

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rugeley

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124360

Headteacher: Mr B Mulligan

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 30th September – 3rd October 2002

Inspection number: 248593

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

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Newman Grove
Rugeley
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Telephone number: 01889 256120

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Wharton

Date of previous inspection: 5th June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11565	Mrs J E Platt	Registered inspector	<p>Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage</p> <p>Educational inclusion</p> <p>English as an additional language</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Art and design</p>	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9736	Mr J Brasier	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
32234	Mrs E Jackson	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Science</p> <p>History</p> <p>Geography</p>	

15474	Mr J Fairclough	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average voluntary aided school, providing education for 169 boys and girls. During the spring and summer terms an additional 16 children attend the nursery on a part time basis. The school draws its pupils from a wide area that includes pockets of social and economic need. Twenty four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is slightly higher than the national average. A very low number of pupils are from ethnic minorities and all have an adequate command of English. Currently, there are 52 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and this is above average. Most of these pupils are identified as having moderate learning difficulties. Two pupils have formal statements of need. Attainment on entry to school varies from year to year, though the general level is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school which provides an acceptable education with several good features. Overall achievement is satisfactory and pupils reach standards that are similar to those found nationally. Good management has helped the staff to remedy the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory with a strength in the management of pupils. As a result, pupils are interested in their lessons and their behaviour is good. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get a good start to their education in the Reception class.
- Good teaching in mathematics enables pupils to reach standards that are above average.
- The Year 2 pupils reach good standards in reading.
- Leadership is good. The headteacher, staff and governing body work together as a team committed to providing the best for the pupils.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and leads to a happy community.
- The partnership with parents is good and they feel well informed about their children's progress.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and geography.
- The use of assessment to check and improve the progress of individual pupils.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in the monitoring of standards and in providing support for colleagues.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn about life in a multicultural society.
- Accommodation and resources for outdoor play for children in the Reception class.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall improvement since the last inspection in June 2000 has been satisfactory. Standards have improved in mathematics and science. Teaching is similar to that seen in the last inspection. The issues identified in the last inspection have all been tackled. Assessment and the planning of the curriculum have improved. However, the action taken has not had sufficient time to have any significant effect on standards in writing, information and communication technology, design and technology and geography. Leadership from the governing body has significantly improved and

governors are very committed to supporting the school. Management is better but the school has not yet dealt fully with the issue of improving the role of co-ordinators and this continues to be an area for development. The school's accommodation has improved, but the outdoor space for the youngest children remains a problem.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 have been well below average in mathematics and science for two years. When compared to similar school the results in science in 2001 were in the lowest five per cent in the country. Very few pupils reached above average and this held down overall results. Results in English were average and more pupils exceeded the level expected for their age. The school identified the need to improve the progress being made by the higher attaining pupils and provided extra support and more challenging work for these pupils. These actions were rewarded with a significant rise in the 2002 test results. Far more pupils reached higher levels than expected for their age and a very positive picture of standards emerged. Improvement has been similar to the national trend. The school has set challenging targets for the current Year 6 and with the high quality teaching in Year 6 is likely to achieve them.

Current standards in Year 6 show improvement has continued and standards are above average in mathematics and average in English and science. Overall achievement is satisfactory. It is good in mathematics and is very good for the increasing number of pupils reaching high standards.

The results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were above average in reading and average in mathematics both compared to all and similar schools. Test results in writing were very low and were in the lowest five per cent in the country. This shows that pupils have not been making sufficient progress in writing. No pupils reached above average levels. National test results in 2002 show higher standards in mathematics and similar results in reading and writing. Current standards in Year 2 have improved in mathematics and are above average and achievement is good. Many pupils reach above average standards. High standards in reading have been sustained and this reflects good achievement. However, standards in writing remain below average and progress is unsatisfactory. Standards in science are satisfactory and pupils are achieving satisfactorily.

Children enter the school with below average attainment. In response to good teaching and a rich range of experiences they make good progress in the Reception class and reach levels expected for their age by the time they start in Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive from all staff.

Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and geography are below average. Standards in all other subjects are wholly satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes and most work hard. Older pupils take responsibility for their own learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. A small number of pupils misbehave but respond well to staff's intervention.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect each other. Older pupils help younger ones and relationships are good.
Attendance	Good. Above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching was best in Year 6 where some teaching seen was excellent. In these lessons, tasks are more challenging and much new learning takes place. Teaching is good in the Reception class. The effective organisation and variety of activities make learning fun for the children and they get off to a good start to their school life.

The teaching and learning in mathematics are good. Introductions to numeracy lessons are lively and teachers develop pupils' numeracy skills by encouraging them to explain their problem solving methods. Teaching of English is satisfactory. Lessons follow the National Literacy Strategy and a range of activities is covered. However, there is a weakness in the teaching of writing in the infants. Teachers rely too heavily on worksheets and do not provide enough opportunities for independent writing. The teaching of reading is better and letters and sounds are taught effectively and pupils quickly start to use these in their reading.

Overall, the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met. With the sensitive support of all staff, they are fully involved in all activities. Targets in their individual education plans, however, are not always broken down into small achievable steps and this restricts their progress. The learning needs of the higher attaining pupils are fully met in Years 3 to 6 and this is having a positive effect on the improvement in standards. The needs of these pupils are not met in Years 1 and 2 in writing. They are not achieving as well as could be expected.

The key strength in teaching is the positive management of behaviour. This is based on caring relationships and this is very effective in building up the pupils' confidence. In the best lessons seen the pace is brisk and pupils are clear about what is expected of them. Teachers capture pupils' enthusiasm by the use of imaginative activities and stimulating resources. In a few subjects, teachers do not give sufficient attention to the development of skills and this restricts pupils' progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. There is a careful balance between academic and practical activities. Some aspects of the curriculum for the Reception class are restricted by the lack of outdoor facilities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Staff include these pupils in all of the curriculum. Their targets are too general to help teachers in planning to meet their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Spiritual development is good. Teachers encourage a curiosity about the world and a desire for new learning. Moral and social development is good. This leads to pupils being friendly and they learn the significance of living in a community. Pupils learn about their own culture but the provision to learn about the diversity of other cultures is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Arrangements for child protection and ensuring pupils safety are in place. The school checks on pupils' academic progress but does not make the best use of this information to track progress and set individual targets.

The school has a good partnership with its parents. They especially appreciate the detailed information they receive about their children's progress. Parents give good support especially hearing their children read.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Effective leadership from both the previous and the new headteacher has provided the school with a clear educational direction. The deputy headteacher has made a significant contribution to many of the changes since the last inspection. Co-ordinators do not have enough opportunities to find out about standards in their subjects and advise their colleagues.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are well known in the school and are fully involved in all aspects of its work. They play a part in monitoring the school's performance and are very committed to providing the very best for the pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is beginning to make effective use of assessment information to judge the school's performance. More needs to be done to respond to identified concerns.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes efficient use of its resources including specific grants and other funding. Support staff are used very well to support learning. The school spends prudently consulting widely on any major decisions. The school gives good attention to the principles of best value.

The number of staff in the school is good and all staff are experienced in teaching this age range. Resources are adequate. Some old books need replacing and resources for design and technology, information and communication technology and geography need increasing. The accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are attractive. The library has limited stock and is underused. The children in the Nursery and Reception class have no secure outdoor play area.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress. • Teaching is good and every child is valued and helped to become mature and responsible. • They feel welcome in school and appreciate the information about their children's progress. • The school expects their children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number and range of extra-curricular activities. • The amount of homework children are expected to do.

The inspection team agrees in large part with the parents. Overall, progress in the school is satisfactory. The amount of homework is satisfactory but could be improved. The programme of activities at lunchtime and after school is limited. The school is looking for ways to increase the activities offered.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards on entry to the Reception class are below those expected for their age. In the Foundation Stage¹ children get off to a flying start and achieve well. By the time they reach Year 1, their attainment meets the early learning goals² expected for their age. Achievement is especially good in numeracy and literacy as children have skills that are relatively limited for their age when they start in the Nursery. By the time they leave the Reception class many can write simple words and enjoy sharing a story with friends. Most count up to ten and are able to put numbers in the correct order. The caring atmosphere in the Reception class enables the children to settle quickly and many are already comfortable with the daily organisation of the school. The school has no stimulating outdoor resources or spaces especially designed for these young children, and this limits the range of experience to fully extend the children's physical skills.
2. In the national tests in 2001, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards that were above the national average and the average for similar schools in reading. This shows pupils were doing better than expected. Test results in writing did not show these high standards and were in fact in the lowest five per cent in the country when compared to the national average and schools with a similar intake. No pupils reached levels beyond that expected for their age and this shows higher attaining pupils especially were not achieving as well as they might. Test results in mathematics were average when compared to all schools and similar schools. There is no significant difference in attainment of boys and girls over time. The most recent national tests (2002) show that high standards in reading have been maintained although were not as high as the previous year. This does not represent a fall in standards but reflects the differing abilities of the year group. Test results in writing show an improvement in the number of pupils reaching the level expected for their age but no pupils reached the higher levels. Test results in mathematics show standards have continued to rise and slightly more than a third of pupils exceeded the level expected for their age. A significant achievement. Teacher assessments in science, in 2001, were above the national average. Overall, the results of national tests show improvement in standards from the last inspection, except in writing which remains an aspect that requires particular attention.
3. Current standards in Year 2 show the high standards in reading have been sustained and are above average. Mathematics has improved in response to the on-going effect of the National Numeracy Strategy and standards are above average. These standards represent good achievement. Writing remains the weakest subject and is below average and pupils are underachieving. Standards in science are satisfactory and overall achievement is satisfactory.

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the Reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development, but also include: knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development.

² Early learning goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage.

