

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY RC  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Burnley

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119491

Headteacher: Mrs A Hardisty

Reporting inspector: Mr T Neat  
2007

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 248024

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lowerhouse Lane
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Telephone number:	01282 426938
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20007	Mr T Neat	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11392	Dr T Heppenstall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16492	Mr R Lever	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
24758	Ms D Townsend	Team inspector	English Geography History Music Foundation Stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Augustine of Canterbury is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school situated to the north of Burnley town centre. It is smaller than most schools of its type, having 170 pupils on roll, compared with the average of 242. There are significant imbalances in the number of boys and girls in different year groups. At the time of the inspection there were 90 boys and 80 girls in the school. Although the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average [17.3 per cent], the school believes that many parents do not claim their entitlement.

St Augustine's draws pupils from a number of areas and many live in the most deprived parts of the town. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The attainment of children joining the reception class is below the level normally found. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs [22.9 per cent] is slightly above the national average and the proportion with Statements of Special Educational Needs [4.1 per cent] is well above average. Both have been rising over the last few years. The proportion of pupils who have continuous experience at the school has fallen significantly in the last few years and is low.

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

St Augustine of Canterbury is a good and improving school. Its pupils produce commendable results in spite of the difficulties it faces. The very good leadership of the headteacher, supported ably by senior staff and governors, and the good quality of teaching result in most pupils achieving well. The very effective management by the headteacher of the very many staffing problems experienced over the last few years has minimized their impact on standards. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards are rising at the end of Year 2.
- The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well and as a result, their behaviour, attitudes to learning and relationships are very good.
- The school is a very caring, inclusive community, which makes very good provision for pupils with difficulties.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science in relation to the national average.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Year 6.
- The effectiveness of subject co-ordination.
- Some subjects lack effective procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in February 1998. Since then it has made good progress and the inspection team judges that it is well placed to make further improvement. Despite increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs and high pupil turnover,

standards are beginning to rise. This is due to the very good work of the headteacher and the improvement in the quality of teaching in spite of the influx of a large number of mainly inexperienced teachers. The key issues identified in the last inspection report have been addressed successfully overall in the face of great difficulties posed by staffing changes. Expenditure has been used wisely to facilitate single age classes. Many improvements have been made to the accommodation and it is currently being extended.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	E	E
mathematics	D	D	E	E
science	D	D	E	E

**Key**

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

Most pupils start school with attainment below the levels typically found, but thanks to strong leadership and good teaching they achieve well. The results of the national tests for 2002 - the last for which national data are available - show that standards at the end of Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics, and below average in science. In comparison with schools operating in similar circumstances, overall results were well above average.

The 2002 tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 indicated that standards in English, mathematics and science were well below average. However, school records show that only four per cent of pupils in that cohort had continuous experience at the school, nearly half were eligible for free school meals, the proportion with special educational needs was above average and the proportion with Statements of Special Educational Needs was well above average. Records kept by the school show that, in relation to their prior attainment, the vast majority of pupils in Year 6 last year made satisfactory or better progress, and many made good or very good gains. The trend in the school's results at the end of Year 6 is below average, due to the many unhelpful factors with which the school has to contend. These include the high pupil turnover caused partly by the large changes to the teaching force. Results are rising at the end of Year 2. This part of the school has not suffered to the same extent from the staffing problems. The school sets challenging targets. No differences were found between the standards attained by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Inspection evidence indicates that the results of the current Year 2 cohort in the national tests are likely to be at least in line with the average for schools working in similar circumstances, but below the national average overall, due to an increased proportion of pupils with learning difficulties,. Pupils at the end of Year 6 are likely to achieve overall results that are above the average for similar schools and broadly in line with the average for all schools. This represents a very good performance for the school, since only five per cent of this group have continuous experience in the junior part of the school.

In art and design, design and technology, geography and history standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In music and physical education not enough lessons were



seen to judge overall standards. In ICT, standards are average at the end of Year 2, but remain below average at the end of Year 6. Standards are average in those areas of the ICT curriculum covered in Year 6, but in a couple of areas pupils lack appropriate experience.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are attentive and interested throughout their lessons. They contribute well to discussions.
Behaviour in and out of classrooms	Very good. The school is very orderly and this makes learning and teaching easier.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils are very caring and sensitive to the needs of others. They co-operate well with each other in lessons and at play.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and contributes directly to pupils' achievements. The quality of teaching in the reception class is consistently good. The lessons are planned well and a variety of strategies are used to encompass all areas of learning. Teachers work effectively to meet the needs of different groups and individuals, including those with special educational needs. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good. Lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are good throughout the school. Overall, art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and physical education are taught well. In geography and music, not enough lessons were seen to make reliable judgements.

Teachers in all classes manage their classes very skilfully and as a result, pupils behave very well in lessons. This creates a positive learning atmosphere that allows pupils to concentrate very effectively and work hard. Lessons are prepared well and teachers make good use of learning resources. This contributes to the very good levels of interest shown by pupils. Good questioning enables them to gain good knowledge and understanding. A number of areas for development were seen in lessons, usually of a relatively minor nature. For example, occasionally there are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to practise speaking and listening skills.

The teaching assistants make a good contribution to the progress made by the pupils with whom they work, especially those with special educational needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The use of a new computer program is beginning to have a positive effect on the quality of planning. Pupils at the end of Year 6 do not have access to all the elements of the National Curriculum for ICT. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The curriculum for these pupils is organised very well and arrangements for using individual education plans are effective in ensuring needs are met.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision made for spiritual, moral and social development is particularly effective. The school reflects its guiding Catholic principles very well. The curriculum also enhances spiritual growth very well. Although the provision for pupils' cultural development is good, there is not a systematic approach to teaching about the main ethnic minority cultures of Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school is a very caring organisation and is safe and secure. The pupils feel well supported by staff. Some subjects lack effective procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has an effective partnership with parents. It makes good efforts to involve them. The quality of information for parents is good. Parental support for pupils' learning is satisfactory overall.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides the school with very good leadership and direction. She has managed the numerous staffing difficulties extremely well and has built a good team. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped because of the many staff changes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides good support for the headteacher and staff. Despite having new members, the governing body plays a good part in shaping the development of the school. It fulfils its statutory duties well overall.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The quality of teaching is evaluated and developed well. There are good arrangements for monitoring the performance of staff.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are supported well by the school's financial planning. Computers are used well in administration.

The school is staffed well with suitably qualified teachers and assistants. The arrangements for settling in staff new to the school are very effective. The accommodation presents some

problems, but is being extended. There are sufficient learning resources; in many subjects the provision is good.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children enjoy school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and pupils make good progress.</li> <li>• Leadership and management are good and parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Some feel that the school does not work closely with them.</li> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• Some feel that they are not kept well-informed about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence confirms the positive opinions held by the majority of parents. Inspectors judge that: [a] the range of extra-curricular activities is similar to that offered by most schools of this size, [b] the provision for homework is satisfactory, [c] the school provides good information for parents, and [d] it makes good efforts to involve parents fully.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Thanks to strong leadership and good teaching most pupils achieve well. Overall, the standards of children joining the school in the reception class are below the levels normally found. The current stable position in the provision of teachers has only just been established and time will be needed for the good teaching seen during the inspection to be reflected fully in the standards that pupils attain.
2. Since the time of the last inspection, standards have fluctuated but taken overall, have not matched the levels reported then. A number of factors explain this. In the intervening period:
  - [a] the school has experienced exceptional staffing difficulties;
  - [b] the proportion of pupils with special educational needs has risen significantly;
  - [c] the proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs has risen significantly, and
  - [d] very high levels of pupil turnover have affected many year groups.
3. The results of the 2002 national tests - the last for which national data are available - showed that standards at the end of Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments showed that science standards were below average. The tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 indicated that standards in English, mathematics and science were well below average. However, school records reveal that only four per cent of pupils in that cohort had continuous experience at the school, nearly half were eligible for free school meals, the proportion with special educational needs was above average and the proportion with Statements of Special Educational Needs was well above average. School data demonstrates that, notwithstanding the results of the tests, 96 per cent of pupils in Year 6 last year made satisfactory or better progress, with 44 per cent making good or very good gains.
4. The rate of improvement in results by the end of Year 6 is below the national trend largely because of the nature of the 2002 Year 6 cohort to which reference is made in the paragraph above. The trend in results at the end of Year 2 is better, reflecting the lower impact of staffing changes on the infant part of the school. Results in mathematics by the end of Year 2 have risen, from a low base, much faster than the national trend of improvement. This is due to the efforts put in by the school to raise standards.
5. The school has the raising of standards as a priority, and sets challenging targets. However, because of its desire to ensure that the needs of all pupils, including those with behavioural and other difficulties, are met as fully as possible, it has not placed undue emphasis on preparing for the national tests. This inclusive approach extends to accepting pupils with difficulties, even though this may affect the results of the tests.
6. Children make good progress in the reception class thanks to good teaching and the very good relationships that the staff make with them. By the time they enter Year 1, most attain the goals agreed nationally for children of this age in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy. The lower standards in this area reflect the lower attainment of many children when they enter the reception class.

