development in the school through feedback from governor visits, headteacher reports and presentations made by some of the subject coordinators. Governors are becoming more involved in school development planning but as yet do not have a clear strategic overview.

- 62 The management of special educational needs provision is good. The funds made available to the school for special educational needs are used efficiently for the benefit of these pupils. Equality of opportunity for all who learn at school is appropriately emphasised.
- 63 Since the last inspection the headteacher and key staff have led the school's development and this has brought about good improvements in standards achieved by the age of eleven. The strategies devised for raising standards in English, mathematics, science and music have been implemented successfully in the juniors. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have also been fully implemented and are well established within the curriculum but their impact is not as yet clearly evident in the infants. The school recognises the need to ensure consistency in its good practice across the school and has taken effective measures to raise standards in the infants. A full-time newly qualified teacher and additional support staff have been appointed to work in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Some staff changes have also been made to provide good role model of professional practice. These strategies are at an early stage of implementation. The school has worked hard and has been successful in improving the quality of provision in ICT but this has not had time to have an impact on standards achieved by pupils, which continue to be below average. Teachers with leadership responsibilities have played their part in improving the school. The team spirit and commitment to improvement that exists within the staff and governors is good.
- 64 Financial planning supports the school's educational priorities appropriately. For example, there is clear planning to use the reserve fund accumulated through prudent use of the budget allocations. The reserve fund is well targeted towards providing extra support in the Foundation Stage and the infants but procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of this resource are not in place. There are appropriate systems for setting the budget. Grants received are used well to ensure that money spent is targeted at raising standards. Financial planning, monitoring and control are good and there is prudent management of resources. The headteacher works hard to ensure that the school gets the maximum benefit from fund allocations. Systems for financial administration are unobtrusive, efficient and responsive to the needs of the school. The principles of best value are understood and applied effectively. The school secretary plays an important role in ensuring that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- 65 The school is currently well staffed with well-qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. This includes the additional newly qualified teacher appointed to support younger pupils. There have been recent changes in subject leadership. The school is effectively exploring ways of making the best use of the coordinators' subject expertise. Subsequently some subjects have more than one co-ordinator. The school provides good opportunities for in-service training that are well linked to school and individual training needs. There are good induction procedures for staff who are new to the school. Support staff are well deployed and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning.
- 66 The accommodation supports the successful delivery of the curriculum. The school is very clean and welcoming. The outdoor areas for younger pupils provide good opportunities for

extending their learning. In all the subjects, learning resources are adequate. However, in religious education there are an insufficient number of books in both the infant and junior libraries for pupils to carry out independent research and read for interest.

- 67 St Mary's CE Primary School makes satisfactory provision for the education of all its pupils and provides at least satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 68 The headteacher, staff and governors should address the following issues to further improve the quality of education provided:

- (1) Raise standards of attainment achieved by seven-year-olds in English by:

- Providing planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills systematically and using assessment information to inform future planning.
- Providing regular opportunities to write at greater length for a range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum.
- Further improving teacher expertise in the teaching and learning of basic literacy skills and language development.

(Paragraphs 3, 7, 23, 31, 48, 63, 93, 97, 98, 101, 102).

- (2) Raise standards of attainment achieved by seven-year-olds in mathematics by:

- Providing regular opportunities for pupils to investigate and apply what they know in practical problem solving situations.
- Providing pupils with a range of opportunities to record their work in a variety of forms.
- Using assessment and marking procedures that will help pupils to improve their work, and making effective use of marking and assessment information consistently to inform future planning.

(Paragraphs 3, 7, 23, 25, 31, 48, 63, 104, 106, 108, 112)

- (3) Raise standards of attainment in ICT in Years 3-6 and secure the development of ICT throughout the school by:

- Further improving the hardware and software resources.
- Implementing the school's scheme of work.
- Mapping of the ICT skills to ensure full coverage of the programmes of study.
- Establishing procedures for the systematic monitoring of pupils' progress.

(Paragraphs 6, 25, 27, 32, 137, 138, 139, 140)

- (4) Develop the effectiveness of monitoring teaching and learning by:

- Monitoring more systematically what pupils in all classes are learning and how this is affecting standards.

- Increasing the skills of subject coordinators in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensuring that the findings of such monitoring are acted upon.

(Paragraphs 20, 30, 58, 59, 64, 112, 120, 150)

The numbers in brackets relate to the main paragraphs of this report where these issues are mentioned.

The above issues are identified as areas for further development in the school improvement plan.

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	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	12	23	2	0	0
Percentage	0	14%	27.9%	53.5%	4.6%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	206
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	77

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	77

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	13	14	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	22	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (76)	78 (76)	81 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	22	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (79)	81 (79)	81 (83)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year 2000.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	21	14	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	8	6	10
	Total	23	21	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (76)	60 (78)	77 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	8	6	8
	Total	23	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (65)	60 (70)	71 (65)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year 2000.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	8
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	2
White	163
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	242.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.0: 1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.0:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	515162
Total expenditure	506334
Expenditure per pupil	2042
Balance brought forward from previous year	12235
Balance carried forward to next year	21063

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	253
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	18	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	25	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	27	1	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	23	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	47	19	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	26	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	16	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	14	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	25	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	52	13	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	18	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	16	0	1	4

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

- 69 Children are admitted into the nursery on a part time basis in the September following their third birthday. On occasions children are admitted earlier if places are available. Children enter the reception class on a full-time basis in the autumn term prior to their fifth birthday. Children are assessed within the first half term of entry to the nursery and into the reception class using the local education authority baseline assessment framework.
- 70 Attainment on entry into the nursery is below average. Attainment covers a wide range of abilities with a small number of children showing weak language and communication skills as well as poor social skills. Children make satisfactory progress in the nursery. The baseline assessments carried out in the Reception Year demonstrate that attainment on entry to the reception class continues to be generally below average. Children make satisfactory progress in the reception class and by the time children are ready to enter Year 1, most are on track to reach the early learning goals in personal, emotional and social development, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, with some children being well below average levels in language and mathematics. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress and achieve standards in line with their capabilities.
- 71 The nursery is staffed by a full-time teacher and nursery nurse. In reception there are two full-time teachers and support is provided each morning from a classroom assistant. All staff have a clear understanding of what their role is within each of the planned activities. The additional staff in reception reflects the school's priority to raise standards for children in their early years of schooling.
- 72 Appropriate arrangements for the introduction of children into the nursery and the reception class are in place. Information meetings are held with children's parents prior to their starting in the nursery and reception classes. Children from the nursery make a number of visits to the school to get to know their teachers and become familiar with routines before transferring to the reception class. Staff encourage parents to be actively involved in supporting their children's learning, for example, by loaning reading books that support the work in progress. Parents are encouraged to contribute to a home-school reading record through which staff in the reception class communicate next steps in reading.
- 73 The overall quality of teaching in the early years is satisfactory and some of it is good. Teaching is good in developing children's personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world; it is satisfactory in other areas of learning. A secure and stimulating environment is provided in which children learn to express themselves and relate to adults and children. Teachers work hard to create a happy and relaxed atmosphere in both the nursery and reception class. A wide range of activities are planned to provide learning experiences in imaginative ways and overall children show interest in the activities provided for them. Many children persevere with tasks and support each other's

learning well. However, too few opportunities are provided for children to gain independence, or discuss how well they are learning, for example, during snack time or by planning their own activities. Adults in some instances take on a supervisory role rather than fully interacting with the child to promote learning. Appropriate methods are used to provide high quality teaching time to individual children, for example, adults in both the nursery and the reception class working with a targeted group of children. However, this is not always effective because, other children are left to choose what they do for much of each session without clear direction or monitoring of their work and play. Sometimes there is little adult involvement to ensure that their play is productive.