4. In the national tests in 2001, pupils in Year 6 achieved standards that were well below the average of all schools and schools with similar intakes in mathematics and science. Pupils were not making sufficient progress. Results were average in English when compared to all and similar schools. There is no significant difference between boys and girls. Standards in Year 6 have been low since 1998 although a gradual rise has been evident and the trend of improvement has been broadly similar to the national trend. The school has made a determined effort to raise standards. Changes include:
- the refurbishment of the classrooms in Years 3 to 6 so that all years have individual classrooms;
 - the employment of extra staff so that pupils are now taught in single age classes. This has made it easier for teachers to follow the guidance in the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies;
 - the employment of additional support staff to help pupils with special educational needs;
 - greater attention to the needs of higher attaining pupils both in lessons and with additional 'booster classes'.
5. These initiatives have reaped significant success especially when combined with the very strong teaching in Year 6. The results of the most recent tests (2002) were much higher and the school exceeded its targets. In mathematics, 90 per cent reached the level expected for their age and 29 per cent exceeded this level a significant rise over the 2001 results. Similar improvement is evident in science and 33 per cent exceeded the level expected for their age compared with 9 per cent in 2001. Test results were not quite as high in English but standards have improved since the last inspection.
6. Current standards in Year 6 are above average in mathematics and reflect the high standards in the test results. Considering many of these pupils did not reach the level expected at the end of Year 2, this shows good achievement and very good achievement for the pupils now reaching higher levels. Standards in science and English are satisfactory and show that the evident improvement in the test results in 2002 has been maintained. Overall, achievement is satisfactory and is good for the increasing number of pupils now exceeding the level expected for their age.
7. Generally, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the support received from classroom assistants; those whose needs are greater receiving closest attention from the support assistants. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are not always sufficiently detailed to guide teachers planning and this restricts their progress.

Current standards in English

8. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory in Years 2 and 6. Pupils are confident explaining their ideas and in Year 6 many have extended their vocabulary not only in English but also in other subjects. Pupils do not always listen with sufficient care to instructions and then are unclear about their tasks. Standards in reading are above average in Year 2 and most pupils are well launched into reading. They can extract information from non-fiction books. Standards in reading in Year 6 are satisfactory. Many pupils enjoy reading but few have favourite authors and the skill of reading between the lines is less well developed. Standards in writing are

below average in Year 2. Pupils lack confidence to express their ideas in a structured piece of writing. Pupils are more confident in Year 6 and recognise that writing changes for different purposes. Handwriting is not always joined-up and could be neater.

9. Standards in literacy support learning in other subjects. For example, in history pupils write accounts as though they were evacuees in World War Two. In religious education, pupils in Year 2 have recorded their promises after learning about God's promise to Noah. These are recorded attractively on rainbows showing a spiritual element in the lesson and pupils have included such comments as, 'to be good to my sister.'

Current standards in mathematics

10. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. Progress is good because all teachers place emphasis on developing number skills and encouraging pupils to explain the methods they use in their mathematical calculations. In Year 2, pupils solve money problems and the lower attaining pupils are fully included using coins to help with their calculations. Confidence increases in Year 6 and pupils are competent working with fractions and decimals.
11. Numeracy skills are used to enhance learning in other subjects. For example, in science in Year 5, pupils have found out information about healthy lifestyles and then analysed their finding and presented them on a pie chart.

Current standards in science

12. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum. However, overall progress in Years 1 and 2 is restricted by the overuse of worksheets which hamper pupils' skills of investigation. This improves in Years 3 to 6 but pupils in Year 6 only have a simple understanding of fair testing. Pupils have a more informed knowledge of other aspects of science. For example, Year 2 pupils are well informed about healthy eating and in Year 6 pupils have a detailed knowledge of the parts of a plant.

Current standards in other subjects

13. Standards in information technology are below average in Years 2 and 6 because pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise their skills and so reach the required level. In geography, in Year 6, standards are below average and pupils' skills of enquiry and map work are underdeveloped. Standards in making and in choosing materials in design and technology are below average because the school does not give sufficient attention to this aspect of the subject. Standards in these subjects were below average in the previous inspection. The school has put procedures in place to raise standards in these subjects but as yet these are not having any significant effect. Standards in all other subjects are wholly satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Attitudes are very good and behaviour, relationships and personal development are good, similar to the findings of the last inspection.

15. Pupils enjoy school. They are enthusiastic in lessons and speak highly of their teachers and other adults. They are welcoming to visitors and take an interest in them. Once in class they get down to work well and show a genuine interest in their work, especially in answering questions. This was particularly in evidence in a history lesson about researching the way of life of ancient Egypt where the pupils were keen to examine what could be learnt from a photograph of a palette. These positive attitudes are due to the good relationships between pupils and teachers and the enthusiasm shown by teachers for their subjects.
16. Behaviour is good. It is generally good around the school, at lunchtime, in the playground and in most lessons, but there are lapses in the playground and in lessons. It is less good in a small minority of lessons where the teacher's behaviour management skills need some refinement particularly in handling the more challenging pupils. In the playground there is occasionally rough play. These incidents are handled promptly by staff and pupils respond positively to these interventions. There are no exclusions. At lunchtime, pupils talk to each other socially. They take care of their accommodation and respect the resources used in many lessons. Oppressive behaviour occurs very rarely and when it happens the school is assiduous in tracking down the causes and finding solutions. There was one racial incident in the last year. The school enjoys excellent racial harmony and pupils play well with all their peers. All pupils join in willingly with the school's religious activities.
17. Relationships are good. Teachers know their children well and enjoy working with them. For example, in a session called Circle Time³ in Reception, children were relaxed about talking about people who had been kind to them and wanted to share their experiences with each other and the teacher. The attitudes and behaviour of the children in this particular lesson were excellent; they were respectful of each other's experiences. In a design and technology lesson in Year 1, pupils worked well together in groups, constructing and designing model houses.
18. Personal development is good. Pupils raise money for charity, act as buddies to those new to the school and in Year 6 are given many positions of responsibility. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to demonstrate independent learning. For example, the library was underused during the inspection. Pupils cheerfully play with those older or younger than themselves on the playground. They show concern for their peers, for instance, listening sympathetically while one of their class was discussing a distressing experience with a teacher.
19. Attendance is good. It is above the average for primary schools and has improved since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is very low. The school day starts on time and lessons run to time during the day. Daily registration is efficient. Pupils arrive on time although a few are slow getting to their classrooms.

³ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and social issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interruption from other pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection, 45 lessons were seen and in 42 per cent of these, teaching was good or better. In history and English in Year 6 the teaching seen was excellent. No teaching seen was less than satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Good teaching in mathematics and reading are having a significant effect on pupils' learning and the good progress made in these subjects. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to judge the overall quality of teaching in art and design and geography.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage

21. Overall, the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The many strengths identified in the last inspection have been further developed. The teacher makes very effective use of support staff and other adult helpers. Effective organisation leads to children being taught in small groups and this greatly enhances their learning. All staff play a full and valued part in the daily life of the children in the Reception class. They have a good understanding of the needs of these children and their positive encouragement enables the children to grow in confidence. Staff know when to offer help and when to challenge pupils to try for themselves and so they quickly take on more responsibility for their own learning. The teacher plans lessons well. These are often grouped around a theme recognising that children learn through repetition and consolidation. This was successful during the inspection when the theme of 'Faces' included shapes in mathematics and art and expression and feelings in literacy. Staff are alert to the needs of the youngest children and those with special educational needs and sensitively check they play a full part in all activities. Early literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively through practical activities. This makes learning enjoyable as the children absorb new information through sharing stories and singing counting rhymes. Occasionally, staff instruct children too much and this restricts their progress in creativity and imaginative play. Teaching of physical development is hampered by lack of resources and some tasks fail to capture the enthusiasm of the children. A strong feature of lessons seen is the co-operation between teaching and support staff who work together effectively as a team. As a result, all children benefit from a rich curriculum and they get off to a flying start to their education.

Teaching in Years 1 to 6

22. In the infants and juniors the teaching seen was satisfactory. Teaching was stronger in the juniors when almost a half of the teaching seen was good or better.
23. Teachers have a secure knowledge of most of the subjects although weaknesses remain. Since the last inspection teachers have benefited from training and advice from the local authority and other schools recognised for their expertise. This has been effective in raising teachers' confidence especially in teaching reading and mathematics. Teaching in these subjects makes a significant contribution to the high standards now achieved. Weaknesses remain in the teaching of design and technology when teachers do not give enough attention to handling a variety of materials and the skills of construction. In geography, a review of pupils' work shows teachers give due attention to the content of the curriculum but not to the

development of mapping and enquiry skills. Most teachers show confidence when teaching information and communication technology skills but the lack of suitable resources means these lessons are not as effective as they might be.

24. The teaching of numeracy skills is good. Practical activities and brisk questioning sessions lead pupils on in their skills of handling number to solve problems. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory. Teachers are confident teaching reading. Letters and sounds are taught effectively and pupils use this skill well in their early reading. The teaching of writing is less effective in Year 1 and 2. The overuse of worksheets fails to extend pupils' writing skills and pupils fail to transfer the skills taught in literacy lessons to their independent writing. Teachers do not promote the use of information and communication technology in other subjects and so pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise the skills taught in lessons.
25. Planning has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Teachers have taken on board the new planning guidelines and this is leading to more continuity in learning as pupils move from class to class. A strength in many lessons, especially mathematics, is the clear learning outcomes that teachers have for their lessons. In the best lessons teachers share these with the pupils so that they have a very clear understanding of the focus of the lesson. This good practice leads to a very effective conclusion to lessons as teachers summarise with pupils what they have learnt. The weakness in planning is the lack of planned opportunities to promote literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. Teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about life in other cultures and this is a weakness in the school's curriculum.
26. The key factor that contributed to the excellent teaching seen was the high expectation the teacher had of pupils' attainment. Questions are challenging and the pupils are pushed to increase their learning at a great pace. In Year 6, the teacher's dynamic approach inspires pupils of all abilities and much is achieved in the pupils' final year in school. Expectations are not as high in other classes and in Year 1 and 2 higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in the writing. Sometimes tasks are too easy and include colouring in rather than independent writing. Pupils become distracted and do not always work as fast or as hard as they should.
27. A positive feature in many lessons is the variety of teaching strategies employed to make lessons interesting. This is a good feature in history lessons when teachers make effective use of artefacts. In Year 4, pupils enjoyed finding out about Victorian toys because they had toys to examine and so gained a real insight into life at that time. In Year 6, drama was used imaginatively to teach pupils about life in the '60s. The headteacher was used as a source of information and in this excellent lesson much new learning took place in a very entertaining way. This leads to an enthusiasm for learning and a genuine curiosity from pupils to extend their knowledge.
28. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and lead to effective management in lessons. A strength in teaching is the genuine concern staff have for the needs of all pupils. Teachers are encouraging and welcome all responses so that pupils know their efforts are appreciated. A few pupils find it difficult to maintain concentration for a length of time and the support staff are encouraging so that these pupils do not

disturb the learning of others. In many lessons teachers include group work and this is very effective in promoting social development as pupils learn to collaborate and help each other.

