

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ETHELBERT'S R C PRIMARY SCHOOL

Melbourne Road, Deane, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105222

Headteacher: Mr T Parkinson

Reporting inspector: Mr J Morris
23696

Dates of inspection: 12th – 15th November 2001

Inspection number: 243008

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Melbourne Road Deane Bolton
Postcode:	BL3 5RL
Telephone number:	01204 61625
Fax number:	01204 61625
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Fr. M Flatley
Date of previous inspection:	15/09/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23696	Mr J Morris	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs	How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19361	Mr K Ross	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21277	Mr S Hill	Team inspector	Science Art and design Equal opportunities	
20326	Mr P Clark		Mathematics Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
25352	Mrs G Taujanskas		History The Foundation Stage	
22704	Mr G Williams	Team inspector	English Physical education	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

Evenlode Associates Ltd
6 Abbey Close
Alcester
Warwickshire
B49 5QW

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Ethelbert's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school in Deane, Bolton. There are 247 pupils on roll in total. Thirty-four children attend the nursery part-time and there are 29 children in reception. There are 86 boys and 115 girls in Years 1 to 6. All of the pupils except three are of white ethnic origin. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. About 13 per cent are eligible for free school meals and about 22 per cent have special educational needs, and these figures are broadly in line with national averages. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. St Ethelbert's has an outstanding ethos captured by its motto "love, care, share" and the successful implementation of the aim of "celebrating success". Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science at 11 years of age. The teaching is very good overall with particular strengths in teaching and learning in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6. All of this stems from the very high quality leadership of the headteacher and other key staff. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school has an outstanding ethos, which is reflected in the excellent provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's work is based on high educational expectations and a deep Christian faith.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average at 11 years of age.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall, with significant strengths in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6.
- The pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are very good. There are excellent relationships throughout the school. The pupils respect and admire their teachers, and by the time they are in the upper juniors, they are mature, independent thinkers, who evaluate their own work and that of their peers with insight and sensitivity.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and other key staff carry out their roles very effectively.
- The school provides very good learning opportunities for the pupils.

What could be improved

- The procedures to assess what the pupils know, understand and can do and the use of this information in teachers' planning, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, are not rigorous enough.
- Tasks are not challenging enough for the more able pupils in some lessons in some non-core subjects.
- Teachers do not make full use of support staff in a few lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. Improvement has been very good overall. There has been very good improvement in science and physical education and good improvement in pupils' research skills and personal development. Teaching is much improved. High standards of leadership and management have been maintained under the new headteacher. There is a very strong sense of teamwork and commitment to continuing improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

A* indicates that the school's performance is in the highest 5% nationally.

Attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average. The children achieve satisfactorily in the nursery and reception class and generally achieve the national Early Learning Goals. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science at seven years of age. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well and standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science at 11 years of age.

These inspection judgements closely match the results of national tests in 2001. Standards achieved by seven year-olds have been consistently in line with national averages or higher since 1997. Standards achieved by 11 year-olds have fluctuated over the same period with a trend of improvement in line with the national trend. Results in English and mathematics in 2001 showed a significant improvement both in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools.

The school sets statutory targets for 11 year-olds in English and mathematics, in negotiation with the local education authority. These targets are based on performance indicators accumulated from Year 2 to Year 5. The school generally achieves these targets and in 2001 exceeded them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The children in the nursery quickly settle into school routines and understand the need for rules. Throughout the school, pupils have very good attitudes. They are friendly and caring towards others and enthusiastic about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons, at lunch and play, during assemblies and clubs.
Personal development and relationships	There are excellent relationships throughout the school between pupils and adults and among the pupils themselves. Pupils accept responsibilities willingly and, by the time they are in Year 6, they are very mature.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good. Attendance in 2000/01 exceeded the target set for the school by the local education authority.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Seventy lessons were seen during the inspection and none of them were judged to be less than

satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. There are particular strengths in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 where the teachers consistently demonstrate very high expectations. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is very good and the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are taught very well. The school meets the needs of different groups of pupils well. Very good support is provided for less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs, although occasionally teachers do not maximise the use of this support. The school makes good provision for pupils with particular abilities in sport and music. In some lessons, in subjects such as art, geography and history, teachers do not provide sufficient additional challenges for the more able pupils. Throughout the school the children and pupils are interested and involved in their work and try hard. These positive aspects of learning are very evident in Years 2 to 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good overall with particular strengths in English, mathematics, science and music. The provision in ICT is good and the school is well placed to improve its work in this subject with the opening of a new ICT suite later this term. There are very good extra-curricular opportunities particularly in sport and music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, the pupils make progress at a similar rate to their peers and in some cases make significant gains in their skills and understanding.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes excellent provision for the pupils' spiritual and social development. Provision for moral and cultural development is very good. This is because the school fully implements its intentions to celebrate success and base its work on strong Christian values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for all its pupils. However, some procedures and records are not sufficiently formalised. The arrangements for the assessment of pupil performance and use of this information in teachers' planning are very good in English, mathematics and science. These arrangements are less effective in the other subjects.

The school has a very good partnership with parents characterised by very good sharing of information about individual progress, class work and school events, and good involvement of parents in the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school's aims and values are self-evident in daily practice. The headteacher and other key staff provide a very clear educational direction to the work of the school and there is a tremendous sense of teamwork.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are extremely supportive of the work of the school and have a good understanding of what it does well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good and improving. The school carefully analyses available data on academic performance and attendance. The priorities identified in the school development plan and staff training are closely tied together.
The strategic use of resources	Very good overall. Specific grants are used very well in accordance with their stated purposes and the school makes very good use of modern technology. Learning resources are used well. Support staff are used well

	overall but, in a few lessons, teachers do not maximise the available skills of additional adults in the classroom.
--	---

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Resources are very good for English and good for mathematics, science and music. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>All of the parents who responded think that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable approaching the school with a question or problem; • Their child likes school; • The teaching is good; • The school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best; • The school is well led and managed; • Their child is making good progress at school. 	<p>There were no aspects of the school's work about which a significant number of parents expressed concerns or dissatisfaction.</p>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' very positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average. The children achieve satisfactorily in the nursery and reception class and generally achieve the national Early Learning Goals. The children achieve above expectations in personal and social development and there are good features to their communication skills by the end of the reception year. This means that they develop good classroom habits, enjoy school and are well-predisposed to future learning. In this sense, the Foundation Stage provides a good start to the children's education.
2. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science at seven years of age. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well and standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science at 11 years of age. This is because the pupils benefit from the outstanding school ethos and high quality teaching and because they have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well. These high standards reflect improvement since the previous inspection arising from the strong leadership and commitment by all the staff to celebrate pupils' successes and constantly look for ways to do even better. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have clearly had a positive impact in the school. Pupils make good or better progress in the key skills of reading, writing, number and information and communication technology (ICT), with this progress accelerating in Years 4, 5 and 6. There are no significant variations in the achievements of girls and boys and less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs of pupils progress at a similar rate to their peers.
3. These inspection judgements closely match the results of national tests in 2001. Standards achieved by seven year-olds have been consistently in line with national averages or higher since 1997. Standards achieved by 11 year-olds have fluctuated over the same period with a trend of improvement in line with the national trend. Results in English and mathematics in 2001 showed a significant improvement both in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools.
4. The school sets statutory targets for 11 year-olds in English and mathematics, in negotiation with the local education authority. These targets are based on performance indicators accumulated from Year 2 to Year 5. The school generally achieves these targets and in 2001 exceeded them.
5. There have been significant improvements in standards in science and physical education (PE) since the previous inspection. Standards in science are now above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. In the national tests in 2001, three-quarters of the pupils achieved the above expected National Curriculum Level 5. Standards in PE are now in line with national expectations compared with standards that were below expectations, particularly in gymnastics, previously. This is because the school took sustained, effective action to address the weaknesses identified in the provision in these subjects in 1997. In particular, in science a high quality scheme of work is in place and good attention is given to the promotion of investigative and experimental skills. In PE, the co-ordinator has provided a good lead to raising standards by, for example, teaching other classes and working alongside colleagues and using input from outside specialists.
6. Standards in art and design, design and technology (DT), geography, history and ICT are all in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in all these subjects have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, teachers miss some opportunities to provide different, more challenging tasks for the more able pupils in these subjects and, as a result, the learning and progress of these pupils is not maximised. There are very positive aspects to teaching and learning in ICT which show that the school is well-placed to raise standards when the new ICT suite has been installed and put into use.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good overall, showing clear improvement in this already strong area. At the time of the previous inspection pupils' attitudes were good. Children in the nursery are quick to understand and comply with school routines and rules and they are happy and enthusiastic. Children in the reception class develop these basic social skills and listen well in whole class activities and get on with tasks with a good level of independence. Pupils in Years 1 to 6, enjoy being in school, feel secure, enjoy the friendships they form and value school life. In lessons, pupils show enthusiasm for their work, sustain their interest throughout and concentrate on whatever aspect of the subject is being taught. Throughout the school, pupils display eagerness to answer questions and offer their own ideas, whilst other class members respectfully and patiently listen to what their peers have to say. This mutual respect amongst the pupils manifests itself in all lessons and at other times, and, together with the support they offer each other, is a strength of the school.
8. Behaviour presents a similar picture. Again, the previous report judged this to be good and it is now very good in lessons and around the school. Most of the children in the Foundation Stage behave very well, although a small number, particularly in the reception class need a lot of adult support. Pupils work together collaboratively in pairs, groups and as a class when, for example, preparing for and presenting a class assembly. They share materials and equipment and co-operate on group tasks very well, such as Year 2 pupils carrying, placing and afterwards returning gymnastics equipment safely, efficiently and without direct supervision. These abilities are clearly demonstrated in all school and extra-curricular activities.
9. Pupils are extremely well mannered to their teachers, other adults, visitors and to each other. They move around the school in an orderly manner, play amicably, often in inclusive mixed age groupings. Older pupils support the very young pupils and exercise responsibility for pupil behaviour, operating the recently introduced 'peer-mediation' system effectively yet unobtrusively. The Year 6 pupils are very proud of this and eager to talk about the three half-day training that they received outside the school, so much so that they say other Year 6 pupils are going to be 'trained-up' to support them. No oppressive behaviour was witnessed during the inspection and pupils of all ages report that there is no bullying. School property is treated with the utmost respect. This is another characteristic of the orderly community where all people involved co-exist and support each other in total harmony.
10. Pupils whether in class, at play or out of school accept responsibility willingly. Older pupils support younger pupils enthusiastically, and assume responsibility for class tasks and school rules, such as being 'peer mediators'. Pupils are confident to offer their opinions and views. They applaud spontaneously to recognise the success of others, they hold doors open for adults and are eager to help visitors in any way that they can.
11. Pupils say they enjoy attending school. Their enthusiasm for school can be seen throughout the school day whether in lessons, at lunch or at play. They arrive punctually and immediately they are in class, they accept responsibility for themselves and set about whatever tasks that they have been previously set.
12. Attendance is above average and punctuality is very good. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and personal development.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Seventy lessons were seen during the inspection and none of them were judged to be less than satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall and the proportion of lessons judged to be very good or excellent has increased from one tenth in 1997 to over four tenths