- 74 The curriculum for children in nursery and the reception class is planned according to the six areas of learning. In the nursery current planning is not sufficiently focused on the early learning goals and the national guidance are not used to aid progression. Although activities are identified as being for more or less able children, planning does not show how the work will be adapted to suit the needs of all the children of different ages and attainment. Similarly assessments recorded on what children know and can do, do not reflect the early learning goals well enough. Information on children's attainment passed to reception class teachers is based on outdated national guidance. The school is aware of the need to ensure that the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum are met and subsequently consistency in planning and continuity across the two classes is secured.
- 75 Overall resources for the children are good, they are stored in carefully labelled containers accessible to children. Currently, however, there are too few picture storybooks available in the nursery and reception classes and children who come from minority ethnic backgrounds are under-represented in the literature available. This was a weakness noted in the last inspection report. The accommodation for the nursery and reception classes is good. Outdoor facilities provide a wide range of opportunities for collaborative experimentation as well as physical development through energetic play with large equipment and games.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 76 The teaching and provision for developing children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Significant progress is made in the early years and the majority of children are likely to reach the early learning goals by the age of five. Routines are well planned and clear and children know what is expected of them. Relationships between staff and children are good and help to foster a calm, positive and disciplined learning environment. The children demonstrate growing confidence and self-assurance in their application to tasks. Staff provide good role models such as thanking children for their ideas and their hard work and treating them with respect. This helps children to become aware of other people's needs. The children behave well. Most understand what is expected of them and behave accordingly. Children, in both nursery and reception listen to adults and wait for a turn to play with a piece of equipment or help to clear up at the end of a busy session.
- 77 As they become older most begin to show improved levels of concentration and are keen to learn and engage with the wide range of activities available. They play and work well together and co-operate with each other. The children use role play and choose activities to

take the initiative, however, more opportunity could be provided for children to plan the activities they are to be involved in and recall and record their experiences in a variety of ways. The children are developing sound levels of independence, for example, when changing their clothes for physical education lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

- 78 The provision and quality of teaching in language and literacy is satisfactory. The majority of children's communication, language and literacy skills are under-developed on entry into the nursery and despite the satisfactory progress they make in the Foundation Stage many children are not likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. All adults use discussion and explanation as a vehicle for encouraging the development of language and communication. Children are encouraged to listen to stories and engage in reciting rhymes and poems. Opportunities for play in the nursery provide a richness that excites and extends children's communication skills such as, in the role-play area relating to home and Bob the Builder's office. In both the nursery and reception class questions are used well to improve children's listening skills, but less effectively to engage them in extended conversations when they explain what they are thinking or express preferences or to give reasons.
- 79 Throughout the Foundation Stage children are developing an interest in books. In the reception class they are supported in literacy sessions to recognise initial sounds and to follow text in shared reading activities. Reading activities are well supported and children are encouraged to take books home regularly. Most children recognise their own names and some familiar words.
- 80 The children are learning to write their names and they know some letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. In reception children write in response to the teachers' direction to copy what has been written and are beginning to write words and phrases combining the sounds they know. However, children have too few opportunities to write independently and to make choices about what they write. Many children do not yet form their letters correctly and this weakness is reinforced when they copy words or phrases without the guidance of an adult.
- 81 Children use the computer to consolidate their knowledge of letters and sounds; they concentrate well and use the mouse competently.
- 82 In order to increase the rate of progress for many children more opportunity should be provided for children to extend skills in speaking, for example, by making a personal response which reflects their experiences. Few examples were seen of children observing adults modelling reading and writing or experimenting with writing for themselves. Children, for whom English is an additional language need to experience a wide variety of writing displayed in the form of books, notices and labels. Opportunity should also be provided for children to hear their home languages as well as English, for example, through the use of audio and video materials.

Mathematical development

- 83 The quality of provision and teaching of mathematical concepts and skills is satisfactory. Most children make satisfactory progress but are not likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. In the nursery children have many opportunities to play number games, and develop their counting skills in practical situations, which supports the recognition of numbers well. Use is made of daily routines such as registration to consolidate numeracy skills. Songs and rhymes also make a valuable contribution to developing numeracy skills. As children move into the reception class they extend their oral and mental mathematics and the more able begin to add and subtract simple numbers. Most of the older children are able to count to 10 and beyond with increasing maturity and understanding. The home corner and other role-play situations give good opportunities to explore language and an understanding of number. Good and creative use is made of a range of resources and activities to develop mathematical skills including sand, water and baking to support weighing and measuring. Children sort equipment, compare length and weight and learn to recognise colours and shapes.
- 84 Resources for the full range of mathematical experiences are satisfactory and are supplemented well by the use of games and by number lines. CD-ROMs are used effectively to reinforce children's recognition of number and early counting skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 85 The overall quality of teaching and provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and the majority will reach the early learning goal. Themes are used to support this area of learning. For example, 'People who help us' provided children with the opportunity to meet the crossing patrol, a police officer, fire fighter and nurse and learn about their work in the community.
- 86 Good use is made of visits out into the school grounds and the locality to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For example, children learn about the number of their house, the colour of their door and about where they live. Children develop a sense of chronology, time and sequence through the experience of constructing timelines to consider the different stage of growth from a baby to a school child. They talk about what they will do today, what happened yesterday and what may happen tomorrow. Practical work is used well to extend children's scientific understanding. For example, children sow seeds and plant flowers to observe the plant growth. They use musical instruments to make sounds. Sand, water and modelling materials support the ongoing themes and also enable children to explore the different properties of materials. Good use is made of the computer. Children are becoming increasingly independent in developing keyboard skills and they can control the mouse and move objects on the screen with increasing accuracy. They operate listening centres confidently to listen to stories and rhymes. In both the nursery and the reception class they use a good range of building and construction equipment to make a variety of models and products and become involved in activities for extended periods of time. Through stories, conversations and displays children are beginning to develop an awareness of right and wrong and of people's celebrations in different religions, for example, Diwali and Christmas.

Physical development

- 87 By the end of Reception Year, most children meet the expectations of the nationally recommended early learning goals and make good progress in this area of learning. The regular opportunities for outdoor play in the nursery class help children to develop their physical skills and the large wheeled bikes and trikes are manoeuvred and reversed in parking spaces with considerable skill. The many practical activities that the teachers provide such as mixing play dough and making collages, allows children to practise and develop fine motor skills. Children are developing their skills well in handling pencils, paintbrushes and scissors. Most children move confidently and show an awareness of space. Younger children develop a sense of space and improved co-ordination through playing with balls and large toys. Adults take opportunity to join in planned activities both inside school and in the outside areas. Teaching and children's progress is satisfactory in this area.

Creative development

- 88 The quality of teaching and learning in this area is satisfactory. Teachers provide an appropriate range of activities to develop their creativity and make successful links to other areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are achieving the early learning goal for this area of learning and make satisfactory progress. Children in the nursery class have regular opportunities to express their ideas in painting and drawing. Opportunities are provided for children to paint, print and draw regularly and to create collage pictures using a variety of man-made materials. Frequent opportunities are provided for singing and music making, which the children undertake with enjoyment. Children's listening skills are developed through the repetition of familiar songs and their understanding of number is enhanced through the singing of number rhymes. Role-play is a significant feature of this area of learning. Children have opportunity to develop their imagination by responding to and creating stories of their own through imaginative play.
- 89 The Foundation Stage curriculum has been introduced since the school was last inspected and staff changes have occurred in the teaching and coordination of this stage of education. Considerable progress has been made in curriculum planning and assessment, particularly in the reception class. Policy documents have been developed to reflect the statutory changes. Necessary development points have been identified by the coordinator. These include further improvements to planning and establishing schemes of work to cover both nursery and the reception class in order to ensure full coverage of the curriculum at appropriate levels for the age and attainment of the children. These actions are intended to raise children's attainment and address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report relating to monitoring and recording children's individual experiences and progress.

