

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. GREGORY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Farnworth, Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105244

Headteacher: Mr G Maloney

Reporting inspector: Mr G Alston  
20794

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 June 2003

Inspection number: 246463

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Presto Street Farnworth Bolton
Postcode:	BL4 8AJ
Telephone number:	01204 332659
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Fr. J. Clarke
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20794	Mr G Alston	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion Special educational needs English as an additional language English Design and technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19740	Mr A Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12232	Ms D Atkinson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science History Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14459	Mr G Owen	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Geography	How well is the school led and managed?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Gregory's is a Roman Catholic primary school that caters for pupils from four to eleven. It is situated in the centre of Farnworth. This is a below-average sized primary school with 199 pupils on roll: 86 boys and 113 girls. There are 30 children in the reception class. Children arrive at school reflecting the full range of attainment levels but, overall, the attainment on entry is below average. Pupils are organised into eight classes. The pupils come from a catchment area that has significant signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority owned estates to private dwellings. The majority of pupils are white, and a small minority come from Black-Caribbean and mixed-race backgrounds. No pupils are learning English as an additional language. There are 48 pupils (24 per cent) entitled to free school meals and a similar number on the register of special educational needs. The majority of pupils on the register have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. These percentages are higher than most schools. Two pupils have statements of special educational need, which is a similar proportion to that found in most schools. The most significant change since the last inspection is the re-building of the school and three changes in teaching staff.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school that enables pupils to achieve well in their academic and personal development. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. Nevertheless, standards in English and science are above average by the time pupils are eleven. Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to work and behave well. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and consistently good in some classes where pupils learn well. Leadership is good, but there are areas of management that need to be improved. The school ensures that pupils benefit equally from the provision. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- By the age of eleven, pupils achieve well in English and science, and results in national tests in 2002 were above average.
- The vast majority of pupils' behaviour is good. They form warm, sincere relationships, try hard with their work and accept responsibility well when they are given the opportunity.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- A good range of experiences in the infant and junior curriculum helps to develop pupils well spiritually, socially and morally.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and, with the support of a caring staff and a supportive governing body, continually strives to further improve the education the pupils receive.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in mental mathematics and problem solving by the ages of seven and 11.
- Standards in information and communication technology by the age of 11.
- Pupils' independent learning skills in English and mathematics are below expectations.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school.
- Strengthen the role of the senior management team, most subject co-ordinators and the governors in checking on how well the school is performing.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. There has been good improvement since that time. Standards at the age of 11 are higher, the quality of teaching is better and the curriculum is well planned. The accommodation is much better than it was at the previous inspection. Requirements are now met regarding the school's prospectus and the governor's annual report to parents. In addition, the strengths identified last time have been maintained. In relation to the key issues identified:

- standards in English and science at age 11 are much better than they were;
- provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology(DT) has significantly improved. Pupils make better progress and standards in ICT at seven are higher but not at age 11. There is no evidence to judge standards in DT;
- there has been a satisfactory improvement in the way the school is managed. However, there is still some way to go with this;
- there has been good improvement in the school's links with parents.

## 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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	B	B
Mathematics	C	C	C	C
Science	C	D	C	C

**Key**

Well above average    A

above average        B

Average                C

Below average        D

Well below average   E

Standards for 11 year olds in the 2002 national tests were above average in English and average in mathematics and science when compared both with schools nationally and with similar schools. Trends in results over the past four years are generally below average in English and average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who achieve the higher than average Level 5 is above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Boys do better than girls in national tests. Results have improved in English and science but not in mathematics.

Standards for seven-year-olds in the 2002 national tests were above average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. In the main, trends are average, but the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than average Level 3 is above average. There is no difference between how well boys and girls perform in tests. Test results show signs of improvement in reading and writing, but not in mathematics.

In relation to work seen during the inspection, children in Reception achieve well and will reach the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning and exceed them in their personal and social development by the end of the year. By the end of Year 2, standards are close to national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are not as high as in the 2002 test results because there is a greater percentage of pupils with special educational needs. By the end of Year 6, standards are above national expectations in English and science, and average in mathematics. This confirms the results in the 2002 national tests, except in science, where standards are better. Overall, pupils achieve well. Standards in English and science are high enough but not in mathematics, where pupils' mental and problem solving skills are the weakness. Other areas for improvement are in pupils' library skills. Across the school, standards in ICT meet national expectations at seven but remain below expectations at 11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of well-matched tasks given to them and the good support they receive from teaching assistants.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Almost all of the pupils are keen and interested. They show high levels of concentration and perseverance.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of pupils behave well. They are courteous to one another and to adults. There have been no exclusions recently.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form very good relationships with adults and peers. They are polite and respectful. Improvements are needed in helping pupils to become more independent in their learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The rate is similar to the national average. Levels of unauthorised absence are broadly average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the needs of all pupils are appropriately met. In all lessons seen, except one, the teaching was satisfactory or better. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when 25 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6 is particularly strong. The good features of the teaching in these classes are the high expectations of pupils, clear objectives of what the pupils are to learn, challenging tasks and the effective interaction of teachers with pupils as they work. Pupils learn well because they are interested in what they do and make a lot of effort. These qualities are not always present in all lessons in other classes, resulting in a variation in the quality of teaching across the school and in the subsequent progress that pupils make. In a minority of classrooms the amount of good and very good teaching is not high enough.

English is taught well, with a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills. Although these skills are taught effectively there is a lack of opportunities for pupils to further develop these skills in other subjects, for example in reading for information or extended writing. The teaching of mathematics is sound, but mental strategies are not taught effectively and pupils have limited opportunities to apply their knowledge in everyday, practical situations. The teaching of science is good because teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own investigations. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' scientific vocabulary. In all other subjects, where a judgement could be made, the teaching is satisfactory.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and their needs are met well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A good range of visits and visitors and activities outside lessons enrich pupils' learning experiences. Provision for personal, social and health education is effective. An area for improvement is the development of opportunities to increase independent learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Close liaison between the co-ordinator and class teachers leads to greater understanding of the needs of individual pupils. Specific support is effective and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Strong Catholic values are evident and the great majority of pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Collective worship is effective. Pupils are taught to be very aware of the less fortunate and to find ways to support them. An area for development is to improve pupils' knowledge of the multicultural society in which they live.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Child protection procedures are strong. There are Good procedures for monitoring attendance, behaviour and health and safety matters. Procedures for checking on what pupils have learnt are best in English, mathematics and science. However, these procedures are lacking in most other subjects.
Partnership with parents	Satisfactory. Appropriate level of communication, including annual reports of pupils' progress. Parents have positive views about the school and make a sound contribution to their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Leadership is effective and stronger than management. Areas for improvement are the delegation of responsibility to the senior management team and developing the roles of some subject co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. They are very supportive of the school and fully meet their responsibilities. However, they rely on the headteacher for information and have little input into shaping the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The aims of the school are expressed within a comprehensive statement about the school's priorities and form a sound basis for evaluation. Much of the evaluation of the school's performance is done successfully by the headteacher, and standards have risen.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Specific grants are used well. The school has adequate arrangements and practices to ensure that value for money is achieved in the purchasing of supplies and services.

The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The match of staff to the demands of the curriculum is good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The progress that their children are making.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The expectations the school places on pupils for hard work and achievement.</li> <li>• Leadership and management.</li> <li>• The way the school is helping their children to become more mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The homework pupils receive.</li> <li>• Out-of-school clubs.</li> <li>• The approachability of the school.</li> <li>• Information about how pupils are getting on.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the majority of parents' comments. In relation to the quality of teaching, it is clear that inspectors agree with parent's views in some classes, but not all, because in some the teaching is never better than a satisfactory standard. Furthermore, leadership is stronger than management. However, inspectors' judgements do not support those views where parents expressed concern. Homework is consistently set and supports pupils' learning. The school provides a better range of activities out of school than that found in most schools, and many pupils enjoy these sessions. Generally, staff are approachable and there are sufficient opportunities for parents to discuss how their children are getting on and there are appropriate annual written reports on their progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Taking into account the variation in levels of ability, standards seen in English and science and in most aspects of mathematics are satisfactory by the ages of seven and 11. However, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' skills in problem solving and their ability to answer mental questions are not high enough. Standards fluctuate from year to year but have risen since the previous inspection. This is because:
  - the quality of teaching has improved;
  - the school procedures for checking on how well pupils are doing are better;
  - target setting has raised teachers' and pupils' expectations.
2. Standards for seven-year-olds in the 2002 national tests were above average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. Although trends are average, but the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than average Level 3 was above average. There was no difference between how well boys and girls perform in tests. Test results show signs of improvement in reading and writing but not in mathematics.
3. Standards for 11 year olds in the 2002 national tests were above average in English and average in mathematics and science when compared with all schools nationally. When comparisons are made with similar schools the picture is the same. Trends in results over the past four years are generally below average in English and average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who achieve the higher than average Level 5 is above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Boys do better than girls in national tests.
4. There has been a good improvement in the issues raised in the last report. The school has effectively raised pupils' achievement in English and science in junior classes. Great strides have been made in information and communication technology although pupils at eleven still do not reach nationally expected standards. The school has provided effective support and training for teachers and developed a computer suite. As a result, pupils are making much better progress in this subject. It was not possible to judge standards in design and technology but the provision has improved significantly. The school has worked hard and introduced several new initiatives to try to raise standards in aspects of English, mathematics and science, but with little effect in mathematics. National test results in 2002 confirm this improvement by the age of seven and 11. The school almost met the targets it was set by the local authority in 2002 in national tests in English and mathematics. It has been set challenging targets for 2003 that it is likely to meet. The feeling of the parents is that they are happy with the standards that pupils achieve.
5. When children enter Reception their attainment varies with different groups of children and, in the past, their attainment has been below average when compared with that of children of a similar age. Most children have limited personal and social skills. Their communication and early mathematical skills are also underdeveloped and this affects their overall learning. The children currently in the reception class achieve appropriately and, by the time they reach Year 1, they should achieve the expected levels in all areas of learning, and exceed them in their personal and social development.