during this inspection. There are some variations between the three key stages in the school. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, with nearly half the lessons being good or better and nearly one tenth being very good or better. The teaching of personal and social development is good and the teaching of communication, language and literacy is satisfactory with good features. The teaching of the other areas of learning is satisfactory. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall, with three-quarters being good or better and four tenths being very good or better. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good overall, with nine tenths being good or better and over six tenths being very good or better. There are particular strengths in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 where the teachers consistently demonstrate very high expectations. Lessons in Years 2 to 6 are characterised by very good knowledge of the subjects of the curriculum, very good teaching of basic skills, and very effective planning, methods and pupil management. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is very good and the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught very well.

14. Throughout the school the children and pupils are interested and involved in their work and try hard. Pupils pay careful attention to the quality of their handwriting and how they lay out their work in different contexts such as writing poems and stories and recording scientific experiments and investigations. These positive aspects of learning are very evident in Years 2 to 6. A very strong feature of the school is the maturity of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 and the sensitive and skilled manner in which they evaluate their own work and that of their peers as, for example, seen in a Year 6 art lesson.
15. The school meets the needs of different groups of pupils well. Very good support is provided for less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good progress as a result of support provided outside the classroom in literacy and numeracy by school staff and Local Education Authority support teachers. However, teachers do not maximise the use of additional adult support in a few lessons. The school makes good provision for pupils with particular abilities in sport and music, for example providing additional opportunities in tennis and singing.
16. In some lessons, in subjects such as art and design, DT, geography, history and ICT, teachers do not provide sufficient additional challenges for the more able pupils. This means that these pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning through the provided tasks and their high levels of interest but that, at times, they are not stretched enough.
17. The provision of homework is satisfactory throughout the school and parents are generally happy with the arrangements. There is a good homework club. However, very few examples were noted of homework being set during the inspection.

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

18. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good overall with particular strengths in English, mathematics, science and music. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection. At that time there were shortcomings in the development and promotion of planned opportunities for pupils to devise and carry out their own science investigations, and a need to improve pupils' research skills by providing more opportunities for them to show initiative and independence in their own learning. These have been fully addressed and new curriculum policies have been implemented to ensure progression between year groups. A comprehensive programme has been introduced for the development, monitoring and reviewing of all areas of the curriculum, resulting in well-focused and appropriate individual subject action plans. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good, confirming the findings of the last inspection.
19. The curriculum has been planned effectively to ensure that all subjects receive sufficient

emphasis. Teachers' planning reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000 and is well supported through the use of national guidelines in most subjects. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is very good overall. The English curriculum is rich in well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills as observed during a Year 5 class assembly. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy is also very good and has an impact in particular on pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects, for example accurate measurement in design and technology. Well-planned opportunities to share proposed learning intentions at the start of the lesson and an opportunity to review collectively the learning that has taken place at the end of the lesson has proved beneficial in most subjects. These improvements have enabled high standards to be maintained in English, mathematics and science.

20. The school provides good equality of access and opportunity with no significant variations noted in the provision for boys and girls or different ability groups. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the Foundation Stage and very good in Years 1 to 6. The school has good procedures to identify pupils having difficulties in their learning and follows all the recommendations of the National Code of Practice. Class teachers are responsible for writing the very good individual education plans and these are monitored carefully by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Substantial evidence was seen of individual pupils making good or very good progress in their learning in literacy and numeracy. This is because of the effective action taken in lessons or through small groups being withdrawn from literacy or numeracy lessons to work with support teachers or learning support assistants.
21. The curriculum is suitably enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop their abilities, particularly through sport and music. They include gymnastics, cross country running, short tennis, athletics, netball, dance, football and choir. There is a very good personal health, safety and citizenship programme of work that provides a range of rich experiences for all pupils. The planning is supported by national guidelines that ensure satisfactory provision for drugs awareness and the dangers of drugs misuse.
22. Visitors to the school during the year include the local clergy, police, musicians, artists, writers, poets, soccer coaches from Bolton Wanderers Football Club, and the school library service. The work-related curriculum has enabled the school to develop very good links with the local community, producing posters for display within the locality regarding care of the environment, for example, litter. Further links with the local community include participation in Bolton's Schools Music Festival, including a concert at the Lowry Centre in Salford. Visits to places of interest that link up with topics being taught provide very valuable experiences, for example Wigan Pier, Manchester Jewish Museum, Smithills Hall and the Reebok Stadium. These well-planned visits enable pupils to see places and objects for themselves. A residential visit to Castlerigg Manor is undertaken by pupils in Years 5 and 6, successfully developing pupils' personal, social and spiritual understanding.
23. Links with the community are very good. The school's links with the community were reported as a significant strength in the previous report and remain so. Links include a local travel agent, Bolton Wanderers football club, public sector institutions and emergency services and visits by ministers of churches of other denominations. There is an ongoing link with local elderly people and with the Thompson Memorial School for the deaf, where pupils sing and some pupils use sign language to communicate. The school participates in events such as an environmental conference attended by some Year 6 pupils, who on their return made a presentation to the rest of the class. Links with partner institutions are very good. The school shared training for performance management with another local primary school. Links with the feeder secondary school are very strong and their staff have used this school as models of good practice in literacy and numeracy. Good practice identified in this school by the Local Education Authority has been passed onto another secondary school. These and other links make a very good contribution of pupils learning.
24. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good, thus maintaining the high

standards found in the last inspection. There are particular strengths in the opportunities for spiritual development, which are excellent.

25. The opportunities provided for spiritual development are woven effectively into the daily life of the school, particularly in the curriculum for religious education, the acts of collective worship and assemblies. The assemblies, which all staff attend, are very well led and have a significant impact on the pupils. There are frequent opportunities for reflection and consideration of the good things in their lives. Pupils are encouraged to think about important events, both happy and sad and the special moments in their lives. Teachers make good use of these special moments to encourage pupils to think about their lives. Each classroom has a special corner where pupils can reflect on their experiences and the lives and experiences of others. There are some simple and moving prayers and 'thank yous', such as in the reception class when children thanked God for various things including their mummy and daddy and their fish. Pupils are clearly valued by the adults in school and staff provide very good role models for pupils to follow. The parish priest is a frequent visitor, and it is clear that children enjoy his visits. This adds significantly to the impact of spiritual development in the school, and strengthens links with the parish. Music plays a significant part in the spiritual life of the school both in singing and in the music played at assemblies. This gives further chances for a moment's reflection. Parents comment very positively on the impact of the class assemblies. Many attend these assemblies, even when their own child is not in the class concerned.
26. Moral development is very good. The mission statement is clearly central to the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to live lives in which they 'love, care, share,' through the caring ethos, based on Christian principles. The youngest pupils learn what is acceptable through positive reinforcement of good behaviour. This is very successful. Staff use praise very effectively to encourage pupils to behave well. There are weekly awards in assembly where one child from each class is chosen as the 'guiding light', which celebrates the good things a child has done that week, as an example to the class. This is very effective. Older pupils are chosen as the 'golden child' for a week. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and develop their own sense of moral values. Some older pupils have recently been trained in 'peer mediator' skills, along with lunchtime and other staff. This means that pupils are encouraged to develop skills in solving problems and resolving disputes. The pupils are justifiably proud of their skills and take their role seriously, explaining to visitors how they were trained and their role, very carefully.
27. Social development is very good. Relationships are a particular strength in the school and provide a very good basis for pupils' social development. Many planned opportunities for circle time enhance social development for younger pupils. Opportunities to choose a 'buddy of the week' encourage older pupils to think of the good qualities of others such as friendship, help and co-operation. These events contribute very positively to improving pupils' self esteem. All adults in the school provide very good role models of courtesy and respect, to which pupils respond positively. Pupils are actively encouraged to take on personal responsibility, even the youngest pupils in the Foundation Stage, such as tidying away at the end of sessions. Older pupils look after younger ones at lunch and play, predominantly but not exclusively through the 'peer mediation' scheme. All pupils take part in a number of fundraising activities during the year, some for local charities such as Derian House Hospice, and others further afield, such as the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal, Cancer Research and Cafod. This has a positive influence on their sense of social responsibility.
28. Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils learn about their own culture through a range of curricular topics. In history, for example, pupils learn about life in the twentieth century. They visit museums and galleries, and local places of interest, such as Wigan Pier. Various festivals are celebrated such as Harvest and Christmas, which effectively adds to pupils' understanding. Visits and visitors also make a significant contribution to the enrichment of pupils' understanding. For example, African drummers visited recently. Art and music make a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development. This is particularly evident for those pupils who belong

