

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Heywood, Rochdale

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105833

Associate Headteacher: Mr. S. Nicholson

Reporting inspector: Mr. G. J. Martin
21563

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th October 2002

Inspection number: 246530

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:	Pot Hall Wilton Grove Heywood Rochdale
Postcode:	OL10 2AA
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Father J. Duggan
Date of previous inspection:	20 th November 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21563	Mr. G. J. Martin	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13746	Mr. D. Russell	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
25509	Mrs. J. Clarke	Team inspector	Science Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14991	Mr. A. Hardwicke	Team inspector	Mathematics Art	How well are pupils taught?
30205	Miss T. Kenna	Team inspector	Geography History The foundation stage curriculum	
15292	Mrs. J. Pollard	Team inspector	English Design and technology Special educational needs	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary school is situated in the town of Heywood near Rochdale. It educates pupils aged from four to 11. There are 316 pupils on roll, 169 boys and 147 girls. The school is a little smaller than at the time of the last inspection. The school serves a mixed area. Some pupils come from the immediate locality, others travel from areas outside of this. Pupils come from a variety of background circumstances. There are 60 pupils identified as having special educational needs. This represents 19 per cent of the school's roll, which is similar to the average found nationally. The range of special educational needs includes specific learning, emotional and behavioural, speech and language and physical difficulties and multi-sensory impairment. Five pupils, less than two per cent of the roll, have statements of special educational need. This is similar to the national average. Nine per cent of pupils, less than the national average, receive free school meals. At the time of the inspection only one pupil, from an Asian heritage background, was from an ethnic minority. The level of attainment on entry to the school is very wide. Overall, the average level of attainment on entry is below the average found nationally, particularly in social, communication and literacy skills. The school roll is stable with few pupils transferring into or out of the school other than at the normal time of first admission

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is now an effective school and it provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school has worked hard to monitor its own development and the governors and staff share a common aspiration to continue with the improvement of the school. Although the attainment in the national tests for English and mathematics is a little below the national average, as seen in the table on page two, the inspection found that attainment in all subjects is at least satisfactory. This is because the teaching is good and pupils make good progress in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Improvement has been such that the serious weaknesses found at the time of the last inspection have been addressed sufficiently well for the school to move forward. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good.
- The school provides well for those pupils who have special educational needs.
- The very good relationships that the school promotes help the pupils to develop very good attitudes to school. This makes them keen to work well.
- Pupils work and play happily together because the ethos of the school is based firmly on Christian principles of care and concern for each other.
- Behaviour in the school is very good and helps the pupils to learn well.
- The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally and socially. Consequently, the pupils have good provision for their personal development.

What could be improved

- Standards, by sharing the good teaching seen in many lessons so that there is more consistent good teaching throughout the school.
- Assessment could be used more effectively to: a) provide greater challenge for the children in the reception class so that work is closely matched to their needs; b) help teachers to set learning targets for all children and especially those with the ability to attain higher standards.
- Systems to promote and reward good attendance.
- The systems for managing the needs of pupils who find learning difficult need to be consolidated

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made steady and satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in November 2000. At the time the school was found to have some serious weaknesses. These weaknesses have been the focus of improvement during the last two years. There has been effective and rigorous monitoring of the school's progress. Progress has been variable but satisfactory overall. Teaching has improved, contributing to better achievement in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology are now satisfactory, an improvement since the last inspection. The planning of the curriculum is now more structured, although there is still work to be done to co-ordinate the curriculum for children in the reception year and to ensure that the curriculum is

organised effectively to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Progress with assessment is unsatisfactory overall and there is a continued need to make better use of assessment as a tool to raise standards further. Reasonable progress has been made to increase the effectiveness of staff with specific responsibilities, as seen in the work to improve planning and to further improve the resources for information and communication technology.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	D	D	D
Mathematics	C	E	D	D
Science	C	E	C	D

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

The table above shows that, in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, results in science were similar to the national average while results in English and mathematics were below average. When compared with similar schools, that is, schools having up to 20 per cent free school meals, results were below average in all subjects. The results for 2002 show similar levels of attainment in all three subjects. Evidence from the inspection shows that in English, mathematics and science, pupils in Year 6 are attaining close to the expected level for their age. This evidence also enables the inspection team to predict that the Year 6 pupils will achieve the expected level in these subjects at the end of the year. In physical education it is likely that they will exceed the expected level and, in all other subjects, they are on target to achieve the expected levels. Learning in the Foundation Stage is good in creative, physical and personal and social development and satisfactory in all other areas of learning although the children in the Foundation Stage (reception classes) are unlikely to reach the goals set for them in their areas of learning because, overall, their attainment on entry to the reception classes is below average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and the Year 2 pupils are on target to achieve the expected levels in all subjects, with higher than expected levels in physical education. There was insufficient evidence available to make a judgement about attainment in design and technology for the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy school and they try hard in lessons
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in and around the school. They are courteous and polite. They socialize very well at all times, including break and lunchtimes. Older and younger pupils regularly help one another.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The school has a good ethos of Christian care and concern where very good relationships flourish. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for routine jobs around the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Although the registers show satisfactory attendance during the term in which the inspection took place, data from the previous year shows that attendance is below the national average.

The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are strengths of the school. The very good quality of relationships helps to promote good teaching and effective learning. Pupils show respect for the feelings, beliefs and values of others. They understand well what effect their actions may have on other people. The majority of pupils respond with maturity to being given responsibilities. The school could do more to promote better attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Four out of five lessons observed during the inspection were good or better and a quarter of lessons were very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, an improvement since the last inspection. Improvements to the quality of planning have helped to improve the teaching and learning. Pupils are managed well and the very good relationships between pupils and teachers support effective learning. Good attention is paid to the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this is helping to raise the levels of attainment in English and mathematics. Because pupils show interest in their lessons and work well, they learn effectively. The very capable teaching assistants and other support staff are used well to support pupils who need help with their concentration. This makes an important contribution to the achievement of the pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and those who sometimes find learning difficult. In some classes, there is good practice in the way teachers use assessments to set targets for what pupils need to do to improve their work but this is variable across the school. In other classes, assessment is not used as well as it could be to set targets that will help pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities for learning. The strategies for teaching the basic skill of literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, well supported by teaching and non-teaching staff and parent helpers. Pupils are keen to take part and they enjoy this enrichment of their learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs in lessons, particularly where their needs are planned for within the teaching, but the systems for identifying the needs of pupils and planning appropriate provision are still at an early stage of development.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school's strong Christian ethos helps to establish a caring and positive learning atmosphere. There is a strong continuum of spiritual development across the curriculum. Effective links between social and moral development help the school to be very good at providing for the pupils to become socially and morally responsible. There is good provision for their cultural development. The school prepares its pupils well for living in a society that is rich in cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The welfare and care provided for the pupils is good. All staff show sensitivity for the individual needs of pupils. The school has good systems for supporting the pupils' educational, personal and social development.

The school has established an effective working partnership with parents. The community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The very good work of a teaching assistant to support the work of teachers leading extra-curricular activities makes a strong contribution to the quality of experience for the pupils. There are good links with other schools that help to prepare the pupils for the next stage in their education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The associate headteacher, seconded from another school in the diocese, has given the school good leadership during the period that the governors were appointing a new, permanent headteacher. The hard working deputy headteacher gives good support for school improvement. Subject leaders and other key staff are still developing their responsibilities for helping the school

	to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are supportive of the school and have greater involvement in monitoring its effectiveness. They are committed to providing the support needed to help the leadership of the school to continue with improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are effective arrangements for monitoring and improving teaching and learning, for developing the curriculum and for enhancing resources. This work has already impacted on standards.
The strategic use of resources	Day-to-day financial administration is good. The strategic management of resources over the longer term is satisfactory. The school has appropriate systems in place to check that it achieves best value when committing spending.

The school has a good number of experienced teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and to manage the school. The satisfactory accommodation and resources for teaching and learning are used well by the teachers and support staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like the school and it is helping the children to become mature and responsible. • The behaviour in the school is good. • The teaching is good and their children are expected to work hard and do their best. • The school is approachable and they would feel comfortable about discussing any questions or problems with the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel that they are not sufficiently informed about how well their children are getting on. • A few parents feel that the amount of homework given to their children is not right. Some feel there should be more, others less. • A few parents feel that the school could work more closely with them.

The inspectors agree with the mainly very good views that parents have of the school. They also feel that the school is making good efforts to communicate more effectively with parents about their children's progress and the homework they are expected to do.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last full inspection, standards in English, mathematics, and science were in line with national expectations in Year 2 and below national expectations in Year 6. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) were below national expectations at Year 2 and Year 6. Standards were in line with national expectations in all other subjects, except physical education and design and technology, where standards were above national expectations at the end of Year 2. The low standards at the end of Key Stage 2 contributed to the decision by the previous inspection team that the school had serious weaknesses.
2. Since then the school has made satisfactory improvements in standards of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Now, the attainment of pupils is at least satisfactory in all subjects by Year 2 and Year 6, with good attainment seen in physical education in Year 2. It is not possible to judge attainment in design and technology, as there is insufficient evidence from the inspection.
3. In the Foundation Stage, children enter the reception class with levels of attainment across the areas of learning that are lower than the average found nationally. The children admitted to the reception class this year have a wide range of ability; some have good skills of communication and personal development, while a significant number have poor speaking and listening skills and limited social development. While the majority has been to a variety of pre-school educational settings, a good number have no formal pre-school education. These children are at a disadvantage because they have not learned the social conventions of being in a class with other children and it takes them a while to integrate socially and be ready for learning. Evidence shows that the achievement of the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but that, by the end of the reception year their attainment is still below that found in many other schools.
4. In the 2001 national tests and tasks for seven year olds, results were in line with the average found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The number pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was close to the national average in reading and mathematics and below the average in writing. These results, and evidence from the inspection, show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and, by the end of the key stage they attain standards that are close to the national average. The 2002 results show that the gradual improvement in standards has been maintained and inspection findings confirm this.
5. The Year 6 pupils in 2001 attained results in the national tests that were broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. Their performance in science

was a little better than in English and mathematics, particularly as the very high Level 6 was achieved by 3 per cent of pupils. The number of pupils achieving the above average Level 5 was close to the national average in English and science but significantly below the national average in mathematics. This evidence and the conclusions drawn from looking at the pupils' work during the inspection show that there is a trend for improving results in the school. Indications are that the current Year 6 group will achieve results similar to the previous two years. Against the previous attainment seen from their Year 2 results, pupils achieve well. Other evidence from the inspection confirms this good achievement.