ENGLISH

- 90 By the age of eleven, standards in English, as measured in the National Curriculum tests in

2001, placed pupils well below the national average when compared with all schools and above the national average when compared to similar schools. At the age of seven, in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for reading and writing, the school's performance was well below the national average and close to the national average when compared with similar schools. This was not as good as the test results in year 2000 because of the continuing trend of the increase of the number of pupils with learning difficulties.

- 91 Detailed school data demonstrates that over the last four years the school's results have fluctuated for pupils aged seven and eleven. These results are clearly affected, annually, by the composition of the different groups of pupils; the re-organisation of teaching staff; the number of pupils entering and leaving the school at different times of the school year and the large number of pupils with learning difficulties in all classes, particularly in Years 2 and 6. Analysis of pupils' assessment and monitoring procedures, along with detailed analysis of individual results and target setting in literacy, confirm that the present class of eleven-year-old pupils have made good progress in their learning and overall, achieve standards very close to the national average. These findings are broadly similar to those of the previous inspection, though fewer pupils than the national average are likely to achieve the higher levels. A significant number are unlikely to achieve the expected standard. By the age of seven, pupils are making satisfactory progress, but standards remain below those expected nationally and are lower than those found in the previous inspection. This is because of the large number of pupils with learning difficulties in Year 2.
- 92 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, which is monitored comprehensively and regularly and there is no pupil for whom English presents a significant difficulty. There is early identification of pupils' special educational needs with subsequent detailed and realistic IEPs. These pupils make good progress towards achieving their targets. This is due in part, to the provision of appropriately planned work by teachers, combined with quality support during lessons and in withdrawal groups. All these pupils have full access to the curriculum.
- 93 Standards in speaking and listening are below national expectations for pupils aged seven and in line with national expectations for pupils aged eleven. This is because of some pupils' immaturity in these skills, the lack of regular opportunities to express themselves fully and missed opportunities to interact with other pupils to achieve appropriate listening skills and to develop and explain their ideas through regular discussion. There are good opportunities throughout the school for pupils to learn about the usage of spoken Standard English, but there are fewer opportunities in some classes to practise it. By the age of seven, whilst most pupils are confident in speaking out, many pupils' speaking and listening skills are weak, resulting in their difficulty to relate recent events. In some lessons the development of listening and speaking skills is inhibited by restlessness when the adult is talking. Sometimes there are missed opportunities to use pupils' enthusiasm, so as to develop and extend vocabulary through relevant discussions. In Year 1, the use of games to link the past with the present was used effectively to discuss the age and types of games such as 'In and out the dusky blue bells' and 'London Bridge'. The pupils listened carefully and responded eagerly, clearly enjoying the group activities.
- 94 By the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed satisfactorily and

the majority of pupils achieve standards expected for their age. Progress is good. Higher attaining pupils speak fluently, lucidly and with confidence. They speak knowledgeably about the school routines, the procedures for pupils with special educational needs and the school meals' procedures and menu. These pupils enter into the protocol of discussion and debate confidently and present their points of view, clearly, but others have more difficulty. Most pupils listen with increasing attention, sustain longer conversations and many make mature contributions to class discussions. Average attaining pupils communicate their ideas, mostly satisfactorily, whilst lower attaining pupils have more difficulty when articulating their thoughts. Most teachers encourage a high level of discussion, and in response the pupils include relevant details and express their ideas clearly. Pupils perform publicly in school productions, such as the forthcoming Christmas Concert and musical events and these offer valuable opportunities for pupils to use spoken language in more formal settings.

- 95 In reading, pupils' attainment is broadly typical of most pupils by the age of seven, and inspection findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. While the higher attaining pupils are on course to reach standards that are above those expected nationally, there are also a significant number of lower attaining pupils who are not expected to reach the nationally expected standard. Most pupils express an enjoyment of reading and show enthusiasm when they do so. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts confidently and with a sound degree of accuracy and understanding. Average attaining pupils read more hesitantly and make more errors, but use letter sounds to fathom out words, whilst lower attaining pupils need support to 'read' the text. One lower attaining pupil, relied heavily on the pictures and guessed the words and expressed a less positive response to reading - 'I keep getting mixed up'. Year 1 higher attaining pupils read expressively, accurately and with understanding such books as *A Good Book* by Helena Oakley, average attaining pupils read less accurately and expressively, but with confidence. Lower attaining pupils need support to read words such as 'and' and lack confidence to tackle unfamiliar words. Occasionally the reading book is too difficult for the pupil. Sound home-school links and the range of reading activities to improve standards, such as the recently introduced phonic programme and games are making a positive contribution to reading standards. Homework diaries encourage pupils and parents to work together to improve standards, act as a record of progress, and are completed by parents and teachers.
- 96 By the age of eleven, overall standards in reading are marginally above the national average and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress. There are significant differences between the higher attaining pupils and the lower attaining pupils. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils read fluently, mostly expressively and with confidence, infer meaning and predict outcomes from the text they are reading. They enjoy the humour in books such as *Fancy a Spider for Breakfast* by Ian Souter and the wizardry of *The Goblets of Fire* by J K Rowling. These more advanced skills are less well used by lower attaining pupils, whose choice of books includes *Donald Duck* and *Beauty and the Beast*. Years 3 and 4 pupils read accurately with expression and attention to detail and appreciate the humour in Jacqueline Wilson's book, *Falling off the Cliff*.
- 97 The quality and range of the school library books in the Years 1 and 2 and the Years 3 to 6 libraries have improved since the previous inspection and there are further plans to increase the quantity of non-fiction books. Space is used effectively to house the alphabetically

coded books, but the locations are still difficult to access for some pupils, and, during the inspection, pupils made little use of them to enhance their research and retrieval skills. In the classrooms there are more opportunities for pupils to select books from an adequate range and use appropriate referencing skills to find information from books. This makes appropriate contribution to pupils' literacy skills development. There are plans to 'band' reading books for pupils under seven according to National Curriculum levels. Resources for the subject are good overall and are used well. Non-fiction library books are to be supplemented.

- 98 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in writing, spelling and punctuation is below average. When work is set according to the pupils' individual abilities, the work is meaningful and pupils make satisfactory progress. Good use of the National Literacy Strategy ensures that all pupils gain confidence and develop skills in a logical progression through Years 1 and 2. Pupils are beginning to organise their writing but many need support and a few pupils show a growing understanding of capital letters and full stops. Spelling is developed systematically throughout the infants by concentrating on specific letter groups or looking at particular word patterns. For example, pupils in Year 1 construct simple words, while Year 2 pupils identify more complex sounds such as 'oo', in words such as 'woodcutter', 'brook' and 'cook'. Planning shows that all pupils have opportunities to write fiction and rhymes with predictable and repetitive patterns, compose simple poems and riddles and write accounts of visits and events they have observed. Higher attaining pupils progress from writing simple sentences without punctuation to simple sentences with full stops. Pupils' work shows that they are aware of question marks, speech marks and exclamation marks through the use of work sheets and story books, but punctuation is weak when working independently. Handwriting is unsatisfactory, but there are some signs of improvement as a result of a newly introduced handwriting scheme. Joined up writing is now introduced in Year 2, in the summer term. When given the opportunity, many pupils write descriptively and coherently about characters of their own choice, and extend their ideas logically into short sentences. Sentences are beginning to be punctuated with capital letters and full stops correctly, but in some instances are used randomly or omitted. No note taking was seen.
- 99 By the age of eleven, pupils achieve standards in writing that are below those expected nationally. Good use of the National Literacy Strategy ensures that pupils gain confidence and develop skills in a logical progression throughout the junior classes. Pupils write regularly during formal and informal activities such as in literacy lessons and in role-play. Pupils are beginning to write simple plans before they start their own story writing. There is now a clear focus on the different types of writing taught, such as fiction, persuasive writing, play script or formal letter writing, and pupils examine their characteristics and their relevant styles. Higher attaining and some average pupils achieve well. Year 6 pupils, for instance, write successfully in the style of Adrian Mole', for example, 'It's my mum's friend's wedding today, so we'll all have to go!'; compose poems depicting 'Winter' as a person, or couplets in the style of Macbeth, such as, 'Tail of a rat, Blinded bat'. Although most of the writing is based on the same topic for all pupils, progress is satisfactory for most and good for lower attaining pupils, because of the good support they receive from classroom assistants. The standard of handwriting for many pupils continues to be unsatisfactory. The newly introduced hand writing scheme has not yet had sufficient time to make a significant

impact on older pupils' writing and the skills acquired in formal sessions are not transferred when pupils are writing in other subjects.