to the school choir, which participates in a number of concerts around the area. For example, the school was chosen to sing at the 'Songs of Gold' ceremony for the forthcoming 'Commonwealth Games'. Pupils learn about other cultures through the curriculum and particularly the religious education programme in which they are taught about other faiths such as Islam and Hinduism. This is linked to visits to local Hindu temples. During the inspection pupils learned about the Hindu festival of Diwali, through two high quality assemblies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school cares well for all its pupils, the standards reported previously having been maintained. The school is a caring community in which pupils' learning, self-discipline, spiritual and moral development are all given equal consideration. Parents appreciate greatly this aspect of school life. They feel the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible and believe that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. Inspectors support this view. Procedures for child protection are good and meet statutory requirements. The school has an appropriate child protection policy, which is based on locally agreed guidelines. All staff are aware of their responsibilities and duties if they feel a child is at risk. There is suitable liaison with other responsible agencies that ensures that additional help is available when needed.
30. The school is a safe environment and any concerns are acted upon immediately. Risk assessments are undertaken and significant risks have been formally recorded. However, procedures to report health and safety concerns and record any remedial action taken need to be formalised. Safety checks of portable electrical equipment are overdue. Fire drills are held termly and are correctly recorded. Regular reviews are made of the condition of the premises and any issues arising are dealt with promptly and effectively.
31. First aid procedures are implemented and there are sufficient staff trained in first aid. However, first aid records do not follow the guidance on good practice issued by the appropriate government department. For example, there is currently no first aid book to record minor injuries and record any treatment given. Appropriate procedures are in place to inform parents where necessary. Procedures for helping children to settle in the nursery and reception class are good ensuring that children enjoy coming to school. An appropriate programme is in place to ease pupils' transfer to the next stage of their education.
32. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and punctuality are very good and this is reflected in the above average levels of attendance. Attendance is closely monitored and unexplained absences are investigated. Recognition for improved and sustained punctuality and attendance are celebrated during certificate assemblies. The school meets all statutory requirements and the administrative procedures are very efficient.
33. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The school has high expectations of behaviour, based on positive recognition. Each class has a set of negotiated rules. Rewards and recognition of success include 'golden child' and 'pupil of the week'. Lunchtime supervisors also have a very effective system for rewarding pupils. Year 6 pupils have been trained by an outside agency to act as 'peer mediators', particularly at lunch and play times, as part of the school's personal, social and health education programme. The school has worked hard on behaviour management and assertive behaviour and the very high standards of behaviour, seen during the inspection week, contribute greatly to pupils' levels of attainment and progress.
34. The provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school is a warm, welcoming community where all pupils are valued as individuals and all achievements celebrated. Individual teachers keep a record of awards. Older pupils are encouraged to care for younger pupils and they do so very well.

35. The procedures for assessing pupils' learning and attainment are satisfactory overall. In English, mathematics and science assessments are undertaken regularly and very good records are kept. The school has successfully developed its own computerised tracking system. This is proving very valuable for tracking and targeting pupils' learning as they progress through the school. Good attention is paid to tracking and targeting those pupils who require additional support. There is a good whole school policy to guide teachers, including an appendix with agreed procedures for subjects other than English, mathematics and science. However, the use of assessment in the non-core subjects is inconsistent and less effective, particularly in providing consistently challenging work for the more able pupils. The school undertakes useful assessments when children first enter school. This enables early identification of any special needs. The school has successfully identified those pupils with special gifts or talents, for example in singing and sports, and provided appropriate support for them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The school has a very good partnership with parents. Overall this is a similar but improved picture to that found at the time of the last inspection, with parents now receiving better quality information and improved reports on their child's progress. Parents have a great deal of pride in the school and hold the school in very high regard. They are particularly appreciative of the provision for their children's welfare and education. They believe that the school promotes good behaviour, good attitudes and a strong Christian ethos and values.
37. The school provides parents with a very good level of information, which allows them to become involved in their children's learning and to have a secure understanding of the school's work. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is good. Parents are actively encouraged to help in school and a small number do so productively on a regular basis. They give time to activities such as listening to readers, helping in classrooms supporting children and preparing resources. Pupils' reading diaries are used effectively to encourage reading at home and also as a means of communication between home and school. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved.
38. The prospectus and the governors' annual report are full and informative documents encouraging home school partnership. Both these important documents meet statutory requirements. Monthly newsletters are reader friendly, well presented and include photographs of pupils. They keep parents well informed of forthcoming events, school issues and items celebrating success. Each term parents receive information about what the pupils are to learn about with suggestions and ideas of how best to support children at home. This information is particularly useful to parents since it enables them to support their child's learning in a practical way.
39. Pupils' annual written reports give parents good information about children's progress. There is, however, some variability in these reports. The better quality reports give clear pointers on how the individual child could improve in all subjects, not just in English, maths and science. On the other hand, some reports do not provide such guidance on what needs to be learnt next in all subjects.
40. The school has an active and effective 'Parents and Friends Association' whose work adds a further dimension to the life of the school. The association is currently raising funds towards enhancing the junior playground environment and also for the leasing of computers for the school's new computer suite. This support and other efforts by the Parents and Friends Association make a significant contribution to pupils' learning opportunities and are much appreciated by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. St Ethelbert's has an outstanding ethos captured by its motto "love, care and share" and underpinned by the slogan "Celebrating success". The school's aims and values are fully reflected in practice. This is evident in the day to day life of the school - in the classrooms from the nursery to Year 6, at lunch and play, in assemblies and clubs, in the teamwork of all the staff and in its partnership with governors, parents and the community at large, particularly the Church. The pupils respect and admire their teachers but are independent thinkers who evaluate their own work and that of their peers with insight and sensitivity. It is crystallised in the teaching and pupils' attitudes in Years 4, 5 and 6. This is a school with a very clear educational direction and a deep-rooted Christian faith. All of this stems from the very high quality, clear leadership of the headteacher and other key staff. The headteacher has only been in post since January 2000. He has successfully maintained the high standards of leadership reported at the time of the last inspection and established a very strong sense of common purpose among the staff and very positive partnership with parents.

42. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have both successfully completed the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers and school self-evaluation training. There are good arrangements for staff performance management and training and the induction of new staff, including newly qualified teachers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher carry out a programme of formal observations of teaching that includes every teacher every term. Teachers are provided with verbal and written feedback and the staff agree a particular focus for these observations, for example pupils' writing and adult-pupil interactions. There are co-ordinators for all subjects and they carry out their duties and responsibilities diligently, including contributing to school development planning and monitoring pupils' work in their subject. There are also efficient and effective co-ordinators for other key areas of the school's work such as special educational needs and assessment. However, insufficient opportunities are created for subject co-ordinators to observe lessons or work alongside colleagues to monitor the quality of teaching.
43. The school benefits from the contribution of an extremely supportive Governing Body. The governors have a good understanding of what the school does well. This is because they are very involved in the school beyond their formal minutes. There are individual governors responsible for literacy, numeracy, special educational needs, equal opportunities, religious education and ICT and individual governors adopt a class. Governors are frequent visitors during the school day meeting with the appropriate members of staff and visiting classrooms. The parish priest is the Chair of the Governing Body and he is in the school most days to the point that he is known by all pupils and parents. Governors have a good level of involvement in financial planning and the personnel committee sets and monitor targets for the headteacher. In comparison with these very effective practices, the governors' involvement in the school development plan is not fully developed.
44. The school has good procedures for self-evaluation and these are improving rapidly. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities and it is well-structured. Staff training and development are closely tied to the school's priorities whilst allowing individual staff to pursue personal development. The school carefully analyses available data on academic performance and attendance to compare its performance with all schools, similar schools and schools within the local education authority and to identify variations in pupils' achievements.
45. The previous report indicated that financial control and office administration were very good. The present situation indicates a somewhat similar picture. There is currently a higher carry forward figure, but the chair of finance and headteacher, supported by the Local Education Authority's finance support officer, have agreed a list of improvements. These include the development of a new ICT suite, re-location of the key stage libraries to a whole school library, installation of a telephone system and development of the nursery building. This, together with committed expenditure on pupil and supply cover adjustment will reduce the expenditure surplus balance to approximately two per cent. The governing body and its finance committee are directly involved in the approval of the school's spending priorities. Informal monitoring takes place to judge value for money but the governing body has not as yet established criteria for success for high expenditure items. Effective use is made of specific grants to support new initiatives and to improve the quality of opportunity for raising standards for pupils with special educational needs. The school makes very good use of modern technology in financial management, teachers' planning and assessment and displays, and is developing a very good web-site. The recommendations of the last auditor's report have been fully addressed. The school secretary carries out the day-to-day financial management of the school effectively and provides very good support for the headteacher and staff. Administration procedures are well established and her approach to staff, pupils, parents and visitors is caring, courteous and efficient. This contributes significantly to the smooth running of the school. Teachers and support staff value the work she does which allows them to carry out their duties more effectively. She responsibly assumes control of computerised systems for maintaining accounts, financial transactions and school records. As a result, the procedures are unobtrusive and support the day-to-day running of the school well.
46. Accommodation is satisfactory. It is well managed and allows the curriculum to be taught

effectively. High quality displays of work, throughout the school, celebrate pupils' achievement, provide good links to topics being studied and contribute positively to the schools ethos. The building is satisfactorily maintained and kept in a good state of cleanliness. The caretaker makes a strong contribution to the life of the school by carrying out many improvements and maintenance duties around the school.

