

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brinnington, Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106108

Head teacher : Julie Bottomley

Reporting inspector: David Marshall
27681

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 246558

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brinnington Rise Stockport
Postcode:	SK5 8AA
Telephone number:	0161 4805403
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Katrina Wilkinson-Davies
Date of previous inspection:	13 th – 16 th October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27681	David Marshall	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	How high are standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' personal development and attendance
14976	Peter Dexter	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?
22157	Michael Roussel	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Paul's is an average size primary school in the large urban area of Brinnington, a suburb of Stockport. There are 210 children on roll – 101 boys and 109 girls. Most pupils come from the immediate locality, which is recognised as an area of high deprivation. Of the children of statutory school age there are 15 from ethnic minority groups – which is below the national average. There are nine pupils with English as an additional language, but none are receiving additional support – again below the national average. Currently around 85 pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. The level of attainment on entry varies from year to year but is generally well below average, and this reflects changes in the area over the last few years. Many children come to school needing language support, which the school has identified in its early assessment procedures. As a consequence the school is part of a speech and language development project. There are 49 pupils identified as having special educational needs – 23 per cent of the school roll, and above average. There are currently two pupils with statements of specific need, which is also above the national average. The school has faced considerable staff changes in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Paul's is now an effective school. The quality of teaching is good. The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and subject co-ordinators are good. The quality of education provided is good overall; pupils achieve well and make good progress despite their low start. Those pupils with special educational needs are taught well with appropriately challenging activities. Pupils' personal development is very good. The school provides a broad curriculum, with a very wide range of additional activities. The head teacher, governors and all staff work together well and the very good community links they have secured create a very positive atmosphere in the school that provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The quality of provision in the nursery and reception classes is very good and so children make a good start to their education.
- The provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is very good.
- The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and key staff are good.
- The governing body is well involved and makes a good contribution to the effectiveness of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are very good. They are polite and courteous, very enthusiastic and co-operate well.
- The school's relationships with parents and the local community are very good
- The support staff, caretaker and administrative manager make important contributions to the effectiveness of the school

What could be improved

- Pupils' written English, particularly when used in other subjects.
- Pupils' achievements in mathematics.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' work on a day-to-day and medium-term basis, including marking, and the use of this assessment to guide curricular planning for pupils' future achievement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the time of their last inspection in October 1997, the area the school serves has changed. In the report in 1997, pupils' level of attainment on entry to the school was judged to be in line with expectations for their age. In the last few years early assessments have shown that children coming into the school now are achieving well below or very low standards in comparison. This has had an impact on the levels achieved by pupils by the time they leave school.

The school's overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The quality of long-term planning in English, mathematics and science has improved well. There are schemes of work for all subjects and there is much clearer identification of long-term curriculum aims. Pupils' progress is now becoming easier to map as the school has adopted a consistent approach to assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics

and science. However, the use of these assessments to modify lesson planning to ensure work is matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities has still to be implemented throughout the school, and has not yet had time to have an impact on standards. Assessment procedures have not yet been expanded to take in all other subjects in the curriculum. The school development plan is much clearer and there are good links between its priorities and the school budget. The head teacher and governors monitor and evaluate its effectiveness well. There has been improvement in the work of the governing body under the leadership of the new head teacher. The good relationships with parents have been maintained, as have the links with the wider community.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	D	D	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	E	E	D	
Science	E	C	E	C	

Results in the 2002 national assessments for seven year olds were well below the national averages for all schools in reading, writing and mathematics. They were also well below average when compared with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. In science, teacher assessments of pupils' standards at age seven were well below average when compared nationally and when compared to similar schools. Current standards seen during the inspection have improved but are still below average in these areas. This improvement is largely due to the effective teaching of the basic skills of reading, speaking and listening from the time children start school. On the basis of their own prior attainment, pupils up to the age of seven are making good progress. When children enter the nursery class, most are attaining very low standards. Children make good progress as a result of effective planning but standards are still well below those expected by the time they enter Year 1.

The results in the 2002 national tests for eleven year olds were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The school's performance was below that of similar schools in English and mathematics but matched these schools in science. Results over the last three years have shown a drop in standards and improvement below the national trend. However, this is due to the area that the school serves having changed and children's attainment on entry being significantly lower than before. In the last two years, pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have reached their targets in National Curriculum tests. The targets set for the 2003 are for more improvement. The standards shown in the table above are now being exceeded. Current work shows that by the age of eleven, pupils make good progress as they go through the school. Older pupils now continue to make good progress and achieve well. This is due to the good teaching based on careful planning. Pupils' work shows good improvement and pupils at the age of eleven are achieving average standards in the speaking, listening and reading aspects of English, in numeracy in mathematics, and in the investigative aspects of science. Although standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected for their age, they have begun to improve well recently as pupils have more regular access to computers. In music, art and design, physical education, and design and technology pupils are achieving standards in line with what could be expected for their age by the time they leave school. In history and geography standards are below expectations for their age, and this is mainly due to the weaker standards of pupils' writing that the school has identified as an urgent priority.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show great interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well. There is no sign of bullying or unpleasantness. Pupils respect each other and enjoy playing and working together.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils form very good relationships with their teachers, with other adults and with each other. This makes a significant contribution to the school's positive atmosphere.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall, although the level of unauthorised absence is above average.

The personal, social and emotional development of all pupils is very good. The way they work together so well makes a significant contribution to their overall learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Lessons seen overall	Very 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. This is a significant improvement over the last inspection. In particular there is a much higher incidence of good and better lessons than reported at the last inspection. A very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently very good. The range of opportunities teachers create in the Foundation Stage is particularly impressive and ensures children make a good start to their education. Teachers' use of day-to-day assessment to ensure all lessons are appropriate is particularly successful at this stage.

The good quality of teaching throughout the rest of the school enables pupils to make good progress in both key stages. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum are good throughout the school. This enables them to teach the basic skills of speaking and listening, and reading in English and numeracy in mathematics effectively to all pupils. The school has identified the need to establish a more effective way to teach pupils writing and to use their language skills in other subjects.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils, which result in the very good behaviour and good learning. Teachers relate very well to their pupils and manage classes well, and most lessons move along at a good pace. Class discussions are lively and careful questions bring good responses from all pupils. Pupils learn to listen carefully and concentrate for longer periods of time as they get older. A wide variety of teaching methods are employed to make lessons interesting, and pupils enjoy their learning. However, the many changes of teachers recently have enabled the school to identify some areas for improvement, for instance, the use of day-to-day assessment and marking to ensure that all lessons are appropriately challenging and that pupils are building on what they already know and understand. The teaching, and support, of pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well against the targets set for them and for their ability.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum provided in the Foundation Stage is very good. Throughout the rest of the school the curriculum is broad and balanced and the quality and range of opportunities for learning are satisfactory. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities for older pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are generally supported well. The targets on their individual education plans are relevant to their needs and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Provision and support in this area is good when required. Pupils make good progress and achieve appropriately high standards.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The provision for their spiritual, social and moral development is also very good and pupils soon learn right from wrong and how to behave at all times. The provision for their cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection are very good. There are good procedures to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance and staff work very hard to maintain a caring, supportive environment. The use of assessment in the Foundation Stage is very effective. In Key Stages 1 and 2, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science but very limited in all other subjects.

The school has a good partnership with its parents and this enables them to be regularly involved in school life and activities and to help their children learn more effectively.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The head teacher provides caring and purposeful leadership and enables the school's aims to be achieved through her careful day-to-day management. The deputy head and other key staff work closely with the head to improve pupils' standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They visit the school regularly and understand the needs of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school monitors its provision well. They have addressed the priorities and areas for development since the last inspection well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning is carefully linked to the need to raise standards and the school evaluates the effectiveness of all decisions made. Best value principles are applied well.

There are a good number of teachers and assistants and the whole staff work as a close and supportive team. The school's accommodation is good. The level of resources is good and meets the needs of all pupils and the National Curriculum. The school administrative manager carries out the day-to-day administrative functions very well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like coming to school.• Behaviour is good.• The teaching is good.• The school is an important part of the community.• The teachers are very approachable.• The school is helping their children to become more mature and sensible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better information about their children's work and progress.• The range and type of homework their children are given.

Inspection evidence supports the positive views of the parents. The view of the inspectors is that the quality of information provided to parents is good. Also, the inspection team does not agree with a few parents about the homework their children are given. The tasks given as homework are linked with the work being covered in lessons, parents are well informed so they can help, and pupils' progress is enhanced as a result.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children are first admitted to the school, initial assessments show that their attainment is well below the expected level for their age in many of the early learning goals¹ for the Foundation Stage. It is often very low in their language development, personal, social and emotional development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their mathematical skills, creative skills and physical development are well below what could be expected. This is a very considerable change from the time of the last inspection. At that time the report recorded, "The attainment of the majority of children when they start school is in line with national expectations."
2. Children in the nursery and reception class are making good progress in their learning as a result of the very effective provision. By the end of their reception year children attain standards in line with those expected nationally in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. In the other areas the standards are still below expectations for their age. The nursery and reception class teachers, nursery nurses and assistants work together very well in planning and assessing children's achievements and this ensures the good progress the children make.
3. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2002, the pupils had results that were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with pupils from similar schools the pupils' results were well below average in all three subjects. In science the teachers' assessment in 2002 at the end of Key Stage 1 showed standards were well below the national average. The results in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6 show that the proportion of the school's pupils achieving national expectations was well below average in English and mathematics and in science. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was also well below average in English, mathematics and science. When the school's results are compared with similar schools, based on the number eligible for free school meals, they are below average in English and mathematics and match the standards in these schools in science.
4. The school's targets for pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science in 2002 at the end of Key Stage 2 were achieved, with an increased number of pupils reaching the higher than expected levels. This is a clear indication that the school is now well placed to extend and challenge all pupils further. In 2003 the school's targets have been raised to an appropriate level in all subjects. Results over the last three years have shown a drop in standards and improvement below the national trend. However, this is due to the area that the school serves having changed and pupils' attainment on entry being significantly lower than before.
5. Speaking skills show good progress as pupils mature and especially when their interest is engaged in the topic that they are studying, as shown in Year 6 lessons during the inspection. Despite the occasional lack of consistent, planned opportunities to develop their skills, pupils learn to listen more carefully throughout the school, and make good progress. By the time they leave, pupils are achieving standards in line with those expected for their age. Standards of reading are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. By this stage, above average and average attaining pupils are acquiring a growing range of vocabulary, and sound levels of word recognition. They often use humour and detail in their responses. The majority of pupils can use appropriate letter sounds to tackle unfamiliar words. Most pupils know the difference between works of fiction and non-fiction. By Year 6, above average attaining pupils achieve