6. In relation to work seen during the inspection, by the end of Year 2, standards are close to national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve appropriately in mathematics and well in reading, writing and science; especially in Year 2. Standards are not as high as the 2002 test results indicate because of a greater percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 class. By the end of Year 6, standards are above national expectations in English and science, and average in mathematics, and this shows an improvement on the 2002 national test results. Pupils achieve appropriately in mathematics and well in English and science, especially in Years 5 and 6. Standards in English and science are high enough but not in mathematics, where pupils' mental and problem-solving skills are the weaknesses. Other areas needing improvement are pupils' library skills. In all other subjects, pupils meet national expectations, except in design and technology, where no judgement can be made.
7. In English, standards at seven are close to national expectations and above them by 11. Standards are at the expected level in speaking, listening and reading, and writing by the age of seven and above them by the age of 11. Throughout the school, listening skills are good and pupils' speaking grows increasingly confident over time. Pupils' basic reading skills are strong, and most pupils understand the books that they read. However, library and information gathering skills are not as good as they should be. Writing skills are high enough, particularly at the age of 11. There are strengths in:
  - the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation;
  - good use of vocabulary to create interesting pieces of writing;
  - how well pupils develop their ideas.
8. In mathematics, attainment at the age of seven and 11 is close to national expectations. Throughout the school, pupils achieve appropriately. Seven-year-olds have sound number skills, knowledge and understanding. Lower and a number of average attaining pupils have limited ability to recall number facts to 20. Their knowledge of multiplication tables and their ability to solve problems is also less secure. By the age of 11, pupils' mental arithmetic skills are satisfactory and many have developed strategies to calculate, but these are not secure with average and lower attaining pupils. The higher attaining pupils sequence decimals and fractions and understand numerator and denominator. Little evidence of investigative and problem solving work was seen and pupils have difficulty in understanding questions requiring the use of two or more operations when solving problems. There are shortcomings in:
  - the application of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to everyday practical problems;
  - the speed of mental calculations.
9. In science, seven year olds have levels of understanding that match national expectations in materials, plant life, animal life and forces. Most pupils know what makes a test fair and the highest attaining pupils predict the consequences of any unfairness in the testing. Eleven year olds build successfully on previous learning and they reach above nationally expected levels in understanding of chemical changes when materials are mixed, food chains at Formby nature reserve and the effects of conditions on plant growth. Pupils have good measuring and recording skills and know how to control a fair test. Overall, progress is good considering the low starting point for many pupils.
10. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is close to national expectations at the age of seven but below them by the age of 11. The improved provision and staff training has raised standards at seven but there has not been sufficient time for this to impact on standards at 11. At seven, pupils are confident in

the use of a computer and open programs, and follow instructions allowing them to use applications effectively. They are beginning to appreciate the impact of control technology in everyday life. At the age of 11, pupils have appropriate skills in word processing, and can save their own work, find information on a CD Rom, and use icons and menus. However, pupils knowledge of data handling, spreadsheets and control mechanisms are weak. In the main, progress is sound, considering that many pupils do not have access to a computer at home.

11. The school has made a good effort at introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Careful monitoring in English has enabled the school to modify the strategy to meet the needs of its pupils but this is less so in mathematics. Recent monitoring of the Literacy Strategy has identified weaknesses in handwriting and spelling, and a planned programme to address these issues is to be implemented. However, pupils' literacy skills are not given sufficient emphasis or further developed in other subjects in both infant and junior classes. There are few opportunities for them to write at length for different purposes in subjects, for example in geography, history or science. Likewise, there are limited opportunities for reading for information across subject areas. A similar picture emerges in mathematics, where limited use is made of pupils' numeracy skills to classify, compare and measure in other subjects. However, examples were seen in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, and science. Similarly, limited use is made of pupils' computer skills in other subjects, and computers in classrooms are under-used at times.
12. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. Class teachers assess their needs and progress, and discuss them with the special needs co-ordinator, who draws up and monitors the individual educational plans. This close co-operation and frequent reviews of pupils' targets contribute significantly to the good progress made by these pupils. A scrutiny of pupils' individual target plans and their work indicates that they make good progress. Pupils with statements of special educational need make good progress towards their targets.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Pupils' attitudes, respect for others and behaviour are good. Their relationships with adults, including visitors as well as school staff, are very good. Personal development, responsibility and initiative are good. The great majority of pupils are very interested and fully involved in the many activities provided by the school. Attendance is satisfactory. The quality of these aspects, in the last report, was considered to be generally good. Since the previous inspection, and taking account of significant changes to staff and the pupil population, the school has worked hard and successfully to maintain the quality of these aspects of pupils' development.
14. Almost all of the pupils are very interested in school life, particularly when the teaching is of high calibre. Pupils who have special educational needs have positive attitudes to school and are very well integrated into the school community. They relate very well to adults and consequently gain greatly in confidence and make good progress. The majority of school staff know their pupils very well and have the skills to deal positively with those pupils who have behavioural and emotional difficulties. Pupils are quick to settle to tasks and act in a responsible and sensible manner. They show good levels of concern for others and for property. The cleanliness of the school and lack of graffiti on the site demonstrate this. Pupils have developed a strong sense of ownership of their school and are quite protective of it. At break times, in the playground, the rubbish bins provided are used well by the pupils to deposit litter. In the Foundation Stage, the children are happy, enthusiastic, concentrate well and work with interest.

They play happily both indoors and outdoors, co-operate sensibly when sharing equipment and are suitably motivated. Children's attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good.

15. Pupils are happy to share with others and take turns. For example, the range of resources is shared well by even the youngest of pupils. In classes they listen respectfully to others' opinions and organise themselves well in working groups when the opportunity arises. For example, pupils in a Year 6 literacy lesson quickly and sensibly decided who would lead the group and cheerfully accepted joint decisions, even though they clearly all wished to leader. In the playground they understand and are happy to accept the sensible rules for safe play as they share the areas for different groups and ages. They are confident to give opinions. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils were confident enough to try and explain what skills a ventriloquist has, although several struggled with their communications and comprehension skills.
16. Discussions with pupils demonstrate that they feel safe in school. They have no concerns about bullying, sexism or racism. They feel fully included in all activities, whatever they wish to participate in. They know what to do if they do have worries of any kind and feel they would have no difficulty to approaching a member of staff for advice about any subject. Pupils know and accept the school's expectations regarding good behaviour and the overwhelming majority are happy to do their best to achieve them. The constant application of the behaviour policy reinforces pupils' positive experience of the value of adhering to correct rules. There have been three temporary exclusions recently in the school; these have been for unacceptable levels of behaviour.
17. The personal development of pupils is good. There are increasing opportunities to take responsibility as pupils get older. For example, the school's 'buddie system' provides Year 6 pupils with the opportunity to be responsible for younger ones. Pupils take their roles seriously and show sensitive care for others. They are eager to accept any responsibility offered. Individuals have clear duties, which they take seriously and complete in a responsible manner. For example, they manage entrance and exit doors at break and lunchtimes, and in classrooms they are proud to be selected to take messages about the school.
18. Attendance is satisfactory. This is due in part to the school's continual efforts to make further improvements. For example, there is an ongoing focus to improve attendance by impressing upon parents the value of full attendance and the punctual arrival at school of all pupils. The school has shown significant concern about the number of parents who remove their children for extended holidays during term time, and tries hard to deter this practice.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and this leads to sound achievement. All but one of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory. The standard of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen from 25 per cent to two per cent and the amount of good and better teaching has increased. Thirteen per cent of the teaching is very good. This confirms the positive views about teaching quality expressed by parents at their pre-inspection meeting with inspectors, and in the returned questionnaires. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching between classes, with the strongest teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6.

20. In the reception class, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Particular strengths include:
- the very good relationships between children and adults. For example in a 'sharing news' session the teacher created a warm learning environment and so the children were confident to offer their own experiences;
  - the good management of the children ensures that time is well spent and profitable. For example, good management in a lesson when the children explored pattern ensured that they completed the task well;
  - the effective partnership between the teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistants fosters a happy working atmosphere and an enthusiasm for learning.

Areas for improvement:

- more effective teacher's planning, for example:
    - long-term planning to give more detail about the topics;
    - medium-term planning to give more detail of the links between areas of learning, highlighting the depth and vitality of the programme;
    - short-term planning to give more indication of structure for free-play and the use of story so that it shows how children's learning will be moved on;
  - better procedures for checking and recording what the children can do and using this information to influence the short-term planning so that all children are sufficiently challenged.
21. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Apart from one lesson, all teaching seen in the inspection was satisfactory or better and was strong in Year 2. The particularly strong aspects in the teaching are:
- the very good teaching of basic skills. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the pupils were taught how to use the suffix 'ly' with different words, such as, quietly and suddenly. Pupils develop good skills that will help them in their reading and spelling;
  - teaching methods that challenge pupils. For example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, the teacher got the pupils to use small cubes to measure distances using non-standard measures. Pupils quickly gained an understanding of measuring and the higher attaining pupils began to estimate successfully;
  - very good pupil management. For instance, in a Year 2 art lesson, pupils responded well to clear instructions and interpreted expressively the samples of Aboriginal art they had seen into their own work.

The weaknesses in the teaching, particularly in Year 1, are:

- what pupils are to learn is not clear in the teachers' planning and, as a result, pupils are unclear in what they are trying to do. For example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson, the planning did not identify which skills pupils were to learn and, as a result, little progress was made;
  - weak subject knowledge. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, the pupils were unclear about what they were trying to find out in their investigation because the information the teacher had given them confused them;
  - lack of expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, in a Year 1 Literacy lesson the task was too easy for higher attaining pupils, who could easily write words such as fat, bad and sad.
22. The teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. The lessons observed range from very good to satisfactory. The strongest teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6, where most of the lessons were good or better. In the best lessons, the teacher's planning clearly links with previous work and sets out unambiguous intentions for pupils' future learning. For example, after reading an extract from Treasure Island, the teacher in a Year 5 Literacy lesson asked the pupils, 'What do you think will happen next in the story?' She then introduced a challenging task that involved finding clues in



the text to support pupils' predictions. In addition, common strengths in these lessons are:

- high expectations. Year 6 pupils successfully investigated how mixing materials can make things change;
- the wide variety of teaching methods. For instance, in a Year 6 art lesson, the teacher paired pupils, showed them a method of drawing, and used a good range of samples to emphasise teaching points.

The weaknesses in the teaching are:

- lack of expectations and as a result, the teacher over-directs the pupils. For example, in a science lesson the teacher showed the pupils how to carry their investigation into the effect of friction as a force;
- ineffective questioning of pupils resulting in pupils having little input into the lesson;
- lack of opportunities for pupils to be responsible for their own learning.