7. Inspection evidence indicates that the results of the current Year 2 cohort in the national tests are likely to be below the average for all schools, but at least in line with the average for schools operating in similar circumstances. Pupils at the end of Year 6 are likely to achieve overall results that are broadly in line with the average for all schools and above the average for similar schools. This represents a very good performance, since only five per cent of this group has continuous experience in the junior part of the school.
8. No differences were found between the standards attained by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are doing well against specific targets and are making good progress, particularly when receiving extra support. The school uses assessment data from teachers and the national and standardised tests to set targets in individual education plans and in Statements of Special Educational Needs.
9. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. Many seven year olds contribute well to discussions, listen to stories with interest and respond to teachers' questions enthusiastically. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils discussed their radio advert for a theme park. All pupils contributed well to the stimulating discussions. Pupils in Year 6 listen carefully to instructions and ask questions confidently.
10. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, reading standards are average. Most pupils read confidently, fluently and with expression. They understand what they read and name the authors, illustrators and publishers of books. Most know how to use the contents page and index correctly to locate information. Year 6 pupils read fluently, with good understanding and appropriate expression. Many thoroughly enjoy reading. Most know what kind of books they like and why. Their reading is supported well by work in other subjects, such as history, when they read for information.
11. Children start school with low levels of attainment, but make good progress in developing their writing skills as they pass through the school. By the end of Year 2, ideas are developed effectively in sentences. Commonly used words are spelled correctly and good attempts are made at unfamiliar words such as 'goggles'. Standards of handwriting are good. Pupils in Year 6 write in a variety of forms, often in a lively and thoughtful way. Their persuasive writing is very good, including letters to Queen Elizabeth, dated 1555, requesting financial support for a voyage to the Spice Islands. Punctuation is of broadly average quality. Basic punctuation rules are applied consistently and the use of more sophisticated forms, such as speech marks is developing appropriately. Pupils' handwriting is mainly fluent and clear. Spelling is average.
12. In mathematics, standards in the current Year 2 are below average. At the end of Year 6 they are average. Pupils in Year 2 count, order and write number to 50 and know that subtraction is the inverse of addition. They know the properties of common shapes. More able pupils understand that multiplication can be done in a variety of ways. They use more than one method to solve problems. In Year 6, pupils present mathematical information in a clear, organized way. Numeracy skills are developed appropriately, including addition and subtraction to two decimal places. Most pupils have suitable knowledge and understanding of ideas concerning shape. For example, they find the perimeter and area of simple shapes using formulas. More able pupils achieve appropriately when using all four number 'rules' to two decimal places.
13. Standards in science are below the national average for all schools at the end of Years 2 and 6. Compared to similar schools standards are average by the end of

Year 6. Skills of investigating are strongly developed compared with other aspects of science in Year 2. Pupils respond successfully to suggestions about finding things out, but do not record whether their experiments turn out as they expected. Most pupils know a good deal about plants, animals and humans. For example, they understand some of the ways in which flowers differ. Year 6 pupils show a clear understanding of fair testing. They recognise the need to measure things in experiments, but do not show that they understand the need to repeat measurements. Pupils' knowledge of the functions of the main human organs is above average. They understand that water can exist in different forms, but do not recognize changes of state in other materials.

14. In art and design, design and technology, geography and history standards are average at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In music not enough lessons were seen to judge overall standards, but singing is above average throughout the school. No overall judgement is made of overall standards in physical education, since too few lessons were observed, but in those elements seen, standards were average. In information and communication technology, standards are average at the end of Year 2, but remain below average at the end of Year 6. Standards are average in those areas of the curriculum covered in Year 6, but in a couple of areas, pupils lack appropriate experience.

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

15. The pupils like school and their attitudes to work are very good. In eight out of ten of the lessons observed in the inspection, attitudes and behaviour were judged to be very good or better. In one lesson in ten they were judged to be excellent. Pupils are attentive throughout their lessons, are interested and contribute well to discussions and in answers to questions in assemblies and lessons. Parents are very satisfied with the attitudes of their children and believe that they look forward to going to school. These high standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
16. Behaviour is very good in and outside of classes. As a result, the school is very orderly and this makes learning and teaching easier. Also, the pupils are very courteous to adults and treat property well. They are also trustworthy; for example, members of staff are not concerned about the security of their personal possessions. Parents are very satisfied with the standards of behaviour and have no significant concerns about bullying. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. One fixed-term exclusion was made in the previous year.
17. The pupils are very caring and sensitive to the needs of others in many ways. They wrote to soldiers in the Gulf to cheer them up. Charities are supported. During the inspection, pupils willingly donated coins to charity which had been given to them in an assembly. They are attentive when fellow pupils are speaking in discussions. The different members of the school community are integrated well and considerable care is shown to pupils with difficulties. These attitudes help the school considerably in its aim to be inclusive.
18. Relationships in school are very good. Pupils co-operate well with each other in lessons and at play. They like their teachers and other staff and they are confident that they will receive support when required. Pupils with special educational needs form very good relationships with teachers, support staff and their peers.
19. The personal development of pupils is good. They respond well to adults and the Year 6 pupils enjoy positions of responsibility, which they feel to be worthwhile.

These involve helping around the school in various ways. Younger pupils aspire to these roles. The responses of pupils to outdoor activities such as rock climbing, undertaken during residential courses, indicate pleasure in overcoming challenge. The number of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility has been reduced because staff changes have caused the operation of the school council to be suspended.

20. Attendance is satisfactory. It has been in line with the national average for several years but there is a declining trend. However, this would have been reversed this year but for a serious influenza outbreak which affected about half the school's population. Sickness is the main reason for authorised absence. The level of unauthorised absence is relatively low due to rigorous efforts by the school and good co-operation from parents.
21. The punctuality of a particular group of pupils is a concern, but it was not a serious problem during the inspection.

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

22. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and contributes directly to pupils' achievements. Of the lessons seen during the inspection, approximately two in ten were very good, seven in ten were good and one in ten was of satisfactory quality. Despite the many staffing changes, this is an improvement since the last inspection, when a smaller proportion of teaching was good or very good and a small percentage of lessons were unsatisfactory. There is a good spirit among the staff. Strong teamwork and clear determination to help move the school forward are evident. However, stability in the teaching and support staff has only just been achieved, and it will take longer for the good teaching seen to be reflected in the standards achieved by pupils aged 11, than those aged seven.
23. The vast majority of parents believe teaching to be good. Those attending the meeting with the registered inspector, before the inspection, thought that the teachers' knowledge of individual pupils contributes strongly to the progress that is made. The inspection team endorses this view.
24. The quality of teaching in the reception class is consistently good. The lessons are planned well and a variety of strategies are used to encompass all areas of learning. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to children's learning. All members of staff work well together.
25. All teachers manage their classes very skilfully and, as a result, pupils behave very well in lessons. This creates a positive learning ethos that allows pupils to concentrate very effectively and work hard. This is seen very clearly in Year 2 lessons, currently held in the library, where the restricted space makes teaching and learning difficult, but no time is lost thanks to the very good discipline of the pupils. Good questioning enables pupils to gain knowledge and understanding. In a Year 6 science lesson the good use of questions significantly improved pupils' ability to conduct an experiment independently. Lessons are prepared well and teachers make good use of learning resources. The provision of local history materials in a Year 3 lesson had a good effect on the standards that pupils attained. A variety of areas for development were seen in lessons, usually of a relatively minor nature. For example, occasionally teachers do not provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to practise speaking and listening skills. In two of the lessons seen, more able pupils were not challenged effectively. Overall, the enthusiasm and commitment of

teachers and their assistants support their drive to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