¹ Planning in the Foundation Stage is geared towards children achieving standards known as the early learning goals in six areas of development – personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

good reading standards; average and below average attaining pupils reach generally satisfactory standards. Appropriate measures are taken to identify pupils with reading difficulties and to provide them with extra help and support. By the time they are eleven, many pupils become independent readers with their own preferences for authors and for different types of literature. Pupils in both key stages have an appropriate range of opportunities for writing for different purposes in their literacy lessons and their response to these is satisfactory. However, opportunities for writing in other subjects to further enhance writing skills are limited, and so most pupils do not attain standards appropriate for their age by the time they leave the school. Pupils up to the age of seven have a sound understanding of the sequence of a story and begin to gain a secure understanding of simple sentence structure. By this time average and above average attaining pupils write paragraphs and begin stories well. In Years 4 and 5, pupils use adjectives more effectively to add colour and interest to their descriptive writing and their poetry. However, the opportunities are limited and the pupils make insufficient progress in writing as they move through the school. The handwriting skills of all pupils improve only slowly and the standard of presentation at the top of the school varies greatly. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' grammatical knowledge and understanding also improve slowly as their improved speaking, listening and reading skills are not sufficiently employed to enhance their writing.

6. Pupils are making good progress in mathematics throughout the school, given their very low starting point. The standards of attainment for Year 2 pupils in mathematics are well below average. The present Year 6 pupils are working at the level expected for their age. Well-trained classroom assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress. Attainments since the last report have remained the same in Year 6, but have declined in Year 2. However, all classes now have more pupils with special educational needs than at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 more able pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of numbers up to 100. In mental mathematics sessions, teachers encourage pupils to use methods they know to double or halve given numbers. The recent emphasis on the development of pupils' mathematical understanding and reasoning skills in Year 6 is beginning to have an impact. However, opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical ideas in practical contexts, to estimate and measure, to make connections between number and other aspects of mathematics and to solve problems, are limited because of the constraints of the commercial worksheets. Despite this, more able Year 6 pupils work with numbers to 10,000, understand negative numbers and link percentages to fractions as well as to measures e.g. 80% of 1kg in grams. They work with shapes, such as rhombus and parallelogram, confirming a good understanding of shapes, simple perimeters and areas. Most pupils in Year 6 use standard written methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide. They have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of graphs and their usage. Work in ICT and science is beginning to support older pupils' handling of data.
7. In science, by the end of Year 2, pupils are now achieving standards in line with those expected for their age and understand that materials have different properties, some of which can be recognised through use of the senses of touch and smell. They know that different objects can be made from the same material and that some materials are natural, whilst others are man-made. They know that forces, such as magnetism, can move objects. They can sort materials into magnetic and non-magnetic, firstly on the basis of prediction, and then by testing with magnets. This practical approach to learning builds pupils' confidence. They become eager to ask as well as answer questions, providing the teacher with a good insight into how their learning is progressing. During Years 3 to 6 pupils build on their skills and knowledge through a good range of practical investigations, and continue to achieve levels in line with expectations for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of how to carry out a scientific investigation, and the standards they are achieving are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils are alert to health and safety issues relating to the different tests, for example when investigating concepts such as evaporation, distillation, capillary action and crystallisation. They make sensible predictions, and clearly describe their findings using the correct scientific terminology. They are becoming more secure in their ability to draw conclusions, which relate to the intentions of the investigation. Year 6 pupils have recently

begun to make good use of ICT for recording their work. They use different formats to record the results of investigations, including tables and graphs.

8. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress throughout the school. A great deal of attention is paid by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, and all teachers assess the pupils' levels of achievement and then match instructions for written tasks to the pupils' lower reading levels. As a result, all manage to complete the work they are set. Work is very well matched to the needs of all these pupils and achievement is good for all groups of pupils with special educational needs. There is good support for these pupils from learning support assistants who implement strategies such as Early Literacy Support and Additional Literacy Support very effectively. When the school admits pupils with English as an additional language, they are given good support when necessary and make good progress as a result.
9. Levels of attainment in ICT are below average by the time pupils are seven, and when they leave the school at the age of eleven. Pupils' progress is now becoming consistently sound and they have the opportunity to achieve standards in line with those expected for their age. At Key Stage 1 pupils can use a computer mouse competently to load a program and to draw, using a number of functions from different art programs. They are also able to use different word-processing packages. In Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to build on their previous knowledge well. They can access the Internet and store data in word-processing programs and databases. Throughout the school, pupils' skills are still at a basic level but the opportunities they have are now good, and much better than at the time of the last inspection.
10. Pupils' achievements in the painting and drawing aspects of art and design are above levels expected for their age by the time they leave school, and in line with expectations for their age in all other aspects. Attainment is at the expected levels in design and technology and physical education at the end of both key stages. In music, pupils make satisfactory progress in singing and attain standards in line with expectations for their age in performing and composition. Pupils make sound progress in history and geography but due to some lack of opportunities and their below average writing skills, they do not yet achieve levels in line with those expected for their age by the time they are eleven.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils like coming to school. Pupils are at the centre of all the work the school does and this creates a very supportive and welcoming environment. Pupils listen well in lessons, they fully understand the 'Golden Rules' of the school and as a consequence behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally very good. All staff have high expectations of good behaviour, which are very well met. The 'Golden Rules' are further underlined with dining room and playground rules. The pupils respond very well; there was no oppressive behaviour or bullying, sexism or racism seen, or would be condoned. All pupils have a very good understanding that their actions may have an impact upon others, and, as a consequence, the school is a very orderly and welcoming community. 'Golden Rules' are discussed regularly in assemblies; they are thus well known and understood by all pupils. There have been no exclusions.
12. The school council, with two elected representatives from each class from the infant and junior classes, discusses matters to enhance school life. These young people are very well supported and encouraged, and therefore feel confident in articulating their views. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and all adults and children work in a friendly environment. The main hall, when used as a dining room, is a very good example of this pleasant working environment. Lunchtimes are enhanced by the friendly support and care provided by mid-day staff.
13. Year 6 pupils are pleased to undertake a number of duties to support school life, such as acting as register monitors and assisting with equipment used in assemblies. Other older pupils have volunteered to be 'playground friends'; they wear distinctive headgear and help and

assist pupils in the schoolyard at playtimes. They are very supportive in this role. A very good example of this was where a 'playground friend' intervened effectively in a dispute when older boys were playing football. This is an example of the very good opportunities for personal development provided at the school, particularly for older pupils, and so they are well prepared for the transfer to secondary school.

14. The high standards of behaviour contribute very well to the enjoyable times spent at this school. This starts at the daily welcome provided by teachers in the playground as soon as the bell goes, continues during registration periods, where class teachers exercise a very good pastoral care and persists throughout the school day. Very young children are well integrated into their first days at school. The nursery and reception areas provide a seamless transfer from home. Frequent visits to the main building for weekly infant assemblies, allow young children to feel very much part of the whole school.
15. Attendance levels at the school are satisfactory. There are very few pupils late for school and registers are marked well at the beginning of each session. Parents generally provide telephone calls or notes to explain all absences. The last report showed that attendance levels were good, and whilst these could be better now, the educational welfare officer reported she had no major concerns at this school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good, and sometimes very good. A very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is a substantial improvement from the time of the last inspection.
17. The good quality of teaching enables children to make good progress throughout the school. Most teachers are aware of the very differing needs of pupils. The deployment of classroom assistants and parents to support pupils is good. Most teachers are experienced and use a suitable range of appropriate strategies to develop pupils' learning. This was very apparent in a number of literacy sessions when the teachers took great care with their language work with the whole class and how it was developed in the subsequent group work. The deputy head teacher and senior teachers are very good examples of best teaching practice, particularly in their attention to detail, enthusiasm and class management. The lessons taught by them during the inspection were of a very good quality.
18. The teaching in the nursery was very good. The adults are very aware of the differing needs of the children on entry and provide a rich and rewarding curriculum. They rightly emphasise language and social skills and the children make good progress in these aspects. The teaching in the reception classes is good and reflects the hard work of the teacher since she began at the school just over a month ago. Planning very clearly identifies what children are to learn, and all activities selected are a good preparation for when the children start the National Curriculum. The teachers in the Foundation Stage clearly identify what is needed to build on what children already know. Children of all abilities are given good support and so their progress is good. Classroom organisation is good and the teachers make the best possible use of the very good range of resources to achieve the early learning goals for children of this age.
19. The good teaching at Key Stage 1 reflects teachers' care to use language carefully to bring clarity to their explanations and to improve the accuracy and quality of pupils' speaking and listening. It also sharpens pupils' subject knowledge because they learn the right terminology to describe, for example, the features of a Tudor building or the action of micro-organisms in causing decay. Teachers question effectively. In the mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1, teachers improve pupils' mental agility by rapid, well-directed questioning, moving swiftly from one challenge to the next. In other subjects, for example English, they use questioning to extend thinking and encourage reflection. In most lessons teachers target their questions carefully, taking account of pupils' differing needs and abilities. This builds pupils' self-esteem,

gives them the confidence to express their own ideas, and enables them to make good progress. However, teachers miss opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical ideas in practical contexts and to make connections between number and other aspects of mathematics and to solve problems. There are also limited opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects.

20. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2, with the best teaching in Years 3 and 6 where teachers have good subject knowledge and very clear planning. The links between different subjects that these teachers make produce activities that are particularly valuable. A strong emphasis on self-evaluation leads to pupils acquiring some independent learning skills and to their good personal development. Pupils generally learn well. The very effective teaching in Years 3 and 6 is an example of where the considerable individual teaching strengths of these teachers has been utilised to the very best effect through their careful assessment and planning of the three core subjects.
21. Teachers throughout the school are fully aware of the individual requirements of pupils with special educational needs. The care, patience, understanding and firm discipline exhibited by the teachers and learning support assistants are very good. The teaching is good. The targets in the pupils' individual education plans are sensible and achievable. Teachers and assistants work closely together to plan support in the classroom as well as to plan work for pupils when they are withdrawn from lessons for extra help. Assistants in some classes are given prompt sheets that effectively direct pupils' observations in withdrawal groups and so no time is wasted.
22. Teachers use a good range of methods and groupings that are well matched to the lesson's purpose. The quality of whole-class teaching in the literacy and numeracy sessions varies, but is generally good. All teachers set a good example and lead discussions well, introducing new ideas with care and clarity. The most effective teaching ensures that other pupils share their skills and show their completed work as an encouragement to others.
23. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. They use praise well to modify behaviour and reward good work. They give every clear instructions to pupils and listen carefully to pupils' replies and questions, and show they value them all. Teachers manage pupils very effectively, which results in increasingly good behaviour. In lessons in Years 3 and 6, the teachers were careful to use the completed work of pupils as good examples. This meant the best responses and work were constantly reinforced and all examples of challenging behaviour kept in check. This kept all pupils' attention focused and resulted in good progress.
24. Teachers plan to use informal assessments to gauge pupils' understanding in their lessons. However, the information from these checks on pupils' progress is not used consistently to modify the plans for the next lesson to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of ability. These day-to-day assessments are not always being used accurately, and lessons are therefore not always appropriately challenging. There is a good school policy for marking pupils' written work that encourages the frequent use of feedback to pupils, which is related to the aims for learning in the lesson. Some teachers mark pupils work very carefully, nurturing pupils' confidence and giving each pupil clear advice on how to improve. These arrangements motivate pupils, encourage positive attitudes to learning and promote good progress. However, this quality of marking is not being applied in all classes. This means that at times pupils are not sure whether they have successfully completed a piece of work, whether more is needed, or how they might improve in the future. Homework is used appropriately and well to support pupils' progress throughout the school.

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

25. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children are very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory across the rest of the school. The curriculum for the school is broad and balanced, based upon national guidance and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The religious education programme is taught in line with the recommendations of the Diocese of Chester.
26. The key issue from the previous report relating to the provision of comprehensive schemes of work for all subjects has been largely met. The provision for personal, health and social education is now satisfactory, with policies in place for sex education, drugs awareness and personal, health and social education. Provision for equality of opportunity is good and all pupils, regardless of gender, are encouraged to take part in all activities. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced and the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. The school has also adopted national guidance for schemes of work in the other subjects.
27. Although the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has had an impact on the English curriculum, and the school has provided other sessions of reading, it has not yet adapted the curriculum to provide for greater opportunities for writing. This has inhibited pupils' progress in writing. The school has wisely identified the need to monitor how these opportunities for writing in other subjects match pupils' needs in relation to what they do in the literacy lessons. The mathematics curriculum is also not yet sufficiently balanced, and the worksheets provided by the teachers do not match the good quality termly and daily plans because too many are the same for all pupils. The opportunities for problem solving, sometimes linked to other subjects, vary from class to class, the application of numeracy throughout the curriculum has not received enough attention and pupils have made less progress in these aspects as a result.
28. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported. Pupils are grouped well in classrooms and supported well by learning support assistants. Their targets in individual educational plans are used well to provide a suitable individual curriculum for them all. These pupils are integrated well in all lessons and take part in all activities. Although none of the pupils currently in the school with English as an additional language receives additional support, it is clear from teachers' planning that where this is necessary it is well organised and effective.
29. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities for the pupils, including clubs for gardening, basketball, cross-country running, country dancing, football and museum activities, and a field study homework club. There are a series of planned trips for curriculum study each year, including walks around the locality, to Reddish Vale for field studies, to Formby for beach studies, to the Roman Experience in Chester, and to the Stockport museum air raid shelters. Residential trips are arranged for Year 5 who go on a one-night field studies trip to Castleton and Year 6 who spend four nights in Wales. These contribute well to pupils' personal and social development.
30. The community makes a good contribution to the life of the school. Good relationships have been developed with Stockport County FC, who help with football skills training, and the 'Learning Bus' which visits the school, and parents of younger children can take part in courses to help them help their child with literacy and numeracy at home. In addition, there is the 'Better Reading' group who are volunteers from the Inland Revenue and visitors who talk about their experiences in World War 2. The school choir sings Christmas carols to the elderly in the local community and there is an Arts team that spends a day each year in the school during which pupils are taught to make lanterns, after which they take part in a lantern procession.
31. Although both the drugs and personal, health and social education policies are in need of updating, the school provides a good range of additional opportunities for these aspects. For example, the school nurse shows a sex education video to the older pupils and there is a visit from the 'Drug Bus' to make pupils more aware about drugs that are good for them in times of

illness and those that are not good for them. As well as visits by the school nurse, the dental service and the 'Crucial Crew' emergency services also visit the school each year.

32. Relationships with partner institutions are good. There are strong links with Offerton High School where Year 5 pupils spend a day undertaking various curriculum challenges that have been set up for them and the school is invited to see dress rehearsals of the school's productions. Good links are maintained with Manchester University and students undertake teaching practice in the school. Furthermore, during the week of the inspection, two students from the Ridge Danyers College were undertaking placements in the Foundation Stage classes as part of the Stockport Training Scheme.
33. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a similar judgement to the previous inspection. The school mission statement is clear in the principles by which the school abides when it states, "We aim to create a positive and caring Christian atmosphere in which every individual is valued." This was borne out during the inspection, especially in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development where it is particularly good and where the staff value each individual and help them understand school rules and acceptable ways of conducting themselves.
34. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to further their spiritual awareness are very good. They are enhanced by the high priority that is placed on school assemblies, religious education lessons, pupils' discussions in arrangements like 'circle time', and church services and visits to the school by the clergy and Christian organisations. For example, one assembly during the inspection was taken by a Christian visitor who comes once a month to share his faith with the pupils. He is obviously a very popular visitor with the pupils and the whole assembly was enhanced by their joyful singing to the accompaniment of the guitar and followed by a period of reflection where the whole school prayed. In addition, as pupils come into assembly, music is playing with a central focus of the cross, which sets the reflective atmosphere for assembly.
35. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Moral issues are regularly dealt with, both in and out of the classroom. Through classroom discussions such as 'circle time', issues like bullying, honesty and classroom rules are discussed and reinforced. This is reflected in the strong work ethos of the school, as school rules are well known and generally obeyed. Teachers are good examples and combined with their caring relationships with pupils they promote values of honesty, fairness and truthfulness. This approach leads to pupils developing a clear awareness of the difference between right and wrong and as a further incentive teachers use rewards and sanctions effectively to promote good behaviour.
36. The provision for encouraging the social development of the pupils is very good. The school values its members and encourages pupils to integrate well both at work and at play. This is seen where pupils take on specific responsibilities, such as helping with the recorded music and overhead projector in assembly, as playground friends, tuck monitors in class and a buddy system where Year 6 will accompany the reception children on walks. There is a school council that provides pupils with opportunities to contribute further to school life. In the classroom there are opportunities to work together in pairs or groups and pupils are encouraged to take a pride in seeing that their classroom is tidy. Pupils' awareness of people outside the school community is developed through visits outside, such as the visit to St George's church carol service and through visitors to the school that include the Presto Puppet Theatre and a visiting poet. Pupils raise money for Francis House (for sick children), St Anne's Hospice and organise a charity balloon race for cystic fibrosis. There is a very good display of this initiative to raise money for a charity in the entrance hall. Residential visits to Castleton and Wales give pupils valuable experience of learning to live in a social environment other than their own home.
37. The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils start to understand their own cultural background from nursery rhymes, poetry, stories, music and historical studies about the

Tudors and evacuees in World War II. Painting and music help them to develop a greater awareness of beautiful things, as does the beauty of the world about them. The school has had an 'Art and Design Technology' week, the success of which is shared at the end of the week 'sharing' assembly. Pupils visit the Stockport museum, but visits to art galleries are limited as are the opportunities to understand the diversity of multi-cultural British society. There was a display in the school corridor on Islam that was initiated by a parent in the school, but no other display of world faiths was seen in the school. However, the school is just in the process of forming a steel band and this will go some way to introducing other cultural music to the school

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has a very high regard for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. There is a very high standard of daily maintenance provided by the caretaker, well supported by all pupils who deposit break time snack papers in the bins provided. There are no signs of graffiti or wilful damage. In all a very pleasant environment has been created; this encourages and supports pupils very well.
39. Appropriate testing has been done upon electrical and fire fighting equipment. Minor accidents are dealt with in a calm and sympathetic way, and accidents are well recorded. The school has a high number of staff with training in first aid. Regular contact is maintained with a good range of support agencies including the school nurse.
40. The procedures for child protection are very good. The head teacher has this role, is very well trained and ensures that all procedures are fully implemented and that staff are aware of them.
41. The very active links with the community have resulted in a number of support initiatives started by the Brinnington Partnership. These are supported by metropolitan government funding and are very good. These complement the caring work of the school and provide some activities to help parents to work with their children. The basis for support to the community is contained in a 'community audit action plan', and this has enabled work to be done in many areas, including education. During the week of inspection, this group, the Brinnington Partnership, gave a generous donation to the school for equipment to be purchased.
42. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Attendance records are kept on computer and absent or late pupils are recorded on a daily basis. There are very regular meetings with the educational welfare officer, who supports the school very well.
43. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are very good. The 'Golden Rules' are displayed in the main hall and around the school; this is complemented by a set of playground and dining room rules. The school regularly draws these to the attention of all pupils, sometimes in assemblies; they are well known to all pupils, who behave very well. Teachers and all adults set a very good example; they know the pupils well and are encouraging and supportive to them at all times. As a result of this caring and friendly approach, pupils develop very good relationships with each other and all adults. There was no oppressive behaviour seen, nor would this be expected or condoned.
44. Assessment procedures, for monitoring pupils' academic progress and achievement throughout the school, were identified as a key issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection. Assessments were not being used effectively to guide curriculum planning at that time. Progress has been made since the last report in a number of areas. For example, attainments on entry, and during the Foundation Stage, are now assessed more accurately and used well by staff at all times. The use of ICT in the preparation of individual education plans, together with extra adult support, has helped to improve the progress of pupils with special educational needs from satisfactory to good. National and other, internal, tests are now

part of a whole school approach to assessment. The school is also working hard to develop an ICT programme to monitor the progress of all pupils.