29. The best lessons move along at a brisk pace. This keeps pupils on their toes and improves their listening skills and level of concentration. Teachers often tell pupils how long they have to complete a task and this leads to a buzz of activity as pupils try to finish their work. The pace of learning was slow in physical education lessons observed because too much talking took place and so pupils' enthusiasm for the activities waned.
30. A strength in teaching throughout the school is the use of support staff. Teachers make sure these people are clear about their tasks so that when they are responsible for leading a group the learning is effective. Many support assistants have attended training so that they are confident in their work.
31. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are fully met. As a result of the effective support from classroom assistants and the full integration within the majority of lessons, the learning of pupils with special educational needs is good. However, teachers do not always take note of the targets in the pupils' individual education plans in lesson planning or in the marking of pupils' work. This means that pupils are not always learning as much as they can in lessons.
32. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory, but assessment information is not always used when planning next steps. In Year 5 and 6 it is good, with teachers using questioning and feedback to adjust future lessons. Individual targets have been introduced in literacy and are having an effect on learning for the older pupils because they are more aware of what they need to do to improve. This good practice is less evident in other classes because teachers do not remind pupils of their targets in lessons or in their marking. A few teachers include constructive and evaluative comments when marking pupils' work. For example, in English in Year 4 the teacher writes, 'I think this could be made even better by using more detail and descriptive language'. However, this is not consistent throughout the whole school, where much work is marked with only general feedback and so pupils are unclear how they could have made the work better.
33. Parents expressed a concern about the homework set for their children. Overall, this is satisfactory and especially contributes to pupils' reading in Years 1 and 2. Older pupils are encouraged to research different topics and this also enhances their reading skills. There is scope for improvement in the quality of the provision because of the inconsistency in the level of challenge and the regularity of provision between different teachers. This means pupils do not have the opportunity to develop good habits of consistent and regular independent study.

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

34. The school has given due attention to the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and the school now provides a satisfactory range of experiences. Careful planning has maintained a balance between academic, creative and physical experiences. The statutory curriculum is now in place and the full range of learning

opportunities is taught. All subjects now follow detailed planning guidelines and this helps teachers when planning lessons. However, the school has not yet adjusted these guidelines to meet the needs of the school and in some subjects insufficient attention is given to all aspects of the National Curriculum. This is the case in geography where there is insufficient use of the skills of enquiry and map work. Similarly, in design and technology where the process of design, make and evaluate is taught but pupils do not always have enough opportunity to make and choose from a range of materials.

35. The youngest children in the Reception class benefit from a rich curriculum that includes visits and visitors. As a result, the children enjoy school and make good progress. The school has not managed to improve outdoor facilities for these children and this limits the range of physical activities that can be offered.
36. The National Literacy Strategy provides the structure for teachers to ensure a variety of experiences are planned. However, it is not implemented rigorously enough in Years 1 and 2 and insufficient attention is given to extending pupils' writing. The National Numeracy Strategy is now firmly embedded in school practice. The development of numeracy skills is good and this is contributing to the good progress pupils make in mathematics. The development of information and communication technology skills is restricted due to the difficulties of explaining skills to a whole class group without any large screen display of the software. There is also a lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise these skills in other subjects.
37. Pupils with special educational needs follow the same curriculum as other pupils. The school places great emphasis on including these pupils in all activities. This is brought about by the effective support of classroom assistants which enables these pupils to work at the same tasks as the other pupils. The school includes all pupils in all activities and so equality of access and opportunity is good. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons their tasks reflect the lesson plan for other pupils.
38. The school is not easily accessible for pupils with physical disabilities. The school has developed strategies for overcoming these difficulties but does not make this clear to prospective parents in the prospectus.
39. Parents expressed concern about the provision for extra curricular activities. The formal curriculum is enriched with visits and visitors. The school links the topics taught in the curriculum to the real world through a good selection of visits and visitors to the school. For example, there is a residential visit for Year 6 pupils and Year 5 pupils are to visit a museum. Younger pupils also experience a variety of visits in support of their studies. However, the range of after school activities is limited to football, netball and recorders. There are plans to develop links with a local secondary school with a view to coaching in a variety of sports for the pupils.
40. Personal social and health education for the pupils is delivered through religious education and science lessons. Drugs awareness and sex education are taught in these subjects with supplementary information from the school nurse for older pupils. Circle Time is used as a means of developing relationships and improving behaviour. However, the use of Circle Time is inconsistent between classes and the school does not have clear guidelines to aid teachers planning for pupils' personal, social and health education.

41. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory. The local church is much involved and the school supports a number of charities associated with the church. The school choir sings to residential homes and in the town to raise funds for national charities. There are links with the Environmental Centre at the local power station and contacts with the police and safety authorities. There are few links with business or industry, or the disabled or disadvantaged.
42. There are good links with partner institutions. The contacts with a nearby Beacon School⁴ have led to a number of innovations and there are strong links with the Roman Catholic secondary school in Cannock. This leads to a smooth transfer to the next phase of education. Teachers have developed particularly useful contacts on the curriculum to ensure continuity of learning as pupils change school. There are also developing links with a local comprehensive school that has just become a sports college. It is expected that this will enhance the development of sport at St. Joseph's. The local primary schools in Rugeley meet together to discuss common problems. Links with the pre-school group that meets in the school are strong. A partnership is also developing with Newman College for teacher training.
43. The school makes good overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils through the good environment of mutual respect between adults and pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection in the spiritual development of the pupils but whilst there has been some change in the cultural development of the pupils, this aspect remains in need of further advancement.
44. There is good provision for the development of the pupils' spiritual development. In assemblies and class prayers pupils are given time for reflection and opportunities to think about the needs of others. For example, when pupils were thanked for their prayers for a sick person and told that there was an improvement in his health. As a result, pupils show a genuine concern for the welfare of others. In class work, pupils gain personal satisfaction and confidence as they identify with the challenge of their work and have the success of their efforts acknowledged. Teachers encourage pupils to be curious about their surroundings. For example, a group of children in the Reception class experienced the beauty of the natural world when they collected the fruits and leaves from trees around the school. These children gained a real insight into nature and were enthralled by the acorns and leaves.
45. Staff role models are instrumental in the good provision for the pupils' moral development. Good examples are set for rewarding relationships and problems between pupils are resolved without confrontation. Careful supervision around the school and the mentoring of younger pupils by older pupils at lunchtime all contribute to this good provision. As a result, the school is a happy community with older pupils accepting increasing responsibility for their own actions. Assemblies and religious education lessons give a good lead on right and wrong and the benefits of good behaviour. Pupils have been involved in drawing up rules in their classrooms and this helps them to understand what is acceptable behaviour.

⁴ Beacon School This is a school which excels at one or more activities and has applied to and been accepted by the DfEE for Beacon School status. There are nearly 600 Beacon Schools in England. The scheme is designed to raise standards in schools through the sharing and spreading of practical ideas and knowledge between schools.

46. The good social provision of the school is based on teachers' awareness of relationships between pupils and the possible tensions that might arise. Consequently, friendship groups are used at lunchtime to encourage collaboration. The Year 6 teacher arranges learning pairs with a view to fostering collaborative working in a group that has relationship problems. The school's residential visit develops teamwork and the need for co-operation in order to achieve success with large projects. Collaboration is a feature in many lessons. This is extended to joint work between different classes. For example, Year 1 and 5 pupils have worked together on a topic and produced a very attractive display. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute to decision making about the daily life of the school. As a result, pupils are less aware of the processes that lead to social change.
47. The provision for the cultural development of the pupils is unsatisfactory. There are some opportunities for pupils to learn about their own culture through assemblies and religious education. Literacy and history help pupils to know something about their own culture. Art and geography give the pupils experience of other cultures, for example African art and life in an Indian village. However, although religious education acknowledges the faiths of other religions, the pupils are not prepared for adult life in a multicultural society. They are taught respect for other faiths but are not helped to develop greater awareness that other cultures meet the same problems and share the same needs to express feelings and emotions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. This is a caring school as it was at the last inspection. Assessment has improved since the last inspection but still has work to do in tracking the academic performance of individual pupils.
49. The school is a safe environment with the expected safety measures in place and planned regular safety inspections that are recorded and progressed. First-aid training is a present need and is planned for the near future. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The nominated person has only recently taken over the role but has already made good contacts and acquired knowledge of local procedures. Teaching staff, classroom assistants and midday supervisors are to undergo training in the warning signs of child abuse and action to take if the need arises. Pupils who have special home circumstances receive particular attention and, where appropriate, are offered sensitive support. In lessons, teachers include personal and social issues so that pupils are made aware of the need to look after themselves. The needs of 'looked after' children are carefully observed by the headteacher. Children with health problems are well known and identified to those who need to know. There is no medical room and procedures for administering medicines are in course of revision.
50. The procedures for the promotion of attendance are satisfactory. There is a good relationship with the education welfare officer and any concerns are followed up. Attendance has improved since the last inspection.
51. The procedures for promoting good behaviour are good. A consistent approach is regarded as essential, with the emphasis on rewarding the positive, high expectations, and a Christian approach to life. Consequently, pupils have a clear

understanding of what is acceptable behaviour in the school. Class rules are generated by pupils so that they are relevant to each class. Parents are involved where there are behaviour problems and their contribution is valued. Records of poor behaviour are analysed carefully and teachers write individual behaviour management plans for pupils who find it difficult to maintain good behaviour. As a result, these pupils learn how to manage their behaviour and so make good progress.

52. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. They are almost entirely informal but are none the less effective because of all staff's knowledge of the pupils. Teachers talk sensitively about their pupils, especially the ones causing them concern. All pupils receive careful support in lessons and are free to approach any member of staff if they need help with a personal problem.
53. The school has developed good procedures to assess pupils' progress. These include statutory National Curriculum assessment tests in Years 2 and 6 and non-statutory tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics. The information gained from these tests is used to evaluate the school's overall performance and to set targets for future performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6. The school also assesses children's attainment as they start in school. This information is used effectively to match work to the children's needs and to predict attainment by the end of Year 2. This information, as well as examples of pupil's work, is shared with parents via the recently introduced pupil profile book, which is sent home termly. Parents value this home-school link as a way of understanding their child's progress.
54. Procedures to assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. However, the targets in their individual educational plans are frequently too general and lack clear short-term objectives. Consequently, it is difficult to monitor the progress of these pupils with sufficient accuracy to ensure they are making as much progress as possible.
55. The school generally makes satisfactory use of assessment information in English and mathematics to identify areas of weakness and adjust the curriculum. This has been effective in raising standards in mathematics. For example, a weakness was identified in subtraction skills and with extra focus pupils are now more confident with this skill. In writing, a more detailed analysis of pupils' work has been undertaken and the school plans extra lessons in sustained writing to improve pupils' confidence in independent writing. This is having more effect on standards in Years 3 to 6. For example, in Year 5 pupils were observed writing an imaginative piece of descriptive writing. The use of assessment to set individual, group and class targets is evident in English. These are having a good impact on attainment in Years 3 to 6 as teachers remind pupils of their targets so that they are aware of what they need to do to improve. However, in Years 1 and 2, teachers do not make sufficient use of the assessment, whether from tests or their own informal observations, when planning the next steps in learning. This is evident with higher attaining pupils in writing, who are frequently not given enough challenge to enable them to progress to the higher levels of which they are capable.
56. In other subjects the school has introduced new planning guidelines and procedures for assessing pupils' progress is in the early stages of implementation. At the end of each unit of work pupils are assessed and teachers make a record of pupils who

achieve above or below the expected levels. However, there are no criteria for judging progression in investigative skills in science or design and technology or in assessing skills of geographical enquiry or historical interpretation. Consequently, teachers do not have a complete picture on which to modify their planning of work for groups or individuals.

57. Although a good range of national tests and assessment data has been collected over recent years, it is not collated in a way that shows important trends or tracks closely the progress of each group of pupils. The school lacks a coherent system for recording assessment information in a way that makes it possible to track individual pupil progress term-by-term as they move from class to class. This makes it difficult for the school to be sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible and are on course to achieve their predicted level. The school recognizes this as an area for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. Parents are supportive of the school and the school and parents work well together. Parents have been very welcoming to the new headteacher and find the school very approachable. Parents' views of the school differ little from those at the last inspection, even though the rate of return was disappointing on both occasions. Parents still like the progress made by their children, their increased maturity, their hard work, and the approachability of the school. Inspectors agree with these positive views. Parents are now less concerned about behaviour and consider they are well informed about the progress their children are making. Parents continue to be concerned about the amount of homework and the range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team finds homework and activities outside lessons satisfactory, though there is room for improvement for both features.
59. The information provided for parents is good, an improvement compared with the last inspection. Information includes good newsletters, a factual annual report that meets the statutory requirements and a well illustrated prospectus with appropriate information. Presentation lacks stimulation and could promote the school's merits more effectively and also provide additional information of value to parents. Pupils' annual reports have brief descriptions of what has been achieved in all subjects and offer advice on how parents can help their children. However, they do not refer to targets for improvement. This deficiency is fully offset by the pupil profile book. This contains selected items of work, details of targets and how well they were met, and National Curriculum levels of attainment. These are much valued by parents, who can see the improvements made by their children. There are three evenings per year for parents to discuss their children's progress and these are well attended. Parents know what topics are being taught because each class provides curriculum information for parents on a termly basis. All parents are kept informed about the daily life of the school through newsletters, invitations and reports.
60. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are made aware of reviews of their children's individual education plans and attend the formal reviews when a child has a statement of special educational need.
61. Parents make a positive contribution to the life of the school. They help in lessons and have spent time classifying the books in the library. Parents also help with school visits and transport to sports matches. The association of friends, parents

and teachers is very active and raises very useful finance through a range of social events. Parents also help with reading at home. This has a positive effect on standards in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Parents support the school by the good attendance at Mass, assemblies and school special performances.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The quality of leadership and management has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. This is a major factor in the improvements in the school. Immediately following the last inspection the school implemented a plan to raise standards. The previous headteacher was instrumental in the re-organisation of the classrooms and restructuring the classes so that all pupils are now taught in single age classes. Additional support staff have been employed to provide teachers with more support in lessons. The deputy headteacher also played a major role in these changes especially in implementing the new planning guidelines and in the introduction of new assessment procedures. Overall, many practical actions have been implemented that have led to standards improving especially in mathematics and science. The previous headteacher was withdrawn from the teaching timetable and so had more time to check that these initiatives were having an effect on standards. This analysis and action has given the school a clear direction for the future. The new headteacher has only been in place for a very short time but has already observed teaching in every class, taught lessons and examined the school's procedures and policy documents. This purposeful leadership means he has gleaned an informed picture of the school's strengths and areas for development.
63. The weakness in the management role of curriculum co-ordinators has received attention and is a continuing area for development. A barrier to this role being fully developed was staff absence which led to a reduction in non-teaching time for co-ordinators to manage their subjects. There is now a co-ordinator for each subject and a number of them are developing their subject well. This is particularly true for mathematics and science where standards are rising steadily. In these subjects the co-ordinators have had opportunities to observe lessons and to identify more closely areas that need development. They have shared expertise with colleagues and teaching has improved. However, this is not the case for other subjects and co-ordinators do not have a full picture of what is happening throughout the school. There is an imbalance in the allocation of responsibilities and the deputy headteacher and the literacy co-ordinator especially have a heavy load of responsibilities. The literacy co-ordinator is also responsible for managing the Foundation Stage and currently does not have a full picture of English throughout the school. As a result monitoring is not as effective as it could be. For example, in checking that enough attention is given to resolving the weakness in writing in Years 1 and 2.
64. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. The requirements of the new Code of Practice⁵ are in place and records carefully maintained. The school recognises the need to look for ways to make access for pupils with disability easier and to include a statement with this information in their policy. The co-ordinator collaborates with staff when writing individual education plans for pupils assessed as

⁵ Code of Practice- this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

having special educational needs. These plans include targets to tackle concerns but are often too general to guide teachers in their planning. Parents are happy with the support their children receive.

65. The contribution made by the governing body is very good and has greatly improved since the last inspection. Following the last inspection the governing body was re-organised with a stronger commitment to the school. The governors now have a high profile in school and have established links with subject co-ordinators. As a result, they are well informed and this helps them in their decision making. Governors ensure all statutory duties are fulfilled and policies are up-to-date. For example, the school has a clear policy on racial harassment and a monitoring policy is in place.
66. The school development plan is drawn up collaboratively in the autumn term following a review of the previous year. Current targets include a focus on the issues identified in the previous inspection and are pertinent to the school. The focus is clearly on raising standards although it is a weakness that science was not a target when results in national tests have been unsatisfactory. In practice, the school has given due attention to science in Years 3 to 6 and standards have significantly improved. The plan includes an additional document identifying the financial implications of implementing the plan. This is satisfactory practice for allocating the budget but leads to some lack of focus on spending. For example, every subject receives a set amount of money without prioritising to the subjects with most need.
67. The overall administration of the budget and the day-to-day management of funds are good. The recommendations of the most recent audit have been addressed. The school monitors spending closely and the administrative staff use technology to check on the current spending situation. Information is provided to the headteacher and governors so that the school is kept up-to-date and can make adjustments as required. Last year they were very quick to spot when the budget was heading for an overspend and quickly adjusted the situation. Governors are very aware the school has limited flexibility in their spending but are determined to keep the current staffing situation. Specific grants are spent correctly and have a beneficial effect on the pupils' education. For example, the funding for pupils with special educational needs provides extra adult support to enable these pupils to play a full and active part in all the school has to offer.
68. The school is now giving more attention to the principles of best value by checking that spending decisions have a positive effect on standards. For example, the major restructuring of the juniors and the positive effect this has had on teaching and standards. The school is especially challenging in the targets set for higher attaining pupils in Year 6 and the targets set for 2004 are very high. The school compares its performance with other schools and this has made the school very aware of the need to raise standards. Consultation is good. Parents are consulted about any major changes. For example, the uniform has been changed and parents are very supportive because they were consulted before the decision was made. The governors are very aware of the need to check on value for money in any major spending decisions. They seek advice and check on prices and support to ensure that services and resources are both effective and economic.
69. The school is giving satisfactory attention to monitoring its performance. The school now has a wealth of information from their assessment procedures to allow them to check the overall school's performance. This is being used to celebrate

improvement, for example, the results in national tests in Year 6 in 2002. However, it is not being analysed with sufficient rigour to track the progress of pupils and to check that all are making the best possible progress. Sufficient attention is not being given to the weakness in writing which has been identified by test results over recent years.

70. Since the last inspection the school has given more attention to monitoring teaching. The local education authority has been involved and advice provided to improve teaching and raise standards. The previous headteacher observed lessons and the present headteacher has also visited lessons. However, weaknesses identified in the previous inspection remain and there is scope for sharing the very good and excellent teaching seen in some lessons to raise the overall quality of teaching.
71. Procedures for performance management are in place. The school places great emphasis on training and has made good use of training from the local authority and advice for the local Beacon School since the last inspection. This has been effective in raising standards especially in Year 6. There are appropriate procedures to support new staff. The school offers placements for students on teacher training, nursery nurses and other similar courses. These students are supported by the deputy headteacher to ensure both the students and the school benefit from the experience.
72. The accommodation is satisfactory. Pupils are taught in attractive classrooms. It has drawbacks in the stairs to the juniors and the hall making access difficult for pupils with disabilities. The library is in an unsuitable place for independent research and study. The school has very large outdoor areas including a field and wooded area used to extend the curriculum. As at the time of the last inspection there is no secure outdoor space for the children in the Foundation Stage.
73. Learning resources are satisfactory. More equipment is needed to support learning in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and tuned instruments for music. The books in the library are limited in number and some reading books in the school are old and need replacing. The school has limited resources to teach pupils about other faiths and cultures. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from spacious well equipped rooms but have no large outdoor resources to improve their physical and social development.
74. The school has a good number of experienced teachers and support staff. This is effective in enabling pupils to work in small groups and benefit from extra help which enhances their learning.
75. The school is currently in the process of reviewing its aims, which are too long and complicated. The school development plan for 2001 identifies the school's mission as 'developing each child to the maximum of his/her potential, within a faith context'. The overall strengths now evident in the leadership of the school and the teachers' determination to raise standards in a caring community show that the mission statement is reflected in the school's work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. In order to continue the improvement and raise standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve standards in writing in Years 1 and 2 by:
 - setting tasks that allow more opportunity for independent writing;
 - increasing the level of challenge for these pupils.
Discussed in paragraphs 2, 3, 8, 24, 26, 36, 55, 63, 69, 86, 87, 89, 94, 97, 99.