23. Across the school homework is adequate. The quality of marking is generally sound, but is better in Years 2,3, 5 and 6, where the comments are helpful and challenging.
24. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented soundly. The planning is faithful to the national guidelines, but improvements are needed in:
  - the teaching of pupils' mental and investigative mathematics skills;
  - pupils' library skills.
25. Throughout the school, teaching is good in English and science and is satisfactory in art, information and communication technology, geography, physical education, mathematics and music. There is not enough evidence to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in design and technology and history. Although the teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory there are too few opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subjects.
26. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good and is generally undertaken by the class teachers with the support of the special needs co-ordinator and the teaching assistants. Small numbers in classes help teachers to support these pupils well. Teachers are familiar with the process of identifying pupils who have special educational needs, and follow correct procedures. Targets are specific and teaching is appropriately focused. The teaching assistants who work with pupils who have special educational needs have very good relationships with the pupils and teachers. They work in conjunction with the teachers to raise standards and to ensure that all pupils gain full benefit from their lessons.

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

27. The curriculum is good. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the infants and juniors are good; well focused on what is relevant to pupils whilst ensuring sufficient depth and a balance between subjects. The curriculum for the reception class (the Foundation Stage) is satisfactory. This is appropriately grounded in national guidelines, with an emphasis on learning through play, but it lacks depth in some aspects, for example links between areas of learning are unclear.
28. The improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection are good. As a result:
  - schemes of work, based on national guidelines and modified to meet the special needs of the school, are in place across the school;
  - the provision for design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) is well structured;

- all statutory requirements are met;
- extra-curricular activities are wide ranging and vibrant;
- there is appropriate support for pupils who have special educational needs.

The strengths in the curriculum are:

- good schemes of work underpin English, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and science;
- subjects are presented in a way that is relevant and stimulating;
- there is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy;
- the strategies for teaching literacy are effective;
- equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good;
- the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good;
- the provision for personal, social and health education (including sex education and drug information) is good;
- the provision for extra-curricular activities is good;
- the community contributes well to pupils' learning, and relationships with local secondary and primary schools are good.

The main weaknesses are:

- strategies for teaching mental mathematics and problem solving are not fully effective;
- in some classes the schemes of work are implemented inconsistently. Planning for the youngest children sometimes lacks detail about content and structure;
- reading to obtain information, writing and various aspects of information and communication technology are not yet effective tools for learning in all other subjects;
- potential links between subjects are not exploited to the full.

29. English and science in particular demonstrate the impact that careful planning has had across the school. Pupils' writing is good by the time they reach eleven. In most classes it is quite well used to direct, record and comment evaluatively on the many science investigations. Pupils have little opportunity to use their reading skills or write at length in other subjects. ICT is used infrequently in science, for example, and then at a very basic level. In Year 5, the links between pop art and a history investigation of the decades since the 1950s have added relevance and richness to both subjects, illustrating the potential for such curriculum planning. Elements of personal, social and health education are effectively integrated into relevant aspects of science, physical education and religious education.
30. Those who are disaffected and not always able to manage their feelings efficiently benefit from the school's imaginative and effective approach. By focusing on pupils' interest and involvement in specific creative activities, the school is enabling them to take a far greater part in the traditional curriculum. High attaining pupils are now better challenged, as the emphasis on investigation and enquiry spreads from science to history, for example. Those pupils who need additional support and who have special educational needs are well integrated into all lessons. Their individual educational programmes and the appropriate review of progress and changing needs are appropriately handled. Teaching assistants are imaginatively deployed whilst the emphasis in many lessons on discussion and working collaboratively in a team or with a partner ensures that everyone is fully and gainfully included in all activities.

31. The school has made a concerted effort to enrich the curriculum further by providing a wide range of clubs and encouraging visitors. Choirs and instrumental tuition figure highly, whilst judo, gardening, sports and an ICT club are examples of the range on offer. Parents and people from the community join with staff to make these experiences happen. At the same time, all pupils gain much from well thought out and pertinent visits, which bring classroom lessons to life. Local nursery schools, a local primary school and a secondary school all enable pupils to benefit from a range of ventures. The Year 6 music and dance afternoon was highly stimulating and very demanding. The church is a very significant factor in broadening the spiritual and religious dimension of all pupils' lives.
32. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good.
33. The provision for spiritual development is good. Much of the opportunity to develop an understanding of spirituality stems from pupils' exploration of literature, art and music. The choral singing provides an opportunity to reflect on the beauty of the sound that they produce.
34. Moral and social development are very good. The school fosters these aspects very well. Across the school, pupils formulate their own rules and talk about the effect of their behaviour on others. The behaviour policy is consistently implemented. A very small number of pupils whose behaviour threatens to be anti-social at times are helped to manage their feelings. Although not always able to implement the suggestions, the trends are very positive. The moral development dovetails with social development. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities around the school, with older pupils caring for the youngest most effectively at the start of the school year and at lunchtimes. The process begins in the reception and is refined as pupils move through the school. Relationships are in most instances very good. The emphasis that many staff place on collaborative work further enables pupils to learn how to shape their wishes to fit with the majority. Geography and history provide contexts in which pupils can stand back and see how moral and social issues are ignored or acted upon. Year 6's study of Victorian England produced opportunities to reflect on such issues.
35. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Subjects such as art, literature, music and history are vehicles through which pupils explore both Western culture and local and British history. The reception class had Indian music playing in the role-play area, whilst Year 2 pupils looked at Aboriginal art. Although pupils may at times explore music and art from other cultures, this element is underdeveloped. There is limited exploration of other faiths and cultures in religious education. The new scheme gives this a much higher profile, but it is not yet operational.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. The school provides a supportive and caring environment for all of its pupils. In the previous inspection report the quality of this aspect was considered to be a strength of the school. However, there were weaknesses in assessment. The school has successfully placed a higher emphasis on monitoring pupils' academic progress. These systems are now considered to be sound.
37. The headteacher has undergone suitable training for child protection. He ensures that all staff are suitably aware of the current requirements as well as making certain they are regularly updated about specific cases. There are regular meetings with outside agencies, such as social services and education social workers as and when required. The school has sound procedures for the monitoring and improvement of behaviour. There are equally effective systems for eliminating oppressive behaviour, and for

checking on pupils' attainment and progress and personal development. The school has a helpful range of policies, which are successful in promoting race equality and harmony.

38. The school is effective in ensuring the health and safety of pupils. The welfare of pupils is a prime concern of the school staff. The school takes reasonable steps to ensure that their pupils are protected from offensive material when accessing the Internet or through undesirable contacts e-mails. There are fire drills at regular intervals and these are suitably recorded. There is a suitably qualified first-aider in the school. The staff are devoted to the positive care and support of the pupils under their supervision. The majority are generally very understanding and consistent in their warm, sensitive and supportive relationships, which they generate with pupils.
39. There are secure working procedures for checking on pupils' behaviour and dealing in a positive manner with any unsatisfactory behaviour. The school and classroom rules and guidance on how to behave, which pupils know and accept, are positive in the development of good levels of self-control, and respect for others and for property. The generally good levels of behaviour in classes and around the school are managed and supported by these procedures. The school's successful relationships formed between staff and the pupils make a strong foundation for trust and respect. The school's anti-bullying policy and elimination of oppressive behaviour are effective in ensuring the equal treatment of all.
40. Staff carefully record attendance and punctuality, which currently is a school focus towards improvement. The education social worker is accessible, should the need arise, for the school to make contact when their own efforts to resolve situations have failed to produce satisfactory results.
41. The testing and recording procedures of what pupils know, understand and can do are satisfactory. Pupils are regularly tested in English, mathematics and science. Information gained from testing is used appropriately either to plan work for groups of differing levels of attainment or to identify the right group for individual pupils. Systems of testing and record keeping are not in place in most other subjects. The exceptions are information and communication technology and history, where procedures have just been introduced. In these subjects, the records reflect what pupils have learnt in their lessons based on the intentions the teacher set. Consequently, information about individual pupil's achievements is sufficiently detailed and easily accessible to teachers. As a result, teachers have a clear picture of what pupils know and understand, and of the skills they have in these subjects. This helps teachers in planning the next stage of learning by building on the work pupils have learnt in the previous lessons. The school has plans to develop this practice into all subjects, in a planned programme of curriculum development.
42. The school effectively carries out national testing when pupils are aged seven and 11 and successfully analyses of these results. This information has been used to identify areas for improvement, for example:
  - in English, spelling and handwriting were identified as areas for improvement;
  - in mathematics, pupils' skills in solving problems.As a result, planned programmes of improvement are being introduced. Pupils are tested each year in Years 3, 4 and 5 using commercial tests, and the results are used to track individual pupil progress. This information is used sufficiently well, for example in setting group or individual targets for pupils. Test results when children first enter the school are carefully analysed but are not always used effectively to plan sessions to meet the needs of all children. Similarly, recording of what children achieve throughout the reception class lacks detail in most aspects of children's development. The school

is aware of this and is an area planned for development. Most teachers use appropriate marking procedures. Work is regularly marked, but a minority of teachers do not give constructive comments or suggest ways in which work can be improved.

43. The school uses appropriate procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers judge pupils' progress and, if there is need for intervention from an outside agency, the special needs co-ordinator contacts the appropriate agency for more specialist support. The co-operative approach in meeting pupils' special needs is a positive feature of the school provision, contributing well to the academic and personal development of these pupils.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

44. The school has good links with its parents. In the previous inspection report the quality of this aspect was noted as good. Parents have a very positive opinion of the school as signified by analysis of parents' completed questionnaires and their comments at the pre-inspection meeting. The analysis of parents' responses to the questionnaire and their comments at the pre-inspection meeting reflect a very positive opinion of the school. The school now has good social and news links with parents and, in these aspects, parents are well informed.
45. There are regular newsletters sent out that contain information about various aspects of school life. They detail some of the many social events that are going on in school. However, they do not sufficiently publicise or praise the achievements and awards gained by pupils. They are consistent in style, easy to read and promote a positive atmosphere of openness and honesty. The school does not currently produce a detailed termly topic information sheet for each class that could help those parents who want to further support their children's learning at home. Annual pupil reports to parents identify what the pupils can do. They are suitably detailed and set future targets for pupils to aim for. There are termly meetings between parents and teachers to discuss how well pupils are doing, as well as the school's 'open-door access', which welcomes all into the school. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed about how their children are achieving. They take an active part when discussions are held on the progress their children are making towards the targets set in their individual plans.
46. The school appreciates the positive contribution of parental involvement in school. It tries hard to develop this through reminders and invitations to parents and carers. It welcomes them into school whenever they are available to offer help, such as supporting work in classrooms. There is a good quality core of regular parents who help in school that is beneficial to all. The school holds meetings for parents to support its strong belief in the value of promoting parents' understanding of teaching and learning in today's primary school. There is a 'Friends Association' that provides valuable additional funding raised through parental involvement. Additionally, the school is effective in organising social events involving activities for the benefit of pupils, school, parents and the community.
47. The parents' meeting with the registered inspector and analysis of the questionnaires shows that there is a high level support for the school from parents and the community. The majority of parents were happy with most aspects of the school and felt that:
  - children like school;
  - behaviour is good;
  - children make good progress and the teaching is good.The areas a small number of parents would like to see improved were:

- the provision of more information;
- greater parental involvement;
- additional extra-curricular activities;
- more consistency in homework.