45. The school now has good assessment systems in place for the Foundation Stage, and they are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. However, the last report identified that all other subjects lacked assessments and little attempt was made to use these assessments where they existed to guide curriculum planning. Although some progress has been made, it is limited. For example, there are still no assessments in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to find out how well pupils are doing. The assessment data available in English, mathematics and science is still not being used fully to raise standards. Also everyday marking, together with its use in setting targets for improvement, is underdeveloped. These targets for improvement for individuals and year groups, and the monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes, are still in the very early stages of development.
46. The current school development plan recognises some of these shortcomings and that they are still outstanding from the last report. The plan shows how the school is seeking improvements in assessment. Nevertheless, overall progress has been slow and consequently attainments in the non-core subjects² have been affected adversely.
47. The procedures for monitoring personal development are very good. The very good relationships throughout the school enable adults to know pupils very well. This ensures very close monitoring of pupils' actions and behaviour. Learning support assistants and nursery assistants give good support so that pupils' support and guidance are well developed and contribute well to pupils' achievement. The school has a very high regard for all pupils, who are much valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents have a very high regard for the work of the school, particularly the guidance and support it offers their children. There is now a very strong relationship with parents. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school works hard to provide interesting lessons and has a range of extra-curricular events, which parents appreciate are for the benefit of their children. Apart from in the Foundation Stage, there are no parents who regularly help in classes but they are very pleased to help with visits and games.
49. The school provides a good supply of regular letters and newsletters, so that parents are fully aware of the work and events of the school. Parents of children starting school have a booklet advising them of their expectations. The school brochure and governing body report are of good quality.
50. Parents are interested in school events. For instance, a large number attended the annual meeting of the governing body when it was combined with a social event. There is a termly meeting with parents so that progress may be discussed, but many parents also value the daily contact with teachers. The head teacher has a friendly and high profile every day; this gives parents easy access to discuss any concerns, which they appreciate.
51. Homework is regularly set and the school gives guidance on helping children work at home on a display board sited at the pupils' entrance. Although a few parents had some concerns about homework, inspection evidence showed that this was regularly set and marked. There were few other concerns. For instance, although some parents felt they were not well informed about how their children were getting on, there are regular termly meetings and daily contacts, and the overwhelming number of parents stated that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school. This supports the evidence from the inspection that the school

² The primary curriculum is classified as the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and the non-core or foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

welcomes being informed of any parental concerns. A few parents felt that their children were not making good progress at school. This is not the case. Most parents are very supportive of the school and of the work it does. They appreciate the very good pastoral care provided.

52. The active 'Friends Association' supports the school very well; it has provided generous funds to purchase equipment and offers a good programme of social and fund-raising events. The association also sends out newsletters and provides all parents with a statement of how funds were raised.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school are good. The head teacher provides positive and knowledgeable leadership. Her effective day-to-day management ensures the smooth running of the school; she has a very good understanding of the school's needs and a vision for the future shared with her colleagues. The head teacher monitors and evaluates each teacher in action at least once a year to share the best practice in the school. Through this she has secured the loyalty of both teachers and governors in the work necessary to meet the requirements of her vision for every child to achieve his/her potential. As a result the whole school staff work as a mutually supportive team.
54. The head teacher is fully supported and her work complemented by a very capable deputy head teacher. As well as having a class responsibility, the deputy head teacher is also the special educational needs co-ordinator, which is a demanding role given the large proportion of these pupils in the school. Extra support has to be arranged for all of these pupils and their progress is being monitored and recorded well. The deputy head teacher also identifies training needs and arranges professional development courses and visits. The deputy matches the head teacher in her enthusiasm for promoting the highest levels of education and care for both pupils and their parents. Both have a clear understanding of their roles as senior members of the school.
55. This strong leadership structure is strengthened further by the good work carried out by the subject co-ordinators and all staff. As a result of specific training, co-ordinators are clear about the roles that they fulfil and they do this well. At the moment, most monitor teaching in their subjects through carefully evaluating teachers' plans and pupils' work on a very regular basis. Some are also given time away from their class to monitor the teaching and overall provision in their subjects effectively. This enables them to track the changes and improvements they have planned and build on the progress being made in their subjects. As a result, the school is united in its approach to teaching pupils and is successful in achieving its goals.
56. The governing body is led by an enthusiastic chairperson and fully supports the actions that the head teacher is taking to move the school forward. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is sound. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and are beginning to play an effective role in shaping the direction of the school. Various standard committees meet on a regular basis to ensure that the management of the school is effective. These include a curriculum committee that has a close liaison with the curriculum co-ordinators so that it is kept fully informed of what is happening in each subject. The last inspection report had a key issue that required the governing body to develop their role in the school further. Good progress has been made recently so that governors now understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school well because of their close involvement with what is going on. The governing body also has a clear strategy for checking on the progress that is being made. For example, it works closely with the head teacher to set targets for her to achieve, and monitors the progress that is being made on a regular basis. This is now a strong aspect of their involvement with the school.
57. The quality of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and taking effective action through the school improvement plan is good. The main focus has been on supporting the development of the variety of experiences for all pupils and this has been successfully

achieved. The whole staff has contributed to discussions on effective teaching and the positive results of this combined approach were clearly observed in the good quality of teaching during the inspection. Also, the priorities for improvement have been carefully identified. For example, the need for a separate and focused intervention to enhance pupils' writing skills, and the implementation of assessment procedures are detailed in the school improvement plan.

58. The close attention to value for money given by the governors and senior management team is now enabling the school to move forward quickly. Resources are used effectively and best value is sought in all purchases. When all factors are taken into consideration the school gives sound value for money. Taking into account the way that governors, head teacher and staff have worked together to secure the improvements in the last two years and the school's successful drive towards meeting its own targets, the capacity for further improvement is judged to be good.
59. All teachers are appraised and set targets within a good system of performance management, which also identifies what training teachers need for their own development and the needs of the school. The introduction of new staff to the school, including newly qualified teachers, is good. The staff handbook provides a very clear set of guidance for new teachers to follow and includes a relevant induction sheet to support new teachers as they settle in. Support staff meet with the head teacher at regular intervals and in common with their colleagues agree objectives for the development of their roles. Overall staffing in the school is good. Teachers' qualifications and experience broadly match the demands of the curriculum. One class had a temporary teacher at the time of the inspection, and she had been enabled to settle into the school very well and was making an important contribution to the very good provision in the Foundation Stage. The school has a good number of support staff who are very effectively deployed and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Some of the support assistants are allocated to individual pupils who have particular difficulties and work effectively to enable them to make good progress. Other staff in the school, including administrative officer, lunchtime supervisors and the recently appointed caretaker, work well together and are committed to the welfare of the pupils and the success of the school.
60. Learning resources are good, looked after carefully and used effectively to enable pupils to make good progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding. The accommodation of the school is good and allows pupils to learn successfully and comfortably. The provision of a new building for nursery and reception children, the use of the large grounds and good playground markings are significant improvements since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to build on recent improvements, and implement changes already identified to ensure pupils achieve to the best of their ability, the governors, head teacher and staff should jointly:

1. Raise standards of achievement in written English by:

a) providing additional planned opportunities to ensure that the pupils' writing skills are suitably enhanced and reinforced by use in other subjects;

b) ensure that this includes a focus on the presentation of pupils' work and a consistent implementation of the school's policy to improve spelling and handwriting.

Paragraphs 5, 10, 19, 27, 57, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 106

2. Continue to raise standards in mathematics by:

a) ensuring that there is clear planning that guarantees full coverage of all learning requirements and identifies clear criteria against which pupils' achievements can be assessed;

b) modifying the current use of commercial schemes carefully to meet the individual needs of pupils; in turn this should aim to remove over-reliance on worksheets.

c) making sure visual resources such as vocabulary, whiteboards and number lines, are used to best effect in all lessons.

Paragraphs 6, 19, 27, 83, 84, 87

3. Raise standards of achievement in all subjects by:

a) ensuring that both day-to-day and medium-term assessment procedures are agreed throughout the school and implemented more rigorously to inform curriculum planning so that all lessons are planned to challenge pupils appropriately;

b) enabling teachers and subject co-ordinators to make careful use of all assessments made, particularly in the short term, to ensure that they match tasks to pupils' existing knowledge and set targets that focus on their individual needs.

Paragraphs 24, 26, 44, 45, 46, 57, 80, 87, 94, 103, 109, 112, 118, 127, 134

4. Implement the school's marking policy consistently to ensure that all children are enabled to know what they have achieved, what they can do to improve their work and what they need to do next.