6. The progress of pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN) is good. The targets set for them in their individual education plans are appropriately supportive and challenging. The pupils with individual needs make good progress towards these targets. By providing small-group tuition with very capable teaching assistants, teachers effectively support the learning for pupils with special educational needs. This provision is clear evidence of the school's commitment to including all pupils in effective learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The inspection found that the pupils have very good attitudes to the school, better than at the time of the last inspection when they were already good. Similarly, the pupils' behaviour and their personal development are very good. Attendance in 2001 was below the national average but the registers for the term up to the date of the inspection show satisfactory attendance. To maintain, or better still, improve this, the school should consider ways of promoting good attendance.
8. The school has a good atmosphere where pupils are keen to learn and enjoy talking about their work and their successes. They respond eagerly to opportunities, especially where lessons are made exciting and stimulating. They work well together when working in pairs or small groups and they are keen to be helpful to other pupils and the adults in their school.
9. The very good standards of behaviour help teachers to teach effective lessons. The pupils co-operate well by showing interest in the work set for them and by trying their best to achieve what has been set for them to learn. Pupils play well together on the playground at break time and lunchtime. They care for each other well and show good consideration for the needs of others. Although there has been one fixed-term exclusion from the school, this is a rare occurrence and the great majority of pupils show a very real sense of self-control and self-discipline.
10. The very high standard of care and support given to pupils by the adults in the school promote the very good personal development of the pupils. The quality of relationships between pupils and adults is very good and helps the school to operate as an ordered and well-organised community. A calm and trusting atmosphere prevails where pupils feel that their needs and aspirations are considered and respected. The pupils care for their school and the people who work and learn in it. This helps them to become responsible citizens with a good sense of duty and social concern. Parents have very positive views about the behaviour and personal development of their children in school. Over ninety per cent of parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that behaviour in the school is good and that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. During the inspection four out of five lessons seen were good or better, a quarter were very good or excellent, and one in ten were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was found to be satisfactory overall, but with weaknesses in Key Stage 2. At that time eleven per cent of lessons in Key Stage 2 were unsatisfactory. The reasons for this improvement are more

rigorous monitoring by the senior management team, and a variety of effective professional development activities, which addressed teaching and learning strategies.

12. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 were good, with, on average, better teaching in Year 2 than Year 1. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good overall in Key Stage 1, and it is satisfactory in science. In Key Stage 2 teaching was also good overall, but with wider variation than in Key Stage 1. Again the teaching of maths and English was very good overall, while in science it was good. Very good and excellent teaching was seen in all year-groups. The greater proportion of excellent teaching was seen in Years 3 and 4 but more very good teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. The school needs to look at ways of sharing the very good and excellent practice that is seen in some classes, so that overall teaching standards can be of a more consistently high standard.
13. The aspects of teaching that have contributed to this improvement are; good class management, very good working relationships, and very good use of time, support staff and resources. There is good attention to the teaching of basic skills, such as when teachers use the correct language when talking about work in different subjects. Good use is also made of basic mathematical skills in a variety of subjects. In a Year 5 science lesson, for example, pupils used tally charts and then produced block graphs to show the results of their investigations into pulse-rates. This very good use of mathematics helped to develop their basic understanding of data handling, as well as their scientific understanding. The use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum is developing well, but some opportunities are still missed. Here again existing good practice needs to be shared. Teachers promote very good working relationships in their classes, both between pupils and teachers, and amongst the pupils themselves. The school's Christian ethos, which values sharing, caring and considering the feelings of others, is clearly reflected in the day-to-day work of classes, and underpins all that is done to build positive attitudes to work. An orderly and hard-working atmosphere is typical of the great majority of lessons.
14. Teachers generally plan their work well, and ensure that resources needed are ready when pupils need them. They show at least satisfactory knowledge of subjects and in some cases very good subject knowledge. This allows them to explain ideas clearly to their classes. Teachers make constructive use of teaching assistants, so that they are well deployed and clear about what is expected of them. The teaching assistants are therefore able to make a good contribution to the work, both in terms of specific activities with particular pupils, and with larger groups and classes as a whole. These activities make a valuable contribution to the work of the school, and, particularly, to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Because of the skilled support provided, these pupils are fully included in class activities and benefit from the full range of the curriculum, resulting in good learning.
15. The school has been successful in analysing test results and then using results to improve areas of deficiency. For instance, in mathematics, pupils' ability to select appropriate methods for working out problems was identified as an area to work on, and the curriculum was adapted accordingly. In English and mathematics the introduction of individual targets for improvement has been carried through and pupils now know what they need to do in order to improve. Targets are stuck into exercise books, so that pupils can refer to them in their daily work. The recent introduction, in English and mathematics, of a system of grouping pupils according to their abilities, in the junior classes, has enabled teachers to focus their teaching more sharply on their pupils' levels of understanding. Because these developments have only been operating for a short time, they have not yet had time to improve standards.
16. Whilst the school has been successful in improving the quality of teaching overall, this has not yet had full impact on the achievement of more able pupils. In many lessons these pupils were not given sufficient challenge in their work, and so their progress is not as good as that of other groups. Very effective use of teaching assistants and the organisation of classes for English and mathematics, together with good planning, have ensured that pupils of average, and below average, ability make good progress and achieve well. This improvement,

however, has not yet had sufficient impact on the teaching of the more able pupils, and this must now be the focus of the school's push for higher standards, not just in the core subjects of English and mathematics, but across the curriculum.

17. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the quality of teachers' planning. This has been effectively supported by the successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, and by the planning guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Lesson planning is now generally carried out effectively, and teachers by and large maintain a productive and purposeful ethos, based on strong inter-personal relationships. Classes are well managed, and a good range of interesting materials is provided and used. Lessons are generally well structured so as to keep pupils involved and interested, and best use is made of time, resources and accommodation.
18. The use of assessment of pupils' understanding, so as to help plan what they should do next, is still insufficiently developed. Improvements made in English and mathematics mean that the quality of assessment is now satisfactory overall, but procedures are not firmly established in all subjects. This was a key issue for improvement at the school's last inspection, and, whilst some progress has been made, there is a need for further improvement here. The use of assessment in the core subjects of English and mathematics is now well developed, but this must now be extended to the other subjects. The good assessment practice developed alongside the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies must now be carried through to all curriculum areas. Whilst teachers generally know their pupils well, there are not, in many subjects, formal systems in place to record what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers cannot, therefore, base their planning on solid data, but must rather rely on their impressions of how different groups or individuals are progressing.
19. The ways in which teachers mark pupils' work is not consistent throughout the school. While marking is satisfactory overall, many opportunities are missed to show pupils how they may improve their work. For example, in some mathematics books the teacher makes comments such as 'Well done' or 'Excellent work', but does not include advice on what to do next, or how to improve. In some classes, and in a range of subjects, there is often too much emphasis on praising effort, and not enough on targeting improvements. Teachers make good use of homework throughout the school. Pupils are given appropriate amounts of homework, and parents generally support this work well.

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

20. The curriculum is satisfactory overall; it is broad, balanced, relevant and interesting for the pupils. The quality and range of the learning experiences is satisfactory. In all subjects statutory requirements are met. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
21. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The teachers plan the children's work with appropriate regard to the curriculum specially designed for young children. There is a clear emphasis on learning through play alongside the development of the children's personal and social skills as well as the progression of their speaking and listening skills.
22. The school has worked to provide a broad curriculum, which will interest the pupils. The curriculum is planned to ensure the pupils have appropriate first hand educational experiences. Visitors are encouraged to come into school to talk to the pupils. The expertise they share with them enables the pupils to see the rich diversity of opportunities available. The pupils visit places of educational interest in the immediate and wider community. This

provides a good stimulus and context for their work. For those pupils who want to learn to play a musical instrument there are opportunities for them to have expert tuition in school.