- 100 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good, because teachers manage pupils well and provide a range of interesting experiences for them.
- 101 Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory for pupils aged six and seven and good for pupils aged eight to eleven. Very good teaching was seen in a Year 3 lesson. In this lesson, the pupils were left in no doubt as to what they were expected to do. The extremely skilful teaching, high expectations and very good organisation enhanced pupils' learning. The effective management of the class gave pupils the opportunity to discuss and work independently when preparing and presenting a play based on *Cinderella*. These factors ensured that all pupils worked very hard, were very enthusiastic and made very good progress. In contrast, in another lesson that was only satisfactory, some pupils contributed appropriately to the lesson, but many showed little interest in what was being taught, because of whole class teaching which was inappropriate for the large number of lower attaining pupils. Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Strategies to teach spelling and punctuation are well established and are taught systematically. The teaching of handwriting has improved since the previous inspection. It now has a clear, whole school focus. The correct formation and orientation of letters are regarded as crucial in achieving later fluency and pupils are monitored to achieve this end. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support different groups of pupils, principally, lower attainers. There is a consistent and effective approach to planning and teaching which is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning work in phonics, spelling, vocabulary and grammar. Teachers are confident and effective in teaching literacy. Opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, such as history and science are less well developed.
- 102 Assessment is used well to track the progress of groups of pupils and the progress of each year group. As a result challenging but achievable targets are set to raise standards for each year group. Pupils' individual targets are not in place, but the school is conscious of the need to develop this aspect and make sure that assessed pieces of pupils' work match the levels of the National Curriculum. Individual pupils' objectives towards their annual targets are not set and the school is aware of the need to do so in the near future. Marking is inconsistent. While in many instances, work is marked regularly and extends pupils' learning, in others it lacks helpful remarks, which would encourage pupils to improve their standards. For example, very good marking practice was seen in Year 5. The teacher's remarks were set out clearly, on the opposite page to the completed work, and praise, instructions, reminders and guidance were used to extend pupils' learning.
- 103 Two enthusiastic and committed teachers, work well together to manage and coordinate English throughout the school. They have worked effectively with teachers, governors, pupils and parents in a joint venture to raise standards, as shown in the detailed school improvement plan. National and school-based tests have been analysed thoroughly, to search for strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and in the quality of pupils' work. Teachers have implemented good systematic planning linked to effective learning strategies, which are monitored and assessed by the class teachers, the English coordinators and the

headteacher. Throughout the school, a range of English computer programs are available, but regular and consistent daily use to support all pupils' learning in English is limited, because of the current lack of computers.

MATHEMATICS

- 104 In the previous inspection standards were judged to be average by the ages of seven and eleven. Currently standards are below average for pupils aged seven and close to average for the eleven-year-olds. In the 2001 assessment tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' performance was well below the national average but in line with that of similar schools. National Curriculum test results in 2001 for pupils aged eleven were below the national average but above average when compared to similar schools. In the juniors standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection, although there has been a sharp decline in the 2001 results compared to those in the year 2000, when pupils achieved above average standards. This is due to the natural ability of the cohort and the higher than usual number of pupils with learning difficulties. Standards in the infants have continued to be well below average since the previous inspection, although the proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 is close to the national average and has improved significantly compared to the year 2000. The school is aware of the need for improvements in pupil performance for infants and has taken steps to address this concern. Inspection evidence shows improvement in the number and algebra programme of study, where seven-year-olds achieve average standards.
- 105 Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive good support and this enables them to attain standards in line with their capabilities. Year 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to prior attainment. Pupils in the junior classes generally make good progress as they move through Years 3 and 4. Their progress is accelerated in Years 5 and 6 as they are presented with challenging and more varied work. There is no significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
- 106 By the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are below average overall, but make better progress in developing their computation skills in number work. Year 1 pupils add and subtract numbers to ten accurately. They recognise coins and can add in pence up to ten accurately but do not transfer the skill to adding whole numbers in pounds. Most pupils match colours and shapes and name some two-dimensional shapes accurately. Year 2 pupils use mental calculations to count on in twos confidently and fluently, add and subtract two digit numbers with growing accuracy. Higher attainers explain their calculations using the appropriate vocabulary. They work in addition and subtraction up to 100 pence using the standard units but find it difficult to solve simple money problems that require similar calculations. Most pupils are more confident in addition rather than subtraction. For example, pupils take a long time to calculate (15-5), but with support a few can work it out accurately. Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 work through a set of workbooks with only a few pieces of recorded work in exercise books during this term. This inhibits pupils from communicating their mathematical ideas in their own words, experimenting with mathematical vocabulary and developing presentation skills.

- 107 Inspection evidence based on lesson observations, an examination of pupils' books, together with discussions with individual pupils about their work indicates that by the end of the school year most Year 6 pupils are likely to attain the standard typically expected for eleven-year-olds. However, there is a large group of pupils who are registered as having special educational needs. These pupils are well supported by special needs assistants, provided with appropriately challenging work and subsequently make good progress. Year 3 pupils calculate halves, quarters, thirds and fifths of whole numbers accurately. Year 4 pupils show an understanding of organising and interpreting data to solve simple problems. Higher attainers use appropriate terminology such as list, most popular band/group and a few use 'axis' symbols when explaining about horizontal and vertical graphs. Year 5 pupils develop their mental agility in multiplication and division calculations by using the ten times table to calculate three and four digit numbers. Lower attainers use single and two digit small numbers. Higher attainers work out quickly and accurately 4000 divided by 100 is 40. Most use the four operations simultaneously in solving number problems. For example, they know the sequence of these operations and are adept at opening and closing brackets in making calculations. Year 6 pupils consolidate their understanding of the process in solving problems. They experience mathematical vocabulary such as 'redundant information'; the higher attainers and some of the average attainers show good level of mental agility in their calculations. Pupils are beginning to develop understanding of how to apply their mathematical skills in solving common everyday problems. They work collaboratively and discuss which unit of measure they need to use such as money, distance or weight. However, they are likely to need more practice in applying what they know in meaningful contexts to work out answers.
- 108 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In the seven lessons seen, two were very good, one was good, three satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching varies significantly between the infant and junior classes. In the infants work is mostly planned at the chronological age of the class which is working well for the higher attainers and a few average attainers but does not always meet the needs of the large lower attaining groups in both classes. In the juniors work is well matched to the varied abilities in the class which helps most pupils to work briskly with concentration resulting in most pupils making good progress. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented consistently throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, lessons are planned and structured according to the numeracy framework. The introductory activities give due regard to pupils' mental and oral work and to developing their mental calculation strategies. There is good level of direct teaching and explanations given by teachers are generally clear. However, in group activities pupils are generally given undemanding tasks and required to work through a set of work books at their own pace. When teaching is ineffective, there is some lack of clarity in the work presented to pupils, teachers take too long in doing the oral session and pupils have a much shorter period to complete their task.
- 109 Teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6. In both these classes teaching is characterised by a brisk pace in lessons, which keep pupils on task, engaged and suitably challenged. Good questioning skills, seen in the introductory and closing sessions, probe pupils' understanding and require them to explain their thinking and review their learning. The best questioning is geared to the different abilities represented in the class and work is appropriately differentiated. For example, in the Years 5 and 6 lessons teachers used a range of

vocabulary to stimulate a response. In Year 5 lower attaining pupils were asked to calculate two and single digit numbers while higher attainers were asked to work out three and four digit numbers.