26. Teachers work effectively to meet the needs of different groups and individuals. They use appropriate methods, which enable pupils with special educational needs to learn effectively. Teachers take full account of the targets set out in the individual education plans drawn up for these pupils, which are sufficiently practical for them to implement when extra help is not available. Teaching assistants offer skilled support and keep accurate records of pupils' progress. The grouping of pupils by ability within classes promotes higher standards for all groups.
27. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good, and pupils use these effectively to learn in other subjects. Teachers make effective use of computers in a satisfactory range of subjects. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are taught well throughout the school. Overall, art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and physical education are taught well. In geography and music, not enough lessons were seen to make reliable judgements.
28. Teachers work effectively with their assistants, briefing them well and operating with them as a team. The assistants make a good contribution to the progress made by the groups and individuals with whom they work. This is particularly true of the assistance they give to pupils with special educational needs.

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

29. The statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education are met, with the exception of the provision of the full Programme of Study for information and communication technology in the junior part of the school. There is not enough equipment to teach pupils about monitoring events such as sensing temperature or sounds. Further training is required to allow teachers to provide lessons in control technology at a level appropriate for pupils nearing the end of their junior years. Appropriate arrangements have recently been put in place to teach sex education in the context of stable relationships. Pupils are also helped to appreciate the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Much importance is given to promoting pupils' personal development alongside their academic achievement. This helps them to grow in maturity and confidence.
30. The curriculum in the reception class successfully covers all six areas of learning as set out in the national guidance for work for this age group.
31. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broad and appropriately balanced. The areas for development identified in the last inspection report have largely been addressed. Effective schemes of work have been implemented in English, science and information and communication technology. Most subjects now have policies, but the numerous staffing changes have resulted in some being overdue for review. In recent months, a new computer program has been bought and a good start has been made to using it as a very effective tool in planning and monitoring the curriculum. It also has much potential for assessing and recording pupils' progress. All teachers have a laptop computer enabling them to integrate their planning with the school's agreed programme. Teachers' short-term plans are submitted to the headteacher on floppy disk each week, to be loaded onto the system. The subject co-ordinators then have access to them in order to monitor the curriculum in their areas. Plans are



evaluated regularly. Further training is needed for some co-ordinators to make effective use of the system. Good strategies have been developed for teaching literacy and numeracy skills.

32. The curriculum provides equal opportunities, with girls and boys and pupils of different backgrounds being given the same chance to succeed. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The curriculum is organised very well and arrangements for using individual education plans ensure that needs are met, whilst still enabling pupils to have access to the whole curriculum. The provision made in statements is being met well, particularly for pupils with physical disabilities. There are very good links with outside support agencies.
33. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Circle time and informal discussions, often about topical issues or problems that pupils may have encountered, contribute strongly to this. The school is currently looking for an appropriate programme of work on which to base its teaching more securely.
34. The school has satisfactory arrangements for homework. The tasks set must serve a useful purpose and parents are informed about the schedule for each year group.
35. Effective links with the local community, including the church and sports organizations, add richness to the curriculum. Successful liaison with partner institutions, such as the local nursery and secondary schools, helps to ease the transfer of pupils.
36. Pupils' personal development is catered for very well overall. The provision made for spiritual, moral and social development is particularly effective. The teaching in the reception class makes a very good contribution to children's personal growth. In a physical development lesson, the children were praised a lot and this promoted their self-esteem. As a result, they worked well with their partners, showing care and respect for each other.
37. The school reflects its guiding Catholic principles very well. Parents choose it because of its wonderful ethos. Assemblies contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual development. One led by the headteacher encouraged pupils to think about the ways in which we pray. Everyone received a gift of a new two pence coin and its symbolic features were used very skilfully to help them focus on prayer. After the assembly many pupils donated their coin to charity. The curriculum also enhances spiritual growth very well, especially the work done in science. In a Year 2 lesson pupils examining the seeds of fruits through a lens were filled with amazement. "They're massive!" one cried. The eyes of Year 5 pupils were wide open with wonder when a helium-filled balloon released from the teacher's hand rose swiftly to the ceiling.
38. Social and moral development is promoted very well. The adults set a very good example for the pupils. There are very effective systems for developing pupils' self-esteem and for encouraging and reinforcing very clear ideas about what is right and wrong. The employment of lunchtime supervisors who are also teaching assistants has a positive impact in this area, since they know individuals very well and liaise with teaching staff very effectively to guide and support pupils. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development. Visits from theatre groups, musicians and artists 'in residence' generate a good appreciation of the pupils' own heritage. Training for staff on world religions and the creation of a 'multicultural week' in which each class studies a different country's traditions and ways, increase

pupils' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of other cultures. The school acknowledges that a more systematic approach to teaching about the main ethnic minority cultures of Britain, including links with schools with pupils of different races, is needed.

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

39. The school is a very caring organisation. There is a noticeably supportive ethos and the school is safe and secure. The pupils feel well cared for by staff who will help when needed. There are good procedures in place for home/school partnerships. Home/school liaison books are given to parents during induction evenings. Other examples of the caring ethos include the admissions policy, which gives priority to pupils in need of care, and membership of an initiative which provides free fruit every day. Achievement of all sorts is celebrated. For example, the "Star of the Week" is named on a large display and is a much-valued award. These measures have a positive effect on pupils' achievements.
40. The overall arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Health and safety arrangements are good overall and have been improved since the previous inspection. Governors are now involved and play an active role in the inspection of the premises and risk assessment. Local authority audits are carried out and statutory requirements are fulfilled. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory. There is a teacher designated to take responsibility and a useful policy, but many teachers have joined the school recently and not all have had training. Lunchtime supervision arrangements are very good. The routines are clear and organised well, and the number of supervisors is easily adequate. There are induction arrangements for new starters and regular meetings with the head. As a result, the supervisors feel confident in their roles.
41. The arrangements to monitor attendance are good. They have been effective in reversing the declining trend in attendance level but the benefits are masked by unusually high levels of illness. Registers satisfy legal requirements and are monitored regularly. Procedures to establish causes of absence are thorough and there is a close relationship with the education welfare officer. There are effective procedures to deal with messages from parents who are generally co-operative over this matter. Good attendance is rewarded, but there are not enough incentives. Only those pupils who do not have any absences for a whole year get recognition. Some health and safety aspects of attendance recording are unsatisfactory. The record of pupils who are temporarily absent during the school day is only maintained during the time that the school secretary is present. She is aware of who is absent and may have notes or messages from parents, but the information is not in a form which could be given to someone who may need it in the event of a fire or other emergency. Not all teachers followed the procedures for marking registers effectively during the inspection.
42. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are very good. They are based on rules reinforced by a system of rewards and sanctions. The rules are prominently displayed and the arrangements, which are used consistently throughout the school, including lunchtimes, are clearly defined in a policy. An imaginative form of provision is the use of special 'think' sheets which require anyone whose behaviour is unhelpful to consider how they can remedy this and make amends. Copies of these are sent to parents. The arrangements for managing behaviour are very consistent with the strong emphasis the school puts on caring well for pupils. The procedures

are understood by pupils who believe they contribute to the high standards of behaviour. Pupils' very good behaviour contributes strongly to their achievements.