23. All subjects are supported by detailed plans mostly drawn from government recommended curriculum plans. There is a two-year programme of study, which enables the teachers to organise the subject areas for the pupils. This programme takes into account the different make up of the classes. This is necessary because some classes have two-year groups in them. The curriculum map is to be reviewed at the end of the year to ensure that all subjects are covered appropriately. Teachers' planning is thorough, with some being extremely detailed, this means the pupils' learning is focused.
24. The school has enthusiastically and successfully embraced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The school has employed two extra teachers in Years 3 to 6 to teach in the morning sessions. These teachers enable the pupils to be grouped according to their abilities and to be taught in smaller than average class sized groups. This effective strategy enables the teachers to plan for a narrower range of ability in their group. As a result the pupils have more help with their work and this has a positive effect on how they approach their work and how well they achieve. This is particularly so for the pupils who tend to struggle and for the average attaining pupils. For the pupils who are above average there is room in the teachers' planning for them to be stretched even further. The impact of these strategies for improvement can be seen in the improved test results of the pupils at the end of Year 6.
25. Good provision is made for the pupils' with special educational needs. All statutory requirements of the curriculum are met for these pupils and they are well supported to access the full National Curriculum. Individual education plans are available for all pupils and these indicate the help they need. They are detailed and have targets for the pupils to work towards. Early identification of pupils who are in need of extra specific help is a positive aspect of the work of the school. The tasks set in class are well matched to the pupils' abilities and they have good help from the talented learning support assistants. This has a positive impact upon the pupils' learning. Social inclusion for all pupils is a strength of the school. All staff make very good efforts to include pupils of all abilities and background into every activity. There is very good equality of access and opportunities for all pupils with gender stereotyping firmly challenged. This enables all to achieve well.
26. The school ensures that each pupil's development is secured in an environment where all individuals are valued and helped according to their needs. Individuals are accepted for their strengths and weaknesses and helped to fulfil their own potential. Pupils' personal development is very well addressed through a programme that includes personal, social and health education, drug awareness, citizenship and sex education. These opportunities help to prepare the pupils to play an active role as citizens within the school and they also accept their responsibilities in the wider church and town community.
27. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good. There is a wide range of activities that covers many interests and talents. The school has a number of sports teams, which successfully and enjoyably play in competitive games against other local schools. The dedicated and very good support given freely by a teaching assistant makes an invaluable contribution to the work of the teachers who run sports teams and other extra-curricular activities. Teachers, pupils and parents value this support highly because it makes a very good impact on the quality of pupils' learning beyond the statutory curriculum. A member of the community who is a referee trains the footballers and then referees the games for them. The contribution the community makes to the life of the school is good. The school also makes an active contribution to church life. These opportunities enrich the provision that the school makes for the pupils and widens their understanding and experiences.
28. Relationships with other schools and community groups are good. The school has developing links with the High School located on the same campus. The pupils gain confidence from this link with the school to which most will transfer. Pupils' spiritual, moral

and social development are very well fostered, and the school makes a good contribution to their cultural development. At the time of the last inspection very good provision was made for moral development, while provision for the other aspects was effective. There has therefore been good improvement in these areas since the last inspection. This improvement is based on high quality working relationships, which are a strength of the school. Teachers provide very good role models for their pupils, and the expectations for both work and behaviour have a profound effect on the way in which pupils conduct themselves throughout the school.

29. Spiritual development is very well fostered. The school's Catholic ethos provides pupils with a strong framework of beliefs and principles that promotes respect for themselves and for others. Pupils are given opportunities to explore their thoughts and feelings through prayer and reflection, both in assemblies and at other times during the school day. Spiritual values are strongly reflected in the school's aims, and these are very well upheld in the daily life of the school. Religious education lessons and school assemblies are not the only occasions on which spiritual values are taught. The building of quality working relationships in all parts of the curriculum also gives many opportunities to consider aspects of spiritual development. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils learned that they can get better at things by practising. The teacher talked about her own childhood experiences, and this impressed the class and encouraged them to think positively about themselves. The caring and supportive teaching approach enabled all pupils to participate and develop their spiritual understanding. Visits such as those by a poet and an artist, provide an added dimension to the curriculum to give an appreciation of the intangible, such as mystery and beauty.
30. Moral development is very well promoted throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to recognise that everyone is equally important. They are clearly taught that care and consideration should be shown to all, so that everyone can work harmoniously together. From the youngest classes, pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. The school's ethos promotes care for each other, and personal responsibility, built on clear understanding of what is expected in terms of behaviour and consideration for others. Teachers, support staff, and lunchtime and other staff, all play their parts in this process. Representatives of charities such as Unicef and support for the homeless, come to speak to pupils, and this helps develop their understanding of, and respect for, the needs and interests of others.
31. The school's provision for pupils' social development is very good. In many lessons and other activities, pupils are required to work together co-operatively, and they generally respond very well to this approach. When given opportunities to work unsupervised pupils were generally very sensible, sharing and co-operating well, and showing respect for others' needs. In the playground pupils generally mix well, enjoying their play activities. No examples of bullying or other oppressive behaviour were seen. The school makes good use of many contributions which members of the local community, and other visitors, bring. During the past year the Crucial Crew road safety team, the Kinetic theatre science in action, puppet theatre, Zulu Workshops, and local charities, poets and artists have all made good contributions to the pupils' social awareness and sense of responsibility.
32. Provision for pupils' cultural education is good overall. Much is done to make pupils aware of other cultures, and to understand their varying traditions. Pupils are given a very strong feeling for their own cultural traditions and history. They learn about different periods in local and British history such as the Victorian period. Musical instruments from a variety of world cultures are available for use in music lessons. The school choir has been involved in various events in the local community, and there are links with local sporting organisations, such as the Manchester United Soccer School. Understanding of other cultures is promoted through aspects of the school curriculum, such as the study of world faiths. Recently pupils have been learning about Judaism, and have looked at aspects such as religious buildings and festivals. The work done by the school to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development also contributes to their understanding of the wider community. In this way they are being well prepared for future life as members of a multi-cultural society.

33. The school has made good efforts to ensure that pupils are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and life of the school. The inclusive nature of the school's ethos is very well reflected in the ways it organises its daily activities. Teachers plan the work so that pupils of all abilities are catered for, although in some lessons seen during the inspection the more able pupils were not fully engaged because work was not always challenging enough.
34. Some aspects of the school's accommodation do not lend themselves to full inclusion. For instance, there are no access ramps, so access to some parts of the ground floor would be difficult, while upstairs classrooms would be inaccessible to wheelchair users.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school is maintaining the good level of pastoral care and support identified at the last inspection. There is genuine care and understanding of all pupils' needs by staff, whether it is in a classroom environment or in the playground. This inclusive approach is apparent throughout the school. It is a strong feature of the school's ethos and very noticeable in lessons.
36. During a literacy lesson for Years 3 and 4 the pace, challenge and high level of support and guidance provided by the teacher and teaching assistant ensured that all pupils were able to maximise their learning. The hardworking pupils made good progress with their work, by working independently and achieving the individual targets set by the class teacher. This was a good example of how well the learning needs of pupils are cared for in a well planned and well organised lesson.
37. Teachers actively seek ways of rewarding pupils who work or behave well. The good procedures for promoting appropriate behaviour and for ensuring that there is no bullying or oppressive behaviour have a good impact on the way pupils behave. Pupils respond very positively when praised for good work and strive hard to achieve success in their learning at all times. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good.
38. Teachers use circle-time¹ activities to good effect. They raise the self-esteem of pupils and instil the importance of learning from mistakes made and to persevere with difficult tasks to meet learning objectives. Good relationships between adults and pupils and within pupils groups, allow pupils to ask questions when they are uncertain about something. There is usually good rapport in discussions between staff and pupils.
39. The school has made satisfactory progress in its work to develop assessment procedures. Information from tests and assessments is used effectively to evaluate the school's performance. There has been good use of assessment to improve the curriculum for information and communications technology and to help in the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. The more focused use of assessment to support pupils' learning, especially that of pupils' with higher ability, is not yet fully developed in the school. Good practice seen in some classes, where marking is used effectively to help teachers assess pupils' work and set targets for their learning, needs to be shared across the school and in all subjects.
40. The implementation of child protection procedures is effective and allows the pupils to learn in a safe and secure environment. All staff are aware of the need to identify signs of child abuse and the procedures for reporting to the designated teacher for child protection.

¹ 'Circle Time' is time when teachers and pupils have opportunities to discuss aspects of personal and social development.

41. Whilst the school takes health and safety issues and pupils' welfare seriously, risk assessment procedures should be more formalized and carried out more frequently to evaluate any potential risks to pupils. Several minor safety issues were identified during the inspection and remedial actions noted.
42. More formal procedures are required to monitor and improve attendance levels. Over the last three years there has been a downward trend with no indications of any programme to improve the situation. Systems are in place to monitor lateness by some pupils and additional time has been made available to assist the administrative assistant in this important area. The educational welfare officer does not visit the school regularly to review attendances and to advise on monitoring techniques. This partnership needs to be developed.
43. Currently the school uses conventional registration marking procedures and has no technological tools to generate statistical reports on attendance levels. No reward system is in place to promote better attendance by recognising individual pupils, or groups of pupils, that have achieved good attendance or who are never late.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school is maintaining the high level of parental involvement since the last inspection. There is a very effective partnership between school and parents. Parental involvement and commitment positively impacts on the pupils' learning and progress.
45. Parents have very good views of the school and are happy with their children's progress. The majority of parents are pleased that there is an open-door policy prevailing at the school. This helps to cement the long-standing partnership. The fact that the headteacher holds monthly open "surgeries" for parents to share their concerns and discuss matters is a good attribute ensuring full parental commitment.
46. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. For example, reports on pupils' progress are very well laid out and give data relating to progress in all subjects, assessment results in terms of achievement; effort grades; attendance and lateness levels and targets to help their child at home. This gives parents a very clear insight into how their children are progressing.
47. The newsletters and other information related to events happening at the school are also very good. The school prospectus is very well presented and meets statutory requirements. It goes into a lot of detail concerning attendance and absences. Attendance data is given for each year group on a termly basis. This enables parents to directly compare how well their own children are doing in relation to other pupils in the same year group.
48. The governor's annual report to parents is very good and gives precise details of the action plan to address previous inspection findings that placed the school in serious weaknesses. Parents have given their full commitment and understanding to the school during this time of challenge. The school has been completely open with parents about their difficult predicament. This honesty and openness allows the school to maintain the trust and commitment of parents and teaching staff and to keep a reasonable level of stability throughout the school.
49. Although very few parents help around the school there is good commitment in other areas. For example, there is a very active and innovative parent teacher association who raise considerable funds for the school to buy much needed equipment. Parents assist in planting trees in the school grounds. They use their skills and expertise in meaningful ways to contribute to their children's learning at school. Parents encourage pupils to complete their homework and listen to them read at home.