- 110 Teachers make good use of ICT, as when Year 4 saw examples of horizontal and vertical graphs printed from the computer. Although timelines are explored in history; number rhymes and songs are used in music; pupils design their artwork and products to scale and record their science work in graphs but overall there are insufficient planned activities to use mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- 111 There are good procedures in place and used consistently in Years 3-6 to monitor pupils' progress in the subject. Ongoing assessment of pupils' learning and prompt feedback motivates pupils well. They are expected to present their work neatly. Teachers mark work regularly but rarely add useful comments to help pupils understand how they have performed and what they need to do to improve. In Years 5 and 6 teachers set objectives against individual targets for pupils and progress against these objectives is monitored regularly. In Year 5, the teacher uses the year group targets in a clear order of priority. This is particularly effective in involving pupils in their own learning and setting challenging but achievable goals. Pupils found this practice useful to pace learning and work toward the set goal.
- 112 The coordinator provides good leadership and management of the subject. She is well qualified, enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, supportive of all colleagues including newly qualified staff. She provides a good model of professional practice. She has carried out a very detailed and comprehensive analysis of pupils' performance and identifies strengths and weaknesses in teaching and has subsequently planned to provide INSET for the Years 1 and 2 staff. The information is used to plan future development and determine targets at each key stage and class level. However, targets for Year 1 are based on inaccurate assessments and need to be reviewed. The co-ordinator has done some monitoring of the teaching and learning in some classes but needs to provide more evaluative feedback so teachers know how to improve their work. The policy is up to date and reviewed regularly. The co-ordinator has also been effective in increasing resources. She has also sketched an appropriate plan for the future development of the subject, which includes training for infant teachers. This is used as the basis for the mathematics section of the school development plan for the current year.

SCIENCE

- 113 Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards that are in line with what is expected nationally for these ages. Teachers' assessments of standards achieved by seven-year-olds in 2001 show that compared with all schools the number of pupils reaching Level 2 and the higher Level 3 is well below average. When compared to similar schools the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 is average and the percentage reaching Level 3 is below average. At age eleven, the 2001 National Curriculum test results show that the number of pupils attaining Level 4

and above is well below average when compared to all schools but when compared to similar schools standards achieved by pupils are below average.

- 114 Over a four-year period from 1997 to 2000, the school's results for eleven-year-olds have shown an upward trend which mirrors the national picture. Results for 2001, however, show a sharp decline from average standards in year 2000. This is attributed, by the school to the nature of the cohort and higher number of pupils with learning difficulties in the class. Over a three-year period from 1999 to 2001, girls have outperformed the boys in their standards of attainment. However, inspection evidence shows that currently there is little difference between standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress. Analysis of pupils' work shows that recently the rate of progress in the infants has improved. However, lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always make the progress they should.
- 115 In Years 1 and 2, pupils identify parts of flowers and other plants and the conditions necessary for growth. By the age of seven, pupils have considered the dangers of electricity, explored different sources of light and considered the differences between living and non-living things. In discussions these pupils show greater understanding of science concepts than is evident from recorded work. Year 3 pupils consider classification of materials and carry out investigations to find out the degree of hardness and other properties in the sample. Year 4 pupils learn about the human life cycle and stages of growth. In Year 5 pupils explore healthy foods and the effect of exercise on the body and how these are necessary to grow healthily. They enjoy investigating the differences in pulse rates between friends and use their knowledge of graphs to record their observations and findings. Year 6 pupils show clear understanding of the varying number of components in a series circuit and how this can alter the brightness in a bulb. They investigate with growing precision how micro-organisms in the environment might be beneficial or harmful.
- 116 A range of opportunities for experimenting and investigating simple scientific ideas help pupils to apply what they know, which contributes well to pupils' learning. This is evident in the use of a range of measures and in the collection, recording and analysis of simple data. However, for some pupils particularly the lower attaining groups, the pace of learning is at times constrained because the work is not well matched to their capabilities. This results in a lack of opportunities to contribute to discussions and give explanations of their work. There is also little opportunity for most pupils in all the classes to take responsibility for the organisation of their work or the collecting of their own data from which to make predictions or draw conclusions. The similarities in work set for pupils of different abilities sometimes holds back the lower attainers whilst presenting other pupils with challenging tasks. The breadth of study undertaken in the curriculum and the attention paid to giving pupils experience in all aspects of the science curriculum forms a good basis for pupils' learning.
- 117 In both the infants and juniors sufficient time is allocated to the teaching and learning of science. This time is organised into whole afternoon sessions to ensure that pupils have uninterrupted time to carry out their investigations and work with focused attention. Whilst teachers plan appropriate activities, the rigour and pace in the lesson is generally not maintained for the whole of the time and tends to slow down as the lesson proceeds through

the afternoon. Many pupils work at a leisurely pace because of the time available to them. What starts out as a good lesson where pupils work with concentration and high interest levels generally turns out to be a satisfactory lesson where some pupils begin to engage in chats unrelated to work.

- 118 The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory with some teaching being good and one example of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers' good relationships with their pupils add significantly to the quality of learning. Teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge. They deploy appropriate teaching methods that support the achievement of the learning objectives. They use a range of resources and materials that add interest and motivate pupils to become involved in their work. In the most effective lessons, questioning is used well to check what pupils know, understand and can do. Pupils know what they have to learn and this is well matched to their abilities. In the lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, the activities provided lacked the focus on teaching science and the pace at which the lesson proceeded was slow. Teachers make good use of additional adult support to ensure that all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language have appropriate learning experiences.
- 119 Work in science makes effective contribution to developing literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils write reports and accounts of their work and present their findings using bar charts and line graphs. They use ICT to construct graphs and databases, researching material from the computer CD-ROM encyclopaedia, for example, Encarta. They downloaded information from the internet, for example, on making French toast and researching healthy recipes.
- 120 The subject coordinator teaches science to Years 4, 5 and 6, this specialist teaching has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. The school has adopted the national guidance and the implementation of this guidance has contributed effectively to raising standards of achievement. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place. Pupils are assessed at the end of each unit of work and records of their achievements are maintained. The school has introduced the practice of setting annual targets for all classes. This is at an early stage of development. The coordinator provides appropriate leadership, he checks teachers' planning to ensure coverage of the programmes of study and provides support when needed, however, the school is aware of the need to develop the monitoring aspect of his role. Resources for the delivery of the subject are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN & DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 121 During the inspection week, art and design was taught in the juniors and design and technology was taught in the infants. Two art and design lessons were seen in the juniors and three lessons were seen in design and technology. In design and technology, two of the lessons were seen in the infant classes and one in Year 4. Judgements are based on analysis of pupils' work in books and on display, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff.
- 122 Standards have been maintained in art and design and in design and technology in the infants. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain standards in art and design that are in

line with the expectations for this age. In design and technology, standards attained by the age of seven are in line with the national expectation for this age. Due to insufficient evidence no judgements are made on standards attained by the age of eleven or the quality of teaching in design and technology.