43. The provision for providing personal support for pupils is very good. There is a large number of support staff and lunchtime supervisors and pupils always have adults to whom they can turn. This arrangement is enhanced by the caring ethos of the school and the good relationships. Personal development is monitored formally and the results are recorded. Thus, information about each pupil's progress and personal difficulties is available to all members of staff. This provision impacts well on pupils' progress.
44. The school provides very well for pupils who are known to need particular attention. There are effective assessment procedures in place for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are sufficiently specific for accurate assessments of progress to be made.
45. There are good procedures in the reception class for assessing children's attainment and these assessments are being used to inform planning. The school is using the latest national guidance for assessing and recording children's progress. This good provision boosts children's learning.
46. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. They are established well in English and mathematics and contribute to pupils' achievements, but in some other subjects they are at an early stage of development. In art the school has compiled a portfolio of work as evidence of achievement, which is annotated well to show the levels of attainment. This helps teachers to plan more effectively. Similar assessment is planned for other subjects. The key issue identified in the last inspection report has been addressed - the school now analyses assessment data from national tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning and determine the action needed. Detailed assessments made when pupils join the school enable teachers to identify particular needs early, and these help staff to address problems without delay. The school uses assessment data from teachers and the national and standardised tests to inform target-setting procedures in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

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

47. Evidence from meetings with parents and from the parents' survey indicates that most are very pleased with the school. Parents generally agree that their children like school, that the school has high expectations, and that it helps their children mature. Most parents believe that the school works well with them and that they receive good information, but a small minority does not. A significant number expressed concerns about the range of out-of-lesson activities and homework. Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the school but do not share the concerns.
48. The school makes good efforts to involve parents fully and these contribute to the progress that most pupils make. Parents are welcome in school and members of staff are approachable. The welcome extends to family members, particularly grandparents. Parental help is valued. Some parents have a good impact on the life of the school. There is a good level of direct parental support for pupils' learning and an active and successful parent-teacher association. School events are supported well. Surveys are made to establish parents' views and the governing body is running a campaign to raise its profile. These efforts are only partially successful. In

some respects, parental support for the school is unsatisfactory. For example, no parent has attended a governors' annual meeting for five years, the attendance at parents' consultation evenings can be low and the response to surveys of parents' views is also poor.

49. The quality of information for parents is good overall. Newsletters are regular and informative and the prospectus is helpful, although it does not fully comply with requirements. The school has acknowledged the deficiencies. Every parent has started to receive packs of useful information about the work which will be undertaken by their children. These packs have replaced meetings which were not well attended. They include details of forthcoming topics, an indication of what their children are expected to know and guidance on helping them at home. A guide on helping with reading is also available. Relevant information is displayed on a parents' notice board.
50. Pupils' progress reports are issued annually and are of satisfactory quality. They comply with requirements. Comments are given on personal development and there is a clear indication of the effort which pupils have made. All the reports give considerable emphasis to achievement. However, there is no consistent indication of what pupils can do, what they could be expected to do and what steps are needed to bring about improvement. Information about pupils' progress is also given at parents' consultation evenings, which are held twice per year.
51. Parental support for pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in school but inconsistent at home. The school estimates that about a third of pupils receive regular help. Even amongst younger pupils, the practice of reading to parents is not fully established.
52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved in identifying their needs. They provide appropriate support and regularly review their children's progress. They are very pleased with extra help their children receive and the good progress they make. The liaison between home and school helps to increase the progress these pupils make. There are extremely good links with the parents of pupils with more complex difficulties.

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

53. The headteacher provides the school with very good leadership and direction. The school has been subject to an exceptional series of staff changes over the last few years. These include the headteacher taking over the school, three deputy headteachers joining the staff, ten teachers being appointed, of whom eight were newly-qualified, six maternity leaves, three long-term illnesses and numerous supply teachers coming and going. A similarly difficult picture applies to the support staff too. This upheaval has been caused by a variety of factors, including promotion, relocation, retirement and resignation. The headteacher has managed the many staff changes extremely well, keeping to a minimum the effects on standards and has built a good team. She is well thought of and praised by parents, and has the confidence of the whole-school community.
54. There are clear systems and policies in place and the headteacher manages the school very effectively on a daily basis. Her determination through difficult times has carried the staff with her and they are all working very well as a team to move the school forward. Their united efforts are resulting in improvements in attainment. New procedures, for example, for tracking and analysing pupils' progress and the

reflection of the school's policies in its everyday practice have shown everyone where the school is going and how it is going to get there. The school's aims embodied in its Mission Statement are very clearly reflected in all aspects of school life, resulting in the creation of a very positive, supportive ethos.

55. The governing body provides good support for the headteacher and staff. Many governors are new, but they are effectively supported by more experienced members and are already having a positive impact in the management of the school. Governors are now better informed about the school's performance and so more involved than they were at the time of the last inspection. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and welcome the strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher. They have the confidence to question the information they are given and to hold the school to account. Other than omitting a few items from the information it is required to provide for parents, the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have ensured a stable permanent staff this year and that subject and other policies are in place. They target and monitor expenditure more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well.
56. The many staff changes have meant that subject co-ordinators have left and taken their expertise with them. New co-ordinators have taken over and naturally have taken time to grow into the role. They are all keen and enthusiastic and fulfil the realistic targets set for their development. The school is aware of the need to continue and extend this work to ensure that the monitoring of subject performance is fully effective. The deputy headteacher has recently taken responsibility for the training of the co-ordinators. This is helping them to understand how they can contribute to the raising of standards.
57. The monitoring of the school's performance is good and is helping to improve standards. Teachers discuss the needs of the curriculum and their pupils regularly and extensively, and use evaluation of data as part of their strategy for improvement. They analyse assessment information; for example, to find areas for development in English and mathematics. Formal and informal classroom observations also play their part. Recently-established files give accurate information to track academic progress as pupils go through the school. This information helps in identifying groups and individuals who need extra support to achieve appropriately. The resulting provision raises the overall standards that the school achieves.
58. The recently-appointed co-ordinator for special educational needs manages the requirements of the nationally adopted Code of Practice well. She is supported well by the headteacher and attends relevant courses to extend her expertise. The teaching assistants offer valuable support for pupils with special educational needs. They are generally experienced and receive good training to extend their expertise. This provision increases the progress made by these pupils.
59. The school makes good use of its finances. The improvement action plan is now linked well to the most pressing priorities and is closely costed. Money is used wisely in the interests of pupils and to further the school's goal of continuing to raise standards. Income provided for specific purposes such as helping pupils with special educational needs is used efficiently. The budget surplus which resulted mainly from the employment of young teachers, has allowed the appointment of an extra teacher. This has made it possible for single age classes to be formed. It also resulted in additional teaching assistants being appointed. These changes have helped to improve the quality of education. Funding was also available for the new buildings, which are nearing completion.

60. The administrative officer is very experienced and ensures that financial and administrative procedures operate very smoothly. This means that the headteacher and staff can focus on educational priorities. Good use is made of new technologies. The recently-acquired computer program for planning the curriculum and assessing pupils' progress has much potential for raising standards. The school applies the principles of best value well and demonstrates that consultation, competition, comparison and challenge inform its practice effectively.
61. Staffing levels in the school are now good as the governors took the decision to employ an additional teacher to enable single age group teaching and smaller classes. At present staffing is stable, but the school's history of very significant staff mobility has affected planned developments and the continuity of education. The procedures for inducting new staff are very good and help them to settle quickly and become effective.
62. The school's accommodation is unsatisfactory. For example, the library is currently used as a classroom. The cramped conditions mean that practical activities are carried out with difficulty. The erection of an extension, currently underway, is intended to solve this problem. The building enables disabled access to areas and classrooms on the ground floor. Money has been acquired to install a lift to the upper floor. There are disabled toilet facilities.
63. Overall, resources for learning are now satisfactory. At the previous inspection, they were unsatisfactory in all but English, design and technology and geography. The number of modern computers was "only just sufficient" and now the ratio is good. Other hardware problems have been resolved. Resources are good in English, mathematics, science, art and design and physical education.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. To further the improvements already made the headteacher, governors and staff should now:
- [1] continue to raise standards in the core subjects by:
    - (a) giving more opportunities for pupils to write at length and develop ideas more fully in Years 1 and 2;
    - (b) in mathematics, increasing the consistency and effectiveness of teachers' assessments in adapting planning; and
    - (c) in science, providing more consistent challenge for more able pupils and monitoring the work done, to ensure that the curriculum is balanced and targeted more effectively to raise standards; [Paragraphs 77, 87, 95, 96 and 98]
  - [2] raise standards in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6, by ensuring that the equipment and training necessary for the teaching of all parts of the National Curriculum Programme of Study are provided; [Paragraphs 119, 120 and 121]
  - [3] further develop the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators by ensuring consistency in their monitoring of performance, and [Paragraph 56]
  - [4] devise and implement effective arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in those subjects currently lacking them. [Paragraphs 126 and 141]

The governing body should ensure that all the required items of information for parents are included in the school prospectus. [Paragraph 55]

## 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	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	29	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	72	8	0	0	0

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

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	170
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	28

#### Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	39

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	8	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	23	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (83)	88 (83)	100 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	23	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (83)	92 (90)	88 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	7	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	14	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (81)	61 (63)	74 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	15	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (74)	61 (63)	61 (78)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

The number of girls taking the tests is small. In order to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified, the data about the performance of boys and girls has been left out of the tables above.