Paragraphs 24, 78, 79, 83, 87, 109, 112, 118

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

40

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	9	25	4	2	0	0
Percentage	0	22	62	10	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	11	5	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	10	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (52)	81 (55)	81 (72)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	10	9	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (45)	56(72)	81 (72)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

- Data for boys and girls separately is omitted as the number in each category was not more than ten.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	14
	Girls	8	6	9
	Total	16	17	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (68)	59 (61)	79 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 ([])	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	13
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	16	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (61)	66 (65)	76 (80)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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	154	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	5	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	3	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	203

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
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
£	
Total income	420383
Total expenditure	405487
Expenditure per pupil	2112
Balance brought forward from previous year	20650
Balance carried forward to next year	35546

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	215
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	41	14	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	41	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	30	18	0	9
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	32	16	5	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	20	7	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	34	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	32	14	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	34	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	39	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	36	2	0	16

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

62. Children enter the nursery when they are three and transfer to the reception class for the year in which they become five. The school has a well-designed purpose-built unit for the Foundation Stage, which has been open for just over a term. In it the quality of education provided is very good. The work of the nursery and reception classes is exceptionally well led by the nursery teacher. She has created a very good team of teachers, nursery nurses, learning support assistants, and parent helpers, all of whom share her vision and enthusiasm, and support her. The provision now represents a very big improvement over that noted at the time of the last inspection.
63. The arrangements for admission have improved since the previous inspection and are now very good. The nursery teacher and nursery nurses forge strong links with the children's families when they visit them in their homes before they start school. After the children are admitted, the parents are welcome in the unit and the staff continue to try form an effective partnership with them and to involve them in the education of their children. When they first start school many of the children need a great deal of support as their understanding and use of language are poor. This is a considerable change since the time of the last report when children's attainment on entry was judged to be in line with standards for their age. Throughout the Foundation Stage all the teaching and support staff direct their efforts to enable the children to develop their speaking and listening skills. They use every opportunity to engage the children in conversation and to provide activities that will encourage them to talk.
64. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, and often very good. Again this is a very significant improvement since the inspection in 1997 when it was judged to satisfactory overall. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children. All children, including those with special educational needs, follow a broad curriculum based on the early learning goals relating to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. Children are provided with good opportunities to improve standards in all areas of learning. The nursery and reception teams plan together to ensure that there is progression from the ages of three to five in all the topics covered. They also make very good use of resources by alternating some activities. The nursery outdoor play area is very large; it is in an early stage of being developed, but is used well by both classes.
65. All staff in the nursery and reception classes make good observations of the children and know them well. This enables them to plan activities that are appropriately challenging for all children. As a result, children are very happy and settled in school. They are familiar with class routines and settle well to their activities. In both the morning and afternoon nursery classes, there were some children who had only been at school for a few days. These children had settled in very well and enjoyed their activities. All the adults in the nursery and reception classes have very good relationships with children and manage them well. They act as good examples for the children who respond very well. They are very concerned to make learning fun for them all. They are successful in this and provide a rich and rewarding start to the children's time at school.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Many of the children enter the nursery with immature skills in personal, social and emotional development. Progress is good and most children will attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Activities that encourage co-operative play are a regular feature of daily routines. Children's skills in this area of learning develop well because teaching is very good.

Through the direct involvement of adults and the very good teaching, children learn to take turns, share and play co-operatively and quickly become used to nursery routines and enjoy coming to school. Most children play happily alongside each other but also individually, as is common for children aged three. The staff provide good opportunities for children to play co-operatively and as they become more confident they are happy to play together. Children develop their language skills well and learn to ask for what they want and begin to negotiate with other children, learning to share toys and take turns. They begin to show sound levels of concentration and stay with their chosen activities for a reasonable length of time. They are curious and keen to try out new activities. They showed care for each other and greatly enjoyed making models to show how they could enjoy tea and breakfast together. The majority of children are learning to be sociable and co-operative.

Communication, language and literacy

67. When they start school children's speaking skills are very low, and well below levels expected for their age. Staff work very hard to develop all children's language skills and the teaching is very good and so children make good progress. However, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most of them will not have completed the early learning goals for this aspect of learning. Children have many opportunities to write; for example, in the 'Dragon's Den' they respond to the story they have heard. In the reception class children continue to develop their writing skills well. They record notes for the class, reminding the teacher that they need to "do the weather chart". The teacher uses good strategies to motivate and involve children, for example, using their 'Asda' supermarket to focus on sounds. This held their attention and enabled them to work with enthusiasm. Most of the children in the nursery recognise their own names and a good number copy their names without help. They recognise letters used in their names when looking at other words. Children write cards and letters to their friends. Pencils, crayons and different kinds of paper are readily available and children regularly use them. Children enjoy looking at books and they happily talk about the illustrations. One child in the reception class is a confident reader. He loved reading the book to a parent and talking about the text and pictures. His attainment is above average for his age. Children regularly take books home to share with adults. By the time they enter Year 1 most have favourite books and enjoy retelling the stories.

Mathematical development

68. When they start in nursery the majority of children have skills in this area that are well below average. In the nursery and reception classes they make good progress through the very good teaching. Despite this, the majority of children will not attain the early learning goals for mathematical development by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 and are well below national expectations. Some children in the nursery can already count to five and several can count beyond this. They match the numerals to objects reliably as they count. A few children in the nursery write series of numbers correctly though they sometimes write them the wrong way round. One child wrote the numbers from one to seven. The children enjoyed counting tea bags and teacups, and confidently counted out those who were having 'tea'. In the reception class children recognise the numerals one to nine. They quickly identify the number that is one more or one less than a given number. They show good understanding of shape and space by using construction toys to build an Ark for a given number of animals. They show good understanding of mathematical language; for example, in playing with the water they talk about containers being full or empty.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. A very small number of children have a good basic general knowledge when they join the nursery but the majority of children have limited experience and understanding in this area. Children show an interest in how things work and are questioning and curious but by the time they start in Year 1 most children will be well below expectations for their age. Staff promote

this well through their very good teaching and encourage children to explore the environment. Children enjoy looking after the goldfish in the nursery. In both classes children confidently use the computers and learn these skills well. Several can load programs independently. They are able to control the mouse to move objects on the screen. In the reception class children can use the paint program. The teacher clearly explained the use of a new tool, the spray can, and children then used this well to make 'rainy day' pictures. Children enjoy using construction toys. They build shelters and Arks for a specified number of animals. Adults take part in activities, act as good examples for children and play with them to encourage them to take part. They take every opportunity to encourage children's language development in all aspects of play.

Physical development

70. The outdoor play area for the nursery and reception classes is very large, but mostly undeveloped; however, it is well organised and well used. These classes also use the hall for some physical activities. Children are lively and responsive in physical activities due to the good teaching of this aspect. The reception children greatly enjoyed a movement lesson in the hall. They were very enthusiastic and tried hard to follow the teacher's instructions. Children understand that when they exercise, their hearts beat faster and they feel out of breath. By the time they are in the reception class children can control their movements well and use different apparatus with agility. They work with enthusiasm and developing skill. Children use pencils, brushes, scissors, glue sticks and other small tools with developing confidence and skill. Most children are likely to meet the early learning goals for physical development by the end of the reception year, and the majority will reach expectations for their age.

Creative development

71. Children make good progress in this area of learning in both the nursery and reception classes due to the very good teaching. However, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, the majority of children will still be below expected levels in their creative development. Children enjoy making pictures with paint and collage. They have opportunities to draw and to explore a range of materials, including a paint program on the computer. They also enjoy music making and exploring sounds on the xylophones and other instruments provided. They sing a range of familiar songs and rhymes and enjoy moving to these in their hall sessions. In both classes, children have opportunities to draw, paint and explore a range of materials to print and make pictures and make good progress as a result. They enjoy role-play, for example pretending to be vets and caring for their sick pets, or going to the supermarket to buy food. This enhances their speaking and listening skills well. Teachers and assistants provide a very good range of opportunities for children to develop their imagination and this enables them to make good progress.

ENGLISH

72. Pupils' achievements in English by the age of seven are below those expected nationally, but as a result of their good progress, by the age of eleven they are in line with those expected nationally. However, there is a significant weakness in writing across the school. The school has recognised this and is making provision to address this weakness through the introduction of a specific language and literacy project initiative, which is beginning in January 2003. Standards in reading at the age of seven were well below those expected nationally in the 2002 tests. The school has also highlighted this area and has focused on reading and reading comprehension and has recently purchased a published scheme based on initial sounds in an aim to raise standards.
73. The standards are now below those expected by the age of seven. Standards are now lower than in the last inspection when standards in English by the age of seven were judged to be in line with national expectations. However, the higher levels of attainment on entry at the time of

the previous inspection have declined and are now well below expected levels, and this shows that pupils are now making good progress by the age of seven, as they are now judged to be below national expectations. The limited use of assessment information to ensure all pupils are suitably challenged means that sometimes the more able pupils are not achieving high enough standards. Those who enter the school with special educational needs or weaker English skills receive support appropriate to their needs and with such support make good progress overall. There was little difference between the performance of girls and boys seen in speaking, listening, reading or writing by the age of eleven.

74. Although pupils' language acquisition is poor on entry there is significant improvement as they move through the school because of the planned opportunities for discussion, as a whole class, within groups and in pairs. The result of this focus is beginning to raise standards. Reading standards are improving, but pupils' skills in writing for a range of purposes do not match these standards and progress in literacy would be enhanced by more planned opportunities to use literacy skills in other subject areas. By the time pupils enter Year 1 they are gaining more confidence in speaking and listening and this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where the pupils were keen to talk about their weekend. The teacher was encouraging pupils to come to the front of the class and ask questions and although some pupils found it very difficult to frame their questions, she was very encouraging and supported them well, thus building their confidence further in the area of speaking and listening.
75. Pupils in Year 1 are starting to develop an interest in books, but pupils generally have an insufficient grasp of letter sounds and do not use them with confidence to construct and read unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 2 pupils make good progress in reading, and their reading diaries show a significant number of books that have been read in one term. They are starting to read their storybooks with increasing degrees of fluency, but some are still insecure in building up words they do not know. Average and above average pupils respond equally to fiction and non-fiction books, knowing the difference between the two, and usually read a variety of texts accurately and fluently. They are keen to talk about their favourite books, describing with clarity the title, author and the content and why they like it. Most pupils take books home in order to practise reading and this enables them to make better progress in their reading. The National Literacy Strategy has had a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of reading through shared and group reading, and has helped develop confidence in reading aloud to others. Rapid progress is made in reading in some classes because the teachers choose and match books to the needs of individual pupils. This was seen particularly in Year 3 where the teacher ensured that all pupils got a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books to read which are clearly recorded in pupils' reading diaries. By Year 6 pupils make good progress in reading, with the higher attaining pupils reading fluently with good expression and understanding. Although some pupils interviewed have had experience in visiting local libraries, their library skills are at present underdeveloped and many do not yet have a clear understanding of the library classification system. The present library is situated in the main entrance and is due to be shortly re-sited in a new extension and this will go some way to enabling more class library sessions where pupils will be able to practise and refine their library skills. However, some higher attaining pupils know how to use the higher order skills of skimming and scanning, and make use of indexes, contents lists and glossaries in non-fiction books for accessing information.
76. In Year 1 pupils are beginning to develop sufficient pencil control to write letters and words, such as their name. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 make limited gains in their writing skills and by the time they reach Key Stage 2 their speaking and listening skills are more advanced than their writing skills. Subsequently, some pupils who are quite confidently expressing what they want to say are not so confident to record this as effectively in writing. Pupils are not consistently challenged in their writing with regards to punctuation and handwriting presentation, and spelling is generally disappointing and unsatisfactory. However, in the lesson observed in Year 1 pupils were learning to identify capital letters and to use them. Last term, this was an ongoing focus and teachers concentrated on work on capital letters and full stops, yet despite this many of the pupils are still struggling with this area of learning. However, in

Year 2 the focus on this area had obviously succeeded because in the lesson observed the class were engaged in a shared writing session with their teacher and were more confident in re-reading their own writing and correcting for grammatical accuracy. At the present time the effective use of ICT to enable pupils to draft their writing is underdeveloped.