Inspectors agree with the great majority of positive comments. In relation to the quality of teaching, it is clear that inspectors agree that the quality of teaching is good in some classes, but not all, because in some classes the quality of teaching is never better than satisfactory. However, inspectors' judgements do not support the views where parents expressed concern. Homework is consistently set and supports pupils' learning. The school provides a range of activities out of school that is better than that found in most schools, and many pupils enjoy these sessions. Generally, staff are approachable and there are sufficient opportunities for parents to discuss how pupils are getting on and an appropriate annual report on pupils' progress.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48. The headteacher provides good leadership for the school. He is committed to improving standards and he has a clear vision for future developments. There is a clear and supportive mission statement and a list of school aims, and their influence can be seen in the day-to-day work of the school. The strong Catholic ethos contributes to a supportive climate and to a shared understanding of the school's purpose. The headteacher enjoys the full confidence of staff, parents and governors and the caring atmosphere within the school leads to relaxed and confident relationships.
49. The management of the school is sound. A senior management team has recently been formed and they are becoming increasingly involved in the leadership and management of the school. Due to significant levels of staff turnover, roles and responsibilities have, of necessity, been reassigned regularly as staff leave and new staff are appointed. Consequently, much of the work in checking on how well the school is performing and evaluating the work of the school has been undertaken by the headteacher, with some support from his deputy. This has led to a rise in standards, particularly in English and science. A more stable staffing situation now exists and the headteacher is beginning to devolve more management tasks to key staff.
50. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the issues raised about the management of the school in the last report. The role of co-ordinators was identified as an area for development. There have been improvements but further improvements are still needed. Staff changes have affected the spread of improvement. Planning has been significantly improved and provides a sound framework for teaching. It includes long, medium and short-term plans. Many of these are based on national guidance and are adapted by teachers to suit the needs of particular pupils. Co-ordinators have an overview of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and satisfactory procedures are in place to ensure their effective implementation. All staff have clearly defined roles and the headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly monitor the quality of teaching. Both written and oral feedback is provided. This has helped raise the quality of teaching, especially where it had been unsatisfactory in the past.
51. Most co-ordinators now take an active role in the management of their subjects and areas. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science now monitor planning and the results of national testing. In the best examples, teachers are informed of strengths and weaknesses and the action necessary to improve. At the time of inspection this good practice was not consistent throughout the school. Information was not always used to identify where additional help could be given and where improvements could

be made. In some instances, co-ordinators are still not having sufficient impact on raising standards, for example in geography and music. Several co-ordinators are inexperienced. They do not have the skills and are unsure about how to fulfil their role effectively. Good practice was seen in English and information and communication technology, where effective monitoring has identified key areas for improvement. Clear action plans have been established and standards are beginning to rise.

52. The strategic planning for the school is good. The school development plan incorporates a long-term view of developments and forms the foundation for more detailed action plans. These identify priorities for the short term and contain clear targets with costs, personnel and success criteria identified. Targets are generally appropriate and focus on the need to continue to improve standards in mathematics and information technology as well as extending the monitoring role of co-ordinators.
53. The management of the provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is experienced and liaises closely with the class teachers and teaching assistants to give pupils the extra assistance required for them to make progress and to be fully integrated into the life of the school. Pupils who have statements of special educational need receive their entitlement to extra support. The administrative work is up to date and monitored regularly by the co-ordinator. However, the co-ordinator has not been able to monitor the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs in the classrooms. As a result, she lacks a clear picture of the strengths of the provision and where there are any areas needing improvement.
54. Several governors are relatively new to their role. They are a very supportive group and there is a satisfactory committee structure in place. All statutory duties are now met. This was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. Regular checks are made on the school buildings and grounds to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements. Financial information is received through the finance committee, which meets regularly, as do the other committees. There is now an agreed protocol by which governors make contact with curriculum co-ordinators in order to become more informed and to provide written feedback to governors' meetings. This policy is in the early stages of implementation. Consequently, governors are beginning to develop a more secure knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They rely heavily on the headteacher for information. It is through the information made available to them by the headteacher that they fulfil their responsibility to monitor standards and to hold the school to account. However, the governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is unsatisfactory. They have little involvement in development planning through deciding their own priorities on how the school should move forward.
55. Performance management procedures have been fully implemented and they include teaching and non-teaching staff. The procedures for the induction of new staff are satisfactory and newly qualified teachers receive good support. Currently there is one newly qualified teacher and one that has recently completed the training year. Both have been well supported by senior staff and the headteacher.
56. The school's use of information and communication technology for administrative and management purposes is satisfactory. New software to track pupils' progress has recently been introduced and is helpful in providing information about how well pupils are doing. The match of teaching staff and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is good. The quality and suitability of the accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are of a reasonable size, with a good range of pupils' work on display. The multi-purpose hall is used for assemblies, lunchtime and indoor physical education lessons. Play areas provide reasonable space. However, the outside play area for the reception

children is unsatisfactory and lacks large play equipment. The school benefits from a recently installed information and communication technology suite and shares a space with the school library. This arrangement is unsatisfactory as lessons are often interrupted. Seating arrangements are currently unsatisfactory, and the room is poorly ventilated and becomes uncomfortable for pupils when all the computers are switched on.

57. Learning resources are generally satisfactory to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, there is a lack of good quality, and a limited range of reading books, both in the library and in classrooms. The range of software for information and communication technology is adequate and is being supplemented by funds from the parent support group (CHIPS).
58. The quality of financial planning is good. Appropriate use is made of funds, including those allocated for special educational needs and those for the additional training of staff. The management of the school promotes inclusion on a day-to-day basis well. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school currently manages a deficit budget with the approval of the local authority. This short-term arrangement agreed to avoid the need for compulsory redundancies. Projected planning indicates that the situation will be resolved within the next two years, and the school will be managing a balanced budget. Financial resources are appropriately directed to support the priorities identified in the school development plan and day-to-day control systems are good. The school's financial position is reported to the governors each term. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

59. In order to move the school forward and build upon the good improvements made since the last inspection, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
  1. further raise standards in:
    - mathematics by improving pupils skills in solving problems and their ability to answer mental questions confidently and competently;
    - information and communication technology by:
      - improving pupils' understanding and knowledge of spreadsheets, databases and control technology;
      - developing opportunities that pupils have to use and develop their ICT skills in all subjects, in order to further raise standards in these subjects.

(Paragraphs: 1,6,8,10,83,119)

  2. improve the quality of teaching to that seen in the best lessons by ensuring there is a consistent approach across the school to:
    - the high expectations that teachers have of their pupils;
    - the good relationships that teachers have with their pupils;
    - how well teachers question pupils in the lessons;
    - how clearly teachers' planning identifies what pupils are to learn;
    - the opportunities that pupils are given to be responsible for their own learning;
    - the opportunities for pupils to contribute to discussions;and to improve further the teaching in the Foundation Stage by:



- refining the planning, particularly of the structured play;
- improving the use of assessment to shape tasks and measure progress in all activities.

(Paragraphs: 19,20,21,22,27,62)

3. increase opportunities for pupils to learn independently by:
  - improving pupils' library skills;
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to read for information or write at length in all subjects;
  - increasing the amount of investigative work and problem-solving in mathematics;
  - developing a well-resourced library.

(Paragraphs: 8,11,24,28,29,74,78)

4. improve the management of the school by further developing and improving the effectiveness of:
  - the senior management team by a greater sharing of management responsibilities,
  - some subject co-ordinators by:
    - providing comprehensive training for co-ordinators in lesson observation, analysis of pupils' work and data analysis;
    - providing sufficient time for co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in those subjects they lead and manage ;
    - developing action plans that will fully contribute to the effectiveness of the school development plan.
  - the governors in checking on how well the school is performing and in the strategic planning of the development of the school.

(Paragraphs: 49,50,51,54,127)

#### OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Provide appropriate outdoor play facilities for the Foundation Stage. (Paragraphs : 56,60,68)
- Spread the satisfactory assessment procedures the school has in place to all subjects. (Paragraph 41)
- Improve the provision to make pupils aware of the multicultural society in which they live. (Paragraph 35)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	15	25	1	0	0
Percentage	0	13	31	54	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	199
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	48

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	46

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### 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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	10	16	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	22	23	24
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	85 (81)	88 (81)	92 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	23	22	24
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	85 (85)	92 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	13	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	11	10	12
	Total	22	21	25
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	81 (74)	78 (68)	93 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	9	12
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	23	20	24
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	85 (79)	74 (85)	89 (91)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
162	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	145

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
	£
Total income	475,884
Total expenditure	492,884
Expenditure per pupil	2,464
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,874
Balance carried forward to next year	-8,126

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.2
<hr/>	
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

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	34

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	32	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	32	3	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	44	6	9	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	41	21	6	3
The teaching is good.	56	41	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	55	21	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	36	8	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	18	47	32	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	32	53	0	6	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	44	6	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	32	24	9	9

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

60. The reception class provides children with a sound start to their education. Children enter the school on a full-time basis at the beginning of the year in which they reach five. Overall, the provision is satisfactory although:
- the reception classroom is quite small for 30 children and does not lend itself easily to all aspects of learning, as there is no obvious area for 'messy' play;
  - a small outside area with a safe surface has been created but the school has not yet planned how it is going to use this or identified the equipment needed;
- Since the last inspection, the school has successfully established the Foundation Stage. The basic planning conforms to the national guidelines. The reception class teacher was absent for the last two inspection days. This limited effective lesson observations and further discussion of the documentation.
61. Children enter the school with a wide range of attainment but their attainment is below that expected for their age. A significant number have speech problems. They make at least satisfactory progress across all areas of learning and good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. By the end of the reception year many have achieved the level expected for their age in all areas of learning and exceed them in their personal and social development. A few are capable of work at Level 1 of the National Curriculum National Curriculum levels.
62. The teaching is satisfactory. The strengths in the teaching are:
- the staff work well together as a team;
  - relationships with the children are very good;
  - particular attention is given to children's personal and social development;
  - the teaching of sounds and letters is given a high priority.
- The areas for development are:
- improved teachers' planning focusing on :
    - long-term planning to give more detail about the topics;
    - medium-term planning to give more detail of the links between areas of learning, highlighting the depth and vitality of the programme;
    - short-term planning: to give more indication of structure for free-play and the use of story so that it shows how children's learning will be moved on;
  - more effective checking on what children can do or have learnt and using ongoing assessment to influence the short-term planning, so that individual children are sufficiently challenged.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