**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	166	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.25
Average class size	24.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	183

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	382,164
Total expenditure	378,865
Expenditure per pupil	2,165
Balance brought forward from previous year	91,791
Balance carried forward to next year	99,236

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Results of the survey of parents and carers at St Augustine of Canterbury RC Primary School**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	36

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	31	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	22	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	22	6	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	42	11	3	3
The teaching is good.	63	31	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	31	11	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	11	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	25	14	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	31	6	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	42	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	28	17	11	14

Due to rounding not all totals will equal 100.

## **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**

65. The school assesses how much the children know and understand when they first join the reception class. These assessments indicate that there are widely varying standards especially in speaking, listening, mathematics and personal independence. Overall, children's attainments are below those expected for their age when they join the school. As a consequence of good teaching all children achieve well. By the time they reach the end of their reception year, standards in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development are in line with those expected. Standards in communication, language and literacy are below those expected, reflecting the low levels of attainment when children start the reception year. The teacher and her assistants plan together effectively and work well as a team to provide a good range of activities. All children, including those with special educational needs, are included in activities and have equal opportunities to succeed. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned well. The teachers have very good relationships with the children, who are very well behaved. They understand the general classroom routines and demonstrate respect for the teachers and other adults. The provision for children in the reception year is led and managed well. The co-ordinator has worked hard to plan a lively and engaging curriculum, linked well to the requirements for this age group.

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

66. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as a result of the opportunities provided for them to work and play together. They are consistently well behaved and friendly towards each other. They understand the daily routines and help to tidy away after activities. They are encouraged to talk about what they have learned and consequently show confidence in their achievements. The teaching provides a good balance between teacher-led activities and group, paired and individual work. As a result, the children have good opportunities to develop confidence and independence in their learning

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

67. Children make good progress in the development of speaking and listening skills. They enjoy talking with staff and sharing information with them first thing in the morning and at other times during the school day. They listen with enjoyment to stories; for example, 'The Cow that went OINK!' The teachers' skilful questioning helps children to develop confidence in speaking, listening and thinking. Due to this they gain assurance in reading and answering related questions. Although standards are below the level considered to be typical for children of this age, the quality of teaching and learning in this area is good and consequently children make good progress. Those with special educational needs show varied speaking and listening skills. Teachers and their assistants plan together well to respond to needs of all children.

## **Mathematical development**

68. The teaching to promote mathematical development is good. The growth of children's early numeracy skills is planned carefully and teaching is focused well, so that children are confident in the use of mathematical language. For example, one child commented, "If you have five pigs and you take away one, you have four". Another said, "Eight take away three makes five". Many children in the reception class can count from one to 100. Songs and rhymes are used well to reinforce number recognition. Children show enjoyment and join in confidently when singing 'Five little specked frogs' and reciting 'This little piggy'. There is an appropriate range of activities to support learning about shape and space. Play with construction equipment helps to develop children's knowledge. Computer programs, which encourage children to sequence numbers and explore patterns to ten, reinforce learning. Many children know the names of simple shapes such as circles, squares and triangles.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

69. Children enter the reception class with less basic general knowledge than normally found. The good teaching ensures that they are presented with opportunities to find out about the world in which they live. The teachers work well to ensure that good routines are established. This encourages the children to understand the importance of good behaviour when working in and outside the classroom. As a consequence, the teacher can provide a wide range of learning experiences, knowing that the children will apply themselves well to the tasks they are given. Children visit the 'Vet's Surgery' in their classroom. They confidently book appointments on the telephone and discuss the work with their classmates. This sort of activity provides good opportunities to develop speaking, listening and social skills. Scientific ideas are developed well; for example, when investigating a variety of seeds under the computer microscope. This work was enhanced by the interesting display in the reception classroom. Children are familiar with using computers and use the keyboard and the mouse with confidence.

## **Physical development**

70. The teaching to develop children's physical skills is managed and organised well. Effective use is made of the assistants to promote a safe learning environment and to give confidence to those children who are hesitant. As a result of good teaching and attention to detail, the children demonstrate good control and co-ordination in their movements. For example, when kicking a ball, they do so with a side foot action. They show consideration for others around them in the hall and make good use of space. The reception children, at present, do not have their own outdoor learning area. There are plans to provide one. They currently use one of the playgrounds and this arrangement is managed well by the staff, but opportunities for the children to play independently are reduced. Boys and girls play well together and share in all activities equally. The school has a variety of good resources for physical development.

## **Creative development**

71. Children are given opportunities to express themselves through art, music and imaginative play, resulting in average standards of attainment by the age of five. In the music lesson observed, the children made very good progress as a result of the very good teaching. They sang the song 'There was a princess long ago' with very

good knowledge of lyrics, melody, rhythm and beat. They have good control of percussion instruments and use them effectively when accompanying songs. Examples from displays suggest that teachers provide children with good opportunities for creative development. The displays of the children's art promote their confidence and self-esteem.

## ENGLISH

72. Inspection findings show that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve appropriately in Years 1 and 2, and make good progress by the time they leave the school. The good teaching of the present teaching staff is helping to raise standards. The National Literacy Strategy for developing pupils' skills in reading and writing has been implemented well. It has helped teachers to improve their subject knowledge and teaching skills.
73. By the age of seven and 11, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. Many seven year olds contribute well to discussions, listening to stories with interest and responding enthusiastically to teachers' questions. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to discuss their books during lessons. In the juniors, the teachers' good questioning provides many opportunities for pupils to contribute in class discussions. However, the oldest pupils in some lessons do not have opportunities to take part in extended discussions between adults and other pupils. Consequently the further development of conversation and thinking skills is at times limited. Pupils listen carefully to teachers' instructions and are confident to ask questions. In the best lessons, the pupils are given very good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. For example, in Year 4 the pupils discussed their radio advert for a theme park. They worked in small groups and in 'thinking pairs'. All pupils contributed well to the stimulating discussions during the planning process. They worked hard to improve their sentence constructions. Their speaking and listening skills were further developed through the good use of drama when performing their adverts to the class.
74. By the age of seven pupils' reading develops well and most read at the expected standard, confidently, fluently and with expression. They take note of punctuation and understand texts. They are able to name the authors, illustrators and publishers of books. They also know how to use the contents page and index correctly to locate information. Less able pupils use pictures well to talk about the plot, characters and humour in stories. For example, one pupil commented, "I like it because it's funny and she didn't quite listen to him". Pupils read effectively from commercial reading schemes and other materials. Most thoroughly enjoy reading and take books home regularly.
75. By the age of 11 most pupils read at the expected standard for their age, fluently, with good understanding and appropriate expression. Many enjoy reading. They take books home regularly and often read at home by themselves and with others. Most pupils know what kind of books they like, and can explain their preferences. Their reading development is supported well by work in other subjects, such as history, when they read for information. This also helps to develop their understanding of a variety of types of text.
76. Teachers' reading records do not always note what needs to be done to promote further progress in reading. During the inspection, the pupils had very limited use of the school library as it was being used as a classroom. This is a temporary arrangement. A new classroom is under construction.