- 123 Art work on display around the school and in classrooms, in pupils' sketch books and illustration of work in other subjects such as English and history show that pupils use colour creatively to paint, print and produce computer generated pictures. Younger pupils explore colour mixing to find matching shades to paint Christmas paintings of Santa. Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 use line and shape to produce observational drawings of everyday objects. They create portraits of themselves and of others. Pupils' observational skills are developing well. By the age of eleven, most pupils have a clear understanding of the elements of art and design. This was evident from the designs created for their work on masks. Pupils refine their skills in shading using pastels, chalk and charcoal. In both Years 5 and 6, pupils use tools and materials with precision to achieve high standards. In designing and planning their artwork they consider the use of a variety of techniques. For example, two pupils working as a pair in Year 5 decided to use batik to develop the background, others used marbled effect and some glued sand to create a natural backdrop. Pupils make good use of their original designs to evaluate and improve their work. Pupils in both classes apply their making skills well. For example, one pupil used pipe cleaners to make spectacles for his mask and worked out how he would stick them on. They use a variety of stimuli such as visits, paintings by well known artists and topic work to paint, draw, print, explore textures and experiment with combining techniques to achieve a variety of effects. Throughout the school pupils show growing awareness and skill in representing three-dimensional shapes in two-dimensional form.
- 124 In design and technology standards attained by the age of seven are average. Years 1 and 2 pupils make moving objects by, for example, creating figures using split pins and card cut outs. They design and make hand puppets using textiles, and card whilst some make pop-up books. They use scissors confidently and know how to handle them safely. By the age of seven, pupils' design and making skills are further developed. They understand that in making products parts are joined together, for example, by gluing or sewing. They test and explore the strength of the materials and employ finishing techniques by painting and drawing pictures on their puppets. Pupils evaluate each others finished products and make helpful comments.
- 125 From the lessons seen in design and technology, the quality of teaching in the infants is satisfactory overall. Teachers build on previous skills and techniques learnt, and set appropriate expectations. They are secure in the subject knowledge and are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Teachers model skills effectively so that pupils understand the need for care and accuracy. However, support staff pay too much attention to the quality of the finished product and provide outline drawings and assist in making the product rather than teaching the pupils 'making' techniques. This support makes pupils over reliant on their help. Support staff generally work with lower attaining pupils, consequently the gap between the level of skills amongst higher and lower attaining pupils widens. From the two art and design lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good in both lessons. It demonstrated good knowledge of the subject and high expectations. Pupils listen carefully

to each other and to their teachers because they are eager to learn and are influenced by good quality teaching. As a result, they gain knowledge and skills well. Resources are well managed and the teachers' enthusiasm and the challenging work they set ensure pupils make good progress.

- 126 Pupils enjoy art and design and design and technology activities. Pupils concentrate well in the early part of the lessons and use different materials and equipment with confidence. They are self-critical when making evaluations of their work and learn to be objective. They handle tools well and with care. However, in all these lessons, as they proceed towards the second half of the afternoon, many pupils engage in conversations with each other that are unrelated to work. Some pupils wait leisurely for equipment or materials until others have finished using them, such as a pot of sand, or waiting for a turn for the support staff to help them with threading the needle. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language participate well in lessons and make similar progress as their classmates.
- 127 Both subjects make a good contribution to the pupils' personal development by encouraging them to express their feelings through colour and form. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their work, which is planned over several weeks, making independent choices and co-operating with a partner in making masks in Year 6 and pictures related to work on Ancient Greeks in history. The celebration of pupils' work both within the classroom and elsewhere makes an important contribution to the growth of pupils' self-esteem.
- 128 The co-ordinator is responsible for both subjects and has been in post for a short time. Art and design was a key priority in the school development plan in the past academic year, which has provided a good support for the co-ordinator in implementing the national guidance throughout the school. She sees her strength in subject expertise in this area and is aware of the need to develop her knowledge to the same standard in design and technology. To this end an external consultant worked alongside the co-ordinator with Year 6 pupils earlier in the term to provide practical and professional support. The school has recently adopted the national guidance in both subjects to ensure continuity. The co-ordinator teaches both subjects in Years 4 and 6, which has a positive effect on standards. She has recently reviewed and updated school policies which provide clear and comprehensive guidance. Sketch books are used well throughout the school and provide some record of pupils' progression. Assessment in both subjects is under developed. The co-ordinator has planned to develop a school portfolio of artwork in both infants and juniors, also to keep a more comprehensive record of work undertaken by pupils in design and technology. Resources for both subjects are generally adequate but there is a limited range of reference books for staff and for pupils in both subjects. Some use of ICT is made in generating computer related artwork but this aspect needs further development. There is a limited range of reference books in the library for both subjects which is inadequate for pupils to carry out research.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 129 It was not possible to see any teaching of geography and only two lessons of history were observed. Inspection evidence is based on scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work,

teachers' documentation, displays, and discussions with pupils and teachers. Due to insufficient evidence no overall judgements are made about standards achieved or the quality of teaching in geography.

- 130 Overall, standards in history at ages seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected nationally and pupils achieve appropriately. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection. The work seen in history and geography during the current inspection was of good quality. Pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes and listening skills contribute to making them effective learners in these subjects.
- 131 Pupils in both infants and juniors know a good deal about the local area. For example, in geography six and seven-year-old pupils discuss and draw maps of their route to school and the types of shops within their locality. They consider how they can make their local area a safer place. People who work in the local community visit to discuss their work, for example, the local police officer and nurse. Pupils of different ages also find out about different parts of the world. In Year 2, pupils know about the features of islands. Pupils in Year 3 show understanding of the weather around the world and consider holiday destinations for travellers who have different requirements, for example, a very young couple with a baby, a single person who enjoys walking and people who like to ski. Pupils research holiday brochures, justify their recommendations and give information on weather, currency, language and what to pack. Pupils in Year 4 study a village in India and are able to make contrasts and comparisons with their own way of life. Pupils in Year 5 study the local area in greater depth. They investigated thoroughly the safety implications of their proposal to bring bikes to school. Pupils compiled a questionnaire about residents' shopping and transport habits; took a traffic count and represented the results in graph form. Eleven-year-old pupils' work in books shows a detailed study of mountain chains and weather conditions in the Alps.
- 132 In history, the six and seven-year-old pupils develop their sense of sequencing events from simple terms such as 'today' and 'tomorrow'. They plot events from their own experiences, and by the age of seven, pupils investigate and consider events beyond their living memory. There is a good understanding of the differences and similarities between 'then and now', as when Year 1 pupils discussed the differences between the toys of today and the toys their parents and the school caretaker played with in the past. Pupils in the infants record their work in pictures and in writing. By the age of seven pupils investigate what makes someone famous and know the main events in the life of Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. Older pupils show a greater understanding of the way the past is represented and develop a deeper understanding of chronology using time lines and researching features of previous civilisations and societies. Years 3 and 4 study ancient civilisations such as ancient Egypt and are encouraged to use appropriate research skills by using secondary sources such as texts, pictures, photographs and CD-ROMs. They learn about World War II and what it was like for children during this time. By the age of eleven, pupils link study periods such as the Romans, Tudors, Victorians and changes in life since 1948. Displays and books contribute well to the environment and extend teaching and learning.
- 133 Opportunities are used effectively in both subjects to develop pupils' literacy skills, for example, Year 3 pupils undertake empathetic writing about being an evacuee during World

War II. Year 6 pupils wrote newspaper headlines and reports of the battle between Athens and Sparta when studying the ancient Greeks. However, for many pupils writing does not accelerate their progress well enough because many of the skills learned in literacy lessons are not transferred and the marking of work does not sufficiently pick up pupils' errors or give guidance on how they can improve.