63. Teaching is good. Relationships between children and with adults are good because the whole ethos in the room is one of working together. Adults address the children with courtesy and respect, which fosters an atmosphere of trust. Carpet-time sessions, frequently used for whole class teaching, occur several times each day. Children are used to finding and selecting their own resources. Behaviour is very good. It is clear that children understand the simple routines underpinning the daily organisation, share and take turns. They fulfil their teacher's expectations.
64. The following examples typify the reception experience:
- children were keen to share information from home. They listened well to the teacher and each other;

- at snack time, individuals enthusiastically took responsibility for handing round the 'eats' and pouring out drinks;
- at regular times in the day, groups of children selected their own activities. The saris and a few brass artefacts drew them to the role-play area. After dressing up, spoken language sustained their collaboration at a basic level of play;
- adults used their time effectively, ensuring a balance between whole class, group and independent activities. This helped children to sustain their concentration and interest. An adult presence was always most welcome.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

65. Teaching is satisfactory. Speaking and listening is stressed, enabling those who have speech problems to hear and use language regularly. The teacher regularly focuses on letters and sounds and, as a result, most children can identify quite a few. The most able use this knowledge in some aspects of reading and writing, whilst others find it more difficult to use and apply their knowledge. Stories and big books are underused as a context for exploring and developing reading skills. There is plenty of evidence of class efforts with sounds and letters, but no shared class stories or examples of the teacher writing simple stories at the children's direction. There is little stimulating writing around the room to move children's writing on. The following examples provide a flavour of the experiences:

- carpet time provided the opportunity to talk about Hindus and to learn new words;
- most children were happy to try writing about their holiday and write about their holiday. The higher attainers started, "During my holiday I .... ". Some words were identifiable and children used their phonic understanding effectively, but words were seldom demarcated. Others underwrote, copying the adult's writing. Many make an attempt at writing their name;
- photographs show children sharing books but the book area was not a first choice activity;
- children worked with adults on sound and letter worksheets;
- a number of the children were able to read a range of the high frequency words from 'their tin'. Some did not always recognise these when they occurred in a book, or read for meaning, or used picture information to help.

### **Mathematical development**

66. Teaching is satisfactory. The teacher is more confident in the class-teaching element of the lesson. She found interesting ways in which to encourage children to think about patterns. She encouraged them to draw on their knowledge of shapes, and gave them time to put their ideas into words, helping those who were less fluent. Symmetrical patterns were introduced as a development later in the week. Tasks, planned to fit with the class-teaching element, are not always sufficiently structured and, as a result, children are occupied rather than challenged. Adults did not always notice this. Mathematical ideas are not very evident in children's free play. The following examples illustrate the children's responses during the inspection week:

- the better tasks, such as those using the logi blocks, provided opportunities for the adult to increase the complexity of the challenge;
- during pattern-making activities, very few children instinctively stopped and counted how many beads or pegs they had used;
- children were interested in the patterns in fabrics, especially the more exotic ones on saris. They understood that the pattern was repeated in a particular order;
- lower-attaining children found it hard to sustain the creation of a regular pattern;



- workbooks show that children work on number regularly as pencil and paper exercises. A few of the higher attaining children work on the early stages of the National Curriculum.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the world**

67. Teaching is satisfactory. It is at its best when exciting activities such as the visit of the vet and dog spark the children's curiosity and the range of follow-up activities allows for further explorations and imaginative play. How all this develops is not clearly identified in the planning and there is limited evidence in photographs or the children's own books of previous experiences. Children use construction materials and a good collection of bricks. The computer is on all day. The following examples illustrate some of the most exciting themes and activities over the year:
- the book 'Rosie's Walk' enabled the teacher to explore the early stages of mapping;
  - as part of their exploration of Hindu life, children tasted chapattis, chutney and Indian sweets. They showed a willingness to experiment;
  - in the autumn, they talked about themselves and their families, developing an awareness of how they had changed;
  - boys in particular, relish opportunities to use the computer. They collaborate well. Their mouse skills are good;
  - photographs show children engrossed in building the 'Great Wall of China'. It demonstrates their imagination and developed from their work on the Chinese New Year.

### **Physical Development**

68. Teaching is satisfactory. A lack of outdoor equipment limits provision and the quality of teaching in this area. However, the teacher has made good use of two weekly periods in the school hall. She has ensured that children fully understand the routines necessary for safety. The following examples demonstrate what children can do: children demonstrate a confident and sensible use of space;
- they have a good awareness of safety rules and of how to move large equipment;
  - they displayed imaginative approaches to ways of climbing on, travelling across and dismounting from large equipment;
  - children's hand-eye co-ordination is good. They handle everyday tools such as paintbrushes, pencils and scissors well.

### **Creative Development**

69. Teaching is satisfactory. There is very limited classroom space for extensive opportunities to explore paint and the techniques for applying it. The easel is continually out. It is not clear how many experiences and skills the children have been introduced to. Rhymes and music are regular features of the day, including access to musical instruments. The teacher successfully encourages children to use their own ideas and imagination. She ensures that there is provision for role-play in the classroom. The following reflects evidence collected over time:
- the individual portraits on the wall are typical of young reception children. They have made progress since their early efforts, recorded in September;
  - the collage, 'Down by the Cool of the Pool' includes children's efforts;
  - there is very little photo evidence of children using paint, other than in bubble printing;
  - children have easy access to different textured material and small objects;

- role-play and dressing up are very popular activities. The clothes do not influence the nature of the play. Children found it hard to get through the tunnel when they had put on clothes of their choice. The desire to wear the clothes won!

## ENGLISH

70. Standards reach national expectations at age seven and exceed them by the age of 11. These standards for seven year olds are below those attained in the 2002 national tests and that is because there are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. However, the standards for 11-year-olds match the 2002 national test results, and are above average when compared with similar schools. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the work seen.
71. In the main, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1, 3 and 4 and good in Years 2, 5 and 6. The evidence from the analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils' writing makes good gains from Year 1 to Year 6, particularly in the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation. However, pupils have weaker skills in finding information for themselves. The rate of progress is not uniform across the school and is better in Years 2, 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6.
72. These findings show an improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The rate of achievement is better and the school has made important gains in relation to reading and writing. The quality of teaching is better in Years 1 and 2 and much better in Years 3 to 6.
73. By the ages of seven, standards in speaking and listening are similar to the nationally expected level at seven, and above it by 11. As they move through the school, pupils listen with growing attention and concentration. This developing strength is seen in a variety of settings, for instance assemblies, lessons in all subjects and in less structured situations, such as on the playground. Pupils state their opinions well and justify them with growing confidence. They present their work at the end of lessons, or in assemblies, to ever widening audiences. There is evidence of good growth in the use of technical language in subjects such as:
- science;
  - mathematics;
  - art.
74. Standards in reading at ages seven are around the expected level and above it by 11. Across the school, the strengths are:
- good basic skills; pupils know letter sounds and can use these sounds to sound out words they do not know;
  - seven year olds are developing good expression in their reading but most do not know how to find books classified by alphabetical order;
  - eleven year olds have a wide vocabulary, understand their books and talk at length about the characters;
  - the majority of pupils have good attitudes to reading.
- Throughout the school, higher attaining pupils show very good expression when reading, particularly the direct speech. The main area for development is improving on the weaker library and information gathering skills. This shortcoming is part of a wide difficulty with independent learning skills.

75. Standards in writing at age seven are around the expected level, and above them by 11. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have neat, legible and printed handwriting. The higher attaining pupils spell accurately and are becoming skilled at writing adjectives, such as 'hilarious'. Punctuation skills are improving. Writing style is straightforward and simple, but there is little evidence in other subjects of pupils writing at length, for example in geography, history or religious education. The highest attaining seven year olds have good ideas that they develop logically and provide the reader with interesting thoughts and words. For example a seven-year-old pupil wrote a poem titled 'I don't like...' beginning, '*I don't like bears that give me the scares, I don't like the place that's under the stairs.*'
76. By the age of 11, basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are generally good and accurate. The majority of eleven-year-olds are already accomplished writers. The highest attaining pupils show good skills whilst seeking to entertain and inform, such as the pupil who wrote '*My love, Bess, was graceful as a dove on the purple moor, more beautiful than a swan swimming on a pool of roses*'
77. The style of writing creates interest, with richness in the vocabulary. For example, there is good use of adjectives and adverbs to give colour to the writing. Effective work is seen in poetry, where humour and vividness are present. Commendably, the lower attaining pupils are developing an improved style that includes writing complex sentences, such as, '*While the Highwayman was talking to Bess, Tim the Ostler was spying on her and him*'.
78. The development of literacy skills is unsatisfactory. This is because there is a lack of opportunity for pupils to use and develop their reading and writing skills in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. The teaching of the Literacy Strategy varies in quality and is generally good through Year 2, and through Years 5 and 6. There are some useful pieces of work that have benefited from information and communication technology (ICT). For example, drafting and re-drafting of writing in comparing old style language in *Treasure Island*. However, opportunities for pupils to use ICT are limited.
79. In the main, the quality of teaching is good. However, this masks judgements of very good teaching in Year 2 and satisfactory teaching in Year 1, good teaching in Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory teaching in Years 3 and 4. The quality of individual lessons ranges from very good to satisfactory, with the majority of lessons being good. In the good and very good lessons, the strengths of teaching include:
- good development of basic skills, such as the recognition of single-letter and blended sounds in words;
  - teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding, which means that pupils are presented with work that is well-matched to their levels of attainment;
  - good questioning that directs pupils to recognise how writers use words to create feelings in the reader, for instance, "What kind of ways do writer's make us feel scared?" Pupils respond 'through changing the setting or by creating suspense'.
- In Year 2, the teacher showed very good practice when she intervened effectively with a group of higher attaining pupils as they compared two stories written by Colin McNaughton. In Years 5 and 6, the best lessons have very good pace and strong use of technical vocabulary. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the lesson moved swiftly from reading a piece of text from *Treasure Island* into character analysis and predicting what might happen next. Pupils appreciate this approach and are fully engaged. For these strengths to be present, the teachers have to be very secure in their subject knowledge and lesson planning.