77. Pupils start school with low levels of attainment, but make good progress in developing writing skills by the time they leave the school. However, by the age of seven standards are below average. The most able pupils write simple short stories, but evidence from workbooks indicates that there are only limited opportunities for pupils to write extended stories with developments of ideas and themes. This prevents their writing from developing further. Standards of handwriting are good in the pupils' books. They regularly practise forming their letters correctly.
78. Pupils in Year 2 learn about rhyming words ending in 'ear'; for example, 'clear' 'year', and 'spear'. The good teaching enables them to learn the about the different sounds made by using the same letter endings; for example, 'pear' and 'bear'. This stimulates good conversations between the teacher and pupils. They also make comparisons between books written by the same author and those of different authors. The teaching supports pupils' research skills and provides good opportunities for them to discuss the similarities and differences between books.
79. Pupils in Year 3 learn about alliteration and poetry. The good teaching enables them to achieve well. They write good imaginative alliterations; for example, "A blue fire fly flying," and "A creepy crawly centipede clapping". Pupils in Year 5 learn about persuasive letter writing. The very good preparation and teaching enhance pupils' writing skills and they make very good progress. In one lesson, they were led to believe that the headteacher was going to ban football in the school. They were very concerned about this. Their very good writing skills clearly reflected their emotions, factual knowledge and good use of rhetorical questions. For example, one pupil wrote, "Some of the pupils in Year 6 carried out a survey and the conclusion showed an overwhelming majority of support against banning football. Surely this evidence speaks for itself?" The lesson provided very good opportunities for the further development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 6 learn about passive and active verbs. The teacher's good examples helped the pupils understanding in one of the lessons seen. One of the pupils wrote, "Preston beat Burnley. Burnley was beaten by Preston." Lower attaining pupils made good use of the class computer to further develop their reading skills and understanding of grammar. Other subjects are used effectively to support pupils' writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 write persuasive letters to Queen Elizabeth I to request financial support for their voyage to the Spice Islands. The pupils' writing demonstrates factual knowledge and good use of persuasive letter writing skills. Standards of handwriting are good. Pupils take pride in their work.
80. The marking of pupils' work by teachers is good. Throughout the school there are examples of supportive marking relating to content, pupils' attainment and effort. Marking for the older junior pupils identifies what they need to do to improve.
81. The classrooms have good English displays to support pupils' learning in literacy. They show a range of writing being undertaken. For example, Year 5 pupils have learnt about poetry. The pupils visited the school cellar as an effective stimulus for their poems. One pupil wrote,
- "Crisp and cold,  
Endless mould,  
Lights are dim,  
Legs shake,  
And more mould,  
Relief to get out"*



82. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is especially so for their moral and social development. They work very well together and show respect for each other, especially when working independently in small groups.
83. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has provided staff and parents with guidance and support in various aspects of teaching English. This is contributing effectively to good teaching and learning. The school has good systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The co-ordinator and headteacher analyse the results of tests and other assessments thoroughly. The outcomes of this analysis are used to inform future teaching. The co-ordinator is aware of how to develop the subject further, thanks to her monitoring of English teaching. She recognises the need to improve pupils' writing skills. She is committed to raising standards for all pupils and the school shows a good capacity to do this. The learning resources for English are good. The school has recently purchased many new infant and junior reading books. It is evident that the good range of quality books is starting to impact on reading standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. In numeracy and other areas of the mathematics curriculum pupils achieve well. Although the attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 is below the national average it is in line with that of pupils in schools of a similar background. This is below the results of the previous year as there are a greater number of pupils experiencing learning difficulties. The present Year 1 class is on course to restore the previous higher standards. At the end of Year 6 standards are in line with the national average and above those in similar schools. This is a significant improvement on the results of the national tests in 2002, when they were well below average, and reverses the falling yearly trend from 1999. The inspection found no significant difference between boys and girls. All pupils are making good progress and those with special educational needs make good progress against their targets, because of the very good support they receive.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. All the teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and plan their work well. Lessons are structured well with clear time targets. In some lessons, however, the time allocated is too long for the age of the pupils. The teachers take into account the needs of all pupils and work is matched well to pupils' abilities. Teachers explain what pupils are going to learn and pupils know what is expected of them. They provide good mental warm-ups in which pupils are keen to answer. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils solved mental problems against the clock and really had to think quickly. When pupils are engaged in the activities they concentrate, work well and have very good attitudes to the subject. In all lessons, teachers show very good management and pupils are very attentive and behave very well. In all the lessons observed pupils were learning appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In Year 6 they were to explain clearly the use of 'for every' in solving ratio problems, and 'in every' to explain proportion. In Year 4 very good teaching led to pupils being interested and very well motivated. As a result, they made good gains in their understanding of the equivalence between fractions and decimals. The teacher planned very well for all abilities and managed the class and activities very well. Teachers use a variety of interesting teaching strategies. In Year 1 a 'fishing' game reinforced place value well and in Year 3 the teacher used the pupils themselves to represent simple fractions and develop their understanding of equivalence. Computers are appropriately used to support the

learning of mathematical skills and to display data using a range of graphs and charts.

86. Numeracy is used appropriately across the curriculum. In science, pupils use a range of measurements accurately, collect data from their investigations and display them in a range of graphs. Measuring skills are also appropriately developed in technology activities.
87. The subject is managed very well. The new co-ordinator has a very clear vision for developing the subject and monitors all aspects of performance well. She is already instrumental in raising standards. Pupils' work is assessed accurately and other assessment data are now analysed skilfully to identify areas for development and to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Data effectively informs grouping arrangements and the setting of targets for all. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection, when they were insufficient in range and quality. They are now good and support all topics well. Informal assessment is good, but although formal procedures are in place, the many changes of staff mean that they are only just beginning to inform planning more effectively. The school has recognised this and plans for further improvements to be made in August using a new computer-based planning and assessment tool. There is a good range of work on display to represent many aspects of the subject.

## **SCIENCE**

88. Despite the fact that inspection evidence shows that standards are below the national average, at both seven and 11 years of age, most pupils achieve appropriately and many achieve well. The standards attained by the current cohort of 11 year olds are broadly average when judged against schools working in similar circumstances. No differences were found between the standards attained by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
89. The provision for teaching science has improved a good deal since the last inspection. The written guidance available to teachers is now better. A detailed programme of work is in place. The range and quality of equipment available to teachers and pupils have improved considerably and are now good. These changes support the drive to raise standards. The ability of the Year 2 teacher to provide practical activities has been significantly impaired lately because of the need to use the small library as a classroom.
90. The good teaching of the present staff has the potential for raising standards. Lively presentation of work in Year 2, such as writing secret messages and good links made with other subjects in Year 6, including studying micro-organisms alongside history work about the bubonic plague, contribute to pupils' very good attitudes to science. Teaching is better now than during the last inspection. All the lessons seen were good or better.
91. The good questioning of the teacher and her assistant in a Year 2 lesson led to pupils acting effectively as young scientists in examining a wide range of fruits using magnifying aids. This bears out the results of last year's teacher assessments, which show that most Year 2 pupils' investigating skills are strongly developed compared with other aspects of science. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they respond successfully to suggestions about finding things out, but do not record whether the outcomes of their experiments are as they expected. The pupils know a good deal

about plants and animals, including humans. They understand some of the ways in which flowers differ.