47. There are adequate numbers of teachers and support with a good range of qualifications and experience. Teachers are effectively deployed to maximise pupils' learning and make use of subject expertise. Support staff make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning but on occasions teachers do not maximise the available skills of additional support in the classroom.
48. Resources are good in maths, science and music. They are satisfactory in all other subjects with the exception of English, where they are very good. Throughout the school, resources are well organised and accessible and they are used well in lessons. Library resources are satisfactory and there is a suitable supply of fiction and non-fiction books. The school uses the local area for a number of educational visits and this enriches the curriculum. The school is developing a new specialist ICT suite and this is due to open by January 2002.
49. Improvement has been very good overall since the last inspection. There has been very good improvement in the curricular provision and standards achieved in science and physical education and good improvement in pupils' research skills and personal development. Teaching is much improved. High standards of leadership and management have been maintained under the new headteacher. There is a very strong sense of teamwork and commitment to continuing improvement. Taking these factors and pupils' achievements into account, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Key issues for action

50. The headteacher and governors should now:

- (1) Raise standards in art and design, DT, geography, history, ICT and PE by: *
 - developing more rigorous systems to assess and record what pupils know, understand and can do and use this information in teachers' planning; (Paragraphs 35, 94, 99, 104, 109, 114 and 118)
 - providing more challenging tasks for the more able pupils. (Paragraphs 6, 16, 54, 97 and 103)
- (2) Ensure that teachers plan how they are going to use additional staff in lessons to maximise the learning of all pupils. (Paragraphs 15, 47, 54 and 108)

Minor issues

51. The headteacher and governors should now:

- (1) Provide more opportunities for subject co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching in their subject; * (Paragraphs 42, 90, 99 and 104)
- (2) Address the minor matters of health and safety procedures discussed during the inspection. (Paragraphs 30 and 31)

* There are targets related to these issues in the current School Development Plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	25	22	17	0	0	0
Percentage	9	36	31	24	0	0	0

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

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)	18	230
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	50

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	10	18	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	18	18	17
	Total	28	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	96 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	27	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	93 (100)	96 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	20	13	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	15	20
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	30	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (74)	82 (70)	100 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	20
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	30	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (70)	82 (72)	100 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	198
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5.6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	608023
Total expenditure	533250
Expenditure per pupil	1872
Balance brought forward from previous year	9380
Balance carried forward to next year	84153

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate = 31%

Number of questionnaires sent out	248
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	83	17	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	26	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	32	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	44	4	3	3
The teaching is good.	83	17	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	31	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	12	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	17	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	65	34	1	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	18	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	82	14	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	43	3	0	14

Please note some the responses to some questions may not add up to 100 per cent because some parents did not mark any of the boxes.

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

52. Children enter the nursery with a broad range of attainments, although baseline assessments indicate that this is broadly average overall. This is an upward shift in the standards at intake from those found at the time of the last inspection. Children make steady progress overall, through consistently sound teaching. They are in line to reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they reach the end of the reception year, and to be above expectations in personal, social and emotional skills, with strengths also in communication skills. This represents an improvement in the standards found at the time of the last inspection.
53. The curriculum in the foundation stage has been appropriately adapted to take account of the early learning goals. There are effective and detailed policies for all aspects of the foundation stage. Work is appropriately planned in all six areas of learning in both nursery and reception classes. Assessment, both informal and formal, is thorough and good systems are in place to record informal assessment in sessions. For example, in the nursery 'sticky notes' are used to record events which are later transferred to children's records, ensuring that opportunities to record progress are not missed. Lessons are usefully evaluated for their effectiveness, and this information is used to plan future activities.
54. Teaching continues to be sound overall, broadly maintaining the standards found in the last inspection. A significant proportion of good teaching was observed, in both classes. Nearly two thirds of the teaching was good in the nursery and one third of the teaching in the reception class was good and better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching is characterised by good organisation and a wide range of interesting activities, which are generally well-matched to the abilities of the children. Both classes provide a very warm and welcoming environment, with opportunities for children to learn from stimulating displays which celebrate children's work. Very good relationships are evident throughout, and this is particularly effective in the nursery, where very young children soon gain confidence. Staff establish good routines and have high expectations of children and this leads to good behaviour. Praise is used effectively to raise the children's self-esteem and reinforce the standards expected. Adults provide good role models for behaviour and relationships. The early years co-ordinator is very experienced and has a thorough understanding of the needs of young children. She provides good support and advice for less experienced teachers in the Foundation Stage. Staff work closely together as a team. Support staff are hard working and their contributions are valued, although there are times in the reception class when they are deployed to best effect. Sometimes planned activities do not provide sufficient challenge for the more able children, so on these occasions their learning is less effective.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Teaching is good. It means that children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. Children are in line to reach standards above those expected by the end of the reception year. They quickly settle in the nursery and become confident learners. Parents are made very welcome and the sessions begin with an opportunity for parents to join in with their child's activities, which many do, before leaving them happily settled. This is a good informal start to the day which means all children quickly choose and engage in an activity rather than gathering together and waiting for others to arrive. Children are confident with staff and many are confident with visitors, offering cups of tea in the home corner, and selling 'cards' from the shop. They work well together in small and large groups, beginning to take turns in the nursery and patiently waiting for their turn in circle time in the reception class. Children relate well to one another, such as sharing the enjoyment of the 'Kipper' story in nursery. Staff relate exceptionally well to children, which contributes significantly both to their quality of learning, as

well as their sense of safety and security. It also has a strong impact on behaviour as staff provide very good role models and this results in consistently very good behaviour in both classes.

Communication, language and literacy

56. Teaching is satisfactory with good features. It enables children of all abilities to make steady gains in their learning overall and to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year. There are strengths in the development of children's communication skills, which are above expectations by the end of the reception year. Children are confident speakers, to both adults and other children. The confidence they show is linked to the good skills they develop through the programme for personal, social and emotional development. They interact well with others, showing suitable awareness of the listener. In the nursery, for example, children explore runny cornflour, saying, "I don't want to put it on mine hands", 'Cos I'll have to wash them" and "It looks like ice-cream doesn't it?" Skilful interaction by the teacher in the nursery enables children to extend their speaking skills further, as when the teacher repeats back the child's comments, allowing the child to hear words correctly and encouraging them to make further comments. In reception, older children are keen to explain how to use the whiteboards, particularly that the yellow felt pen makes orange marks, and how to use the eraser, saying, "Look, watch, do you know how to do this?" The youngest children are beginning to develop a love of books. They listen well to stories and enjoy looking at books for short periods, following the story in pictures. Older children in the reception class understand that printed words carry meaning and they follow stories carefully, such as 'The Worried Sparrow', which the teacher reads expressively to the whole class. Younger children have regular opportunities to write, and they know that marks have meaning. Staff encourage children to write letters and 'post' them. Most children recognise their names and some older children in the reception class recognise a number of simple words. They know initial letter sounds and many can write their names. Some make attempts to write simple words.