50. A few parents would like the school to explain the organisation of classes more clearly, such as why there is a class with an imbalance of girls and boys and how the learning needs of pupils in mixed-age classes will be met.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. At the time of the inspection the school was led by an associate headteacher, seconded for a term from another school within the diocese. The governors had, by the time of the inspection, appointed a headteacher to take up post at the beginning of the term after the inspection.
52. The associate headteacher leads the school well. He establishes good working relationships within the school and he is popular with parents, who feel that he is doing a good job for the school during a period when no permanent headteacher is in post. The inspection team agrees with this view. In the few weeks he has been in post before the inspection, the associate headteacher has evaluated the school well and made a good contribution to its improvement. The good work begun by the previous headteacher to improve the school has been continued well. This is because the associate headteacher has been directly involved in the work to monitor the work of teachers and to share good practice to improve teaching. This work is successful, as evidenced by the good teaching seen throughout the school. Through his commitment, his high profile around the school and his caring support to teachers and pupils he has established a good atmosphere for learning. Evidence of this was seen in the very good relationships between pupils and staff and the good ethos for learning seen in all classrooms.
53. The very good support given by the deputy headteacher has made a very effective contribution to the improvement of the school since the last inspection. The work of the deputy has a good impact on the school, such as in the improvement of information and communications technology and in the systems for assessing pupils' progress. The effective work of the deputy headteacher is a good model of leadership for other members of the senior management team. There has been satisfactory progress in the development of the roles of subject leaders and other key members of the management team but this work needs to continue so that they make a stronger impact on the improvement of the school. The responsibilities of each teacher involved in school improvement need to be clearly defined and linked effectively to the aspirations of the school development plan. Because of the need to clarify how the school can be improved by delegating responsibility to the management team and monitoring their work, the overall leadership and management of the school is satisfactory, an improvement since the last inspection.
54. The work of the governors is also satisfactory. The governing body is very supportive of the school and has been actively involved in monitoring improvement since the last inspection. The good work of a monitoring committee of governors has enabled the governing body to be kept well informed about the progress the school has made to meet the targets set in response to the areas for improvement since the last inspection. Governors are now more knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and how the school is responding to its own evaluation of performance. The governors fulfill their statutory obligations appropriately, checking that the information they provide as part of their statutory responsibilities is accurate and clear.
55. Overall, the combined efforts of staff and governors in evaluating the school and monitoring its improvement have had a good impact on school improvement. Advisers from the diocese and local education authority have supported staff and governors well in this work. For example, the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching has encouraged teachers to recognise and share effective planning and better teaching.
56. Day to day financial administration is good. There are effective systems for tracking spending and to ensure that the school receives best value for money. Information technology is used well to make school administration more manageable and efficient. The financial information

provided to the governors gives them sufficient detail for them to monitor the school's financial position.

57. The school's priorities for improvement are appropriate. The school development plan shows a clear commitment to improving teaching and learning so that standards will rise. The systems put in place with which to monitor school improvement have proved to be an effective tool in the school's self-evaluation process. The school is now in a position, with a change of leadership, to refocus its efforts on key areas of school improvement, specifically those that will take the school forward in response to this inspection report. The staff and governors recognise how far they have come since the previous inspection and now have a shared commitment to accelerating that improvement. To do this, they should build on the strengths of the school, seek ways to share effective practice and make teaching consistently good to promote better learning and higher standards. The role of the management team and subject leaders is crucial to this improvement. Therefore, the work to promote the leadership roles of these key staff should continue.
58. The work of the non-teaching staff makes a very strong contribution to the school. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of the pupils, supporting the work of the teachers well. The administrative staff working in the school office are efficient and have a strong commitment to helping the school to run well. So too do the caretaker and cleaning staff, who look after the building well. Lunchtime assistants show a good level of care for the pupils and they make a strong contribution to the very good relationships found in the school. Teachers are deployed to their classes appropriately and the match of teachers' qualifications to their subject responsibilities is satisfactory. The resources available are satisfactory overall. Generally, learning resources are satisfactory in all subjects. However, science and music resources are only marginally satisfactory and should be carefully reviewed in the near future to improve them.
59. The school has implemented good systems to address appraisal and the performance management of the teaching staff. All personnel have been assessed by the appropriate team leader and areas for improvement identified to improve teaching and learning. This is starting to have an impact on the standards of teaching.
60. Accommodation is in reasonable decorative order and sensibly used by teachers to deliver the demands of the curriculum. There are some areas where accommodation needs improvement. For example, there are insufficient numbers of toilets for the number of female staff. Lack of carpeting in some classrooms makes movement around these rooms noisy and potentially disruptive. There is no lift to access the upper part of the school for any pupils or adults who may have difficulty using stairs.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to raise the standards further and improve the quality of education for the school's pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Improve standards by sharing the good teaching seen in many lessons so that there is consistently good teaching across the school. (reference paragraphs 12,13,16,18,19)
 - (2) Make better use of assessment to:
 - i) Organise the teaching of children in the reception class so that work is more closely matched to their needs; (reference paragraphs 16,69,70,75)
 - ii) assist teachers in setting learning targets for all pupils and especially those with the ability to attain higher standards. (reference paragraphs 16,18,24,33,106,113,115)

- (3) Improve attendance by:

- i) monitoring patterns of attendance and absence more rigorously
- ii) introducing systems to promote and reward good attendance.
(reference paragraphs 7, 42,43)

Also, to continue with previous improvements, governors may wish to build the following into their action plan:

- i) The school should further develop the leadership and management roles of subject leaders
- ii) The school should support the good start made in the work to introduce effective systems for managing the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	13	26	8	0	0	0
Percentage	11.3	24.5	49.1	15.1	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

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)	N/A	316
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	60

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
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Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8%
National comparative data	5.6%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	20	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	23	29
	Girls	19	19	20
	Total	45	42	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (92)	82 (92)	96 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	29
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	44	46	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (92)	90 (89)	94 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	40	22	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	29	37
	Girls	20	15	18
	Total	49	44	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (64)	71 (55)	89 (83)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	30	37
	Girls	20	16	19
	Total	50	46	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (69)	74 (64)	90 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	315	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4 : 1
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	178

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	683010
Total expenditure	686892
Expenditure per pupil	2140
Balance brought forward from previous year	9223
Balance carried forward to next year	4004

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	316
Number of questionnaires returned	138

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61.7	33.3	2.9	0.7	1.4
My child is making good progress in school.	47.1	40.6	5.8	2.9	3.6
Behaviour in the school is good.	45.6	48.5	2.9	0	2.9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31.2	46.4	10.9	5.1	6.5
The teaching is good.	40.6	47.8	5.8	0.7	5.1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31.9	42	18.1	3.6	4.3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64.5	29.7	2.2	1.4	2.2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54.3	35.5	4.3	1.4	4.3
The school works closely with parents.	32.6	46.4	13.8	2.2	5.1
The school is well led and managed.	42	37.7	3.6	2.9	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	42	2.9	0.7	4.3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32.6	47.8	10.9	1.4	7.2

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

64. The Foundation Stage refers to children from the time they enter the nursery until they reach the end of their reception year. At this school there is no nursery, and children enter the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they will reach their fifth birthday. The school limits the length of the school day for these children for the first two weeks of the autumn term. At the time of the inspection, all reception class children had spent five weeks of full days in school.
65. The children attend a very wide range of pre-school settings. At the time of the inspection there were 44 children in the two reception classes, only one had received no formal pre-school experience, ten had attended full time private nursery school, 15 a local authority part time nursery and 18 a part time play group. One of the children was on the school's register for special educational need.
66. Within the school, the Foundation Stage is divided into two classes. Children are further divided into three mixed ability groups. These groups are taught in three discrete teaching areas for numeracy and literacy, where children are taught by the two teachers, and a creative area managed by a capable support assistant. Children spend an equal amount of time in each of these areas during the morning session, in the afternoon they are taught in their registration groups.
67. In the last inspection report, teaching was judged to be good, and the children's learning matched this. This remains the same.
68. As the majority of children start in the reception classes their skills and knowledge levels are below those expected for children of this age. They are particularly underdeveloped in speaking, listening, personal and social skills. All children are encouraged to work together, teachers continually emphasise the need for all to "share". Those children with special educational needs are identified early, are given good help and care and so achieve well. However, the very small numbers of children who enter school with average levels of attainment are being insufficiently challenged.
69. All children make satisfactory progress throughout their time in the reception classes. The main emphasis of teaching at the beginning of the year is on the development of conversation skills, and helping children to develop their personal and social skills. The teachers use many strategies to develop the children's self esteem and confidence. However, insufficient emphasis is placed upon helping children to become independent learners.
70. Information about the children is gathered when they start school. This year the organisation of these checks has lacked rigour and has led to an unreliable information base for the teachers to work from. Consequently, activities planned, while appropriately addressing the need for children's communication, personal and social development, shows insufficiently focussed planning in all other areas of learning. The teachers do not keep a sufficient check on what activity children have chosen, understood, learned and can do. Therefore inadequate information is available to fully inform planning, and many opportunities to meet individual children's needs are lost.
71. The environment for these young children is attractive and encourages them to learn. As a result, in all areas of learning children make satisfactory progress. Written evidence from the previous reception classes show that the majority of children achieved the early learning goals, and are working at levels expected for children of this age. In personal and social development as a result of patient and supportive teaching, by the end of the Foundation

Stage, children make good progress as they achieve the standards expected. As they enter Key Stage 1 a very small number of children achieve well in all areas of learning, and are working at levels above those expected.