92. Strong teaching in Year 4 is currently helping pupils to work at above average standards in areas such as using symbols to record electrical circuits and understanding the feeding relationships between different plants and animals. The teacher's high expectations of what pupils can achieve are a key factor in this.
93. In an experiment on the effect of temperature on rates of dissolving, Year 6 pupils showed a clear understanding of fair testing, referring to the elements that remained constant and the one which they were changing. Their past work shows that they realize the need for measurement in experiments, but do not demonstrate understanding of the need to repeat measurements; for example, when weighing objects in air and water. Pupils work above the level expected for their age group in describing the functions of the main human organs. They understand how water can exist in liquid, solid and gaseous forms, but do not show that they recognize changes of state in other materials.
94. The lessons were good in each of the year groups observed, with very good teaching seen in Year 2. The main strengths of the teachers' performance were:  
[a] the quality of interaction between staff and pupils. Good 'How?' and 'Why?' questions helped to boost pupils' understanding of how gases behave in a Year 5 lesson;  
[b] very good skills in managing and controlling classes, based on teachers' clearly stated expectations, result in pupils behaving very well and concentrating hard. Excellent behaviour was seen in some lessons;  
[c] the very good preparation of interesting activities and the provision of much equipment and other resources. Consequently, pupils are very interested in learning and apply themselves well to the tasks they are set.
95. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to challenge more able pupils. Opportunities for independence and improving their literacy skills are reduced by the overuse of printed worksheets in some classes. A lack of software results in pupils having too few opportunities to use computers in science lessons.
96. Pupils in Year 2 have had five changes of teacher this year and Year 4 have had four. This has resulted in more work on life processes and living things than on other parts of the curriculum. Some of the work does not follow the National Curriculum closely enough and in Year 2, this has a negative effect on the results that pupils attain in the national tests.
97. Work in science makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development.
98. The effectiveness of the subject co-ordinator has increased since the last inspection. Action plans are drawn up now and checks made on standards and the quality of planning and teaching. The headteacher has made a great deal of time available to the co-ordinator to assess provision and improve it. However, the lack of continuity in subject management detracts from the standards achieved. The present co-ordinator is currently on maternity leave. Other events have led to the headteacher and on a different occasion, the deputy headteacher taking temporary charge of the post. The many changes in staffing reduce the consistency with which checks are made on performance in this subject.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. Evidence based on lessons and sampling of previous work, shows that pupils attain average standards by the end of both Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when standards were below average at Year 2. All pupils are now achieving well, where previously they made unsatisfactory progress in Year 2.
100. The quality of teaching and learning is now good. At the previous inspection it was unsatisfactory, as expectations were low in a quarter of lessons seen. There is appropriate use of sketchbooks across the school and a good range of opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their knowledge and skills. Work across the school inspired by a wide range of artists is attractively displayed and shows good understanding of a variety of styles, such as those of Klee, Klimt, Kandinsky and Lowry. Some of this work has been produced on the computer using the features of a 'painting' program. In a very good lesson in Year 6 the teacher used Van Gogh's 'Landscape near Mount Majour' to teach pupils about visual elements such as colour, texture, pattern, line and tone.
101. Leadership in this subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a good understanding of the subject's needs. She is keen and enthusiastic and gives good support to colleagues. She has addressed the fact that at the time of the previous inspection there was no policy or scheme of work. She has also introduced national planning guidelines which ensure that the curriculum is balanced and pupils build on their knowledge and skills progressively. She has also built up very good portfolios of work which illustrate the skills and quality of work that should be expected in each year group across a range of art activities. Art and design is used well to support work in other subjects, particularly history. Work in this subject contributes well to pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Pupils are learning appropriate vocabulary to describe their work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. The school makes proper provision to teach design and technology, but it was only possible during the course of the inspection to observe lessons in Years 4 and 5. As a result, no overall judgement is made of the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence from an analysis of previous work, teachers' plans and discussions is sufficient to show that pupils attain average standards for designing and making throughout the school. This shows an improvement in Year 6, as at the time of the previous inspection standards were below average.
103. In lessons seen teaching and learning were good. The teachers planned the work well and managed lessons very well. Pupils worked hard and concentrated on the tasks. In Year 4 they showed good understanding of mechanisms such as a fixed pivot, slides and pop-ups used in the books they designed and made. In Year 5 pupils produced work in line with expectations as they evaluated their musical instruments.
104. Previous work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory overall as it was in the first inspection. It is evident that by the end of Year 2, pupils understand that the making process begins with a plan. In their topic on Joseph's coat they used pictures to develop and communicate their designs. They selected from a range of materials, tools and techniques and learned to join various materials. They know what they have done well and suggest how they could

improve. Previous work in Year 6 and a discussion with pupils, showed they had been soundly taught to design and make slippers. The teacher had given them the opportunity to think of the criteria they needed to consider when designing. They understood the task and produced working drawings. They annotated these drawings, showing features and materials. Their comments on appearance showed a sound understanding of the needs of the consumer and they evaluated their product with a specific user in mind.

105. The school has introduced national planning guidelines, which ensure that skills are developed systematically. Pupils measure accurately to support the development of their numeracy skills, but there is little use of computers in the subject. Pupils learn specific technical vocabulary, which they use when discussing their work. The co-ordinator manages the subject efficiently but has no opportunities to monitor teaching.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. The evidence from a scrutiny of past work, displays and conversations with staff indicates that standards are average by the end of Year 2. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. It was not possible to observe a Year 6 geography lesson during the inspection, since history was being taught this half term instead. However, evidence from a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils indicates that by the end of Year 6 pupils achieve average standards.
107. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one infant and one junior geography lesson. Consequently, no overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence, from a scrutiny of work, planning and discussions with pupils suggests that teaching is good. In the two lessons observed the quality of teaching was good. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in these lessons were very good. Pupils from all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress.
108. Pupils in Year 2 were learning about a family in Tocuaro, Mexico. They discussed the differences between old and new Mexican kitchens, and compared them with the equipment used in their own homes. The teacher's questioning style provided good opportunities for the development of pupils' speaking, listening and enquiry skills. The pupils made good progress in speaking and listening. However, the written task did not challenge the more able pupils sufficiently and as a result their progress was reduced.
109. Pupils in Year 4 visited the school's building site. The pupils learned simple map reading skills. They were able to locate their positions on the map as they walked around the outside of the school building. They were told about the architectural design of the new classroom and the changes to be made to the present building in order to integrate the new with the old. The pupils showed care and respect for each other.
110. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to further develop her role in checking standards and the provision made for geography. She has a clear understanding of how to develop the school's work in this subject. Learning resources are limited, especially the provision of books. There are plans to improve them. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## HISTORY