This issue has already been identified by the school.
- (2) Improve standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and geography (Years 3 to 6) by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills and to extend these skills in other subjects;
 - increasing resources for information and communication technology so that teaching can be more effective;
 - extending resources for design and technology and giving greater attention to developing pupils' practical skills;
 - developing pupils' geographical skills of enquiry and plan for a better progression of mapping skills.
Discussed in paragraphs 13, 23, 24, 25, 34, 36, 56, 73, 83, 98, 108, 116, 122, 124, 125, 126, 129, 131, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145.
- (3) Extend the use of information gained from assessment to track pupils' progress towards nationally expected levels and then monitor more closely that pupils are making the best possible progress.
Discussed in paragraphs 32, 48, 55, 56, 57, 69, 94, 99, 109, 117, 127, 132, 138, 146.
- (4) Further strengthen the management role of co-ordinators by providing more opportunities to gain information and so encourage the adoption of best practice.
Discussed in paragraphs 63, 99, 124, 127, 132, 139, 146.
- (5) Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about life in a multicultural society.
Discussed in paragraphs 25, 43, 47, 73, 83, 100.
- (6) Improve the outdoor environment and resources for outdoor play for the children in the Nursery and the Reception class.
Discussed in paragraphs 1, 21, 35, 72, 84.

In addition to the key issues above, the governors may wish to consider including the following minor issue in the action plan:

- improve the number of books in the library and further develop its use to support learning.
Discussed in paragraphs 72, 100.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	5	12	26	0	0	0
Percentage	4	11	27	58	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

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a*	169
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a*	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a*	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a*	52

*The Nursery runs from spring to summer terms and was not open at the time of the inspection.

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	9	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	22	14	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (96)	58 (67)	100 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	22	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	13	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	18	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (61)	68 (61)	82 (75)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (68)	68 (71)	73 (92)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

* numbers not included because the year group included 10 or less in the total number of boys or girls.

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	165	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	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	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	366,878
Total expenditure	374,429
Expenditure per pupil	2,256
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,200
Balance carried forward to next year	12,649

Number of pupils per FTE adult	Na
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	169
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	36	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	4	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	46	18	7	0
The teaching is good.	43	57	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	54	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	21	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	61	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	32	54	0	11	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	32	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	36	25	11	11

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 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

77. Children join the school either into the Nursery or the Reception class depending upon their age. This organisation means that the nursery is only open for the spring and summer terms and so was not seen during the inspection. The current intake includes 28 children. Twelve of the younger children had not attended Nursery although they had had pre-school experience in the playgroup that is held in the school. As judged in the last inspection, the educational provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
78. Children in the Nursery and the Reception class follow the Foundation Stage curriculum, as recommended in national guidance. This enables children to transfer smoothly into the first level of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is rich and stimulating and includes a good range of experiences that make learning enjoyable for the children. They benefit from the good number of adults which enables learning to take place in small groups. This is very effective for the youngest children who have already settled happily into school. Similarly, children identified with special educational needs receive ample praise and a guiding hand to encourage them to play a full part in all activities.
79. Children enter the school with a wide range of abilities but overall their attainment is below average. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and most of the children start Year 1 at the level expected for their age in all of the areas of learning. Assessment is good and the teacher has quickly identified children needing extra help and careful monitoring of progress makes sure these children make secure progress. The youngest children, who have been in the class for a very short time are monitored sensitively to check that they can keep up with the pace of the work. The good co-ordination has created an exciting learning atmosphere which enables children to get off to a good start. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with the most positive features in the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the variety of experiences to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. Teaching and learning is good because all staff have a secure knowledge of the needs of this age group. They know when to closely supervise and when to stand back and encourage independence. As a result, children make good progress and the youngest children have quickly settled into the routines of the school. They enter the class happily in a morning and enjoy the range of activities set out for them while the attendance register is called. Great emphasis is placed on sharing and children understand the need to take turns. For example, in physical education they wait patiently for an opportunity to throw the bean bag or kick the ball. Pupils enjoy working in small groups. This successfully includes the less confident because adult support keeps a watchful eye on them and sensitively includes them in conversations and activities. Many children have been together in the Nursery and so have established friendships but they are also willing to share and work with the younger children. One child took it on board to help others with their paint aprons

and very kindly offered support with the fasteners. Children identified as having special educational needs and who find it difficult to compromise and fit in with a larger group are managed carefully by all staff. Consequently, they experience the full range of activities and are making good progress. Through great patience these children are encouraged to take part in the same activities as the other children. The great majority of children demonstrate independence when looking after their own personal needs. A few still find it difficult getting changed for physical activities and rely heavily on adult support. The curriculum includes sessions for Circle Time and these are effective in encouraging children to talk about their feelings. In the lesson seen, the children talked happily about their affection for their grandparents. Achievement in this area of the curriculum is good and leads to children gaining in confidence by the time they reach the end of the Reception class.

Communication, language and literacy

81. Many children start school with limited skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Teaching is good and includes ample opportunities for children to work in small groups and this extends their speaking and listening skills. A few find it difficult to listen with sufficient care and so staff spend time listening to the children and encourage them to relate their ideas. Higher attaining children show great confidence talking to visitors. For example, one child exclaimed, 'my mum will be really impressed (with his painting)'. A review of examples of previous work shows an overuse of worksheets which included too much colouring rather than extending children's understanding of letter and sounds. This was not evident during the inspection when a range of interesting tasks captured the children's interest. For example, the use of a teddy bear who makes mistakes. The children find this very funny as they spot the correct letter to start a word. Good progress is made in learning to write and a review of last year's work shows most of the children left the Reception class with a secure knowledge of letters and sounds. Most were able to write a few words unaided. The higher attaining child was writing simple sentences and when describing herself included an exclamation mark 'I am so beautiful!' Current standards reflect the children's low ability when they start in the nursery. Older children can attempt the letters in their names but few have reached the level of using writing to record their ideas. Many have weak letter formation and are unable to write any letters. The classroom has an area to encourage early writing skills but it lacks stimulation and few children were seen to use it during the inspection. Children are more confident in reading and when given an opportunity to read are eager to settle with a book. Pop-up books are favourites and children have a good understanding of how to handle a book. They make good use of the pictures to help with their enjoyment and the higher attaining children are able to spot familiar words. In the class literacy lesson, children enjoyed the role play of 'Little Miss Muffet' and this enabled them to retell the story in drama.

Mathematical development

82. Children start school with below average mathematical awareness. Through a range of practical experiences good progress is made and pupils reach the early learning goal by the end of the Reception class. A review of previous work shows that when pupils left the Reception they were counting accurately up to 10. Children were able to use their mathematical skills to solve simple problems using addition and subtraction. The lower attaining children still relied on the use of counters to help

with counting and simple addition. Current standards show children have got off to a good start with their counting skills. Teaching is good and the use of a number line enables children to count and the older ones identify '2 more' and know '8 is more than 6'. The focus for the week of the inspection was learning about flat shapes. This was done very effectively through an imaginative range of activities and very good use of support staff. Group activities included water play when pupils 'fished' for a shape and a walk in the school grounds identifying different shapes. The variety of activities led to effective learning because children were experiencing the same information in different ways and so much new learning took place. By the end of the week, many children were confident using language, such as 'circle', 'triangle', 'rectangle' and were able to copy simple patterns of shapes. Staff grasp every opportunity to develop the use of number. For example, the children count the number of stars they have been awarded and in music they are encouraged to count the number of beats when they are playing instruments. This makes children aware of using numbers in a range of experiences and they grow in confidence as they move through the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Many children enter the school with limited knowledge of the world beyond their own locality. Through a range of stimulating experiences and good teaching they extend their horizons. The teacher organises a range of exciting visits and visitors that are effective in enhancing children's learning. They are encouraged to be curious about their environment. For example, they very enthusiastically collected leaves and acorns to make shape pictures. Photographs show children's enthusiasm as they visited Shugborough and tried out a range of activities of life at that time. Children further develop their understanding of the passage of time when they classify toys as old and new. The visit to collect min-beasts is another example of the trouble the staff go to extend children's understanding of life and an appreciation of the world. Opportunities are provided for free choice and the children often opt for building with a range of construction blocks. Many show good skills and often build with a purpose, such as making a vehicle which moves. These are good working models and the children are justifiably proud of their efforts. Literacy skills are extended in these activities. For example, when writing about fish children have to record their findings under given headings. Adult support for the children struggling with writing is effective in enabling the children to complete the task accurately. Children using the computer with adult support understood that the computer responds to instructions. However, during the inspection the computers were underused to support learning and a review of work also identifies this as an area for more attention. The children are encouraged to learn about Christianity through daily prayers and celebration of important festivals. There is little evidence that this knowledge is extended to learning about the beliefs and cultures of other people.

Physical development

84. Children enter school with average physical development. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils reach the level expected for their age by the end of the Reception class. In dance, the children enjoy moving to music. Most move freely and are aware of the need to take care not to collide with other children. They are beginning to move with expression. For example, they adapt their movements and use small, flicking actions to the light music and heavy, striding actions when

marching. In the lesson seen some instructions were too directed and children copied the teacher rather than deciding on their own actions. This restricted their own interpretation and a few children lost interest in the tasks. Children enjoy outdoor activities but the lack of suitable resources means these are limited to small games skills and the opportunity to develop co-ordination skills as they climb and pedal small vehicles is missed. During the inspection, children were observed throwing bean bags and kicking balls with increasing proficiency. However, in the lesson seen a lot of time was spent waiting for their turn and a few became restless and lost interest in the tasks. Good quality teaching ensures pupils develop appropriate control in handling paintbrushes, using scissors and holding a pencil.