77. In Key Stage 2, pupils' writing skills begin to improve, but at a slower rate than that expected of pupils of a similar age. Again, pupils' speaking skills are more advanced than their writing. Following on from the good progress made in Key Stage 1, pupils enter Year 3 and make good progress in their learning. There is a range of writing that includes character studies from texts of books written by well-known children's authors and they design a newspaper front page based on this study. Also there is a good example of extended writing on Jack and the Beanstalk, along with writing report on non-fiction texts about various wild animals, animal magic poetry and examples of pupils' own written booklets on 'Rainbow Fish'. Most examples of cross-curricular writing are based on historical and wildlife studies. Historical studies feature in writing with the Romans and a recount of a visit to the Roman Experience in Chester. Pupils write postcards as World War II evacuees designed to illustrate how evacuees informed their parents of their safe arrival at their destinations. In Year 4 there was a good display of poems about a 'Wild Wind' where pupils were concentrating on powerful and expressive verbs, and examples included, for example, 'A Mad Tornado Twirling and Swirling, Whooshing and Whirling, Moving everything in its way, Everything gone in one day'. All these poems were produced on a computer. Word processing is currently underdeveloped within literacy lessons although a good word-processing lesson with Year 4 was observed in the new computer suite during the week of the inspection. There are plans for future ICT lessons to be linked to literacy lessons now that the computer suite is available.
78. The procedures for assessment and use of assessment information to guide teachers' planning are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has begun to track attainment by collecting work samples and looking at levels of work through the school. Furthermore, a new improved schedule of assessments has been introduced, but these will need time to impact upon standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, there are still areas for improvement. For example, marking is inconsistent and sometimes not rigorous enough, especially in spelling, punctuation and standards of presentation.
79. Standards of handwriting vary across the school but are generally unsatisfactory. Examples of handwriting exercise books show infrequent practice entries and most of these are in the earlier part of the autumn term. This inconsistency of practice means handwriting standards are improving slowly and the practice examples shown are not transferred into the regular handwriting pupils undertake. Although there is some evidence across the school of improvement in writing for different purposes, with some examples of better presented work and neater handwriting, there are a significant number of pupils whose standards of writing are below and well below that expected of pupils of a similar age. Where the work is better it is invariably where there is a better quality of teaching, notably where the teachers have high expectations of their pupils and also in the effective use of the National Literacy Strategy. There are too few opportunities for pupils to re-draft their work, correct their mistakes, and present their work in an improved form. Standards of spelling are generally below expected levels throughout the school. The school gives pupils spelling lists to learn as part of homework. However, there is an inconsistency in teachers' marking where some spelling mistakes are corrected, but no evidence to show that pupils are required to practise or correct their mistake.
80. The standard of teaching seen during the week of inspection was good across the school. In the better lessons teachers showed a greater understanding and knowledge of the subject, planned well, had high expectations and assessed work well through effective marking. They then inspired pupils through a brisk pace and challenging questions and knew what their pupils could do and ought to be able to do. Motivated by the better teaching, pupils showed a positive attitude towards their work. The tasks for pupils with special educational needs are planned in line with their individual education plans by the class teacher and a learning support assistant.

The assistant works and supports individual and groups of pupils needing extra help under the guidance of the class teacher.

81. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who has only been in post since September, but in that time has worked very hard to prioritise areas of development. She has undertaken an audit of literacy provision and has written an action plan. However, although monitoring of the subject is just being put in place, there has been no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, especially in the juniors. Resource provision is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has started to improve resources for the subject by acquiring more books for the reading scheme and a new phonics scheme.

MATHEMATICS

82. The standards of attainment for Year 2 pupils in mathematics are well below average. The present Year 6 pupils are working at the national average. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by well-trained classroom assistants; they make good progress. Attainments since the last report have remained the same in Year 6, but declined in Year 2. However, all classes now have more pupils with special educational needs than at the time of the last inspection.
83. Developments in the subject since the last inspection have been satisfactory. For example, the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced satisfactorily and planning for each term and each lesson based on this strategy works well. Also teacher knowledge has improved because of the strategy and extra training and as a result pupils' attitudes to mathematics are now good because of the good relationships. However, marking and the best use of assessment data to match work to the pupils' different abilities remain outstanding from the last report as only limited progress has been made.
84. Pupils aged seven work with a collection of commercial worksheets and a numeracy exercise book. The more able pupils work with numbers to 100 and apply this knowledge to simple measures such as change from a pound coin, or add centimetres to make a metre. They are beginning to know their two, five and ten times tables. Pupils explore simple fractions of $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ and use them to tell the time. Middle and lower ability pupils often have the same worksheets covering these topics or other work as the more able, but they complete less work and with more inaccuracies. Pupils with special needs, and sometimes those of lower ability, need the help of classroom assistants to tackle this work. This over-reliance on the same worksheets, and the amount of worksheets used mean that the work is not always matched to pupils' abilities. The amount of work recorded in exercise books is small. Opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical ideas in practical contexts, to estimate and measure, to make connections between number and other aspects of mathematics and to solve problems, are limited because of the constraints of the commercial worksheets.
85. By the age of eleven, more able pupils work with numbers to 10,000; they are beginning to work with negative numbers and link percentages to fractions as well as to measures e.g. 80% of 1kg in grams. Pupils divide three-digit numbers by two-digit numbers successfully, for example $220 \div 16$. They work with shapes such as rhombus and parallelogram, confirming a good understanding of the properties of shapes, simple perimeters and areas. Average and lower ability pupils often have the same worksheets; whereas the average ability pupils make good progress working independently, the lower ability pupils, and those with special educational needs, complete less work. They only make good progress because of the sustained support of the classroom assistants. In a mental mathematics session, average and lower ability pupils showed gaps in their quick recall of multiplication and division facts to 10×10 . Some have to use a calculator to check such straightforward questions as $64 \div 8$. Pupils experience data handling through block and line graphs and they use these and ICT accurately in their work in science. The opportunity to use numbers, shape, space and measures in problem solving, although provided from time to time, needs further development.

86. Teaching is satisfactory. However, there are good features in all lessons and effective teaching in Years 1, 3 and 6. Teachers plan well both termly and daily. They use the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively and its key objectives for learning as the basis for this. Relationships are always good because teachers treat pupils with respect, ask direct questions well and praise answers; as a result pupils respond enthusiastically. Learning support assistants maintain the good progress of pupils with special needs because of their skilled, empathetic approach. Pupils try hard at all times to set out their work neatly to meet the standards set by the teachers. When pupils use individual whiteboards to complete their work teachers make good use of these to check pupils' progress. Teachers approach mathematics lessons confidently; they explain things clearly and use mathematical language consistently. Many of these features were seen in several lessons; in particular in a well-structured lively lesson in Year 1 about partitioning numbers and in a brisk Year 6 lesson on the use of brackets and the four operations of number, the progress made was particularly good.
87. However, several lessons have common features for improvement to raise standards further, and some of these apply to the best lessons too. For example, the resources used by teachers during whole class teaching are not used sufficiently or consistently to help pupils learn. The resources for pupils to use, such as number lines or weights in practical work, are insufficient and often inaccessible. The worksheets provided by the teachers do not match the good quality termly and daily plans because too many are the same for all pupils and are chosen from different sources. The opportunities for problem solving, sometimes linked to other subjects, vary from class to class. The marking of everyday work is sometimes of little help to either pupils or teachers. Assessment procedures are still not fully used at all times to set targets for improvement for individuals or groups of pupils.
88. The subject is well managed by a co-ordinator who is determined to raise standards. Discussions about how to do this are ongoing with the local authority adviser. The school improvement plan already identifies some of the same areas for improvement. However, these are in the very early stages of development and consequently they have yet to have real impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

SCIENCE

89. Standards of attainment are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. There are a few pupils in Year 6 who demonstrate levels of knowledge and understanding above those expected of pupils of this age. Pupils throughout the school are making at least sound, and often good, progress in science. Good progress is made by those pupils with special educational needs. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
90. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve sound standards in their knowledge of a good variety of science topics. In Year 1 pupils have made a good start to their science in a very good project on 'Ourselves'. Year 2 pupils, when discussing the properties of materials, can recognise and identify properties of materials and sort them into groups according to given criteria of natural or man-made. Their work on sorting, grouping and changing materials was good. The recorded investigation was clearly exciting and enjoyed by all. Year 2 pupils are given a great many opportunities to experience investigational work, and they always complete their work thoroughly and well.
91. Many pupils in Year 6 have benefited from the good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 that provides an even stronger emphasis upon scientific enquiry. In a very good Year 6 lesson pupils were faced with concepts such as mass, weight, gravity, force and displacement. In an exciting teacher-led discussion about gravity, all pupils showed a good appreciation of the principles of fair testing, and a good knowledge of the key steps in scientific enquiry. The level of knowledge of many pupils about materials was impressive.