111. The evidence from a scrutiny of past work, displays, and conversations with staff, indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection, and are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
112. Most pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of the past and of how things change over time. They have appropriate knowledge of important people in history, such as Florence Nightingale, and understand why they were famous. They research local history. For example, they have studied the nearby war memorial and the history of local houses and homes. The stimulating displays and artefacts around the school enhance pupils' interest in, and understanding of, history.
113. Three history lessons were seen during the inspection, one in the infants and two in the junior classes. The quality of teaching is good. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Their behaviour and attitudes towards the subject are very good.
114. Pupils in Year 1 learn about holidays in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In the lesson observed, the pupils looked at photographs from the 1900s. The good resources provided by the teacher stimulated discussion about the changes in holidays from 1900 to the present day, and enhanced pupils' historical enquiry skills.
115. In a lesson for Year 3, pupils were learning about the lives and living conditions of local people 100 years ago. The teacher's high expectations and the very good range of historical sources; for example, old newspapers, school records, photographs, and diaries impacted well on standards. The teacher used praise well. This promoted pupils' self-esteem.
116. Pupils in Year 6 study the Tudor explorers. In the lesson seen they learnt about Sir Francis Drake's ship and living conditions on board 'The Golden Hinde'. The style of teaching contributes well to the development of pupils' skills in speaking, listening and historical enquiry. Pupils display a high level of interest and curiosity in history. As one pupil commented, "I like learning about what has happened". Older pupils undertake independent research in libraries with access to computers. History presents pupils with good opportunities to develop their literacy skills. They write for different purposes. This contributes well to their knowledge and understanding in history. For example, pupils in Year 6 studied persuasive letter writing. They wrote an imaginary letter to the monarch, dated June 11<sup>th</sup> 1555. In the letters they outlined historical events and requested funding, further provisions and medical supplies for their trip to the Spice Islands. One pupil wrote, "We will begin our quest on the 20<sup>th</sup>, but from my calculations your gracefulness, it will take at least eight weeks to arrive so ..... I am asking you to give money for the country and will give us the essentials that will help us through this journey of hard work and exhaustion."
117. The school uses visits and visitors effectively to build on pupils' historical knowledge and understanding. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
118. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator recognises that there are not enough opportunities for her to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. However, a good development plan for the subject is in place and the shared commitment and capacity to succeed are good.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Despite much improvement to the provision made for teaching ICT, standards remain as they were at the time of the last inspection. Seven year olds attain average standards, but 11 year olds below average. Boys and girls attain equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
120. The last report showed that resources for ICT were inadequate. Much of the hardware was unreliable, out-dated and had limited potential. There were not enough printers and little software. The school has responded effectively to the report's key issues of producing a scheme of work which clearly states what will be taught, and increasing pupils' access to computers. A big investment in up-to-date PCs and peripherals, such as printers, has resulted in a good ratio of computers to pupils. There is currently one computer for every eight pupils. The school lacks provision to enable pupils to monitor events external to the computer, such as sensing sounds or temperature. Software and equipment for teaching control technology have been bought, but more training is needed to enable the current staff to teach control technology. Consequently, pupils aged eleven lack experience of these parts of the ICT curriculum and do not attain the required level overall.
121. All the current teachers have undertaken the training for teaching ICT provided by the government. They are confident and committed to raising standards. However, the movement of staff has made it difficult to ensure that everyone has the knowledge and understanding needed to teach the programme for their year group. In-service training is targeted well to achieve this.
122. Pupils in Year 2 showed confidence in interpreting information displayed on computers during the inspection. The teacher's good questioning helped them to draw conclusions about, for example, which pet was the most popular, and to recognize the limitations of the database, including what it did not tell them. Pupils of this age work at the expected level in the activities they undertake, including combining text and images to produce pages that depict, for example, 'Daisy the Cow, from Jack and the Beanstalk.' They work well at searching the Internet for information about animals such as leopards and elephants.
123. In a Year 6 lesson the clear, detailed instructions of the teacher enabled pupils to refine their Internet search skills. Scrutiny of their past work shows that they have appropriate ability in the tasks they undertake, including producing a presentation about Burnley FC which incorporates sound. Discussion with pupils reveals that they work effectively with databases and spreadsheets, and create artwork after the style of Mondrian. Most have not done enough work on programs that simulate real and imaginary situations, reflecting the lack of software for this area. Pupils have worked with floor robots, but lack experience of appropriately challenging control technology work.
124. The good quality of teaching results in lessons being interesting. This leads to very good attitudes to learning. A Year 6 lesson observed was taught at a fast pace, contributing to very good levels of interest. The good knowledge teachers have of the subject is evident in their confident instruction and interaction with pupils. Their very good skills in controlling their classes create a constructive environment in which all can learn effectively. Occasionally, teachers do not check that all can see demonstrations on the computer, or they provide pupils with questions they might have come up with themselves.

125. A reasonable amount of work on computers in different subjects helps the development of ICT skills. For example, pupils in Year 3 design mosaics as part of their art work, Year 5 compose acrostic poems about cellars and Year 6 do graphical modelling to produce plans of the school as part of their geography work. There is not enough use of ICT in subjects such as design and technology.
126. A conscientious co-ordinator has taken responsibility for this subject, despite having no special experience of ICT. She is aware of the need to put in place effective arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress, and to develop the monitoring of standards. Currently, pupils' work is not saved to floppy disks or the hard drives of the machines. There is not enough software to improve the use of computers in other subjects. A teaching assistant, who is also a governor, has begun to act as an ICT technician. She takes responsibility for monitoring this subject on behalf of the governing body. This arrangement works well in ensuring that governors have a detailed understanding of how well provision is affecting standards.

## MUSIC

127. Although the school makes good provision for teaching music, there was not enough evidence to make a judgement on standards of attainment. During the inspection it was possible to observe only one junior music lesson and a whole-school hymn practice. As a result, no overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work, planning and discussions with pupils indicates that teaching is good. In the lesson observed, pupils achieved standards that are above the level expected for their age group. The standard of singing is also above that expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
128. During the inspection a Year 5 lesson was observed. Pupils aged ten have very good listening and performing skills. This was demonstrated when they played musical games, such as 'Switch' and 'Don't clap this one back'. They clap complex rhythmic patterns and identify the rhythms in words and sentences. They were taught composition and graphic score notations. They used technical vocabulary when evaluating group compositions and performances. For example, one pupil commented, "The texture was good. It had three instruments playing together." During this lesson pupils made very good progress. This was because the teacher gave them very good advice and guidance about how they might improve, and provided them with ample time to plan and evaluate their work. Throughout the lesson the pupils worked well together and showed respect for each other. Following a group performance, one pupil commented, "They were very professional".
129. In whole-school assemblies and hymn practice the pupils sing with good diction, pitch, melody, rhythm, beat and a sense of ensemble. They sing well in unison and in two and three parts. They listen well to the guitar accompaniments and respond to changes in speed at ends of phrases. They sing with a mature sensitivity to the words in the hymns.
130. In discussions, pupils in Year 6 confidently demonstrate enthusiasm for their music lessons. They speak about singing in hymn practice, and composing and performing using percussion instruments in class lessons. One pupil commented, "I think everyone in the school enjoys music." The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is especially so of their



social development when they work together. One Year 6 pupil commented, "Music's good 'cause we can help the little ones to sing in assembly."

131. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the music lesson and hymn practice observed were very good. Pupils from all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress.
132. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator provides good guidance and support for her colleagues. This has a positive impact on the standards attained. The storage of instruments is organised very well. This provides ease of access for teachers and pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

133. The school makes proper provision for teaching physical education, but it was only possible to see one lesson in Year 2. Consequently, no judgements are made about standards or the quality of teaching and learning at the age of seven. Only games lessons were seen in the junior part of the school, so judgements about standards are limited by this. In both the gymnastics lesson in Year 2 and the games lesson for Year 6, pupils attained average standards. Standards were average at the time of the last inspection. Boys and girls do equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates.
134. Weaknesses identified in the last report have been addressed effectively. A planning framework has been put in place and the quality and range of learning resources, which were unsatisfactory, are now good. The library is no longer located at the end of the hall.
135. Good skills of managing and controlling pupils resulted in very good behaviour in the lesson seen in Year 2. Suitable coaching helped pupils to explore ways of jumping and rolling with appropriate skill. They worked very safely and remembered sequences of movement successfully. The teacher related well to her class and got very good levels of concentration in return.
136. Good subject knowledge was evident in the teacher's coaching of the forehand tennis stroke in a Year 6 lesson and led to good progress being made. The pupils worked with commendable control under the difficult circumstances imposed by the small playground. They showed satisfactory skills of striking and receiving. Pupils compete hard but fairly and evaluate the performance of others in a constructive way.
137. In the best teaching seen, lessons proceed at a good pace and planning ensures that tasks become more difficult as the session passes. Targets are set to boost motivation and raise standards, and pupils are active nearly all the time. Where teaching is less effective, expectations of the quality of work are not given immediately before pupils start tasks and teachers talk for too long when giving instructions or coaching. These shortcomings result in progress being reduced.
138. Overall, effective arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils learn to swim. Those in Years 3, 4 and 5 have access to lessons. Instruction is given at a municipal pool. Members of the pool staff take responsibility for the programme followed by the pupils and for keeping records. The school was unable to supply information about the standards attained by pupils.

139. The accommodation poses problems. There is no school field or suitable grassed area on site. A municipal playing field is situated a few minutes walk from the school, and the school uses it well. However, the usual dangers that accompany public access to this area have to be borne in mind at all times by the staff. The larger of two hard playing surfaces is at the front of the school and traffic noise causes difficulties. The smaller playground at the rear of the school is also adjacent to a [minor] road, and balls are easily lost through the railings that surround it. Plans to increase the extent of the hard surfaces are well advanced.
140. Satisfactory opportunities for extra-curricular sports activities enhance pupils' skills and their personal development. These include the chance for older pupils to play lacrosse competitively. The school has recently achieved a good deal of success in reaching the national final for pupils under 12 for the second year running.
141. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post. She is enthusiastic, committed to raising standards and gives a strong lead in providing extra-curricular opportunities. She is aware of the need to develop effective procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress, and to make the monitoring of teachers' planning more systematic.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

142. The standards, provision and quality of teaching and learning in this subject are evaluated in the Section 23 inspection report produced by the diocese.