Creative development

85. Planning shows the children have many opportunities for creative activity. Most enter school with average levels of attainment having enjoyed painting and model making in the pre-school play group. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and leads to sound progress. Singing is included in many activities and the children have a range of action rhymes that extend learning in other subjects. They enjoy playing the percussion instruments. Children rise to the challenge to close their eyes, listen and then name the instrument. This led to good learning as children learnt to recognise and name the instruments. The classroom has a role play corner but it was little used during the inspection. Imaginative play was better in the literacy lesson when children enjoyed playing the different characters in a nursery rhyme. Pupils enjoyed painting their friends on a transparent screen that enabled them to learn about proportion and detail in their work. However, the opportunity to mix colours to get a closer match to the person they were copying was missed because the choice of colours was limited by the supporting adult. Staff celebrate children's achievements by attractively displaying their work which encourages children's pride and self-esteem. Teaching is not always sufficiently challenging. For example, pictures often include too many repetitive tasks, such as screwing up tissue paper and sticking it on shapes and this restricts children's ability to work creatively. This was identified as a concern at the last inspection and has not been fully resolved.

ENGLISH

86. Current standards in Year 2 are average in speaking and listening, above average in reading but below average in writing. Considering the great majority of pupils start school with average language and literacy skills this reflects overall satisfactory achievement. Achievement for many is good in reading. However, many pupils, especially the higher attaining pupils, are underachieving in writing. This is partly because of a lack of challenge in some of the pupils' independent tasks and insufficiently high expectations of what they might achieve by the end of Years 1 and 2.
87. Standards reflect the results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001. Reading results were above the national average for all and similar schools and the test results for 2002, although not as high, show good standards. National test results in writing in 2001 were very low and were in the bottom five per cent for all schools and schools with a similar intake. These results show a decline in standards since the last inspection and pupils are not making as much progress as possible. The results of writing tests for 2002 show standards have risen although no pupils exceeded the level expected for their age and standards remain below average.
88. Current standards in Year 6 are average. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. This

reflects the results of the end of Year 6 national tests for 2001 which were average for all and similar schools. The most recent test results (2002) were not as high but still reflect an improvement since the last inspection. These improvements have been brought about by:

- the school's focus on improving the attainment of higher attaining pupils;
- extra booster classes;
- additional time for sustained writing;
- very high quality the teaching of English in Year 6.

89. The number of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age has increased every year since 1998. Overall, the trend is positive but writing does continue to be weaker than reading. Higher standards in writing, targeted by the school, have not yet had sufficient time to have any significant effect on standards. Targets for 2001 were not reached because fewer pupils reached higher levels than predicted. However, the school has continued to focus on the needs of the higher attaining pupils and future targets are challenging. In response to the current very strong teaching of English in Year 6 the school is well placed to reach them.

Standards and progress in speaking and listening

90. Throughout the school, standards in speaking and listening match those expected nationally. In Years 1 and 2, pupils listen attentively to stories, rhymes and explanations. Pupils are confident when talking about their work and other experiences. Most pupils have a secure understanding of turn taking in group conversation and recognise the need to listen to each other. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson on medicines and things that harm us, where children listened to each others ideas and contributions. A few pupils do not listen to instructions with sufficient care and then are unclear about their tasks.
91. Listening skills further develop in Years 3 to 6. Pupils listen attentively, their responses show good understanding, and they express points of view and ideas clearly. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils evaluated and commented logically, sensibly and sensitively about another pupil's poem, discussing his use of descriptive and interesting words. In the same lesson, pupils talked knowledgeably about personification, the differences between similes and metaphors and the use of words to describe different emotions. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to speak in front of the class in the literacy hour and this is building the pupils' confidence. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, children role-played the dialogue between Jack and Jill when they were asked to fetch the water. Pupils are confident in participating in class discussions and answering questions. When answering questions about the feelings of evacuees in, *Good Bye Mr. Tom*, average attaining pupils in Year 5 made reference to the text in their responses. They reflected empathy for the evacuees and referred to comments that had been made by the teacher when giving their opinions of the characters. However, when reading prayers in assembly, some of the pupils were less confident and the audience had difficulty in hearing them. Teachers promote the use of technical language in other subjects and pupils are confident using these terms in their responses.

Standards and progress in reading

92. In Year 2, pupils read accurately and with developing fluency. Most are secure with initial sounds and blends and use this knowledge when they come across a word they do not know. The higher attaining pupil who read to the inspectors showed great confidence tackling the words 'magician' and 'Margarit'. The great majority know how to locate information in non-fiction books. A few pupils do not have favourite books and rely heavily on the teachers' choice of books. However, the higher attaining pupils are more enthusiastic readers and select books by looking at the cover, predicting what the story is about and reading the editor's summary. Records of pupils' reading, other than in the group guided reading sessions are limited and inconsistent. The reading diary acts more as a list of books read rather than as a means of two-way communication about progress between teacher and parent. This leads to some books not matching pupils' ability and this restricts their progress.
93. Standards of reading in Year 6 are average. Considering the pupils' level of reading at the start of the juniors overall achievement is satisfactory. Shared reading sessions promote a keen interest, because the texts used appeal to all pupils, as does the range of books used for guided group reading. Higher attainers read with fluency and expression, and discuss and compare characters and themes with good understanding. Pupils in Year 6 have a limited range of authors but can discuss their favourite type of story. The shared reading strategy of the literacy hour and the enthusiasm of some of the teachers provides an avenue for ensuring pupils access some challenging and rich texts. Pupils have difficulty in reading between the lines and in making deductions from the text. They gain skills with which to support their learning across the whole curriculum and have sound skills in looking up information in reference books and on the Internet. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower attainers enjoy reading as much as other pupils and make good progress.

Standards and progress in writing

94. In Year 2, standards in writing are below average and overall progress is unsatisfactory. There are very few pupils who are working at the higher level and higher-attaining pupils are especially underachieving. Lessons lack precise learning objectives and teachers do not make full use of assessment information, to match work well to the needs of all pupils. The overuse of inappropriate worksheets, which do not challenge the pupils, is limiting the potential for pupils to use writing skills and they are unable to produce creative pieces of length. However, where appropriate opportunities are provided pupils enjoy the experience and produce some creative work. For example, one pupil wrote, 'thunder bashes and crashes, it bangs and flashes... pupils are scared and babies cry'. Whilst the school has been successful in raising the attainment of its lower attaining pupils, it has not yet been successful in raising standards for those who are higher attainers. Following a good start in the Foundation Stage, achievement slows because of lower expectations. Formal handwriting practice lessons are resulting in satisfactory progress. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 write in a legible style and form letters correctly. Presentation is usually satisfactory.

95. In Year 6, standards in writing are satisfactory. The achievement of many pupils is satisfactory and is good for the increasing number of pupils reaching high levels. Pupils appreciate the different purposes of writing and have written play scripts and recounts of events and visits. Pupils reap the benefit of the intensive enrichment of language provided in literacy lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6. As a result, pupils are gaining in confidence in expressing their ideas, the range and richness of vocabulary increases and pupils use this to make their writing exciting to the reader. In Year 6, following a visit to the railway station, one pupil wrote, 'the violent train hurtled through the jet black sky, like a dragon breathing out dark, dirty smoke'. In Year 5, pupils convey empathy with their character, for example when writing about the experiences of evacuees. Much of the work seen in other subjects does not always reinforce or extend literacy skills sufficiently. Handwriting is usually legible, but is not consistently joined and a good deal of work is not presented tidily. Spelling and grammar is generally accurate but there are examples of carelessness and pupils are not always transferring the skills taught in literacy lessons to their independent writing.
96. Literacy skills are at a level to support learning in other subjects. In science, pupils label diagrams and record their findings in a correct format. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to evaluate examples of work and are able to record clear explanations for their preferences.
97. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The best teaching seen was in Year 6 and one lesson seen teaching was excellent. In these lessons the teacher has high expectations of pupils and seeks to inspire and challenge them. Teaching methods include imaginative strategies that capture the interest of the pupils. These include drama, sharing and editing each others' work. Teachers demonstrate writing and editing skills effectively. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on the *Railway Children* after editing a pupil wrote, 'as it wrenches its way up the track, it coughs and splutters out its grimy, sooty smoke'. Relationships in the classroom provide a confident and positive atmosphere in which achievement flourishes. Pupils are keen to learn and rise to challenges. Challenging questions are used to consolidate, extend and verify what pupils know and understand. Outcomes for lessons, class and group targets are tightly meshed together and pupils are very clear of what they have to do. In the best lessons, activities focus on the needs of the pupils, are challenging and this leads to good gains in learning. However, in Years 1 and 2 such methods are not always used and teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of pupils. Higher-attaining pupils spend time completing work that is not extending their learning, for example, cutting up words and colouring in pictures. Occasionally, pupils are not allowed sufficient time to spend on the task. Pupils' books contain large amounts of worksheets or work directly copied from texts and these tasks fail to extend pupils' learning. Teaching of reading is more effective and teachers make good use of big books to consolidate letters and sounds and demonstrate the correct use of punctuation and how this affects the way you read a story. Teachers use questioning very well to help pupils make quick progress in their learning, while also enjoying reading. Throughout the school teachers employ teaching strategies, which promote language and extend pupils' vocabulary. As a result pupils gain in confidence to take part in discussions and to speak in front of the class at the end of lessons.

98. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils with special educational needs to use word-processing skills to write, and amend their work. However, this is not yet sufficiently consistent and computers are under-used. Throughout the school, very capable teaching assistants give pupils who have special educational needs, support. The impact of this support is particularly evident in the independent time in literacy lessons and enables pupils to make good progress.
99. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is regularly monitored to ensure consistency with the literacy guidelines and the literacy hour being followed in lessons. Pupils' work is scanned by the co-ordinator but limited opportunities are available for more detailed investigation into standards and teaching throughout the school. This means the evaluation of the subject does not focus rigorously enough on improving the quality of teaching in order to raise standards. Assessment is satisfactory with a good start being made on setting pupils' individual targets. This is helping pupils in Years 3 to 6 to improve as they are more informed about what they have to do to get better. It is less effective in Years 1 and 2 because insufficient attention is given to these targets in lessons and in the marking of pupils' work. The tracking of pupils' progress is not sufficiently in place to ensure pupils are making the best possible progress.
100. Resources are satisfactory but some reading books are in need of replacement to motivate children's enthusiasm for reading. The position of the library does not lend itself to be used as a good information centre. Even though the school library service supplements non-fiction books for specific topics, the school library remains inadequately stocked. There are very few books to teach pupils about other faiths and celebrations. This was a weakness in the previous inspection and has not improved sufficiently.