Personal, social and emotional development

72. On entry to the reception classes children's personal, social and emotional development is well below that expected. By the time they complete their reception year, children achieve the nationally agreed standards. Children make good progress in this area of their work because the teachers have high expectations of them and they work hard in a busy environment. All groups of children including those with special educational needs are encouraged to join in, play together and help each other with their work. In both classes the children are encouraged by staff to share equipment and to take turns. The children work well alongside each other and some are beginning to share resources well. Many are polite and caring of one another. However, some do not share well and, when they played with bats and balls, some would not co-operate with each other. When adults intervene, children learn well but when teachers do not initiate and guide play, co-operation between children is limited.
73. The children change their shoes, and take off their jumpers for physical education lessons. Many found this difficult and needed help to remove their jumpers. They cope well putting their clothes and shoes tidily so that they can dress themselves at the end of the lesson. Most children dress themselves, with some needing help with shoes, one child after trying very hard to knot a tie eventually asked for help. Most of the children have learnt the class routines well. They happily put away resources they have been using at the end of the lesson and know that this is expected of them.
74. Teaching in this area of learning is consistently good. Members of staff are patient and caring with the children and this enables them to learn and develop their social awareness. Those who find it particularly difficult to join in class activities are given good help and encouragement to contribute. The children often work in groups and pairs and they are learning to work together well. The children happily work with different children and become increasingly confident to join in. All staff give clear ideas of what is expected of the children, including the difference between right and wrong. This helps the children's moral and social development.

Communication, language and literacy

75. The children make good progress in this area of learning, particularly in the skills of speaking and listening as a result of good teaching. Most of the children come into the reception classes with underdeveloped speaking and listening skills. Because of this, teachers place great emphasis on this area of learning during the autumn term, resulting in these children making good progress. However, for a small number of children who are further on when they start school, activities are insufficiently focussed to develop their individual needs and their progress is just satisfactory.
76. Teachers employ a range of strategies to encourage the children to develop their vocabulary and confidence in speaking. A good strategy was used when pupils were asked to feel many different objects with different textures and then to describe them. Many were curious about this activity but had difficulty expressing their thoughts.
77. Role-play areas are a particular focus for the development of spoken language. The emphasis the teachers and teaching assistant place on the development of speaking and listening skills in these areas is clear and has a positive impact upon the children's confidence. For example during a free choice activity, children had built a "bus" out of tyres.

Several sat in the tyres while others distributed tickets and packed lunches. Children's confidence in a social situation is developing well.

78. All the children enjoy stories. They are extremely interested in the big books that the teachers read to them. They particularly enjoyed reading the big book about the 'Three Little Pigs', which they had written and illustrated themselves. They knew how to orientate it, where to start reading, how to turn the pages and tell the story using the pictures. Throughout lessons there was a strong emphasis on language development. The children in both classes have books to take home to share with parents or carers and in this way the children's learning at school is extended.
79. Writing is prominently displayed in all areas of the literacy base and this is effective in encouraging the children to write. Children regularly work at the writing tables writing busily. More able children are aware of left to right orientation and are beginning to form their letters correctly.

Mathematical development

80. On entry to the reception class children's mathematical development is below that expected. During the year their progress is satisfactory, and they enter Year 1 with standards expected for children of their age. A small number of children who are further on when they start school do not achieve as well. This is a result of inadequately focussed activities to meet their individual needs.
81. The teacher in the numeracy base provides children with many activities and experiences so that they develop their mathematical skills through teaching and play. In one lesson good use of story telling was used to help children count to seven and then on to nine. At the end of the lesson children collected groups of three items.
82. The children sing number songs and this helps to reinforce their learning of numbers. They collected groups of three items to make the sad number three teddy bear happy. The range of different activities that the teachers plan for the children means that they are interested in their learning, and so satisfactory learning takes place.
83. Good practical teaching allows the children to have many opportunities to practise their skills and consolidate their understanding. In one good mathematical development lesson, children played with sand using different sized containers, they were beginning to use appropriate language such as *small* and *big*. Some responded to questions such as '*Which will hold a lot?*' They recognised their colours when they played in the fruit shop. This helps their mathematical language to develop well. The teacher carefully plans these lessons so that children's learning is built on systematically, lesson after lesson.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, most children's attainment on entry to the reception class is below that expected. However, they achieve the standards expected for this area of learning by the end of their reception year. The teachers and teaching assistant provide a wealth of activities to extend the children's understanding of the world around them. This means that they enlarge their knowledge from the starting points of their own home, families and school. Good teaching ensures that children make consistently sound progress.
85. The teachers and learning support assistant have planned a varied programme for the children in this area of learning. These experiences provide a good foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. Children develop a sound understanding and concept of time as they explore the autumnal changes happening around them. An example of this was when children were taken on a walk down the school drive to look at trees, in particular a crab apple tree, which they had been observing over a period of time. On returning to the classroom, they discussed their observations, developing both their

observational, speaking and listening skills. They use the surrounding area well to explore the features of living things. Some children helped to plant winter pansies in baskets. They were very aware that the plants needed careful handling and that they would require water. Many activities were centred around the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. The children explored and investigated different media for making models of the pigs, and they learned that it was not very easy to blow down a house of straw.

86. The children have constant access to information and communication technology and use the mouse independently to control simple computer programmes such as "*Dressing the Tweenies*".
87. The children are very aware of their own culture, as their parish priest regularly visits them, and they spend some time in prayer before they go for their lunch. They have well planned opportunities to learn about other cultures, such as when they lit the Diya lights to celebrate Diwali, and dressed in saris. In one lesson children made paper children in different colours to place round the world to celebrate United Nations Day. Planned experiences to widen children's cultural development are good.
88. The quality of the teaching overall is good, and the staff plan effectively a wide and interesting range of activities, that cover all aspects of this area of learning.

Physical development

89. When children enter the reception class their levels of attainment in physical development are below those expected. However children make good progress to achieve the standards required in this area of learning by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Good teaching in this area enables pupils to make good progress from a low starting point. The children make good progress in this area of learning because teachers and teaching assistants employ many strategies to help children improve. The outside areas and the school hall are used well to help children to develop their large motor skills and their co-operative learning. Skilled adult teaching also means that the children are taught how to control a variety of pens, paint brushes and glue sticks as they work. For example the children were encouraged to carefully cut out their paper children for the United Nations Day collage.
90. The teachers encourage the children to work co-operatively in physical education sessions. The children enjoyed moving round the hall using different speeds and gaits, this was their first physical education lesson in the hall and many found the tasks difficult but challenging. They were encouraged in this good lesson to avoid bumping into one another, to walk, run and skip. The latter of these many were initially unable to do, but with help and support many achieved this. They all had great fun in the warm up and cool down sessions.
91. The staff use the outside area well to develop the children's skills of physical development. As they play with the wheeled toys they also extend and develop their imaginative play. For example, when the children sat on the bus that they had made out of tyres, they decided they would go on a journey and the conductor gave out the tickets. Others constructed a car using large bricks and, in response to the question "*Where are you going?*", the answer was "*to work*".

Creative development

92. In creative development most children enter the reception class with attainment below the level expected. As they leave the Foundation Stage they achieve the levels expected for children of this age because they make good progress. The children are taught well and have many opportunities to learn new techniques and use different materials.

93. The children enjoy painting pictures and making collages. In one lesson they mixed colours carefully and, under the guidance of a teaching assistant, they painted and coloured pictures of children with care and attention to detail. The teachers and teaching assistant understand well the skills they are encouraging the children to develop. Careful attention to the development of skills and the use of specific language enables the children to achieve satisfactorily. Again co-operative and collaborative work features highly, encouraging good personal and social development.
94. Music, mainly in the form of singing action songs plays a large part in the routine of the reception classes, when all join in very well both with singing and actions.

ENGLISH

95. Pupils speaking and listening, reading and writing for the current Year 2 pupils is broadly in line with the national averages, although there is a small number of pupils performing at lower levels of attainment than expected for their age. When compared with pupils' baseline assessment results at the start of the reception year, pupils make good progress in both Years 1 and 2. Girls performed slightly better than boys in reading and writing. This has been recognised by the school and teachers are taking steps to take better account of boys' needs. National test results at the end of Year 6 show improvement since the last inspection. Inspection findings show that pupils in the current Year 6 are achieving standards that are broadly in line with the national averages and they are making good progress. This indicates that the school is making a significant contribution to raising standards.
96. The improvement in learning has been achieved because of the good quality of teaching and the successful use of the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching assistants also make an important contribution to pupils' progress. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinators have ensured that all the weaknesses identified have been addressed. The National Literacy Strategy is well embedded into the curriculum and is well taught. Additional lessons for extended writing have been timetabled to improve standards and these are effective. Assessment data is now better used to focus teaching and support during lessons for the various needs and abilities of the groups and individuals. Pupils' work can now be tracked, although target setting is at an early stage. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the school. Their individual educational plans have clearly stated, achievable targets. The way pupils are grouped according to their abilities helps their learning.
97. Pupils make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 their achievement is at least satisfactory and some have developed good skills. In many lessons teachers give opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills because they wait for pupils to respond and encourage them to give longer answers to questions. Through the very good relationships between pupils and teachers, pupils demonstrate good listening skills during lessons. They can attend for sustained periods of time, listening to each other and the teacher. Shared and guided reading sessions also provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their oral skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 give examples and suggestions for their story about three baby monsters and include appropriate capital letters and an exclamation mark. All pupils knew the story of the 'Owl Babies' and could describe them as sad or happy in different parts of the story. Pupils eagerly answer teachers' questions with confidence and volunteer additional information. Teachers check on pupils' understanding of vocabulary, especially when new or unusual words are introduced. This ensures that all pupils have full access to lessons, that their vocabulary continues to be extended and that they make at least satisfactory and some making good progress in speaking and listening. Older pupils in Year 5 answer in complete and complex sentences when responding to questions in their extended writing of a 'Crime Report'. Pupils initiate their own questions showing that they understand their tasks. They read their writing to the whole class confidently and with expression.

98. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in reading that are in line with those expected nationally and they make good progress. A number of the pupils read fluently, accurately and with good understanding. They are eager to read and enjoy their books. They combine the sounds of individual letters and use this knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words. The higher attaining pupils discuss their books, read with expression and make comments about the text as they read. Pupils make good use of illustrations to support the sequence of the text and add further detail to the story. Guided reading is well used to ensure that vocabulary is understood and the story sequence is followed. Discussions about the reading encourage good learning.
99. Class libraries support reading and pupils have time to use these and the school library. Pupils take their books home every day and have a home-school diary to record their progress. Good use is made of the Early Literacy Support for pupils in Year 1. Pupils who are below average are given additional help particularly in spelling and reading. There is good communication with parents, who support their children well. This has been very successful with pupils achieving very good improvements by the end of the Year 1 classes.
100. Most pupils enjoy books and reading. They research and use the library to locate information sources. Pupils use dictionaries and enjoy dictionary games. They have favourite authors, for example, J. K. Rowling and Roald Dahl are currently the most popular and pupils give opinions about the texts they have read. They make comparisons between the books about Harry Potter and the film. Pupils read aloud and with expression. When they meet unfamiliar words they use their previous knowledge of the structure of words and their word building skills to identify them correctly. Most pupils have books at home and read every day. They have a satisfactory range of books in the library, but some of these are old. Pupils use a wide range of texts in their literacy lessons including stories, non-fiction material and poetry, which has been enhanced by a visiting poet. Older pupils develop their skills of comprehension, supported by their extended writing lessons. They become more proficient in recognising the different styles in which books are written. The way the classes are organised supports pupils with special educational needs and they achieve well. Good use is made of the Additional Literacy Support programme. Pupils make good progress over time. They develop literacy skills that improve their reading and they use these skills across the curriculum. Teachers are in the process of developing the Further Literacy Strategy. Pupils have a homework book and activities including reading, are set consistently.
101. Attainment in writing is broadly in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. There has been a considerable improvement. The school has made use of specialist help from the local education authority, a poet and writing consultant. Handwriting lessons have been included on the timetable. This has stimulated pupils' writing. At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. It takes some pupils considerable time before they can form regular letters and position them on a line. Some of the younger pupils are beginning to form letters neatly and when making lists of 'words' and 'not words' could write them underneath each other satisfactorily. By the time pupils are in Year 2 they begin to space and position words satisfactorily. Most pupils can write sentences accurately, and the above average use more complex sentences. All write on topics such as 'My Birthday, The Magic Box and A Monster Came to School'. Higher attaining pupils show clear sequencing, organised ideas and the use of direct speech. The more familiar are words spelt accurately, making their standard good.
102. Throughout Key Stage 1 the pupils are secure in their literacy and write with pleasure. The help of a local poet to show how poetry is structured has enriched literacy. Year 2 pupils have written collective poems on the Ocean, which they illustrated, and Year 1 completed the other half of a story they heard. This work is matched to the different groups of pupils enabling them all to join in the activity. A good proportion of the older pupils produce fluent joined legible script and take care with the presentation of their work. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6

confidently write extended pieces of work in a variety of forms, with a purpose, for an appropriate audience, select language and vocabulary to good effect and include mood and feeling in their work. Most use complex sentences and a range of punctuation. For example, they write a characterisation from information gathered through dialogue, which includes making inferences. Good use of alliteration based on animals was developed through the visiting poet. Excellent responses to the writing of an 'Instant Poem' give very good opportunities to use nouns, verbs, adjectives, and investigation skills when writing instructions.

103. There is very good use of information and communication technology. Throughout the school there is consistent and thorough literacy work, for example, grammar, structure, vocabulary and punctuation. Spelling strategies are developed throughout the key stages and clear targets are set for pupils to achieve in writing. All of these support writing well and account for the improvement in pupils' work. Writing assessment books and logbooks are part of the thorough monitoring process of pupils' achievements.
104. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 with some very good practice seen. This is similar to the last inspection and it is helping to improve standards, particularly in writing. At Key Stage 2 teaching is mainly good with very good and excellent practice seen. Excellent teaching occurs when there is a good pace to the lessons and high expectations of pupils. This promotes positive attitudes to learning and good achievement, with work that matches pupils' abilities. This has a positive effect on pupils' behaviour and they respond very well to the lessons. Very good use of information and communication technology supports pupils' learning well. This is an improvement since the last inspection and results in better progress and improving standards.
105. Teachers' planning overall is very thorough; the objectives are shared with the pupils and clearly understood by them. Lesson plans and teaching strategies recognise the differing needs of the pupils within the class. There is an appropriate two-year rolling programme in place to take account of the mixed age groupings. Efficient and effective teaching assistants have clear targets for the lesson and they monitor pupils' learning well. They give good support to pupils who have special educational needs and overall these pupils make good progress. During whole class work, support staff sit with an individual or a group of pupils to ensure that they keep up with the other pupils. This is a very successful strategy as it ensures that there is full integration of all pupils in the lesson. All teachers have a good knowledge of literacy and a wide range of methods is used to promote positive learning. There is a whole school marking policy although this is not used consistently throughout the school and not all teachers make appropriate comments to help pupils improve.
106. The two co-ordinators, one in each key stage, provide appropriate leadership for the subject and they are clearly focused on driving standards upward. However, more collaboration across the key stages would help them to develop a better understanding of each others work. There is analysis of test results and monitoring of teaching, which has led to the identified areas for improvement. Target setting is now in place, but targets could be further refined to make them more demanding for the higher attaining pupils.
107. The stock of books is overall satisfactory, there is a mixture of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms but there are too many old books in the library. The school has a programme for replacing library books but currently some of the books are unattractive. Pupils throughout the school read at home and are encouraged to do this every day. Older pupils have opportunities to be librarians and are very knowledgeable about the books and their locations.

MATHEMATICS

108. At Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with those found nationally, and pupils achieve well. In the school's last inspection standards were found to be below national expectations in Year 6, and so there has been satisfactory improvement. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy, and teachers confidently adapt the national guidelines to the needs of their pupils. The introduction of a system, in Key Stage 2, of grouping pupils according to their abilities is helping teachers focus more clearly on the right levels of work for their pupils, although this system had not yet been in place long enough to have an impact on overall standards. More still needs to be done to target more able pupils, and to provide them with work which challenges and extends them, so as to promote higher achievement. Subject managers have successfully developed systems to monitor pupils' understanding, in order to identify areas where results have been less good, and they have adapted the curriculum in response to these findings.
109. By the time they are seven pupils begin to understand place value, and can solve problems using mental calculation. They know the names and properties of simple 2 and 3 dimensional shapes, and use simple tables and block graphs to communicate results. In Year 6 pupils continue to develop their mathematical understanding. They quickly recall multiplication facts and solve number problems using a variety of mental calculations. They measure accurately, and find the areas of simple shapes. They use graphs appropriately to represent data in a variety of ways. They are not so good at using and applying mathematics, and many find it difficult, for instance, to develop their own strategies for problem solving.
110. The teaching of mathematics is good overall. In the junior classes there is a greater variation in the quality of teaching, with some satisfactory lessons observed, as well as some which were very well, or excellently taught. Teachers show good subject knowledge and have generally been successful in introducing and developing the National Numeracy Strategy. In some lessons seen, however, teachers allowed their introductions to go on too long, so that pupils became bored and unsettled. This also meant that there was less time for the main activities of the lesson, and so learning objectives were not fully achieved. A better balance between the different parts of lessons would improve learning for all pupils.
111. Teachers generally have high expectations for both work and behaviour in their classes, and the high quality working relationships seen in many lessons are a significant feature in the success achieved in promoting higher standards. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, for example, the teacher was working on two-dimensional shapes with the lower ability pupils. The excellent teaching ensured that all pupils understood the learning objectives, and there was a very good level of challenge and expectations, both in relationships and the setting of work. Quiet music was played in the background, and this established a calm working atmosphere.
112. Because of these effective teaching strategies pupils develop good attitudes to mathematics as they move through the school. There is often a sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm as pupils work. They work well together, discussing their ideas, and sharing and co-operating well. They are usually encouraged to discuss their work together, to listen to the opinions of others, and to sustain their concentration and work hard.
113. All aspects of the curriculum are given appropriate attention, and the school has adopted the guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The school has identified the 'Using and Applying Mathematics' aspect of the curriculum as an area for development, and the evidence of the inspection suggested that this was correct. When faced with choices about ways of solving problems, pupils often cannot think independently to find their own solutions. Opportunities to develop this aspect need to be more systematically

built into the curriculum at all stages, so that pupils build their confidence in choosing methods and strategies.

114. An appropriate amount of curriculum time is devoted to mathematics and the recent introduction of ability groups in the junior classes is beginning to have a positive effect in raising standards. This system enables teachers to adapt their teaching more closely to the needs of their pupils, and good examples of this more closely focussed approach were seen during the inspection. In a Year 5 lesson on interpreting data from a chart, the teacher kept up a lively pace of work with the lower ability group. She provided interesting activities which were appropriate for the pupils' abilities, and presented them in a lively and exciting way. There was very good learning, involvement and enjoyment for all.

115. In some lessons seen during the inspection, and in some pupils' work seen, it was evident that the higher ability pupils were not being given work which was sufficiently challenging for them. This means that, over a period, these pupils are not making the progress that they are capable of, and the school is not achieving the results which it should. More needs to be done to extend these pupils through a variety of teaching and support strategies, so that they can achieve what they are capable of.

116. The subject is effectively managed by the subject leaders for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They work well together, meeting regularly, and there has been a very good focus on analysing pupils' work and identifying areas which need additional attention. Some time has been provided for this work, but none has been set aside for working alongside colleagues and directly monitoring teaching and learning. Because of this the subject leaders' knowledge of what is happening, respectively, in the other key stage is presently limited, and so their capacity to promote higher standards and disseminate good practice is restricted. Much was done last year to review resources for mathematics, and, as a result, increased expenditure enabled many older resources to be replaced. The school now has adequate resources and they are efficiently organised and stored.

SCIENCE

117. Pupil's attainment in science is in line with the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils' achievement is good. This is the result of good teaching and learning. Overall the pupils are making good progress in science as they move from class to class in the school.