80. In the less effective lessons, teachers' explanations are not always clear and so pupils become confused about the task and what they need to do. In other lessons, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough and there are too few opportunities for pupils to express their ideas in the oral part at the start of the lesson. Areas for development are:
- more opportunities for pupils to read and write in all subjects;
  - more fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms and in the library.
81. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She provides good support and guidance for staff. Her effectiveness is enhanced by the opportunity to monitor teachers' planning and how the subject is taught. Monitoring has identified areas for improvement, such as handwriting and spelling. The school focused on how it could improve pupils' skills in this area, and this has been successful in raising standards. Although the school has effectively implemented the Literacy Strategy there are still areas for improvement to resolve, for example in planning opportunities to further develop pupils' literacy skills across all subjects. There are sound systems for assessment in place that provide a clear picture of pupils' achievements. Pupils are set individual targets that provide a focus on what they need to do to improve the standard of their work; for example, 'check my work carefully for full stops or use more interesting words in my writing'. A strength of the provision is the support given in lessons from teaching assistants. Resources for reading are inadequate. There is no effective library where pupils can find information for themselves and there is a lack of books in the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

82. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests in mathematics at age seven were below the national average, and below those achieved in similar schools. Inspection evidence and the projected results in national tests for the current year, however, show that standards are in line with the national average. These findings reflect those of the previous inspection. Standards achieved by age 11 are also in line with the national average and with those achieved in similar schools. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below that found nationally and they generally make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Class teachers are aware of their needs and provide work that is well matched to their abilities. They make particularly good progress when an additional adult supports them.
83. Standards throughout the school are now improving, especially in Years 2, 5, and 6, where the quality of teaching is consistently good. The strengths in the subject are:
- the school has carefully planned the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy that has led to a more structured approach to the teaching;
  - there have been improvements in teachers' planning. These now include long-, medium- and short-term plans and represent a significant improvement from the previous inspection;
  - there is a strong focus on developing pupils number skills;
  - pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons.
- Areas for development are:
- there is evidence in pupils' books and on display showing work on measurement, weight, capacity and on classifying two-dimensional shapes. This work is, however, less frequent than number work and often is not sufficiently challenging;
  - data-handling work is limited and, with the older pupils, often amounts to simple interpretation of data from lists and block graphs;
  - the use of information and communication technology to support the development of mathematics is too infrequent;

- mental and oral sessions are used at the beginning of each lesson, and with the exception of Year 2, the questions asked and the areas of mathematics covered are too narrow, focusing primarily on addition and subtraction of number. Often the work is not well matched to pupils' levels of attainment, and the higher attaining pupils are not challenged in these sessions;
  - there is not enough work on the everyday application of mathematics, and pupils are less confident in this aspect.
84. At age seven, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the good mental work given to them is having a positive impact on standards. For example, the pupils in one lesson were invited to close their eyes and to visualise a rectangle. They were then asked to imagine cutting the shape in half and asked to draw, and then show what they had left. The exercise was repeated several times with different shapes, finishing with pupils being asked to imagine cutting the corners from a triangle and to draw what they had left. Most were able to correctly name and draw a hexagon. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils have a clear understanding of the value of numbers and they can carry out simple calculations accurately. Many understand the importance of patterns and know the difference between odd and even numbers. Lower and a number of average attaining pupils have limited ability to recall number facts to 20. Their knowledge of multiplication tables and their ability to solve problems is also less secure.
85. By the age of 11, pupils' mental arithmetic skills are satisfactory and many have developed strategies to calculate, but these are not secure with average and lower attaining pupils. Opportunities offered at the start of lessons are not sufficiently broad to develop mental skills further. Higher-attaining pupils carry out written calculations accurately and have a sound knowledge and understanding of number facts. They recognise basic two-dimensional shapes and many are beginning to define them by reference to their properties. The majority of pupils identify parallel lines, right angles and triangles. Most have a sound grasp of place value and, when asked to make the largest number possible with four digits, they reason 'the highest number needed to be in the thousands column'. The higher attaining pupils sequence decimals and fractions, and understand numerator and denominator. Little evidence of investigative and problem-solving work was seen. Pupils have difficulty in understanding questions requiring the use of two or more operations when solving problems.
86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and some good lessons were seen. The most effective teaching was characterised by:
- detailed planning clearly defining the mental starters, main activities and reflection at the end of the session on what has been learnt;
  - clear targets that were shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson, enabling them to better assess their own progress;
  - confident subject knowledge of the teacher;
  - brisk pace that is maintained throughout, capturing pupils' interest;
  - good questions that challenged and extended pupils' thinking;
  - work selected to suit all abilities in the group and care taken to involve all;
  - good use of teaching assistants;
  - good balance between mental activity, teacher input and pupils' independent work;
  - positive behaviour management that motivates and involves pupils.
- Less effective elements in lessons judged to be satisfactory included:
- inconsistent pace and some activities not sufficiently demanding;
  - over reliance on published scheme of work;
  - teacher explanations that were not always effective and some missed opportunities to develop learning.

87. Behaviour in mathematics lessons was good and the relationships between teachers and pupils were positive and supportive. In one lesson low-level disruption and some over-boisterous behaviour was not well managed, and was allowed to distract and disrupt the learning of others. Day-to-day assessment is satisfactory and the marking of pupils' work is consistent and encouraging, but it rarely indicates to pupils what they need to do next in order to improve further in some classes. Pupils requiring additional support are always identified and appropriate work is provided.
88. There is a satisfactory curriculum, and mathematical skills are used and developed at times in other areas of the curriculum. For example:
- in history, pupils in junior classes use a timeline to chronicle events and record significant changes in society;
  - in geography, the development of mapping skills to fix the position of places accurately using scale, and understanding co-ordinates, is linked well to work in mathematics;
  - pupils use their information and communication technology skills to record and display in a range of formats data collected in surveys.
- The development of mathematical vocabulary in all classes makes a positive contribution to the literacy development in the school.
89. The subject co-ordinator is interested and enthusiastic, and has a positive impact on the development of the subject throughout the school. Plans are checked and analysed, as are the results of national and school-based tests. Following this, written advice is provided for teachers, identifying the strengths and weaknesses in each class. However, this advice is not followed up rigorously in order to ensure that improvements are made throughout the school. The school is focusing on improving pupils' problem solving skills but there is inconsistency between classes in the quality of work in this area. A lack of opportunity to see the subject being taught restricts the co-ordinator's view of consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. Resources are adequate and there is a range of practical equipment available in each classroom. Homework is used effectively to support learning.

## SCIENCE

90. Standards are in line with those expected nationally at seven. They are above expectations for pupils aged 11. Pupils achieve well. The improvement since the last inspection is good because:
- teaching is better and standards at 11 are now better than the national average;
  - investigation and scientific method underpins all the effective teaching;
  - the scheme of work is carefully thought out and is well established.
- The main strengths in the subject are:
- effective investigative work in most classes in both infants and juniors;
  - good or very good teaching and learning in most classes;
  - that the range and depth of the subject matter, particularly at the top end of the school is good;
  - that pupils collaborate well on investigations;
  - pupils enjoy science.
- The areas requiring development are:
- a more detailed analysis of pupils' responses to national tests in order to identify particular areas of weakness;
  - the elimination of unnecessary worksheets in a minority of classes;
  - greater and more effective use of pupils' literacy and information and communication technology skills;

- opportunities for the co-ordinator designate to establish an effective leadership and management role.
91. Year 2 pupils were challenged to recall and evaluate their previous knowledge about what a plant needs to grow. Next they decided how to systematically check their statements by planting and growing seeds under various conditions. The teacher's subtle structure provided a framework, but all the thinking and decision making had to come from them. The teacher acted as an efficient scribe creating a simple but clear visual record of their decisions, thus enhancing their learning, and furthering their understanding of recording. They undertook their group investigations systematically.
92. Year 5 pupils planned 'an investigation to measure and observe how well different materials muffled sounds'. Their starting point was to predict a result and, in discussing this, decide what evidence they needed to collect. Prior knowledge was recalled, reviewed and used in a new context. Besides demonstrating a good understanding of how to control an experiment, each group approached the systematic recording of their results in slightly different ways. Whilst accepting them all, the teacher helped them to critically evaluate each in order to select a format most likely to serve their needs well. The pupils were in control of their learning.
93. Year 6 relished the opportunity to consider the following statements, '*Mixing materials can cause them to change*' and, '*Gases are produced when some materials are mixed together.*' Initially they were helped to recall and review prior understanding through the use of association cards and true/false statements. Pace was brisk, discussion animated and areas of uncertainty highlighted. This set the scene for pupils to work in groups to investigate a range of combinations. They were very clear about the need to control variables, changing the key variable systematically, hypothesising about the likely result of each combination before working together with some skill to collect systematic evidence and to interpret the results. Each group made an effective research team. There were no passengers. Their approach demonstrated maturity, good scientific knowledge, understanding and skill in managing scientific method.
94. Teaching and learning are good. In the lessons seen, most of the teaching was good or very good, which results in pupils' good progress in nearly all classes. One lesson was unsatisfactory.
- The best teaching is characterised by:
- secure subject knowledge and a good choice of methods;
  - well focused learning objectives;
  - well planned, sequenced steps that enable pupils to think logically about the challenge;
  - effective questioning skills, modified to ensure that all pupils are included;
  - high expectations and a brisk pace;
  - ongoing assessment through sensitive monitoring of class response, stopping the class to help pupils reflect, review, and reconsider;
  - good use of collaborative investigations;
  - effective use of teaching assistants;
  - good pupil management.
- Where teaching was unsatisfactory or less effective, there was:
- overuse of worksheets;
  - the sequence, organisation and explanations were muddled;
  - expectations were low or ill defined, and the resulting learning was unsatisfactory;
  - a tendency to tell pupils what to think and to over-direct them in setting up investigations.