- 134 Numeracy skills are used to interpret graphs and tables and represent data, for example, when studying local traffic and climatic temperatures in geography. Observations were made during lessons of good opportunities for some pupils to use ICT as part of their study, for example, in Year 4, downloading information about Roman games. Year 6 pupils made exciting use of ICT by designing a geographical quiz based on the television programme 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire'. However, overall, because of a lack of suitable hardware there are insufficient opportunities for all pupils to use ICT as part of their study.
- 135 Only two lessons of history in Years 3 and 5 were seen. The teaching seen in history was good. The scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' past work suggests that in both subjects teaching overall is at least satisfactory and often good particularly in the juniors. Planning and the use of a range of resources are the most significant strengths of teaching, which promoted learning well. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects and make lessons interesting and fun for the pupils. They plan activities, which support the practical application of what pupils know. For example, in the investigation of the safety aspect of their proposals, pupils drew land use and traffic maps and made general observations of the area. Pupils then debated their findings and the feasibility and safety implications of the request. On the basis of the information gathered the request to bring their bicycles to school was refused by the headteacher and the reasons given for this decision, was accepted by pupils. Teachers provide well for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language who subsequently make good progress.
- 136 Since the last inspection, the programmes of work for both subjects have been revised successfully to take account of the national planning guidance. However, too little progress has been made in implementing procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress, this was identified as a weakness during the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 137 Pupils aged eleven years of age achieve standards that are below the standards expected nationally and pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make unsatisfactory progress. Whilst standards are the same for eleven-year-olds as those found in the previous inspection, there has been a good improvement in the detail of the planning and the management of the subject. Teachers' knowledge has improved and is generally satisfactory. The demands of the subject and the provision of computers and computer programs have moved on rapidly since the previous inspection and the school has caught up with current developments in terms of knowledge and expertise, but, within the remit of finance, not the provision of computers. The amount of software has increased to cover the requirements of the ICT curriculum, but the quantity of computers lags behind. All pupils still have restricted opportunities to use the computer as an integral

part of the everyday life in the school and to use them throughout and alongside other work to support learning, as and when the need arises. No judgement on attainment or teaching can be made for pupils under seven, as no teaching was seen during the inspection. No pupil was seen using the computer to support other subjects. However, planning and pupils' work show that there is a good scheme of work in place to offer all pupils opportunities to acquire ICT skills and develop their capabilities.

- 138 By the age of eleven, many pupils set up programs, use rudimentary word processing skills and edit and print their work, but the slowness of their keyboard work indicates limited experience and practise of these skills. Pupils, who have computers at home, are more skilled in their work and share their knowledge and skills with the large number of pupils who require support. Pupils format their work in a variety of ways, using different fonts and sizes of texts. The use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum has improved, but its use is still restricted by the number of computers available for daily, regular use. There is a satisfactory use of a range of programs, for example, to create mathematical patterns in art and design and to display material to enhance poems and stories in English. Pupils study spreadsheet modelling, input information and work out, with teacher support, football league tables. Most pupils are less successful in copying formulae from one cell to another. CD-ROMs are used to research scientific information, such as the different melting temperatures of solids. Evidence from work indicates that increasing use is being made of the Internet to gather and interpret information and that pupils are beginning to treat computers like books as they find information in history. Independent research skills are as yet rather underdeveloped. Some pupils gain good expertise in copying images and text from web pages, and paste these accurately into word processing packages. Presently the school is not networked.
- 139 The teaching of the subject has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection. This is due to the teachers' increasing confidence after training, but the organisation of the limited resources remains problematic. The teachers' ongoing professional development, which is part of the national initiative to improve teachers' confidence and understanding of ICT, is progressing satisfactorily. In the three lessons seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Overall, pupils made satisfactory progress. In all the lessons seen, most pupils needed individual help to enable them to complete their tasks. In a Year 6 lesson on modelling input into a spreadsheet of football league tables, there was good use of work sheets to support the work being done. Good use was also made of the overhead projector so that all pupils could see the method, but the majority of pupils found it difficult to recognise the correct formulae and apply them to their own tables without intensive support. This also applied to the six pupils, working along side, using the laptop computers. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were given opportunities to copy, create and enlarge a design of a fish tank and fish. Pupils worked with interest and enjoyed developing their graphic skills and created rectangular shapes and symmetrical fish, the teacher shared his time well, giving support to pupils whose skills were not as accomplished. However, one of the laptops was not available, due to inappropriate use. In a Year 3 lesson, a simulation game generated a lot of interest and pupils used the symbols accurately to operate the program, but some found controlling the mouse difficult. The school is fully aware of the shortcomings in this subject. Every classroom has a computer and in addition there are six laptops, but the class sizes in some year groups, especially in Year 6, severely reduce opportunities for pupils to practise their

skills regularly.

- 140 The coordinator has a good grasp of what needs to be done to raise standards. Although he has successfully introduced a scheme of work based on nationally agreed guidelines, the system of assessing pupils' attainment is insecure and there is currently no fully implemented skills-based checklist to monitor pupils' progress. No marking of pupils' work was seen, but rather completed pieces of work, which act as class portfolios. The school has a computer in each classroom and has opted for six laptops instead of a computer suite. Four more computers are on order to support these laptops. Generally, there is a good range of software resources, but whilst there is one lower-case keyboard for pupils with learning difficulties, there are no devices such as concept keyboards or touch-screens that would enable them to have better access to the curriculum.

MUSIC

- 141 Standards are in line with those expected at the age of seven and eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve satisfactory standards, demonstrating a significant improvement to the standards found at the previous inspection when music was judged to be unsatisfactory. This is because of the introduction of specialist music teaching from two teachers with musical knowledge and expertise, the successful introduction of the national music curriculum and its successful implementation and the positive attitude of pupils towards music tuition. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in gaining the key knowledge and skills of the subject and there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate good vocal skills and their singing in lessons is good.
- 142 There is a developing strong musical tradition in the school and pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum with good opportunities for performance and good quality musical experiences. Music is incorporated into seasonal performances and pupils take part in the musical Christmas activities and Christian celebrations which continue to enhance the school's relationship with the community. An invitation for pupils to take part in a concert at Horwich leisure centre, accompanied by the prize winning Wingate Brass band, typifies the acknowledged quality of the singing in the community. The attendance at the Bolton Music Association Festival and the Victoria Hall gives pupils opportunities to attend quality events.
- 143 Teaching, overall, is good. Teachers plan work carefully and lessons have appropriate learning objectives. Teachers' planning has benefited from a national scheme of work. As a result, planning is now co-ordinated across the school and pupils learn musical skills in a logical progression and have good opportunities to understand the elements of music, such as structure, tempo and dynamics which were under-represented at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers make good use of correct musical terms and introduce a variety of activities and resources to gain pupils' interest. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their musical skills without any trace of self-consciousness. They learn to sustain one rhythm pattern against another. For example, they sing independently and 'hold their own line' while listening to a continuous sound (drone), a repeated rhythmic pattern (ostinato), or a round.

In Year 6, for example, pupils identify and attempt repeated rhythmic melodic patterns, work with four beat phrases, and create their own performance to the *Bitter Sweet Symphony*. Pupils develop their musical appreciation by listening to music such as *Fanfare for the Common Man* by Copeland and *Mars* from *The Planet Suite* by Holst. They understand how changes in musical elements, such as tempo, texture and dynamics create different moods in a piece of music, and are introduced to appropriate musical vocabulary as they analyse and express opinions of the sounds heard. Year 4 pupils sing and chant with increasing awareness of the basic beat and rhythm in pieces such as ‘Boom Chicka Boom’ and ‘Hey Mississippi’. Pupils in Year 1 recognise symbols which show when music gets louder or faster and describe the notation symbol to breathe ‘like a wavy line’. They identify long and short sounds successfully, in songs such as *The Elephant has a Long Trunk*. Pupils sing hymns in assemblies such as *Lord, the Light of the World is Shining*, tunefully in unison, but with less attention to the quality and volume of the sound.