MATHEMATICS

101. The performance of pupils in the 2001 national tests in mathematics for pupils at the end of Year 6 was well below national averages and those attained by pupils in similar schools. This followed a trend of low results that has occurred since the previous inspection and showed little progress since these pupils finished their education in Year 6. Test results at the end of Year 2 for 2001 were in line with that of national averages and for similar schools. Since the previous inspection test results have risen and shows a satisfactory number of pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment. This improvement was sustained in the 2002 test results when more pupils exceeded the level expected for their age in 2002. National test results for Year 6 pupils also rose in 2002 with significantly better achievement for pupils at the higher levels of attainment. Current standards show this improvement is continuing and standards in Years 2 and 6 are above average.
102. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because:
- the single age class groups in Year 3 to 6 has enabled teachers to follow the National Numeracy Strategy more closely;
 - the curriculum is more challenging especially for higher attaining pupils;
 - there is increased support for pupils from classroom assistants;
 - booster classes provide extra help;
 - leadership of the subject is effective;
 - teaching in Year 6 is of high quality.

103. Standards in Year 2 are above average. Considering many pupils started in Year 1 with average levels of attainment their achievement is good. Lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work show good knowledge of all parts of the mathematics curriculum. Higher attaining pupils know about the rotation of shapes through $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ turns, they know about simple reflective symmetry but do not use the properties of shapes to sort them into groups. They use information from data that is represented by symbols and measure and draw lines to 6cm. Number facts such as odd and even, fractions such as $\frac{1}{2}$ of 12 are calculated and calculations such as $28 - 10$ and $36 + 22$ are completed accurately. Average attaining pupils identify right angles on doorframes and draw shapes such as rectangle, square and triangle accurately. Pupils are confident handling number when working with money. Counting back is used as a method for simple subtraction and number facts are secure to 20. However, when identifying coins to make amounts such as 8p they reveal weak links between number and coin values and try to make the amount with 2p, 2p and 4p. Lower attaining pupils meet similar challenges as the other pupils and succeed at an appropriate level. They have less accuracy when drawing lines to a set length and work with simpler numbers but they are secure with number facts to 10. When working with money they use coins to work out matching amounts to show that 5p is worth 5 coins at 1p.
104. Standards in Year 6 are above the level expected for their age. Considering many pupils started in Year 3 with low standards the achievement of many is good and is very good for the pupils now reaching beyond the level expected for their age. A full range of activities is covered. Higher attaining pupils measure and draw angles to the nearest degree. They know that probability is measured on a scale from 0 to 1 and they collect information and use angle measure to represent it in a circular diagram. Calculations use all four rules of number with figures to two decimal places and fractional amounts such as $\frac{7}{8}$ of 24 are calculated. Average attaining pupils work at a similar level of challenge with less complexity. They complete calculations such as, $834 + 124$, or 112 divided by 7 and find $\frac{1}{8}$ of 32 . However, they are less accurate and do not draw angles with the same accuracy. Lower attaining pupils are fully included in the curriculum and take a full part in activities such as identifying a shape from a description of its properties. They have knowledge of the multiplication tables and are able to find the perimeter of shapes such as square and rectangle by measuring sides. However, they do not use the relationship of opposite sides being the same length to simplify the calculation.
105. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support that they receive from classroom assistants. The organisation of the school into single age class groups has meant that all pupils are fully included in lessons that challenge at a level appropriate to all abilities.
106. Numeracy skills support learning in other subjects. In music, pupils are encouraged to count the beats and work out the beats in a bar of music. In science, pupils carry out investigations involving measuring distance and then calculate their overall results.
107. Teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is now good throughout the school. Teaching was best in Years 2, 4 and 6. Satisfactory teaching was found in other year groups with no teaching seen being less than satisfactory. The very good teaching featured high expectations of pupils with challenging work that built on pupils' responses and led to a fast pace of learning. For example, in a

Year 6 lesson pupils were asked to draw a triangle with a perimeter of 18cm and this caused them to use their knowledge about the properties of triangles. The teacher used questions well to involve all pupils and posed situations, such as 'We need to know how to...' This combination of high challenge, good pace to the work, clear expectations and good use of reasoning meant that all pupils were focused and interested. Numeracy skills are taught well and pupils are encouraged to explain their calculations. Brisk pace and practical activities lead to pupils clearly enjoying their mathematics lessons. For example, in a Year 6 lesson good interest and good use of knowledge well was shown when one pupil said "Miss, I know another way". Teaching was good in Year 2 because the lesson had clear learning objectives and matched questions well to pupils of different abilities. Questions, such as 'Which coin is the least?' caused higher attaining pupils to use comparisons before answering. Lower attaining pupils learned well when the teacher used questions such as 'Is this right?' and 'Shall we check?'

108. When teaching and learning were less successful questions failed to extend learning and explanations were not requested from most pupils. As a result, in a lesson about quadrilaterals, Year 3 pupils showed little awareness of the properties of the shapes and could not compare a square and a rectangle except to say that the rectangle is longer. Similarly, Year 5 pupils' knowledge of the value of digits in a number was not extended when they were asked to add 2 to numbers such as 3759 but not asked to add 200 or 20. Questions were directed to individual pupils but not thrown open to the whole class so that there were too many times when one pupil was working and the other pupils were waiting. Homework is intended on a regular basis but the level of challenge and consistent setting of homework is not yet established throughout the school. As a result, many pupils are not developing good habits of independent study. Information and communication technology is not being fully used to support pupils' learning in mathematics.
109. The good improvement since the previous inspection has come from good leadership. New ideas and teaching strategies are shared effectively with other teachers. Pupils' performance is monitored and analysed from annual assessment information so that areas of weakness can be identified and the curriculum adjusted. Focus ideas for developing teaching are used on a half term cycle and pupils' multiplication skills have recently been developed. Pupils' performance is monitored from the Reception class to Year 6 but these records have not yet been used to identify the pupils who are not making as much progress as could be expected. Teaching has been monitored and observation methods have been developed with results in improvements to teaching of mental mathematics by a number of teachers.

SCIENCE

110. The last five years have seen standards in science improve slowly year on year, but the rate of progress has lagged behind that of other schools. National test results for 11 year olds in 2001 show that standards were still very low, in the bottom five per cent for all and similar schools. However, an analysis of the results achieved by the Year 6 pupils in 2002 indicates that standards have risen with more pupils achieving higher levels.
111. The teacher assessments of pupils' standards at the age of seven in 2001 and 2002 show that every pupil attained the expected level. In 2002, there was a drop in the number of pupils assessed at reaching beyond the expected level.

112. Standards now are at the level expected for the pupils' ages in Years 2 and 6. This reflects similar standards as those identified in the teacher assessment in Year 2. In the current Year 2 few pupils are working at the higher level. Standards have significantly improved in Year 6 because of:
- the stronger focus on challenging the higher attaining pupils;
 - the closer attention given to the new planning guidelines;
 - the very good teaching seen in Year 6 and the high expectations in this class of pupils of all ability;
 - the school's continuing focus on investigative work.
113. Overall achievement is satisfactory. The increasing number of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age in Year 6 shows achievement is improving as pupils move through the school and is good for many higher attaining pupils in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from additional support from adults and classmates. Teachers often pair these children with higher attaining pupils so that they receive good support and this enables them to make good progress.
114. Seven-year-old pupils are able to name the parts of the body. They are developing an understanding of the need for a healthy diet, as they describe that food is needed for growth, energy and good health. Pupils in Year 2 discuss and sort items into different categories identifying the difference between medicines and drugs which are not safe to handle. Year 1 pupils look at physical differences (eye colour) and use their numeracy skill to analyse and record this information in a block graph. This lesson lacked pace, with the pupils working as a whole class for too long and having very little time to carry out their independent tasks. A review of last year's work shows due attention is given to investigation. Pupils have carried out investigations to see how a bulb is lit and that this requires an electrical circuit. They also discover the different properties of materials. There is limited evidence of pupils making their own suggestions about what they want to find out or saying whether their results were as expected.
115. In Year 6, pupils experience a good range of practical activities, which helps them develop scientific skills. Pupils' books show breadth and balance in coverage. In their work, pupils in Year 6 produce labelled diagrams and graphs to show data collected, for example, to show pulse rate at resting and after exercise. Pupils in Year 6 use appropriate scientific vocabulary accurately and apply the skills learnt in literacy, such as bullet points, sub headings and making notes to their science work. In Year 6, pupils know about healthy eating and mixing and separating materials. They know the main parts and functions of flowers and plants and have a good knowledge of electrical circuits and conduct experiments to test the conductivity of materials. The current focus on teaching of scientific enquiry, which is being promoted throughout the school, is starting to have an impact on standards. For example, in Year 6 when pupils investigate how quickly sugar cube dissolves in water at different temperatures. However, pupils' understanding of fair testing is basic for their age and pupils are less confident drawing conclusions from their findings. The pupils carry out the practical work with care and due regard to safety.
116. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The best teaching seen was in Year 6 and in one lesson teaching was excellent. Teachers plan their science lessons thoroughly and carefully, basing their plans on the national guidelines for science. In Year 6, the teacher introduces work on solubility and dissolving in an exciting and

enthusiastic way. This engages the pupils' interest and highly motivates them. The teacher gives clear instructions, so the pupils know what is expected of them and what they are to do. Perceptive questioning leads to good discussion and ensures that pupils are well aware of safety aspects. The teacher has a good scientific knowledge and insists on the correct use of scientific vocabulary. The consistent practice, across the whole school, of sharing learning objectives with the pupils is very effective in helping them become more aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their learning. A weakness in Years 1 and 2 is the overuse of work sheets that often fail to extend the learning of the higher attaining pupils. During the inspection the use of information and communication technology to support learning was not seen. A review of books shows the use of information and communication in science is underdeveloped.

117. Management is good and this has been a contributory factor to the improved standards in Years 3 to 6. Whole-school planning ensures progressive and effective learning. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and lessons, and shares suggestions and recommendations with colleagues. This has led to improvements in teaching. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress through the scheme of work are in the early stages of implementation. At the end of each unit of work pupils are assessed and teachers make a record of those who achieve above or below the expected levels. However, there are no criteria for judging progression in investigative skills.