95. The management of the subject by a caretaker co-ordinator, the headteacher, is sound but there are some unsatisfactory aspects. This is because there is a lack of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, the co-ordinator does not have a sufficiently clear picture about the strengths and areas in need of improvement. The new co-ordinator takes over the role in September. The current system of assessment works well where the teacher is knowledgeable and methodical. However, there are inconsistencies in its use and the co-ordinator is considering a simpler system. Information and communication technology is used at a low level and the potential for its use is not exploited.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in art and design are in line with national expectations and are, therefore, similar to those seen during the previous inspection. The pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects the work and make similar progress to that of their classmates.
97. By the end of Year 2, pupils successfully mix paint to make new colours. They experiment with a range of techniques and use a variety of media such as coloured pencil, pastels and paint. There are satisfactory examples of observational work and pupils are encouraged to look closely and to record accurately. For example, during the visit to St George's Church the pupils sketched Gothic windows and doorways, and used those as the basis of further drawing work in the classroom. Opportunities are provided for pupils to explore and develop their ideas and feelings, and they can investigate using a range of materials and techniques.
98. By the end of Year 6, pupils' appreciation of art and design has been further extended and use of materials and techniques has become more sophisticated. They use viewfinders to make quick sketches that are later enlarged in the classroom. Good opportunities are given to mix colours and to explore different media, such as paint, pencils and crayon. They work carefully and are eager to learn new techniques and skills. For example, the pupils in Year 6 were keen to understand perspective and how it could be used to improve their drawings. Many draw well and much of the work displayed on corridors shows a mature use of painting skills. Year 5 pupils use the work of other artists as starting points for their own work. For example, pupils produced colourful pieces in acrylic based on their studies of Rousseau, and good palette knife work based on the work of Jasper John's pop art. Year 4 pupils illustrated their understanding of the 'Stations of the Cross' and the pupils in Year 3 were working on three-dimensional figures using wire and papier-mache.
99. From the lessons observed, teaching is satisfactory, with some good examples. Positive elements included:
- good questioning that encourages observation;
  - consideration of detail that develops awareness of composition;
  - pupils are encouraged to examine elements of shape and form before commencing their own work;
  - good opportunities are provided to develop skills;
  - behaviour is generally well managed and relationships are relaxed and supportive.
- Less successful elements included:
- frequent interruptions by the teacher and a tendency to over direct the work.
100. Pupils have a good attitude in lessons and enjoy their artwork. They stay on task for extended periods and concentrate intensely. Noise levels are suitable for the activity and pupils are willing to discuss what they are doing and to share ideas. In one Year 3



lesson, the pupils were beginning to make their own judgements about the quality of their work. They are positive about their art and, during the inspection, were keen to show and explain their efforts. They concentrate closely throughout lessons and pay good attention to instructions, though some are too dependent on their teacher's support and are unwilling to work independently. Conversation during art lessons is usually about the task in hand. On occasions, the behaviour of some pupils can deteriorate, primarily because they have poorly developed work habits and are too easily distracted. Generally, however, they work well together and are willing to co-operate and share equipment appropriately.

101. The management of the subject is sound but there are some unsatisfactory aspects. This is because there is a lack of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, the co-ordinator does not have a sufficiently clear picture about the consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. The headteacher has the responsibility for leading the subject. He is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has had a positive impact on the quality of the work throughout the school. A detailed scheme of work has been produced that includes clear and helpful guidance for non-specialist art and design teachers. Currently there is no formal system of assessment across the school but this has been identified as an area for further development. Work from across the school is sampled, including photographic evidence, and then included in an illustrative portfolio to map the progress pupils make. Resources are adequate and the subject makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' cultural awareness and pupils are given frequent opportunities to work with visiting artists.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. There were no design and technology lessons planned for the week of the inspection. Therefore, no judgement can be made about the standards pupils achieve or the quality of teaching. This reflects the school's approach to design and technology, which it is taught in a three-day block at the end of each term. However, evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils shows that provision has improved since the last inspection. It is better because:
- there is a scheme which provides clear guidance to teachers ;
  - there is an appropriate range of tools;
  - all statutory requirements are met in the design and making aspects of the subject;
  - the co-ordinator provides effective support for teachers.
- The areas needing improvement are:
- procedures for checking on and recording what pupils have learnt;
  - providing time for the co-ordinator to see the subject being taught, in order to identify where further improvements can be made.
103. In Year 1, pupils investigate how card can be used to make pop-up Christmas cards. They draw their design, cut, stuck, decorate and test their card confidently. They evaluate their success and suggest improvements. In Year 2, pupils design enthusiastically their own Christmas puppet. They draw labelled designs from front and side elevations, list the resources needed and formulate a plan of work. They use measuring, joining and cutting skills competently on material before assembling and testing. They are very enthusiastic in discussion about their work and show good recall of the processes used.
104. Pupils in junior classes explore a range of design and technology activities successfully. Pupils in Year 3 make a variety of cushions, for different purposes, that they decorate using tie-and-dye or printing techniques. Pupils in Year 4 design and make a Christmas biscuit effectively. They use a range of ingredients based on a

survey of peoples' preferences. In Year 5, pupils work enthusiastically with wire, clay and plaster to make a Christmas necklace or bracelet in the style of Egyptian jewelry. They use tools such as scissors and knives safely and are aware of the need for accurate measurement. They carry out a product analysis of different types of Egyptian jewelry and use their evaluations to design and make their pieces. In Year 6, pupils are challenged to design and make a Christmas shirt. They examine types of shirts in terms of their strength and gain a clear understanding of design for different purposes. They draw an initial design accurately and list the resources before producing labelled diagrams of different stages in the production process. Having made and tested their products, they make a perceptive evaluation of their work. In discussions with the inspector, they show pride in their work and are keen to explain what they had done.

105. At present there is no permanent co-ordinator and the management of the subject is unsatisfactory in some aspects. This is because there is a lack of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, the temporary co-ordinator does not have a clear overview about the strengths and areas in need of improvement in the teaching. The scheme of work forms a detailed and helpful guide for teachers, with clear identification of what pupils have to learn by the end of each unit of work. This provides consistency of approach in order to ensure the step-to-step development of skills. No system is in place to check on or record what pupils know, understand or can do in order to provide teachers with sufficient information to plan lessons to build securely on pupils' past learning. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop socially through practising collaborative skills in group work. Links to literacy are developing as pupils discuss, label and evaluate their work, and numeracy skills are practised in measuring and estimating. Links with information and communication technology are underdeveloped.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and, by age seven and age 11, standards in geography broadly match expectations for pupils of these ages. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make similar progress to that of their classmates. These judgements are similar to those found during the previous inspection.
107. By the end of Year 2, pupils are aware that physical and human features determine the characteristics of different places. This was shown by the work done on an imaginary journey from home to the Island of Struay, and when finding out about the many places in the world visited by 'Barnaby Bear'. Several pupils were able to point to and name Mexico on a world map and correctly identified the British Isles. They also developed a good understanding of location and compared features in their own locality with those found in Blackpool. Many were able to distinguish between man-made and natural features.
108. Pupils in Year 3 study the weather and weather reporting. They use the Internet as an information source, and use clear and concise symbols to represent different weather conditions. They have satisfactory understanding of the need for accurate forecasting. Pupils in one Year 4 lesson considered similarities and differences of life in India and in Britain. They noted the need to carry water and that there was no power source. They realised that supermarkets were not as easily accessible. The pupils in Year 6 link their studies to a field visit to Formby, where they study coastal features. They have a good knowledge and understanding of related vocabulary and use it correctly. For example, pupils in one Year 6 lesson knew that bays were caused by different rates of erosion on the coastline, and that the sea eroded softer rocks at a quicker rate than harder ones. With the exception of Year 6, the quantity of recorded work is

limited and there is an overuse of photocopied sheets, resulting in poor quality minimal response from pupils.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory and good teaching was observed on one occasion. The strengths of the good teaching are:
- lessons are well planned with clear learning targets that are always shared with the pupils;
  - teachers' good questioning helps pupils to extend their knowledge and their geographical vocabulary;
  - introductions are often lively and interesting and capture pupils' interest, but on some occasions this brisk pace is not maintained throughout the lesson.
- Pupils show interest in their work and remain on task for extended periods. They are encouraged to be aware of time and of the need to complete tasks. Behaviour is generally good and pupils co-operate well with each other.
110. Co-ordination of geography is not effective. The standards are satisfactory, but leadership of the subject is passive and there is no clear whole-school view of standards and areas for development. Currently, the co-ordinator has little input into monitoring, and planning is completed independently by class teachers. Arrangements for assessments are unsatisfactory and amount to a comment by class teachers on the end-of-year report. Limited use is made of pupils' reading and writing skills in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

111. The standards achieved at seven and 11 are appropriate for pupils' ages. Only one history lesson was observed. The school has made good progress in developing the history curriculum since the last inspection because:
- the active and knowledgeable leadership of the co-ordinator has moved the subject forward;
  - teaching is underpinned by a scheme of work based on national guide lines and customized to meet the school's needs;
  - the monitoring of standards has begun, initially through a work scrutiny of Years 5, 6 and Reception;
  - a new lesson format, focusing on four key skills, with particular emphasis on enquiry is now in place;
  - all pupils receive their full entitlement to history lessons ;
  - a system for assessment, newly in place, identifies the quality and level of understanding.
- The main strengths are:
- the use of artefacts and first hand evidence, wherever possible;
  - investigation and enquiry; a focus on the history skills and concepts;
  - visits, and the use of museum and library loans;
  - the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject;
  - pupils' good recall of the subject a year or more after they had covered the work;
- The areas for development are:
- too little independent writing at length;
  - too little opportunity for pupils to use reading their skills to find out information for themselves;
  - insufficient use of ICT across a range of software.