- 144 The majority of pupils, both boys and girls, now enjoy their music lessons and work enthusiastically and with creative effort. Literacy skills in music are developed well through the acquisition of good listening skills, the understanding of musical vocabulary, and performing skills. Effective use is made of songs and jingles to improve younger pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills. Music posters encourage pupils to reflect on the value of music. For example, ‘A single note of music breaks the silence in a lonely room, but a melody, a song or a tune, brings memories, thoughts and happiness’.
- 145 The coordination of music is good. There has been a commitment to raise standards following the previous inspection, and good progress has been made. Clubs are used effectively to teach recorder and the school choir, through the musical skills of enthusiastic teachers who give up their time unstintingly. Orchestral tuition from peripatetic music teachers is particularly evident in the school. Pupils are introduced to instruments such as the violin, cello, flute and oboe. Assessment is not fully implemented. The use of music notebooks was not seen during the inspection period. Resources are good. A designated music room provides good storage space for the wide range of percussion instruments available for use.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 146 Standards are in line with those expected of pupils at the age of seven and eleven as found in the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in gaining the key knowledge and skills of the subject and there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The majority of pupils make good progress in swimming and most pupils have gained their 25 metre award by the time they leave the school.
- 147 By the age of seven, pupils explore basic skills in dance, gymnastics and games. In gymnastics pupils perform basic skills in travelling, being still, finding space and using it safely, both on the floor and when using apparatus. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils travelled along ‘pathways’ at different speeds and in different directions and showed good body control and awareness of others. As the lesson progressed, pupils demonstrated that they could control their bodies well and coordinate a number of movements as they travelled

at different speeds. No dance or games lessons were seen, but planning showed that pupils have opportunities in games to develop their basic skills by playing team games that involve making simple choices on how to use space and avoid opposition. In dance they are able to use movement imaginatively, respond to music, such as *The Nutcracker Suite* by Tchaikovsky, and perform basic skills such as making a shape, turning or gesturing.

- 148 Pupils continue to develop and build on their existing skills in Years 3 to 6. They understand the need to warm up their bodies before taking part in strenuous exercise. For example, in a Year 5 high quality dance lesson, pupils marched, skated, stamped and hopped as Russian soldiers before they participated in a Cossack dance. Most pupils made good progress in travelling actions such as bending, turning and the use of heel flicks, and 'strong' finishes to enhance the dance. The teacher moved round the room demonstrating the correct techniques and challenged the pupils to refine their movements. In a Year 6 games lesson, pupils demonstrated effective skills of dodging and weaving for use in netball and basketball as they worked co-operatively and sensibly. Behaviour is usually good and sometimes very good. Pupils show a willingness to respond to teachers' instructions. On the rare occasion when a lively class was challenged to make more physical effort to refine their dance sequence, pupils responded well and produced a complex series of movements.
- 149 During the inspection, three lessons were seen in gymnastics, dance and games respectively. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The best lessons move along at a brisk pace, activities are demonstrated effectively and lessons are planned to include warming up and cooling down activities. Teachers manage pupils and activities well, thereby promoting positive attitudes and good behaviour. All teachers dress appropriately for the lessons, providing pupils with good role models. They stress the aspects of safety that pupils need to consider during lessons. Pupils enjoy the lessons, respond quickly to the teachers' suggestions and usually work well together.
- 150 The coordinator provides good leadership of the subject. There is a good policy document and the scheme of work, based on national guidelines, ensures that pupils develop skills in a logical progression. There is good provision to ensure equality for boys and girls. All pupils have good opportunities outside class to practise skills in soccer, rugby, rounders, netball and athletics, and benefit from competitive games. The profile of the school has been raised in the last year. Pupils have participated, successfully, in the six-a-side Football Community Programme at the Reebok Stadium and shared the trophy with another school. They have competed in an Under 10s side before the International Australia versus England game, also held at the same venue. External coaches, for example, in tennis and rugby further develop and enhance pupils' skills. There is good liaison with the neighbouring high school, and its facilities, such as the swimming baths and playing fields, are made available to the pupils. An assessment record system for individual pupils is in place but has not yet been fully implemented. Currently there is no monitoring of teaching. There is little use of ICT, for example, to plot pulse rates after exercise, but there is scope for this to be developed. Resources for learning are good and enhance attainment and progress.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 151 During the inspection it was possible to see two lessons in the infants and one lesson in the

juniors. Judgements are also based on an analysis of school documents, teachers' planning and pupils' work in books and on display, and discussions with pupils and teachers. Due to the time of the inspection much of the work focused on Christmas. The school has maintained standards in religious education since the previous inspection and standards attained by infants and juniors are in line with the expectations set in the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

- 152 In the infants, Year 1 pupils know the story of Christmas. They develop awareness of the link between Saint Nicholas and Father Christmas. Pupils explore the moral issues and the significance of sharing with the poor and giving to others at Christmas. By Year 2, pupils can relate the events when Jesus was born. Feelings are explored in depth as to how Mary, Joseph and others felt about the birth of Jesus. Pupils relate the special events at Christmas time and know the names of places and people in the events. By the age of eleven, pupils learn about the Islamic faith. They discuss similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity. They learn about other religions such as Judaism and Hinduism. Most pupils show good understanding of the key events in Christianity during assemblies. Pupils develop understanding of customs and religious traditions and research to find out the differences in secular and non-secular traditions. However, fewer examples were seen of pupils studying a range of stories and themes to understand the different depth of meaning which can be interpreted in various ways. Whilst good opportunities are presented resulting in lively discussion, the emphasis is generally on moral issues with less focus on the spiritual dimension of religious education lessons.
- 153 Effective links are made with the development of literacy skills. Pupils are taught a good range of subject specific vocabulary. They are encouraged to use this vocabulary in their response to questions. Pupils are also encouraged to pay attention to the quality of writing and presentation. For example, in Year 2, pupils were reminded of full stops, capital letters and appropriate demarcation of words when writing the story of Christmas. However, whilst this is effective in improving language skills, valuable time is allocated to instructions and explanations that are unrelated to lesson objectives.
- 154 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Due to timetable arrangements religious education is taught by the coordinator in all the classes except Year 2. The work is well planned and based on high expectations, which on occasions are too high and not well linked to the age and ability of the pupils. For example, in the Year 1 lesson, the text on the overhead transparency was too complex for the reading level of the pupils and the content could have been simplified and illustrated with a relevant story to capture their interest and imagination. Instead, much of the time was taken in giving explanations and although reference was made to how it affects their families, not all pupils grasped the idea readily. Activities provided in the juniors offer good opportunities for pupils to develop independence and initiative and while the higher attaining pupils make good use of these opportunities, the lower attaining pupils at times work at a slower pace. The coordinator has good subject knowledge, which is well reflected in the quality of questioning and in giving constructive feedback to the pupils. However, pupils would benefit from more opportunities for quiet reflection on the spiritual dimension of religious belief and exploring feelings of awe and wonder.
- 155 The coordinator has worked hard to review and up-date the policy and to develop the

scheme of work based on the revised Locally Agreed Syllabus. This provides appropriate guidance and a clear framework which ensures continuity. The coordinator recognises that assessment is under-developed and is reviewing the national guidance for implementation throughout the school. Displays on Islam, Hinduism and Christmas contribute well to raising awareness of different religions, as do visits to places of worship such as the Hindu Mandir. Resources and artefacts for the subject are good but there are insufficient reference books on the subject in the libraries.