118. Standards by the end of Year 6 show good improvement, seen in improved test results, since the last inspection, when attainment was below average. The school recognised the results were not good enough and has worked hard to evaluate the schools strengths and weaknesses and to support areas it saw as needing development. The attainment of the pupils in science is rising but there is more to do to further develop the pupils' potential. Improvements have been made because the co-ordinator has:-

- Improved the quality of teaching and learning by discussing strengths and areas for development with colleagues.
- Improved the curriculum and lesson planning for science.
- Improved the resources within the school.

The effective co-ordinator has recognised the need to further improve the provision in the school by:-

- Ensuring the pupils have plenty of opportunities to do practical activities and also to reflect on what they have found out.
- Refining the schools' systems for checking what the pupils have learnt.
- Sharing teachers' expertise.
- Improving the resources in the school further.

119. In all classes there is no observed difference in the performance of boys and girls. Their class teachers and the teaching assistants support the pupils with special educational needs effectively. They work alongside the other pupils in the class so that all pupils make good progress in developing their scientific skills in relation to their abilities. The science curriculum is planned to ensure that the pupils have some opportunities to plan, predict, observe and consider what has happened during their investigations. But there is more to do to develop this aspect of the school's work. All areas of science are given appropriate coverage and the pupils are given opportunities to consolidate and extend their learning.
120. The satisfactory standards in Year 2 result from good teaching and learning. In Years 1 and 2 the teachers promote observational skills and practical activities. For example, in the Year 1 and 2 class, the pupils discussed which forms of exercise they could do out of school, for example running, cycling skipping and press-ups. They tried these out and decided that they did make their heart beat faster. Reflecting that exercise keeps them fit and healthy. The pupils record their own ideas in their books and talk about why they need to be healthy. Because the pupils record their own results they begin to understand the need to make sure their tasks are fairly done and their recordings are accurate. In Year 1 the pupils tested their sense of smell by smelling a number of pots containing different substances. The pupils then considered what was in each pot recognising that the vinegar smelt very different to the orange juice. In this lesson the pupils recognised the importance of using their senses accurately.
121. The teachers generally plan their lessons well and ensure that the pupils are fully involved in their learning, this ensures that they learn well. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the pupils were busy finding their pulse rate when their bodies were at rest. The aim of the experiment was to see what effect exercise had upon their pulse rate. However, as a number of the pupils found that they had difficulty finding their pulse, the class teacher swiftly ensured that the pupils' homework consisted of locating their pulse rate. The pupils recognise that consistent, accurate results were essential before they introduced variables into their tests. The pupils understand the need to have a fair test and make suitable scientific suggestions when answering scientific questions.
122. Block graphs, tally charts and formal recording of their results ensures the pupils use a range of skills when they write up their experiments. ICT is used well to support the pupils' science learning with both information from the Internet and also charting their results making a valuable contribution to their learning.
123. Teaching in science lessons is most effective when teachers allow the pupils to investigate and plan their own tests. It is less effective where teachers over direct the pupils' work and spend too long talking to the pupils. In these cases the pupils find it difficult to sustain their concentration and as a result they do not learn as well. The pupils are keen and eager to work in lessons. They show commendable attitudes to the tasks set for them. They find experimentation and investigation challenging and work well with their peers to extend their learning. Pupils use increasingly complex scientific vocabulary in their work.

ART AND DESIGN

124. Standards in art are in line with those found nationally at the ends of both key stages. The last inspection found similar results, and so satisfactory standards have been maintained. Throughout the school pupils are given a range of worthwhile experiences, which provide effective coverage of all aspects of the curriculum for art and design. Displays of pupils' work, in art and other subjects, are well presented, and reflect the care and high standards of the teachers and support staff who prepare them. Good quality displays make a

positive contribution to the visual environment in which pupils work, and contribute to the development of their aesthetic appreciation.

125. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection, but scrutiny of pupils' previous work, and that seen in displays around the school showed that the quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers provide interesting activities according to the ages and abilities of the pupils, and are good at teaching the skills needed for the different areas of the curriculum. Teachers have high expectations, as is shown by the high quality of much of the work produced. They are also good at matching the work to the whole range of abilities, ensuring that all are fully included in the work.

126. Because of the good teaching they receive, pupils develop good attitudes to art. They apply themselves well and work hard to improve. They use materials carefully and with good regard for safety. The co-operation, discussion and sharing which is often required makes a good contribution to their social development.

127. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for art and design, and all aspects are given appropriate coverage. Pupils develop their skills progressively. In some classes sketchbooks are used so that pupils can experiment and develop a range of techniques. This approach should be extended to the other classes. As part of their work pupils study the work of famous artists, and good examples were seen during the inspection, with good quality displays of pupils' work in the style of Giacometti, Van Gogh and Klimt. Good links are also made to other subjects, such as when pupils in the Reception and Year 1 classes made print pictures with the title 'We are all part of God's family'. This work made a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and social development.

128. At present there is no member of staff responsible for the management of the subject. This has arisen due to recent staff changes, and, whilst it is acceptable in the short term, there is a need to remedy the situation as soon as possible.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. Only one lesson was observed in design and technology and there is insufficient evidence from the work scrutiny to make a secure judgement on teaching or learning in this subject. Evidence available from looking at a limited amount of pupils' work, discussions with staff and a review of teachers' planning indicates that attainment in design and technology meets national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6. In a period of change for the school, there is no designated co-ordinator in place but the school has uses the nationally agreed guidelines and therefore improvement is satisfactory.

130. In Years 1 and 2 pupils study food and healthy eating. They make good links with mathematics by creating cuboid people, showing careful cutting and sticking. Photographic evidence shows pupils making castles in their project on homes, using a variety of three-dimensional packaging. Their work is well painted and well constructed. They explore a range of materials such as plastic, wood, different types of card and sticking materials. Displays of vehicles show that pupils can join wheels and axles correctly and prepare appropriate designs. Pupils explore different types of hinges and use a number of different ways to demonstrate movement, including paper fasteners, sellotape stitching and sticky paper. Three dimensional containers are well constructed and well decorated. Examples of textile work show pupils developing knowledge of design through assembling cut out textile shapes. There are good links with art where pupils learn about human poses, use wire to make the human frame and make sculptures in the style of Giacommetti. The homework to make a musical instrument showed pupils' interest in designing and making as well as good support from home.

131. In Years 3 and 4 pupils study packaging and make accurate two-dimensional templates to create three-dimensional packages. They cut, score and crease card with increasing accuracy and understand how to make flaps to assemble their work successfully. Pupils make designs to illustrate the package they have made, some with interesting slogans such as 'cornball'. They begin to understand how three dimensional effects can be designed and made from two dimensional plans. During the lesson seen, pupils measure and cut with great care and accuracy showing an appropriate level of skills. Pupils share materials and collaborate well with others. They sustain their concentration well and most pupils use tools and equipment to cut and shape materials and to assemble their packages. The classroom display shows good use of vocabulary and design skills with instructions about making a design work in practice. Older pupils explore bread in their study of food and identify many different types. They investigate their likes and dislikes and make careful charts and graphs. They make loaves of bread and have a clear method for doing this, listing the ingredients and instructions. There is good evaluation about the finished product. Very good use is made of information and communication technology, for example, pie charts, tallies and bar charts are used to demonstrate the results of favourite bread. These are recorded in their design and technology books.
132. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was very good. This was because the lesson included good preparation and clear learning objectives that were shared with the class. The support assistant worked well with pupils with special educational needs, talking to them about their work to develop their vocabulary. They were fully included in the lesson. Overall there was a very good working atmosphere because the teacher supported the pupils and promoted interest in the activities.
133. Evidence from teachers' planning, discussions and scrutiny of pupils' work and displays indicate that statutory requirements for the subject are met as the nationally agreed guidelines are used. However, the subject lacks a co-ordinator and there is no planned approach towards monitoring and evaluating what has been taught. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall.

GEOGRAPHY

134. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is in line with that found in most schools. Pupils achieve well. The standards reflect good, interesting and relevant lessons, which are tailored to the needs of all the pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils learn about their own locality and the issues that are apparent in Heywood. They also study different areas of the world. This gives the pupils a more global perspective and contributes well to their appreciation of cultures different from their own. Frequent educational visits to different parts of the locality give the pupils good opportunities to learn about features and changes that are taking place within their locality. Provision and standards have remained the same since the last inspection.
135. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of their locality. In Year 1 the pupils study the local area around the school. They plot their route to school and discuss who lives nearest and who lives furthest away. In Year 2, the pupils also study their local area. In one good lesson, pupils carefully drew route plans depicting their journey to school, showing good skills of observation in their drawings. All pupils learn about the countries that Barnaby Bear travels to. He has been to a number of different places and usually sends photographs and postcards back to the school to keep the pupils informed about his whereabouts. He has visited Spain and Morocco. Both classes were eager to discover Barnaby Bear's next holiday destination.
136. Teachers work hard to ensure that the correct geographical terms are used both by themselves and by the pupils. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' specific geographical language has developed. In a very good lesson for Years 3 and 4, the pupils produced their

own brochures to encourage visitors to take an interest in their locality. Good use is made of information and communications technology during this lesson when pupils accessed the Internet to discover more information about their area. This was linked to a projector so every one in the class could access the information found.

137. Teaching and learning are good overall. In both key stages, all classes study geography based on a two-year cycle of topics. In most lessons, teaching is clearly rooted, as far as possible, in first-hand enquiry. To support this policy of learning through first hand experiences and the use of source materials, teachers organise visits to a range of local educational venues. The Years 5 and 6 visits to Heywood enable pupils to look at different kinds of buildings and land use.
138. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for one term. She is very enthusiastic, and has good ideas for the future development of the subject. Resources are satisfactory and the school makes effective use of a wide range of resources in the locality to promote effective learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. As yet there is no system throughout the school for recording pupils' progress in the key skills.