112. There were not enough lessons observed on which to base a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. A judgement based on discussion with pupils, work in books, and teachers' planning confirms that progress is satisfactory and that the methodology used in most classes is moving to a more enquiry based approach.
113. Year 2 pupils are involved in a comparative study of holidays in 1900, 1950 and 2000. The teacher helped the pupils acquire the appropriate observation and interpretative skills that would enable them to find clues and make sense of information from videos and photographs. When sequencing pictorial evidence chronologically, pupils had to justify their decisions, pointing to specific evidence. The less able were well supported by the class teacher, whilst the structure of the activity, based on visual evidence and discussion, helped them to participate fully.
114. Year 5 pupils talked enthusiastically about their current history project. They are investigating the decades between 1950 and the present day, which they are doing through research. They worked together on the sort of information that they required and then shaped it into a questionnaire. They each worked on their own which focused on an aspect of life, perhaps football. They interviewed a series of people, recording their memories. They eagerly explained that the age of the person interviewed had a marked impact on the decade they wanted to talk about and the types of memories that they had. This work is still in the early stages, but illustrates well the school's new emphasis on developing historical enquiry, which gives the pupils ownership of their learning. It has certainly grabbed the interest of Year 5 pupils, who were eager to continue the investigation.
115. Year 6 pupils enjoyed their work on the Victorians. They had to face the moral and social issues raised by aspects of Victorian life and work. They found out about coalmines in the Farnworth area. Photographs of the work show the comprehensive range of artefacts and quality photographs and pictures that supported their small-scale enquiries.
116. The management of the subject is sound but there are some unsatisfactory aspects. This is because there is a lack of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, the co-ordinator does not have a sufficiently clear picture as to how well the subject is taught or how well pupils learn.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

117. Since the previous inspection improvements in information and communication technology have been good. Standards at age seven are similar to national expectations, although standards in the Years 3 to 6 are variable. The skills of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are improving at a rapid rate and are now close to those expected. The standards attained by the end of Year 6 are, however, still below those expected nationally. The new computer suite is supporting regular development of skills for all pupils and those with special educational needs achieve satisfactory levels.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils are aware of many of the functions for inputting and editing text. They have satisfactory keyboard skills and good mouse control. In one lesson taken in the ICT suite, the pupils demonstrated that they could open a Word document from the desktop, and use the space bar and back space to make corrections. They used the shift key to enter capital letters and they could use the enter key to move the cursor to enter text in a particular place on the screen. They can access information and select the appropriate icons in order to move around various screens. Some appreciated that using the computer makes it easy to correct mistakes and confidently used the delete function. There is, however, a marked

difference in the levels of skill of those pupils who have access to computer outside school and those who do not.

119. By the end of Year 6, pupils can log onto the Internet independently, and can use the 'favourite' option and 'favourite list' to access particular sites. For example, the pupils successfully used the function to access information related to their coastline topic. They can modify, download and print information from the Internet, and can use pictures and text within a document. Most have a good understanding of how computers can make work easier. There is limited evidence of pupils using the computer to plan and prepare work for different audiences. There are, however, significant areas of the National Curriculum not taught to this age group. For example, there is little evidence that the older pupils learn about the use of spreadsheets, databases and control technology. The contribution the subject makes to other areas of the curriculum is also under developed.
120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was always at least satisfactory, and one lesson was good. Characteristics of the good teaching are:
- the lessons are well planned and have clear learning objectives;
  - sound subject knowledge enables teachers to give clear explanations that help pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a lesson on data the teacher clearly explained the advantages of graphing data in a particular field in order to highlight errors and anomalies;
  - good pace is maintained throughout and pupils show high levels of interest and good concentration;
  - expectations are high and the teaching assistant is used well to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the lesson.
- Less effective features of teaching are:
- inconsistent pace resulting in pupils becoming restless and off task;
  - weakness in teacher's knowledge and confidence;
  - not enough use made of ICT across other subjects.
121. Generally, the pupils cooperated well and answered questions enthusiastically. They shared and helped each other sensibly and showed consideration for each other's needs. For example, pupils made sure that partner could see the monitor and took equal turns at inputting information and using the keyboard.
122. The co-ordinator has made a good start in managing the subject. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and has prepared a detailed and appropriate action plan to develop the subject further. The policy statement has been recently reviewed and there is now a detailed long-term plan. As an interim measure and in order to ensure appropriate coverage and progression, all medium- and short-term planning has been provided by the co-ordinator. Short-term planning is based on national guidance and is modified and adjusted by individual teachers to suit the needs of particular pupils. Appropriate structures, based on the local authority guidance are in place to ensure proper Internet security. Government funded training has been completed by all teachers. This has been supplemented by the introduction of the European Computer Driving Licence courses that have been followed by teachers and support staff. The course was also offered to parents through the Bolton Home School Partnership and has been enthusiastically completed by a small group. The members of the group now provide valuable support in classrooms. They have acquired additional funding that has been used to purchase eleven 'laptops', to be shared between school and the community. Resources are now adequate, but the computer suite is not well ventilated and seating for pupils is currently not appropriate. There are

plans to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, and the system for assessing how well pupils are learning has only recently been introduced by the new coordinator. The school is now well placed to make further improvements.

## MUSIC

123. The standards achieved at seven and 11 are appropriate for pupils of these ages. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory, because:

- the area of musical composition, identified as an area for development, has not been systematically addressed;
- the organisation of teaching across the school has changed. Class teachers now teach music themselves;
- the scheme of work has been modified to meet the needs of the school.

The main strengths are:

- tuneful singing in both the infants and juniors;
- pupils' enthusiasm for the subject;
- the increase in the range of individual musical tuition. The school now offers traditional and Suzuki violin teaching and brass teaching;
- effective and imaginative use of a range of experts;
- the transition music programme shared with a local primary school and run by an external music expert, which enthused Year 6 pupils, enhancing their musical awareness and singing skills;
- the celebration of much of the work undertaken in music, in school performances.

The areas for development are:

- musical composition, identified in the last inspection for further development, has not moved forward sufficiently;
- the subject leadership and management has not developed adequately. There is no coherent plan for moving the subject forward or for monitoring standards, year by year;
- there is insufficient indication of progress between different year groups when an aspect such as rhythm is addressed;
- ICT, apart from the use of keyboards, is underused;
- the significance and approach to music at the start and conclusion of assembly, has not been thought through, resulting in missed opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge of, and, interest in music ;
- a lack of assessment criteria to measure progress systematically.

124. Year 2 pupils continued to build on their musical knowledge as they discussed a new short song. They were encouraged to describe the emotive quality and the structure. Individuals used technical vocabulary properly, such as 'pitch' and 'tone'. The next step related the 'shape' of this tune to letters and thus to a way of recording on paper. Understanding was reinforced and applied as groups worked away at their own short tune, recording their effort in symbols and writing these in different ways to indicate rhythm. The activity was enriched by the use of tuned percussion and, for one group, a keyboard. This was one of a series of lessons, which would continue to extend knowledge and refine composition ready for public performance.

125. Year 6 pupils participated in a challenging singing workshop with a neighbouring school. After 45 minutes they had learnt a new song, with three threads, each of which had a distinctive characteristic in terms of tune, pitch, rhythm and words. They rehearsed until they could sing each thread tunefully, with feeling, with clear diction, appropriate body movements and total conviction. Next they split into three groups, each with ownership of one of the threads. They were amazed and delighted that, in the final 10 minutes, the specialist worked with them so that all three threads were

sung at the same time; yet each thread was clear. This was sophisticated music and pupils recognised that they had achieved something special.

126. Teaching and learning is satisfactory.

In the best lessons, teachers use:

- a systematic approach, which allows pupils to build steadily on their prior knowledge and to use it in new contexts;
- their own good subject knowledge to good effect;
- the new scheme, which encourages the links between increased knowledge about musical structure, musical appreciation, composition and the end product, as performance;
- themselves, as effective role models and encourage pupils to think and experiment.

Teaching is less effective when:

- the pace slows;
- there is too much repetition which is not focused on the improvement of certain elements;
- the work is too similar in skill level to that undertaken in the preceding year.

127. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. Whilst there is considerable musical talent amongst the staff, the necessary overview of levels achieved in one year, so that the same elements are addressed at a higher level in the next, is missing. ICT is used sparingly but could be a most valuable tool, especially for composition. There is no clear action plan to remedy these two shortcomings through good assessment procedures or monitoring.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128. By the ages of seven and 11, standards are appropriate for pupils' ages. This shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In all lessons, the pupils make sound progress and enjoy the activities provided.

129. In games, the Year 1 pupils demonstrate increasing control and co-ordination when throwing or bouncing a ball over short and then longer distances. They understand how to position their bodies to gain maximum impetus. They work hard to improve the accuracy of their throwing. By Year 3, the pupils know how to throw and catch using a variety of well-taught techniques. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate effective sequences when performing a long jump, using both the floor space and benches. They show awareness of the need to use their arms and how to position their feet. When jumping off apparatus they know how to land correctly, showing good posture and balance.

130. In gymnastics, Year 3 pupils make good progress in rolling techniques. They know how to perform forward, scissor and log rolls, and show an awareness of the safety aspects of performing such rolls. They work productively with a partner and successfully devise a sequence involving different rolls. They hold positions appropriately and devise increasingly more adventurous sequences.

131. Swimming is available to pupils in Year 5 pupils, who go to the pool in the autumn. Arrangements are satisfactory and most 11 year olds achieve at least the expected level, with many swimming much more than the expected 25 metres. The few swimmers who do not reach the expected standard are confident in the water and make sound gains. At other times in the year, all pupils take part in dance, and the older pupils participate in cricket and outdoor and adventurous activities.

132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The strengths in the teaching are:
- lessons are carefully planned and taught so that pupils are aware of working safely;
  - the teachers' knowledge and expertise in the subject is reflected in the clear teaching of appropriate skills and techniques that do much to support the pupils' sound progress;
  - all lessons contain an appropriate warming up and cooling down period.
  - teachers demonstrate well to pupils. For example, the teacher in a Year 3 lesson effectively demonstrated three different rolls, ensuring that pupils were clearly aware of the safety aspects.
- Areas for development are:
- not enough opportunities are given for pupils to evaluate performance;
  - the pace is slow because pupils are expected to practice the same skills for too long;
  - ensure all equipment is usable. For example, the balls in Year1 were insufficiently inflated and pupils found it difficult to bounce them.
133. The great majority of pupils respond very well during lessons. They behave very responsibly and treat each other and the equipment they use with care and respect. However, a small minority of pupils lack self-discipline in the open situation outside the confines of the classroom. This manifests itself in over boisterousness, pupils not listening carefully and to silliness.
134. A new co-ordinator will manage the subject from September but, at present, the subject is managed temporarily by the headteacher. He is very supportive of staff, and the scheme of work ensures that an appropriate balance is achieved in all aspects of the work. Resourcing is appropriate and the content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Good use is made of outside coaches, who regularly visit school and take lessons. However, the management of the subject is unsatisfactory in some aspects. This is because there is a lack of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, the temporary co-ordinator does not have an overview as to the quality of teaching and learning in the subject or of the areas in need of improvement. No system is in place to check on or record what pupils know, understand or can do in order to provide teachers with sufficient information to plan lessons to build securely on pupils' past learning. A strength is the good range of extra-curricular activities, which enhance the curriculum. These also provide the pupils with opportunities to take part competitively against pupils in judo, where several pupils represent Bolton.