Mathematical development

57. Teaching is satisfactory and the children make steady progress. Children are in line to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Many activities in the nursery help to support the development of children's counting skills. For example, in the 'card shop,' nursery staff help children count and recognise numbers to five. Children who are 'baking' in the home corner are encouraged to check how many cakes they need for the people at the table. Number lines and other activities in the reception class help children to count and recognise numbers to 10. Children begin to write numbers and they practise counting out sets. Some more able children can count further than 10, but activities are not sufficiently challenging for this group of children, and this limits their learning. Mathematical vocabulary is developed effectively through planned activities. In the nursery, for example children use computer programs, which help them to learn about basic concepts such as above and below, big and small and less and more. In the reception class, activities enable children to build on their previous learning, for example by checking who has caught most bugs at the end of the 'Springy Spider' game. Children learn about patterns and shape by, for example, completing jigsaws, threading beads and participating in cutting and making activities. This learning is reinforced by the staff using appropriate mathematical language, such as when the nursery staff describe tubes as cylinders.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both classes. Children learn about the world around them through role-play activities, for example the home corner and the 'Card Shop', and through playing with materials such as the toy farm. Early science skills are developed in both the nursery and reception classes by, for example, exploring light and dark using torches in very large boxes. This exciting activity absorbs children in the reception class for long periods. They shine the torch inside the box and watch fascinated as it reflects off the different surfaces, such as hologram

paper and streamers. Children learn to use simple tools appropriately. They cut and snip paper, and stick and glue materials to make collages. Children begin to differentiate between the past and present, learning how they have changed since they were babies. Visitors, such as a parent with a baby, help children to understand this well. Birthdays are celebrated and children in the nursery know if they are three or four years old, recognising that they are getting older. Children begin to learn about their own and other cultures. Children in the nursery take part in the Harvest celebrations, going to the church with their gifts, and Christmas celebrations. Older children learn about other faiths. For example, they learn about the Hindu festival of Diwali in an assembly. A good range of both recyclable materials and construction kits is available for children to use, to build and construct different shapes and objects. Children use a range of modern technology devices well. They understand that they need to give commands to make machines work, such as tape recorders. They use the computer confidently, and many of the youngest children have appropriate mouse and keyboard skills to choose and complete the provided activities.

Physical development

59. Suitable opportunities are available for children in physical development, and teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children learn to use simple tools and manipulate them successfully. They link blocks and bricks together to make tall towers and machines. They move with increasing control and confidence in outdoor play. Children in the nursery participate in suitable opportunities for physical play every day, choosing from a wide range of equipment and toys. This is the result of careful and imaginative planning by the nursery teacher as, although the area is a suitable size and safely enclosed, the facilities are underdeveloped. There is no large equipment or outdoor facilities to develop imaginative play with children of this age. The school recognises this and there are plans to develop the space in a much more exciting way in the near future, including play trains and bridges. The opportunities for children in the reception class to share the use of the outdoor play area are limited because the nursery building is separate from main school, where the reception class is based. Children in the reception class have fewer planned outdoor play opportunities, although they have play times with pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, there are suitable opportunities for walks to the local playground and planned indoor activities, including physical education lessons, held regularly in the main hall. Very good teaching was observed in a physical education lesson for the reception children, and this contributes substantially to the satisfactory progress they make overall.

Creative development

60. Teaching in creative development is satisfactory and children of all abilities make satisfactory progress in both classes. The children are confident singers and know and enjoy a good number and variety of songs and rhymes. They particularly enjoy action songs in the nursery, such as when the teacher has a crocodile puppet, which 'snaps' the monkeys away one by one. Children enjoy listening to music and the youngest children march to repetitive music, encouraged by the staff's enthusiastic participation. The children in the nursery enjoy exploring the different sounds they can make with the drums, tambourines and other instruments, such as when two children tap beats on the tambours and dance around smiling at each other. Children in the reception class combine singing and playing percussion instruments simultaneously. The children enjoy painting and collage work. They paint expressively, and describe what they are doing. They make choices of materials, such as when making models from recycled materials, and bits and pieces for their collages.

ENGLISH

61. Standards are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and well above the national average at the end of Year 6. This means that standards have been sustained at Key Stage 1 and have improved at Key Stage 2. All pupils make good progress in their learning. These inspection

judgements generally reflect the results of the national tests in 2001. Standards achieved by seven year-olds were above the national average in speaking and listening and in reading and they were average in writing. Standards achieved by 11 year-olds were well above average in speaking and listening and reading and they were above average in writing. A high percentage of pupils in Year 2 achieved the above expected National Curriculum Level 3 in reading but none achieved this level in writing. The percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 achieving the expected National Curriculum Level 4 was well above average and the percentage achieving the higher Level 5 was in line with the national average.

62. Speaking and listening skills, which were in line with national averages at both key stages during the previous inspection, have improved considerably. This is particularly evident in the juniors where it was previously judged that pupils' speaking skills were not sufficiently extended across the curriculum. Pupils throughout the school are positively encouraged to offer answers to questions and to explain their own thoughts in complete sentences. They confidently share ideas during class discussions and in small groups, arrive at conclusions and competently and clearly communicate the reasoning behind their decisions. A notable feature in all classes is the following of discussion conventions by waiting for others to finish before talking themselves. Throughout all lessons, pupils use correct terminology. They use appropriate subject terminology naturally on a particular aspect, which all teachers promote well. Teachers throughout the school use open-ended questioning well in order to develop and promote extended answers from even the youngest pupils. Care is taken to ensure pupils with special educational needs are given equal opportunities to express their ideas and teachers are vigilant and proactive in promoting opportunities for all pupils to answer questions. Pupils are given a rich diet of speaking opportunities. For example, during the daily act of worship and class assemblies, pupils speak clearly and confidently with poise, expression and fluency so that pupils and adults at the back of the room hear every word and syllable.
63. Pupils' reading skills in Years 1 and 2 are similar to those identified in the previous report, when it stated that pupils in Year 2 read accurately, fluently and with expression. They read texts above their age level and teachers focus on expressive reading. All pupils in these year groups use contents pages and most understand the use of index pages. They all understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They recall what happened in the story and describe the characters, what they are like and what they do. The majority are comfortable in predicting what is likely to come next and do so with confidence. Without exception, they know what authors and illustrators do. Most pupils have collections of books at home. Some pupils indicate that they are heard reading regularly at home, whilst others, particularly the more able read independently for pleasure. All pupils read to their teachers who keep suitable records of the books read and individual progress. During the Big Book shared reading sessions, all pupils displayed obvious pleasure and were keen to read the text.
64. Progress in reading is good overall. Work in Years 3 to 6 builds on the previous good progress ensuring standards are always above the expected level or higher. Pupils read accurately, fluently and with expression taking due notice of punctuation and textual clues. They are developing the ability to characterise speakers well, exemplified by performances in assemblies. Pupils have good book referencing skills, which are used to good effect to retrieve information. A high percentage of pupils interviewed said they were members of local libraries.
65. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages. This matches the recent test results, and can be explained by the cohort of pupils and higher number with special educational needs. However, the school acknowledges this relative weakness in standards and has given a high priority to writing skills and is already making good progress. This good progress continues throughout Key Stage 2 and writing is above the national average by 11 years of age. Pupils write for a range of purposes. Pupils in Year 4, for example, write newspaper reports and practise using commas to mark grammatical boundaries in sentences. By Year 6, pupils are able to comment upon and use styles and conventions in a diary of imagined events. They develop their use of punctuation and improve spelling to enhance fluency and clarity of their work. Pupils take care with their handwriting skills and presentation, which strengthens the appearance of their work. They use and understand different parts of speech and by the time they leave school they use paragraphs to organise their writing. Throughout the school, pupils make purposeful use of ICT to support a range of work in literacy.
66. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which has been further enhanced by the literacy training. In the best lessons, teaching is lively, challenging and well paced, with effective use made of visual aids. Very effective use is made of

structured, open-ended questioning to motivate and encourage pupils to think before they answer, to use extended, reasoned and grammatically correct answers. Support staff are generally used effectively and they support pupils with special educational needs well. The improved planning has clear objectives with explicit targets for individual needs. Planning sessions consolidate pupils' learning and make a positive contribution to their achievements. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils are managed well by effective use of brisk pace, valued delivery and an appropriate balance between class discussion and challenging tasks.

67. Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour are very good overall and this makes a positive contribution to their learning. Pupils enjoy sharing texts and read with sustained interest. They respond to questions with enthusiasm. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and all pupils are respectful and polite towards adults. They work hard and sustain concentration for long periods. Pupils take responsibilities for clearing up at the end of lessons and all pupils, including those with special educational needs show very positive attitudes to work.
68. Assessment is good. The school uses the results of statutory and optional tests to track all pupils' attainment and progress, and sets realistic targets for different ability groups. Teacher assessments are generally consistent with pupils' test results, identifying strengths and weaknesses and informing teachers' planning for the next stage of learning. The marking of pupils' work, which is consistent and constructive and indicates areas for improvement, is used well in teachers' day-to-day planning.
69. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is highly committed and dedicated, and has a clear vision for the development of English. However, she is sufficiently realistic to adjust the focus as the need arises, for example, the current focus on writing. The curriculum is kept under review and planning is regularly monitored. Books are scrutinised with a specific focus, which helps her monitor the teaching, learning and standards in English. All staff have received literacy training, which has had a positive impact on raising standards.
70. Resources are good overall and there is a sufficiency of books to support literacy well. The school is in a state of transition with regards to its library, both as a resource area and as an area to encourage and enhance independent learning. This is because, immediately the new ICT suite is established, the school has detailed plans to refurbish the old suite as its new whole school library. The ICT suite and library together will provide improved facilities to support pupils' independent research skills. The school has allocated sufficient funds to finance the scheme, which hopefully will be completed and fully operational well before the end of the current academic year. The quality and quantity of books currently available is good and there is a sufficiency to deliver the National Curriculum appropriately. The local library service has supported the school well in this venture with their support and enthusiasm.