HISTORY

139. Pupils' attainment is in line with that found in most schools. Pupils achieve well. The standards reflect good, interesting lessons. There is a good match to the needs of all the pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils learn about the history of their own locality, and the rich culture they have inherited. They also learn about past civilisations and events, which gives them a good sense of time. Regular educational visits to different parts of the locality give the pupils good opportunities to learn about the different historical cultures. Provision and standards throughout the school have remained the same since the last inspection.
140. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection, so judgements have been based upon interviews with pupils, observations of pupils' work and an interview with the subject coordinator. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing good knowledge and understanding of people in the past and how they lived. They have a clear understanding that these people lived in a very different way. When questioned, pupils are very clear about the order in which events have taken place.
141. By the end of Year 6 the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the different periods of British history. They develop an understanding of life during Victorian times. When pupils learn about Victorian times, they gain an understanding of the harsh working conditions of many children at that time. During a good Year 5 lesson, pupils expressed astonishment when learning about the working conditions of children in Victorian times and good use was made of information and communication technology (ICT) when pupils researched the children's working conditions on the Internet. They discover how other people invaded Britain in earlier times. They study the Ancient Egyptians. The emphasis in all lessons is clearly one of finding out information from a wide range of sources. After careful examination of these sources, the pupils develop a good understanding of how people from the past lived, and they come to appreciate the legacy that different civilisations have left to our lives today. Very good illustrations and accurate guidance encourage the pupils to careful observations and well-considered deductions so that pupils gain a good understanding and sense of time.
142. Teaching and learning is good overall. In both key stages, all classes study history based on a two-year cycle of topics. Teaching throughout is clearly embedded as far as possible in first-hand enquiry. To support this policy of learning through first-hand experiences and the use of source materials, teachers organise visits to a wide range of local educational venues. The visits to local historical venues enable pupils to look at important buildings and sites that provide a key to the past.

143. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for almost one year. He is enthusiastic, and has good ideas for the future development of the subject. Resources are satisfactory and the school makes effective use of a wide range of resources in the locality to promote effective learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. At present there is no system throughout the school for assessing or recording how well the pupils have learned the skills of historical enquiry.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

144. By the end of Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and their attainment is similar to that expected nationally. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. By the time they reach Year 6 attainment is also satisfactory. Their command and use of information and communication technology skills are sound. The standards attained are better in comparison with those found in the previous inspection. The enhanced resources for the subject means that pupils have improved opportunities to learn compared to those available during the previous inspection.

145. By the time they reach Year 2 the pupils begin to show confidence in using computers. Their ability to store and retrieve work is sound and they communicate information using simple computer generated graphs. The youngest pupils gain effective control of the computer mouse through practise with suitably challenging programmes, such as one they use to design their own pictures. When using the computers in the classroom, they know how to type and correct text using word processing software and they have sufficient skill in using the mouse to control the placing of words in a game to develop their vocabulary.

146. By the ages of 7 and eleven, pupils use word processing programmes on computers in the classroom to re-type their stories, poems and letters and present them well. The typing of work directly into the computer so that the pupils can learn to use programmes as word processing tools occurs infrequently, however. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 access the Internet to find out information about weather patterns as part of their studies in geography. They show sound knowledge of the processes needed to search for information on a topic and how to print it out.

147. All pupils develop confidence in using this technology and they apply the skills they have been taught well. For example, they click on the appropriate icon to search the internet for relevant sites of interest and they use other features of the software such as menus and tools within programmes. Their skills in using information and communication technology to support and extend their learning in other subjects are satisfactory overall.

148. Evidence from the pupils' own work shows that they use computers for a range of activities linked to other subjects of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 use the 'Paint' programme to produce designs for a classroom display. The displays of this work show satisfactory development of computer skills by using the available technology as part of the learning that goes on in subjects other than ICT.

149. Only two formal lessons were observed. Evidence of the quality of teaching was also gathered from observing the use of computers in other lessons. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The teaching by the subject co-ordinator represents a very good model for using portable (laptop) computers to teach the basic skills of combining text and graphics for visual impact. Where pupils are given clear instruction and support from teachers and adult helpers, learning is enhanced. When working in pairs or small groups, the pupils support each other's learning very well. They discuss what they need to do, for example which file to search for specific information, and they take turns to attempt what they have learned so that no child is excluded from learning the important keyboard and mouse skills. The teachers and adult helpers give good support and encouragement, demonstrating sound subject

knowledge and a clear understanding of the pupils' needs. Pupils in turn show a keen interest in the tasks and they are enthusiastic in their work.

150. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They show a good response to the subject, they are interested in the learning opportunities it provides and they respond to challenges well. These good attitudes are seen in the concentration of pupils working on computers as they learn new techniques and skills. Pupils work well on computers and they handle the equipment carefully. Pupils benefit from the addition to the curriculum provided by improved resources for information and communications technology, which represents a significant improvement in resources for the subject since the last inspection. Opportunities for learning are good for all pupils. The pupils who have special educational needs benefit from using computers to help them to produce their work and they achieve well.
151. The co-ordination of the subject is very good. The subject leader promotes positive attitudes among both staff and pupils towards the value of information and communications technology across the curriculum. In the short period of time since taking over the role he has worked hard on improving resources and providing good support and training to staff. There is increased confidence among the teaching and support staff following initial training in preparation for the further training provided through the New Opportunities Fund, which is scheduled to begin in 2003.
152. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made in the provision of this subject since the previous inspection. The school has been successful in increasing the opportunities for pupils to learn a wider range of skills using up to date technology. Further training for teachers and support staff and opportunities for the subject leader to evaluate teaching and attainment against that found elsewhere will help to plan for the use of the available technology as a tool to raise standards.

MUSIC

153. Standards in music by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. The pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. This is the result of good teaching and learning. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and makes a major contribution to the spiritual development of the pupils. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. There are a number of pupils who have taken advantage of the specialist music teaching available and are now learning to play the keyboard. A large group of Year 5 and 6 boys and girls sing together as the school choir and have extra lessons during a lunch hour. They regularly perform in the community and at the time of the inspection were busy practising carols for their Christmas engagements. A number of members of staff are musicians. This means that many of the pupils are taught by teachers who have a good understanding of the subject which enables these pupils to achieve well. The provision of music is therefore strong within the school and this leads to good levels of achievement.
154. A secure scheme of work, which gives appropriate help to the teachers, has been a good aid to the teaching of music. In the lessons observed during the inspection the class teachers were clear about the pupils learning, enabling the lessons to be delivered effectively and consequently the pupils learnt well. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 class the teacher began the lesson with the pupils singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" and adding claps in time with the beat. Later adding to the singing with an accompaniment of percussion instruments. The quality of some of the instruments let down the pupils' performance and meant that the teacher had to work hard to keep the pace of the lesson going. The pupils ended the lesson by singing a song they were learning as part of a taped production. All the pupils particularly enjoyed the singing and also accompanying themselves with the instruments as they sang. In the Year 2 lesson the pupils were encouraged by the class teacher to think about long and short sounds. They thought about the different sounds made by the church bells, the chime bars and the harmonica. They were confident as they made their own long and short sounds using their voices. They chose their own instruments and created their own long and short sounds.

155. The teachers are effective in using the correct technical musical vocabulary and ensuring the pupils have opportunities to play a range of musical instruments. The pupils in discussion talk positively about their music lessons. They value the teaching they receive and talk with affection about the concerts and the music that they have experienced in school. They speak knowledgeably about “Blues” music and how it is different from “Rock and Roll”. The pupils in the choir clearly enjoy their singing and look forward to their performances in the community. The pupils learn a wide range of religious and secular songs.
156. The music co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the development of music throughout the school. She has identified the need for the pupils to be introduced to a wide range of music and has organised different experiences for the pupils, for example Zulu music workshops. Resources are satisfactory but in need of further development. The use of ICT is as yet underdeveloped in music and it is in this area that the co-ordinator is keen to move forwards. A whole school approach to checking pupils’ skills and understanding, is also an area prioritised by the co-ordinator.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

157. Pupils’ attainment in physical education is above expectations at the end of Year 2 and similar to expectations by Year 6. This attainment is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Although no swimming lessons were seen, teacher’s records show that pupils attain the expected standard in swimming.
158. Pupils have good opportunities to practice a range of activities including dance, gymnastics, games and swimming. The school makes good use of its own field and of the playground for games activities. The school’s link with a local sports centre and the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities contribute significantly to the progress the pupils make. The good work of the co-ordinator, who is working to update the school’s curriculum, is contributing to improvements in the already good quality of teaching which results in good pupil progress.
159. By the age of 11 pupils can participate in team games with good regard to positional sense. They develop good skills in gymnastics and execute forward somersaults and other rolling movements to a good standard. Pupils work confidently and develop various interesting ways of balancing on points and using a partner to counterbalance. They can think of different ways of moving on one foot and one hand. They know the reasons why they warm up.
160. Overall the quality of teaching is good. The quality of lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to very good but most were good. As a result, pupils enjoy the subject and boys and girls participate equally enthusiastically in lessons. They use their time effectively, co-operate well with others and are keen to do their best. They invariably behave well. Teachers set a good example in their own style of dress for lessons. Pupils are expected to wear appropriate kit and they do so. Lessons usually proceed at a good pace and classes are well managed. In the best lessons there is a good demonstration of techniques and good use is made of pupils’ own demonstrations to refine their technique and improve their performance. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils were well taught to position their feet correctly when counterbalancing with a partner and their performance improved as a result. In the main good attention is paid to health and safety issues and pupils removed any items of jewellery before lessons.
161. The school participates in a wide range of inter-school sporting activities, which involves a large number of pupils and gains a high degree of success. The coordinator is enthusiastic and has a good knowledge of how to move the subject forward. She has produced a clear policy and scheme of work based on national recommendations with additional advice to reflect good practice. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall. There is a very good provision of small equipment but a more limited variety of large

equipment. Because pupils co-operate well with each other and enjoy competing in a spirit of friendship with pupils from other schools, the subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' social development.