92. Science contributes to the development of vocabulary and the speaking and listening aspects of literacy. For example, in Year 6, pupils' work on forces contained clear explanations of gravity and molecules. Throughout the school pupils' diagrams and written work are all neat and well presented. In Year 5 the pupils have learnt about solids, liquids and gases in a good extension of their previous work on materials. Through very good planning pupils learned to use words appropriate to this topic, for example, condensation, droplets, evaporation and water vapour. Numeracy skills are reinforced in science with the creation of graphs to compare light sources in Year 3, and in the measuring of bones and limbs in their work on skeletons in Year 4. The Year 5 investigation on ice melting was a good cross-curricular topic. Pupils' careful investigations, using a force meter and recording in Newtons, were linked with their history topic. The use of databases to record the results of investigations using ICT is an area that has developed well recently.
93. The quality of teaching is good. In all lessons teachers plan carefully ensuring work is at an appropriate level for different groups of pupils. They use resources well to engage in practical work, and show good classroom management. Most teachers successfully adopt approaches to ensure that all pupils are fully involved and included in the lesson. There were some lessons where teachers' expectations of pupils' ability were high and the challenges posed were exciting. There was a quicker pace and pupils were completely involved. Their higher standards of achievement reflected this.
94. Teaching plans draw upon the nationally approved curriculum guidance. There is coherent planning throughout the school, particularly in developing pupils' investigative skills. The school has now developed a scheme of work to ensure pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are built upon systematically from one year to the next. The effective co-ordinator manages the subject well and has now identified the need to supplement the school's material with a further short scheme and this is in the school's action plan. The school has introduced a regular system of assessment of pupils' progress, but this has not yet had time to impact on improving standards. The range, quality and quantity of learning resources for science are now good, and enhance the progress that pupils make.

ART AND DESIGN

95. By the time they are seven, pupils have attained standards that are in line with expectation for their age. The attainment of eleven year olds, in the drawing and painting aspects of art and design, is better than expected for their age. All pupils, including those who find learning difficult, make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The work seen and scrutiny of teachers' planning confirm that the subject is well established for all classes. Throughout the school pupils are beginning to develop their understanding and use of different art skills and media.
96. Teachers plan the work carefully, making use of national guidance to ensure that skills are developed systematically. Infant pupils use small pieces of tissue paper to explore and create shades of green, blue and purple when creating a tile for the class collage. They explore printing techniques using their hand and fingers to create patterns well. The lower junior pupils have also experimented with colour using tissue paper. They have applied their knowledge to a collage of a spring flower. They place the pieces carefully to intensify the colour by overlapping the petals. In their sketching and drawing older pupils use pencils and pastels. Their drawings show qualities of shape and increasing attention to detail, but do not add a great deal of tonal information.
97. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen in Year 2 was good. The lesson was well planned and built on the work of the previous session. Pupils worked on where and how to start their paintings. The way that they were shown small parts of different pictures by using digital photographs was very successful. The teacher's good questioning skills helped pupils to review their work and the practicalities of building a picture, for example, "What do you think

can grow from this part of the picture?” and “What do you want to show with this colour?” This helped pupils to develop their understanding of different images and make good progress with the development of their designs. Pupils made good progress in their ability to identify ways of improving their work as a result of the teacher’s good emphasis on evaluation. Pupils really enjoyed themselves and their interest led them to new insights.

98. The school is committed to improving the quality of the art and design curriculum and the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection, the good subject co-ordinator has enabled all teachers to attend training to improve their own skills and understanding of art and design. This has enabled them to establish art and design in the curriculum and provide pupils with an appropriate range of experiences. The school is now following a structured programme of work, which teachers plan to review and adapt to the specific needs of the school over the course of the current term.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. By the time pupils are seven their attainment is in line with that expected for their age. Pupils can use accurately simple tools such as scissors, hole punches, staplers and saws to construct their models and designs. They are beginning to understand how different materials lend themselves to different purposes and how they may be joined by different means. This was illustrated, for example, in the construction of different ‘shelters’ when pupils combined fabric, card and wood to make tents and houses. Pupils are also developing their ability to criticise their own work. For example, pupils in Year 2 made glove puppets and included on their making instructions what they found difficult and how they would improve things the next time.
100. By the time they are eleven, pupils have made satisfactory progress and reach levels of attainment in line with those expected of pupils this age. Their use of tools has developed appropriately and they can safely use knives, snips, glue guns and wire strippers. They understand the use of all tools and the very good slippers made in Year 6 showed this. In Year 5, pupils made some ingenious books that involved movements. These were well finished and showed a good variety of individual characteristics. All work is carefully designed with labelled drawings, lists of parts and construction methods. Pupils have a good understanding of the strong features and weaknesses of their models. They analyse the reasons for these well, and give thoughtful consideration to how they could improve them in the future.
101. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject matter and are able to give clear instructions and demonstrations. For example, in Year 3, pupils learned about how to make their sandwiches individual by choosing different ingredients carefully. In Year 4, pupils looked at the properties of different containers in preparation for designing their own for money in later lessons. In Year 6, pupils were able to evaluate the successes and failures of their large-scale model of an air raid shelter in the corner of the classroom, before designing smaller versions they were to make later. In all lessons the teachers understood well what was involved and were able to turn the discussions and investigations into good learning experiences. Pupils were encouraged to give in-depth reasons for what they thought rather than just voicing a preference. Teachers make good use of focused practical tasks to make sure pupils have the appropriate skills before a new project or piece of work is started. These include, for example, practising different stitches to ensure pupils can make them before designing and making their ‘money containers’.
102. In lessons pupils are thoroughly engaged by the activities given to them. They concentrate well and work hard to carry out their assignments. In discussions they are keen to answer, speak confidently and listen well to each other’s ideas.
103. The last inspection found weaknesses in teachers’ subject knowledge, resources and assessment. Since then the co-ordinator, who manages the subject well, has made considerable progress towards improving these. The resources for the subject are now good

and teacher confidence and expertise are much improved through training and help from the co-ordinator. The school has its own scheme of work, based on national guidance, which is ensuring there is continuity and progression through the school. The assessment of pupils' work still needs to be improved to give further guidance to teachers so they are able to match pupils' work against national standards and what they can already do. The standard of learning is monitored by the co-ordinator through questionnaires, scrutinising pupils' work and assistance with planning, but he has had no time to observe lessons or teach model lessons.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Standards in geography are below average for pupils aged seven and eleven. These results are lower than at the time of the last inspection. However, since then the number of pupils with learning difficulties has risen considerably and their ability to write and record their findings in geography is limited. This limits pupils' opportunities to demonstrate what they know. Geography is taught in blocks of time three times a year in each class. It is well planned and field visits are organised thoughtfully to develop pupils' understanding and knowledge through first-hand experience.
105. Pupils in Year 2 are able to record physical and human features of their own local area and a place further afield. For example they use the local area called 'The Vale' well to study their immediate environment. They then learn about the Isle of Struay and compare it with their own challenging urban way of life. Pupils talk and write about different aspects of geography but it is clear in both their writings and discussions that they lack general knowledge. For example, in a lesson about transport, linked to the Isle of Struay, verbal answers were often single words, or in incomplete sentences, and their subsequent writings and drawings were immature compared to those expected of pupils of this age.
106. Key Stage 2 pupils travel further afield for their studies. There are well-planned visits to Wales for a beach and land survey for pupils in Year 6. The visit by Year 5 to Longdendale reservoir to study water treatment and the immediate reservoir environment in depth is a very good learning experience. A very good residential mid-week stay at Castleton, a combined history and geography project, allows Year 5 pupils to study the use of the Hope valley from the Stone Age to the present day. By now they offer reasons for their views about a range of places, recognise why places have different characteristics, and use a developing geographical vocabulary in their writings. However, responses are still brief when they answer or suggest questions, use study skills or write about their findings. This written work is usually below average and not used to consolidate literacy skills.
107. The quality of teaching is good. A strength throughout the school is the high quality of the field trips. The planning for these visits, for each term's work, and for daily lessons is of consistently good quality so that pupils are interested and responsive. Pupils try hard to answer and give their own ideas and reasons. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and prepare resources to enthuse pupils. They are good at direct teaching; their explanations are clear and their relationships with pupils are very good throughout the lessons. Learning support assistants help pupils with special needs, or low attainers, quietly and effectively and so these pupils make good progress. These good skills were all evident in a very lively Year 3 lesson when the teacher used a collection of very good maps to eventually locate pupils' houses on a local map, having started with a globe and working downwards.
108. There has been some satisfactory progress since the last inspection. For example, national guidance has been used well to organise a whole school plan of work and aims for learning are now clear and shared with pupils. The co-ordinator leads the subject well; there was no co-ordinator at the time of the last report.
109. However, all classes share the same areas for development. The marking of everyday work, and the assessment of pupils' attainments against national standards, is still outstanding from

the last report and both need further improvement. As a result of this, teachers are sometimes unsure of exactly what to expect of pupils, including the more able, and so they do not pitch some of the tasks high enough to challenge the pupils' abilities.

HISTORY

110. Standards attained by pupils in history at the ages of seven and eleven years are below average. Although these standards are below those in the last report it is recognised that the abilities of different class groups varies, and are generally lower than at that time. However, there is more the school could do to raise standards further.
111. There have been some satisfactory developments since the last report. These include a much improved whole school plan based securely on national guidance; the very good quality resources provided by the museum service; the good field trips which enhance pupils' learning; and very good quality displays which add to the learning environment.
112. Although some of these were in place at the time of the last inspection they have been developed further still. However, the marking of pupils' work and assessment of pupils' work against national standards are largely undeveloped and they remain outstanding from the last report. Consequently teachers are sometimes unsure at what level to aim at for different groups of pupils so that all are fully challenged.
113. Each class completes three units of history each year, sometimes linked very effectively to other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils build their own attractive Tudor house on a reinforced wooded frame, which shows good links to design and technology. These links with other subjects continues into Year 6 where pupils make their own gas masks during their studies of World War II. Very good artefacts provided both by the school and the museum service, such as gas masks, tapes, books and photographs, enhance the displays of visits and pupils' work. The visit to Chester, when Year 4 pupils experience a 'Roman Day', and dress in costume from that time, is a good example of a well-chosen visit. Pupils in Year 1 are to visit the local museum to look at old toys and compare them with their own favourites.
114. Pupils in Year 2 in their studies about Florence Nightingale write her biography in their own words. They look at illustrations of war and describe what they see. In this, and other work, it is clear pupils know the difference between then and now, how to find simple answers to simple questions, and how to use everyday terms in their own work. They also learn peoples' lives are different, there are such people as 'famous persons' and how to make observations about artefacts.
115. However, their ability to recall main events and to give reasons why these happen, given in their own words at some length, using a range of sources such as photographs, books and information found using ICT, is below average. This is reflected in their answers to questions and in the quality and amount of their written work.
116. Pupils in Year 6 produce their own folders about a history topic based on individual research. Some of this work is in their own words, whilst some is copied extensively from a range of sources, often using ICT. Although they have a sound factual knowledge of the history of Britain, and use this to describe famous people and important events at an average level on occasions, their understanding is reduced because their ability to select information from different sources and to produce work in their own words is below average. This was particularly apparent when some average ability pupils wrote lengthy detailed accounts of World War II copied directly from books and information found using CD-ROMs and the Internet. When more able pupils write accounts in their own words it is clear from the amount of work, and the content, that these pupils still have to develop skills in historical enquiry and in organisation and communication to match their abilities.