MATHEMATICS

71. Standards in mathematics are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and well above the national average at the end of Year 6. Seven and 11 year-olds achieve very good results in the national tests and this is clearly reflected in the work they undertake in class. The school has a high proportion of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieving the higher Level 3 and Level 5, respectively, when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The previous inspection judged standards to be above the national average, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 making good progress and pupils in Years 3 to 6 making satisfactory progress overall. Progress is now good in Years 1 and 2, accelerating to very good in Years 3 to 6. The maintenance of high standards has largely been achieved by very good leadership, sometimes excellent teaching, and by improving the good quality of teachers' planning based on the effective use of national guidelines linked to the close monitoring of pupils' progress. This demonstrates very good improvement in mathematics, especially at the higher levels. The subject enjoys a high profile

throughout the school with many colourful displays, which include clear links with other subject areas, such as ICT when analysing data.

72. Since the previous inspection the school has rightly focused greater attention on practical problem solving. This is having a significant impact on standards throughout the school. Most homework set contains a real-life problem, thus suitably enhancing pupils' levels of understanding of numeracy in everyday situations. All pupils gain from tackling such problems, especially pupils with special educational needs, who benefit by successfully consolidating basic numeracy skills as noted during a Year 1 lesson. At the start of each lesson, well planned mental sessions, requiring quick thinking, are generally taught well and appropriately supported by a range of visual aids that keep pupils motivated and interested. Most lessons feature a rapid pace and a variety of challenging questions that create a sense of vigour, for example the use of a 'tennis' multiplication game in Year 6. The brisk, accurate answers that bounce back and forth between groups of pupils consolidate learning very effectively and most pupils give correct answers to a range of multiplication table problems. The many strategies pupils use to find the correct answers are a strong feature enabling all to share and celebrate success.
73. This total celebration of success and enthusiastic approach to numeracy is clearly evident in most lessons. Pupils in Year 1 confidently learn to place numbers nought to ten in the correct positions, with more able pupils confidently counting on to well beyond 50. Most count on in twos and fours, and use a variety of numbers that when added together make ten. In Year 2, pupils confidently count up to 100 in twos, fives and tens, both forwards and backwards. Pupils quickly learn that the repeating pattern relates directly to multiplication tables. Pupils in Year 3 group numbers accurately demonstrating a growing awareness of patterns found in multiplication tables, and use division to correctly check answers. The introduction of everyday problems related to multiplication and division enhances learning successfully. Pupils in Year 4 accurately answer problems directly linked to giving fractional parts of one whole, for example one third of 21. More able pupils successfully give answers to find two-thirds of 18. Pupils in Year 5 confidently recall the 'digital route' of given numbers, most being aware that 30 is a multiple of five. Pupils in Year 6 multiply and divide given numbers by 10, 100 and 1000 with good speed and accuracy, often in the form of decimals to two places.
74. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. The quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to very good. Very good teaching enabled pupils to accurately record addition problems using the correct symbols. The class teacher introduced more information into the number problem than needed. Pupils quickly 'sorted' the required information, sharing their strategies with the class. The reporting back at the end of the lesson suitably enhanced speaking and listening skills, when pupils clearly described the problems. Teachers make very good use of a variety of visual aids and practical resources. This has a very positive effect on pupils' rapid learning and the ability to think numerically. Vibrant displays in many classes display a good range of pupils' work, with the regular, well-planned use of ICT successfully underpinning learning. The good quality teaching and learning that take place in Years 1 and 2 have a very positive impact on the high standards achieved in the upper part of the school. The effective use of gentle humour by all class teachers positively recognises all pupils' individual efforts, and their contributions are highly valued.
75. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good overall. The quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Two of the lessons were of excellent quality, and this led to pupils learning very effectively. As a result of very good and excellent teaching, pupils' behaviour is very good, most working with the minimum of supervision, and producing high quality written work. Teachers use questions effectively and work is planned that interests and motivates pupils of all abilities. For example in Year 4, pupils confidently shaded in the fractional parts of one whole in response to a given problem, with more able pupils successfully giving answers to one quarter of 84 and pupils with special educational needs completing simpler tasks.

76. Most of the pupils in Year 6 recognise a range of two-dimensional shapes, and are aware of terms such as 'rotation', 'translation', 'reduction' and 'enlargement'. The use of suitable ICT programmes supports learning very well and, for example, pupils present work on shape in the form of a multi-media presentation. The very confident and effective use of an overhead projector by the class teacher clearly illustrates the congruent properties of triangles. Pupils receive high levels of support from additional adults in the classroom, and make very good progress. In the satisfactory lessons pace and challenge is restricted, with more able pupils undertaking the same low-level task before moving on to the planned extension work. This invariably slows progress. More able pupils in Year 3 have limited opportunities at present to work independently, so their progress is not as rapid as it should be. Where there is a suitable balance of whole class teaching, individual and group work involving all pupils, the sharing of intended learning with all pupils and a whole class session at the end of the lesson, the quality of learning is very good. Nevertheless, the school is aware of the need to use the additional adult support more creatively during teaching sessions to gain maximum efficiency.
77. In Year 6, the teacher's relaxed manner, high level of energy and enthusiasm and very effective positive approach to the management of behaviour are reflected in the excellent levels of work output. The well-planned use of resources and the opportunity for pupils to discuss and work in groups has a very positive effect on learning. Numeracy activities are enjoyable and there is a strong emphasis on listening to each other's suggestions and ideas. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, undertaking work appropriate to meet their individual needs. More able pupils are given good opportunities to devise and record their own solutions to problems. No discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls was noted during the inspection.
78. Most pupils enjoy mathematics, have very good attitudes, and respond well in lessons. Pupils listen very carefully to their class teachers' instructions and answer politely. The quality of presentation of most pupils' work is good, reflecting high levels of pride and care. However, opportunities for pupils to mark their own work are limited.
79. The subject is very well managed by the co-ordinator who has clearly identified the subject's strengths and weaknesses using a variety of available data. There are well-planned, appropriate strategies contained in the subject action plan that reflect the school's determination to raise standards even higher. Careful assessments are carried out at regular intervals and these support future planning intentions very effectively in most classes. Overall arrangements for assessment and monitoring pupils' progress are very good. The school has successfully developed the use of non-statutory tests to track pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6. The impact of recently introduced national guidelines on the teaching of numeracy has been very good. Most teaching activities are well planned from the appropriate part of the national strategy. The range and quality of resources are good. In all classes, these resources are accessible and the range available is appropriate to the needs of all pupils.

SCIENCE

80. Pupils achieve high standards in science, improving further on the good standards found at the time of the last inspection. Standards are continuing to improve. The results of national assessments for seven year-olds in 2001 were above average, with all pupils achieving the expected level. This is an improvement on the previous year, when results were broadly in line with the national average. The results of national assessments for 11 year-olds in 2001 were exceptionally high, being in the top five per cent nationally for the second year running. About three-quarters of pupils achieved Level 5, which is above the expected level for their age. This is a very high proportion and a big improvement on the previous year's already very good results.
81. Inspection evidence confirms this picture, with standards being above average at the end of the

infants, and well above average at the end of the juniors. A particular strength, at both key stages, is the quality of pupils' skills and understanding in practical and investigative work. For example, pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class showed good observational skills when studying how jelly cubes react in hot water. They used vocabulary well, describing the cubes as "stretchy" or "sticky", and showed a good understanding, for their age, of the differences between liquids and solids. By Year 5, all pupils have a very clear understanding of a fair test, and almost all know the importance of changing only one variable at a time. By the time they are in Year 6, all pupils make accurate generalisations from their observations, and about half of them have become very skilled in this. As investigative science was a weakness at the time of the last inspection, improvement in this aspect of the subject has been excellent.

82. Pupils' good practical skills support their learning very effectively in other aspects of science. For example, in a lesson in Year 3, the good investigative skills of pupils, and their good understanding of a simple circuit, enabled them quickly to reach a good understanding of conductors and insulators, and to test different materials accurately. More able pupils were able to make generalisations about what they had found, such as "all metals conduct electricity". Pupils build on this good foundation as they get older and, by the time they are in Year 6, their understanding of electricity is very good. This was shown in a very good lesson when they investigated a wide range of different circuits. Their ability to work systematically enabled them to make major gains in their understanding during this lesson. Work in pupils' books indicates that they develop equally good knowledge and understanding across a wide range of scientific topics.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall, and is particularly good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, particularly in knowing how to support pupils' learning through effective practical work. Teachers plan their lessons with an emphasis on practical and investigative work, and ensure that pupils have lots of opportunities for 'hands-on' experiences in many aspects of the subject. This ensures their interest and gives them a thorough understanding of the topics they study. Teachers pay particular attention to getting pupils to think through and explain their ideas, so that they clarify their thinking. Occasionally, teachers show gaps in their knowledge of particular aspects of scientific terminology, so their explanations to pupils are less clear. For example, confusion between cells and batteries meant that pupils were confused about these terms in an otherwise very good lesson. The good opportunities for pupils to write about their work in their own words also help develop their understanding and their thinking skills very effectively. These good habits help them to take on board new ideas quickly and relate them to their existing knowledge.
84. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and have high expectations of work and behaviour. Pupils respond to this well and try hard to do well and please their teachers. Their behaviour and concentration improve steadily as they get older, and both are very good by the time they are 11. Through well-planned activities, their collaborative skills are developed well, moving from working together in pairs in the infants, to working very effectively in larger groups in older junior classes.
85. The subject is well managed. The subject co-ordinator provides excellent leadership to her colleagues, and this is a major factor supporting the good quality of teaching and high standards observed. She gives well-judged advice, has written a high quality scheme of work, tailored to the school's needs, and organises specific training to help colleagues drive forward pupils' achievements. The scheme ensures a balanced and broad curriculum, including good use of ICT. Pupils use computers well for researching information, and have the chance to use ICT for monitoring aspects of the environment using sensors. The co-ordinator's own teaching is a model of good practice in the subject. The emphasis she has given to placing practical and investigative work at the heart of pupils' learning, which is well reflected by the scheme of work, has been whole-heartedly adopted by other teachers. This has paid major dividends in the quality of teaching and learning and the high standards achieved.

ART AND DESIGN

86. Standards meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This has maintained standards as reported at the time of the last inspection. Only one lesson was observed during this inspection. Judgements are based on this lesson, examination of examples of pupils' work, and discussions with staff. Examples of satisfactory work are on display throughout the school, with occasional examples of high quality.
87. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils have done work in weaving, with different and contrasting textures and colours, which is all of a satisfactory standard. The work done in one class, weaving using twigs and a range of other natural and man-made materials, is unusual, very effective, and of good quality for the pupils' ages.
88. Similarly, the work on display in Years 3 to 6, such as the paintings in the style of Picasso by Year 6, or the bright and colourful collages of jungle creatures in Year 4, indicate steady progress across the key stage. Occasionally work is of higher quality, such as the experimental work with acrylic paints and the work in various media on 'places' in Year 5. The latter work displays a subtle use of colour, tone and texture based on careful observation, while the acrylic work shows an imaginative use of colour in a different medium, producing quite different effects.
89. It was not possible to reach a reliable judgement about teaching in the subject. The lesson that was seen, in Year 6, was very good and resulted in very good learning by the pupils. The lesson had very good pace and pupils were managed very well. Pupils showed very good skills in evaluating their own and their classmate's work in rendering perspective, although their skills in drawing and painting were just satisfactory. Pupils learned a lot about the different elements in perspective during the lesson, because of clear explanations and careful questioning by the teacher and the pupils' enthusiasm and productivity.
90. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has made a good start. She is providing good leadership to colleagues and has already taken part in some joint lessons to share expertise. So far she has had no opportunities to monitor the standards in the subject in any systematic way. The school uses a nationally recommended scheme of work, adapted to its particular needs, and this provides a balanced programme of work as pupils move through the school. At the moment, teachers' timetables show that less time is spent on the subject than the school's management information indicates is intended. This is why, in a school where teaching is generally at least good, the standards in the subject are only satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

91. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and standards, which meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, have been maintained as reported at the time of the last inspection. Judgements are based on three lesson observations, examination of examples of pupils' work, and discussions with staff, particularly the subject co-ordinator.
92. Evidence from lessons, displays and photographic records show that pupils throughout the school have satisfactory designing and making skills and that more opportunities are being provided for pupils to evaluate their work than previously reported. Good links are made in DT with other subjects. For example, with art and design and science in Years 1 and 2 when studying the life cycle of a butterfly, and precise mathematical measurement in Year 6, when making the structure for a model of a fairground ride in Year 6. The 'design a chair' project in Year 4, although based on materials in the art and design scheme of work, resulted in highly individualised pieces featuring good skills of designing, making and finishing. One class designed chairs for animals and the other for characters from cartoons and stories. Some showed high standards of imaginative thinking in

both planning and making skills. There are some very good examples of successful group work as well as individual work. A very good display about Islam outside a classroom in the infant department, included a Mosque made from recyclable materials and finished to a good standard. Whole school projects, organised by the subject co-ordinator, have been used successfully to raise the profile of the subject in the work of the school and develop collaborative working. In 1998 pupils carried out research and planned improvements to the school playground. In 2000, pupils designed and made Millennium bridges during a week. This included input from a professional engineer, use of the Internet for research, very good links with mathematics through studying large three-dimensional structures and a competition for pupils in Years 3 to 6 reported in the local press. The completed bridges were to a very good standard.

93. From the lessons seen and work examined, the quality of teaching is judged to be good throughout the school. Lessons are planned well and teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Pupils are interested in their work and persevere if they have difficulties. Work is displayed very well to celebrate the achievements of all pupils regardless of abilities and needs. Careful consideration has been given to pupils with special educational needs in selecting appropriate materials and resources to help them. Good use is made of visitors, such as in the Millennium bridges project referred to above, and current work in Year 5 looking at cams using construction kits.
94. The co-ordinator is an effective and enthusiastic leader who has reviewed the policy in the light of National Curriculum 2000, worked with a local authority advisor and other primary teachers on guidelines to help teachers with their planning and used available funding well to develop resources. She examines completed work and keeps photographic records and was responsible for a display of DT work for a recent parents' curriculum evening. However, the arrangements for assessment in the subject are rather limited.

GEOGRAPHY

95. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in geography. However, examination of the limited range of pupils' work that was available and teachers' planning, and discussions with staff and pupils, indicates that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
96. A subject policy is in place and the school's schemes of work, based on government guidelines, are at present under development. All staff plan appropriate experiences for pupils, with a clear choice of topics, and teaching is well supported by appropriate use of available resources.
97. Pupils in Year 2 record accurately the evidence of human activities and physical features of the Isle of Struay. Pupils confidently use map-making symbols to illustrate major features, for example roads and prominent buildings, to support transportation and employment. Pupils make steady progress in their geographical knowledge and understanding. However, there is limited emphasis given to writing. Much work is recorded on worksheets or briefly in books. All pupils undertake the same task. The use of geography as a means of successfully developing or improving pupils' writing skills has remained at a fairly low level and this is a missed opportunity.
98. Pupils in Year 5 have contrasted the locality of Bolton with Chembakalli, a village settlement in India. Good links were evident between numeracy and geography in the comparing and recording of temperatures from around the world. ICT skills are good and ICT is used well, for example, some good use of CD-ROM and the Internet as research tools. However, the development of enquiry skills, and the ability to work independently are not supported as effectively as they might be.

99. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is preparing appropriate adaptation to the national guidelines to suit the needs of the pupils. She has assembled and catalogued adequate resources for the teaching of the subject, nevertheless the quantity of maps relating to the local area is inadequate to support individual or paired teaching situations. Book resources in the library are appropriate in quality and quantity to support the present geography syllabus. However, monitoring of teaching is insufficiently planned to clearly identify areas for development, and assessment procedures are not used consistently to monitor the rate at which pupils develop skills as they move through the school. As a result, in some lessons work is not matched to the needs of individual pupils. This has a negative impact on the learning of certain pupils, particularly the more able, who are not sufficiently challenged by the work set, which is often in the form of worksheets. These factors are restricting improvement in the subject's overall performance. Pupils' geography work displayed around the school makes a good contribution to the positive learning environment. The pupils' cultural development is supported well by their work in geography.

HISTORY

100. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. This maintains the standards found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory gains in their learning throughout the school. In Years 5 and 6 pupils make good progress in acquiring the skills and understanding of historical enquiry. This is due to enthusiastic and effective teaching, including the good use of resources and the pupils' enthusiasm, interest and involvement.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have successfully developed an understanding of some historical events and characters from the past. Pupils in Year 1 have a satisfactory understanding of the concept of chronology and know that things were done differently in the past through looking at modern and old household items. For example, they compare a toasting fork and modern electric toaster, a box camera and a digital camera. Pupils in Year 2 study World Wars I and II. They write letters as a soldier in the trenches, demonstrating their understanding of how war affected people's lives.
102. By the end of Year 6, pupils have gained a broad understanding of particular periods in history through a carefully planned programme of work. The pupils in Year 3 compare Roman soldiers with Celtic warriors. They make good use of their literacy and ICT skills to research their topic, using books, CD-ROM and the Internet. In Year 4, pupils have excellent opportunities to find out how archaeologists learn about the past and this enables them to make particularly good gains in their historical enquiry skills. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, learn about Victorians. They are very enthusiastic about history and pore over samples of the 1841 and 1891 census information, demonstrating their understanding of how to interpret information and good enquiry skills. Pupils make good links between the two census documents. Some pupils recall particular names and enthusiastically suggest that it could be the same family from fifty years previously. Pupils remember the occupations listed in 1841, such as 'husbandman' and notice that this has changed by 1891.
103. The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time. History has to compete on the timetable with other subjects at different times of the year, limiting the depth and breadth of knowledge which pupils can acquire by the end of Year 6. The pupils are taught effectively about the past and about how others lived in different ways. In one excellent lesson in Year 4, for example, the teacher enabled pupils to gain a very good understanding of how artefacts might come to be buried in times gone by and what might survive. This was achieved by a combination of effective planning, a lively and enthusiastic presentation, along with very well focussed questions and very good class management skills. Good questioning skills are evident in many lessons, particularly in Year 5 where pupils examined census information and the teacher skilfully guided them into finding out a

broad range of information and into asking their own questions. Learning in Years 3 to 6 is good because the pupils are interested and concentrate on set tasks and they behave very well. A further good feature of the teaching includes well-planned visits to places of historical interest, such as Wigan Pier, where pupils experience the Victorian way of life. Lessons are enhanced by the good use of high quality artefacts, many on loan from local museums. In the Key Stage 1 classrooms, corners have been turned into 'homes' from the era of World War II, using the different artefacts. In some cases visitors have used this space to tell pupils of their experiences of life at that time. These effective strategies enhance younger pupils' understanding because they help to bring history to life. However, planning does not always include activities that effectively challenge more able pupils and the older pupils in mixed age classes. In some lessons, some opportunities are missed to develop enquiry skills when using artefacts.