117. History teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. There are several good features. For example, relationships in all classrooms are very good because teachers treat pupils with respect, use praise and encouragement very well, and employ simple classroom management techniques very skilfully so pupils listen to the teacher and each other. Pupils are always willing to try and when they are working they concentrate and behave sensibly. Learning support assistants work with individuals and groups of pupils confidently; consequently pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Daily plans are prepared carefully so everyone knows exactly what is to be done and how. Work is always neat and pupils' work is displayed attractively. Older pupils are beginning to develop their ICT skills in the new computer suite.
118. However, in lessons with younger pupils, historical language is not used sufficiently by teachers to develop pupils' understanding of chronology. Worksheets in Year 2 are the same for all pupils so although all pupils respond in their own words, more able pupils do not do enough. Year 6 pupils copy too much information they have found in their own research, which reduces learning. Assessment procedures, including marking, to check how well pupils are learning, and to find out whether they are making enough progress, are weak so teachers remain uncertain about how their pupils' work compares to what is expected of pupils by the age of eleven.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

119. Standards are below those expected of pupils of a similar age by the age of seven and eleven. In last inspection, ICT was judged to be in line with national expectations and therefore standards are now lower. The school has invested heavily in a new computer suite that was completed in December 2002 and has just started to be used. In addition, all classes have a PC and an Acorn computer, with the exception of Year 6, who will be using the three laptops presently stored in the computer suite.
120. During the inspection, very few computers were being used to their full capacity and consequently the opportunities, particularly for older pupils to practise and refine ICT skills are limited. However, this was not the case with the younger pupils who were able to work independently on computers. Teachers also kept a daily list of pupils who were to access computing for a specific purpose linked to their ongoing learning in class. There were some good displays of word-processed work in the ICT co-ordinator's room, and in Year 1 where pupils had use the paint program *Easel* to illustrate their own portraits. The ICT portfolio did show some work examples from each year, especially a good range from the subject co-ordinator's class. In other years, examples included a letter to Santa, coloured patterns, instructions for making a cup of tea, a small range of data handling, such as choices of favourite chocolate and fast cars. There is also work on a curriculum study in history. The wider range of examples in Year 4 included some poetry, St Paul's News front page, and a recount of a trip to the Roman Experience in Chester and of visits to a wildlife centre.
121. In a sound lesson in the computer suite, Year 3 pupils carefully undertook one of a planned series of word-processing lessons and were able to enter, save and retrieve work and alter font type and size. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were using the *Dazzle* program very effectively to make imaginative repeated patterns. Year 6 pupils have produced interesting front pages of newspapers where they had downloaded a photograph of their visit to a World War II air raid shelter and added a title and text to accompany the photograph. In addition, they had used the Internet accurately to access information. From these observations and in talking to pupils it was clear that they are enthusiastic about their learning and keen to increase their skills in the use of ICT. These examples show that teaching is now satisfactory and where pupils have the opportunity they make sound progress.
122. There is currently a weakness in control technology. Although the school has two programmable 'Roamers' stored in the computer suite, there was limited evidence of them being used regularly. The range of programs on the new computers in the computer suite has yet to be increased to ensure that there is sufficient to meet the requirements of the National

Curriculum programmes of study in ICT. The school has engaged the services of a computer consultancy firm and representatives attend lessons to support the teachers and pupils in their work. All staff have completed the nationally funded training in computing and further training is being given by the computer consultants.

123. The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has been fully engaged in getting the new computer suite up and running. He has an action plan for 2002/3 mainly focused on developing the computer suite, and ICT is a focused area in the school improvement plan where the aim is 'to deliver ICT successfully through the school'. The school policy was updated in September 2002 and the school has had help and support for their ICT development from the local education authority ICT Curriculum Unit. Resources with the opening of the new computer suite are very good and in addition the school has three laptops, two Roamers, a digital camera and a range of listening centres around the school.

MUSIC

124. Standards are in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age at the ages of seven and eleven. This is similar to the standards attained at the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator for music is new since the last inspection and the skills and expertise of the present subject co-ordinator have yet to impact upon the standards across the school. This is despite the significant amount of work she has done in undertaking an audit of the music curriculum, writing an action plan, acquiring more musical resources to support the teaching of music and introducing a published music scheme in September 2002. However, at the present time, the scheme only covers Years 1 to 4 and material for Years 5 and 6 has yet to arrive.
125. The quality of teaching is good. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, which was taught by the subject co-ordinator and where the quality of teaching was judged to be very good. There was good evidence of musical activities that have occurred during the previous term, such as the samba band, who also performed in a school assembly, as did a small recorder group. Pupils' attitudes to music are very good and this was clearly seen in the singing in assembly that is tuneful and joyful, with very clear diction where all the words could be clearly heard in the singing. A high point for inspectors was in looking at the video of the Early Years' and Infants' Christmas performance of 'Whoops a Daisy Angel'. This was the first time the younger pupils had put on a Christmas performance and demonstrated the rising standards that are being achieved in the infant stage.
126. The school provides a good range of musical experiences for all pupils. For instance, the school choir has taken part in the Stockport Schools' Christmas Carol Concert and also sang to the elderly in the local community at Christmas. There is a visiting teacher who teaches the violin each week and recorders are taught to pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. It is planned for the whole class of Year 3 pupils to begin learning recorders from September 2003. An exciting project is just beginning during the spring term where the school is going to start its own steel band.
127. The music co-ordinator manages the subject well and has identified the need to observe the teaching and learning in music across the school and to focus on developing assessment procedures and staff confidence in teaching music through working alongside teachers and giving model music lessons. However, this has not yet been possible, but advice and support have been given by the local educational authority Music Advisory service in the nursery during the autumn term. With the focus on obtaining new instrumental resources in music there is now a good range of instruments to use, but it has been recognised that there is a need to add to the limited range of recorded music from other world cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. At the ages of seven and eleven pupils' attainments in physical education are in line with expectations for their age. The school uses a series of very good commercial plans for dance,

gymnastics and games for all pupils. Pupils between Years 3 and 6 make good progress in swimming. Athletics and outdoor activities are taught well, making full use of the attractive outside areas.

129. Extra-curricular activities in football, running and country dancing are popular and well attended and help pupils to make greater progress. Teams take part in competitions against local schools; during the inspection the footballers were very proud of their narrow win against their local rivals. One player showed sufficient skilled control and tactical awareness to be considered a talented pupil by the school. There are very good links with specialist teachers from nearby secondary schools; they work with pupils in Years 5 and 6 to teach lacrosse, hockey and athletics. Plans for a 'Local Commonwealth Games', with each school representing a different country, are well advanced. These extra activities add very effectively to the everyday curriculum and help to raise standards.
130. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils have developed satisfactory skills in dance, gymnastics and games. They travel in gymnastics and games confidently, exploring space and shape, sometimes with a partner. When apparatus is used, either in gymnastics, or in games with small equipment, pupils are keen to demonstrate their skills to each other. In a Year 2 games lesson pupils threw quoits and balls accurately and were able to catch them with two hands on most occasions. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson they began to improve their own performance after watching others. They behave safely under the firm guidance of teachers and assistants.
131. Year 6 pupils show they have built on these skills. They are aware of the need to warm up and cool down, and the value of a healthy lifestyle. In gymnastics they work confidently on the floor, or on apparatus, either individually, or with a partner. Pupils comment on their own and others' performance and try successfully to develop their own sequences to a higher standard. As a result they look for variation in direction and level as part of this improvement to their sequences. All this was seen in a lively Year 6 gymnastics lesson in partner work on the floor of the hall. The swimming session, also with Year 6, was very successful. The class teacher worked alongside the swimming coach, so all pupils were given every opportunity to improve. Records show that most pupils are able to swim 25 metres before they leave. The school football match showed that all the pupils in the 7-a-side team were above average in control of the ball and in their understanding of tactics for attaching and defending. The aspect that is missing in their development is the ability to use apparatus wisely on some occasions, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
132. The quality of teaching is good, but in one lesson where the teacher did not exercise the firmest control it became unsatisfactory. In this lesson the pupils stopped concentrating and their practising of skills became careless and of poor quality. However, other teaching is good, and as a result pupils are enthusiastic and willing triers. The commercial plans that teachers use are very detailed and provide a very good framework for teachers to plan several weeks work as well as single lessons. Consequently, pupils build their skills systematically, beginning on admission to Year 1. This was very evident in a good gymnastics lesson when these pupils built successfully on previous work, watching each other and then improving their own landing, turning and rolling skills. Pupils are very eager to be involved but teachers have to use all their management skills at all times during the lesson because most classes have a higher number of pupils with special needs, or boisterous personalities, than is usual. Pupils are reminded of health and safety throughout the lesson because of this. All lessons have a suitable warm-up and cool-down session. In many lessons teachers demonstrate high expectations from the start by insisting that all pupils are correctly dressed for physical activity.
133. Progress in the subject has been satisfactory since the last inspection. For example, the framework necessary for the teaching of skills in all areas of physical education for all pupils is now in place. As a result medium-term and daily plans are detailed, which was not the case before, and aims for the lesson are always clearly stated so that pupils know what they will learn.

134. However, there is still no form of assessment used to monitor pupils' progress or to identify talented pupils, even though this is set out clearly in a simple format in the commercial scheme. The co-ordinator is new to the school and has other major responsibilities. So far she has had no opportunities to help other teachers or make any real impact on standards in the subject.