104. The subject co-ordinator is well-organised and knowledgeable. Considerable effort has been made to adapt the curriculum to account for the class organisation at the school. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to assess progress more effectively and arrangements for assessment in history are just being put into place and trialled. Pupils' books are monitored from time to time and teachers' planning is available. However, there are no clear and implemented guidelines for the monitoring of teaching and learning. This has a limiting effect on the role of the co-ordinator in improving standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

105. Standards meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and have been maintained as reported at the time of the last inspection. Seven lessons were observed. Judgements are supported by discussions with pupils, examination of examples of pupils' work and discussions with staff, particularly the subject co-ordinator. It is very clear that all of the teachers observed are competent and confident in ICT and the school is well-placed to raise standards when the new ICT suite is completed later this year. Work had begun on this major improvement to the school accommodation and resources when the registered inspector returned to the school shortly after the inspection week.
106. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress as they move from year to year and achieve at least satisfactorily for their age. There is substantial evidence of progress accelerating in Years 4 to 6 in some aspects of ICT although this does not apply to all elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study particularly control and modelling. Standards by the end of Year 2 meet expectations in word-processing, handling data and computer graphics. Pupils use the keyboard and mouse confidently and understand menus and icons. Pupils in both Year 1 and Year 2 know how to open a file and save their work and how to select different tools when using a graphics programme.
107. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Years 3 to 6 and achievement is above expectations in some aspects of ICT by the end of Year 6. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were making substantial gains in a range of ICT skills through working on a multi-media presentation involving the use of text, graphics and sounds and linking pages. Several examples were seen of very good word-processing in a range of contexts including writing stories, evaluating poems and scientific reports. Pupils throughout Years 3 to 6 demonstrate a good understanding of how to present text and modify its appearance for different effects and purposes. Pupils in Year 5 have completed substantial pieces of well-presented writing. In Years 3 and 4 good use has been made of digital photos and pupils have used computer graphics well.
108. The quality of teaching is good overall. Two good lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. All of the five lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 were good or better. All teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are planned well and a whole class input is time-tabled once a week in every class. Teachers are particularly skilled at introducing pupils to new skills and features of computer

programmes in a whole class situation. This is particularly noteworthy given that, at the time of the inspection, the previous small ICT suite had been dismantled and the school was awaiting the fitting of the new ICT suite, and, therefore lessons were based around single computers in classrooms. This method was successful because most teachers enabled several pupils to have a hands-on experience during the whole class discussions and all teachers provided very good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the discussions. Pupils were generally very interested and involved in lessons and some minor irritable behaviour, for example in Year 1, was managed well by the teacher. In Year 6 new techniques were taught extremely effectively and excellent links made with work in literacy. In one lesson in Year 4 all pupils learnt how to create and use columns in the style of a newspaper and this was new to most of them. However, in some lessons insufficient use was made of available support staff, although this is probably due to the current situation with regard to resourcing explained above. Teachers use displays effectively in the classrooms to support learning. Good use is being made of CD-ROM and the Internet to develop pupils' research skills and support work in other subjects such as design and technology and geography. Digital photographs are used well.

109. Leadership and management in ICT are satisfactory. The school uses a very good scheme of work developed in the local education authority based on the most recent national exemplar materials and the policy has been updated in 2001 taking account of national guidelines on inclusion. The school has found training through the New Opportunities funding very helpful in developing teachers' skills and the provision of the new ICT suite was understandably the main priority at the time of the inspection. The school has a good and rapidly developing web-site and is working towards the 'European Computer Driving License'. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 have their own files on computer and this is being extended to Years 2 and 3. The co-ordinator has started to collect examples of pupils' work for a subject portfolio to help teachers' in their planning and assessment. However, this is at an early stage of development and the arrangements for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do are not sufficiently formalised.

MUSIC

110. Pupils achieve standards, in composing and performing, that are above national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Music receives a very high profile throughout the school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school.
111. Teaching is very good overall. The quality of teaching observed ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Pupils in Year 2 listen very well and can distinguish between short and long notes and confidently repeat short musical patterns using a variety of rhythms. Very well planned group activities successfully develop pupils' awareness of different sounds and, for example, pupils create a sequence of long and short sounds using voices and instruments in response to instructions on a card. Listening skills were further enhanced during the playing of Chinese music when pupils confidently identified the musical instruments being used and their respective sounds - 'high' or 'low', 'short' or 'long'. Pupils respond with great enjoyment as well as responding to the different moods the music created. Pupils in Year 5 use a range of percussion instruments confidently, to demonstrate crescendo and diminuendo, accelerating and reducing a range of rhythms. Excellent class management strategies, for example using a pupil as a conductor and a 'traffic light system' to regulate volume, successfully create very enjoyable musical experiences for all pupils. Pupils listen to and evaluate each other's performance sensitively, acquiring new skills at a rapid rate to improve their own performance. Most pupils clearly match sounds and recitation with a very high level of confidence and expertise.
112. All pupils sing with great enjoyment and enthusiasm, in lessons, assemblies and school choir. Pupils are encouraged to play particular attention to the phrasing and singing in tune. The choir makes an excellent contribution to the singing in assemblies and at special events in the community. Pupils have the opportunity to broaden and extend their musical talents by receiving specialist tuition in brass. In the very good lesson observed in the Year 5 class, the level of pace and challenge promoted learning of the highest quality. Teachers give very clear instructions about the activity and share the lesson objectives with pupils. Very good class management, relationships and rates of productivity, plus the use of gentle humour, mean that time is used very productively. The lessons include planned opportunities for pupils to evaluate performance in order to refine and improve successfully. Plenty of 'hands on' experience results in good learning by all pupils. All pupils are enthusiastically offered the same opportunities, and pupils of differing abilities make similar progress with teachers successfully using intervention and question to check understanding and encourage original ideas. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and most listen carefully to their teachers. Behaviour is often exemplary and pupils handle musical instruments with care, collecting and returning them in a very responsible manner. Good opportunities exist for pupils to discuss the lives and works of famous composers, further underpinning knowledge and experience of similar types of music arranged by the same composer.
113. In school assemblies, music makes a major contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Highlights of this include a very firm multicultural dimension. The playing of music is very successfully used as a background for planned reflection during assemblies.
114. There is excellent management by a well-qualified, energetic co-ordinator who has clearly identified weaknesses and developed a clear scheme of work based on recent government guidelines. The co-ordinator is determined to develop a rigorous system of assessment that will inform future planning intentions more clearly. She is very energetic and presents all her lessons with considerable pace, challenge and obvious enjoyment. Pupils enjoy her gifted approach and make good progress. Resources are of good quality, easily accessible, and used very effectively in all lessons to gain pupils' motivation and enjoyment. At present there are not enough planned opportunities to support pupils' learning through the use of ICT.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This indicates a significant improvement from the previous inspection when gymnastics were judged to be below national expectations and progress was unsatisfactory.
116. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 generally work enthusiastically to improve the way they co-ordinate and control their bodies. They are aware of health and safety issues and use space effectively. This was particularly noticeable in the Year 2 class, where pupils worked co-operatively to pick up, carry, place and afterwards return gymnastic equipment carefully, safely and working as a team. Pupils in this class thoroughly enjoyed their lesson. They worked energetically in their warm up exercises and, throughout the lesson, used space effectively, watching the position of their peers and avoiding contact. During the lesson, pupils made good progress in handling different equipment, responding creatively to guidance on balancing on different body parts and working enthusiastically on sequencing different balances.
117. The work provided in Years 3 to 6 is of improved quality and the range of opportunities has increased. The gymnastic movements and ball skills, acquired by the age of seven, are built upon and pupils improve the quality of their gymnastic movements and their throwing and catching skills, both static and on the move. The pupils' co-ordination skills are developing extremely well and they work in pairs very well. Pupils understand why warm up and cool down exercises are necessary and they are eager to participate. Their knowledge of finding and using space in team games is developing well. Swimming is an important aspect of the physical education programme and in excess of ninety per cent of pupils succeeds in the 25 metres unaided swim and many achieve higher awards in personal proficiency. Standards in dance vary from satisfactory to excellent. Pupils respond to the beat of music, producing in pairs high quality mirrored movements, representing machinery or sporting activities according to their own interpretation of the music, and displaying imagination and creativity. Throughout the excellent lesson, pupils evaluate their work and the performance of others and offer suggestions how it may be improved. Pupils participate in athletics in the summer months using new equipment to develop their athletic skills safely, such as the javelin, discus and shot. In addition to lessons during the school day, the school provides opportunities for pupils to take part in other sports, such as cross-country running and short-tennis. Pupils identified as having particular abilities or potential attend the local Sports Centre for extra pre-school coaching. Pupils at the end of the key stage also have the opportunity to participate in residential experiences, which extends the physical activities programme.
118. Teaching is good overall, and varies from satisfactory to excellent. The co-ordinator supports the subject well and the staff work extremely well as a team to raise standards even further. The school uses the accommodation and available resources well. Assessment is undertaken in some aspects, such as swimming, and the co-ordinator is considering strategies to improve this area further. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject, dress appropriately, respond positively and participate enthusiastically, all of which are helping to raise the profile of this area.