ART AND DESIGN

118. Standards in art and design are at the expected level for the pupils' age in Years 2 and 6. The pupils experience a range of interesting activities and this leads to satisfactory achievement. Pupils with special educational make similar progress, and achieve results as good as their peers. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good because new planning guidelines have been put in place to help teachers develop pupils' artistic skills. Consequently, the weaknesses previously identified have been resolved and standards have improved especially in Years 3 to 6.
119. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and judgements are based upon the school's portfolio of pupils' work and examples on display.
120. In Year 2, pupils have used nature as a focus for their work. Examples show an understanding of colour mixing in their self-portraits and these are well proportioned. Year 2 pupils have used information and communication technology to create colourful patterns and show an ability to select colours and fill in different shapes. Some examples of work include too much crayoning and so are not extending pupils' artistic skills.
121. More evidence is available in Years 3 to 6 because pupils are using sketchbooks. These examples show pupils have explored a range of ideas including working in clay although textile work is limited and is identified by the school as an area for development. Cultural development is promoted as pupils learn about the different styles of a number of artists. In Year 5, examples reflecting the style of Paul Klee show a good understanding of creating pictures using colour, shapes and parallel lines. A few examples of work from pupils in Year 6 are high quality showing they have been inspired by the work of Andy Warhol. The attempt of a portrait of Marilyn

Monroe is impressive and has captured both the actress and the style of Warhol. Examples of work show teachers are developing pupils' skills of planning as pupils are asked to identify the style, media and tone of pictures.

122. Insufficient evidence is available to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching seen was satisfactory. An interesting variety of resources made the learning interesting and pupils increased their knowledge of the style of the artist Monet. Pupils had a choice of resources, experimenting both with pastels and paint and were able to evaluate their work and discuss the quality achieved by the different media. Although pupils are spotting aspects they would like to improve they are less confident adapting and modifying to achieve a better result. Limited evidence was available to show teachers make enough use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
123. Management of art and design is satisfactory. Attractive displays around the school show that art and design receives more attention than at the time of the last inspection. A portfolio of work is in place which enables the co-ordinator to have an overview of standards in the school. However, this does not provide information on the teaching of artistic skills and this is the next step in the school's development of the subject. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development as they learn about the styles of a range of different artists. However, there is limited evidence of art from other cultures being used as a focus for pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. Analysis of pupils' work in workbooks and of work on display shows that standards in design and technology are below those expected of pupils at the age of seven and eleven and progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils and staff offer support to pupils with special educational needs and they play a full part in lessons. However, their overall progress is also restricted because of the opportunities planned for them. A review of pupils' work shows an emphasis on planning and evaluation but little evidence of skills of model making. However, although the position was similar at the time of the last inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement. There is now a structured curriculum that is based on government guidelines, teachers are now teaching the design, make and evaluate sequence to a regular timetable in modules that last one half term. These initiatives have not had sufficient time to have a significant effect on standards.
125. Limited work was available for pupils in Year 2. Models show pupils have learnt how to construct a simple vehicle with wheels from boxes and recycled materials. Other activities include in Year 5 making musical instruments that can be played by shaking and scraping. Year 6 pupils have made slippers and have evaluated shelters. The process of designing and planning the product is developed well and the slippers show fitness for purpose. However, much of the learning is about the procedures and there is insufficient evidence that the making of the product has offered pupils sufficient opportunities to develop skills of choice from a range of materials or investigation of the techniques of fastening. The work on shelters did not show any construction of a structure but mainly evaluated umbrellas. The examples show the school is putting too much emphasis on design and evaluation. Pupils' workbooks show much recording about the design make and evaluate process but there is little to indicate development of the skills of handling materials and selecting tools.

126. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. The major weakness is in the overuse of work sheets that fail to develop any real skills of making. In lessons seen pupils did not have enough opportunities for making choices or the development of skills. This was evident from observation of a Year 4 lesson about designing money containers. The process was structured within a limited range of choice and so pupils were restless as the teacher directed pupils in the task. A limited range of materials was planned and the pupils focused on unimaginative decoration for a purse or wallet that planned to use fabric paints and pens for much of the decoration. This was a planning and designing lesson but there was no real choice of materials, such as papier-mâché or wood, from which to make an imaginative container rather than the whole class project of purses or wallets. Teaching was better in Year 1 because pupils were given more choice of materials when designing their own tiles and curtains as they completed model houses. They used plastic sheet for windows, felt for carpets and curtains and squared paper designs for tiles. Tools were used well and the pupils showed confidence and were self reliant in the work. This linked well with their work in history.
127. The management of the subject is satisfactory. New planning guidelines have been put in place and new resources are being obtained for each new module. These have led to the development of curriculum but there is no clear focus on the raising of standards in the subject and so assessment procedures evaluate the success of the topic rather than the skill development of the pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

128. No geography was taught during the inspection week. Judgments have been made on a review of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. No judgement is made about the quality of teaching and learning in geography.
129. Standards in Year 2 are at the level expected for their age. The achievement of the great majority is satisfactory and standards identified in the last inspection have been maintained. Standards in Year 6 are below average and progress is unsatisfactory. The school has made a good start in tackling the weaknesses identified in the last inspection but there has been insufficient time for these changes to have a significant effect on standards. Pupils with special educational needs, benefit from additional adult support which gives them full access to the curriculum. Their progress is similar to their peers being slow in Years 3 to 6 when the focus on skills is less developed.
130. In Year 2, pupils make comparisons between their own locality and a seaside resort. They recognise the similarities and differences in man made features, such as housing, shops, transport and physical features, like sand, rock and cliffs. In discussion with Year 2 pupils, they eagerly describe a school visit to Llandudno. One pupil confidently states that Llandudno is in Wales and takes 2 hours to get there. In discussing an island that they had been studying, through a fiction book, pupils can identify features, such as a jetty and bridge and draw a map of the island. Pupils compare and contrast this environment with their own. In Year 1, pupils examine the pollution and dangers posed by the volume of traffic on the main road and start to develop simple mapping skills.
131. Evidence from the pupils' books in Years 3 to 6 shows unsatisfactory progress in developing geographical skills and the use of geographical enquiry questions. The curriculum meets national recommendations but lacks depth and breadth. Pupils in

Year 3 look at maps and the use of simple keys, but overall insufficient attention is given to the development of mapping skills, including the use of scales, symbols, keys, coordinates and grid references. Pupils in Year 4, examine ways of improving the school environment and write proposals for improvements. They also investigate how other people live and how the way life styles reflect local conditions. For example, in Year 4 pupils investigate the day-to-day life of a lady in India, but without any depth of understanding or empathy. In Year 5, practical work, on water in the environment, links with science and work on the water cycle. Work on a contrasting locality reveals some use of some enquiry questions but again the use of enquiry is insufficiently developed. In Year 6, the Internet is also used to develop and support the pupils' personal research on mountainous environments, but generally the use of information and communication technology to support the geography curriculum is limited. In discussion with Year 6 pupils they use a very limited range of geographical vocabulary. Year 6 pupils take part in a residential camp at Shugborough, where rivers and stream are explored and children follow an orienteering course but otherwise there is limited evidence of the use of first hand investigations and field work.

132. Sound management has led to the school putting in place strategies to tackle previous weaknesses. These are slowly having an effect on standards. Long-term planning is better because the school has adopted new planning guidelines. Assessment procedures are in the early stages of implementation. At the end of each unit of work pupils are assessed and teachers make a record of those who achieve above or below the expected levels. As yet, however, there are no criteria for assessing progression in skills of geographical enquiry and mapwork. The co-ordinator has had limited opportunity to find out about standards throughout the school. Resources are satisfactory but a greater range is required to make the teaching of the subject more effective.

HISTORY

133. Standards in history are at the expected level for the pupils' age in Years 2 and 6. The pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs thrive in the lessons that include practical activities and the use of artefacts. As a result they make similar progress, and can achieve results as good as their peers.
134. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and standards remain the same. New planning guidelines have developed the pupils' skills of asking historical questions and communicating their findings, particularly in Year 6.
135. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of some famous figures from history, such as Samuel Pepys. They use a variety of sources from which to obtain information. They know about the role that Florence Nightingale played in modernising hospital care and consider if they would have liked to be a nurse in 1854. In Year 1, toys and domestic objects are used as a focus to distinguish between past and present. They sequence correctly cooking appliances in order of age and make comparisons with modern ones. They begin to use historical vocabulary accurately and relate their learning to shared experiences at home and school.
136. In Years 3 to 6 history is well represented in the curriculum and the pupils are given a good range of experiences to develop their understanding of the past. As a result,

pupils in Year 6 have a secure factual knowledge of the way of life, traditions and beliefs of the Egyptians, Greeks, Tudors and Victorians. They appreciate how World War Two affected peoples' daily lives. They understand that historians find out about the past from a range of resources including books, artefacts, audio-visual materials and use of the Internet. This stimulates much discussion, research and a keen interest in finding out about history. Good links are made to other areas of the curriculum, but especially in English, where, in Year 5, pupils write letters home in the role of evacuees, so broadening the pupils' understanding of the lives of people in the recent past. These pupils show a clear understanding of the conditions endured by evacuees in Britain during World War Two, and can demonstrate maturity and empathy in comparing them to their own lives. Work from Year 4 pupils shows how well they can use artefacts from Victorian times and identify changes. They can identify and describe differences between their own lives and those of Victorian children. There are examples of effective use being made of empathy and description to support the development of pupils' writing, but this is not consistent across the school.

137. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The best teaching was in Year 6 where teaching seen was excellent and the brisk pace and variety of activities led to much new learning. Pupils are encouraged to discuss the benefits and difficulties of using different sources of evidence, as in the Year 6 lesson, where pupils question an eyewitness. The headteacher was the source of information and the pupils asked questions about clothes and music from the 1960s. Most pupils responded with keen interest and enthusiasm in this lesson and learning was excellent. Pupils were highly motivated to continue their research using books and the Internet. Throughout the school lessons are well prepared, with a good range of 'artefacts' and sources of evidence being made available. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were asked to write down five questions they want to find out about Egyptian writing and then select pictures, which would answer their questions. The pupils were asked to analyse the picture under the headings, 'What we know for sure', 'What we can guess' and 'What we still have to find out.' Effective questioning, pace and classroom management are also features that support good progress in consolidating, developing and acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and ask probing questions to extend pupils' thinking. Pupils are encouraged to use historical vocabulary. In Year 2, a word bank is used to support the pupils when writing diaries as eye witnesses to the Fire of London. However, there is evidence of missed opportunities. For example, in Year 2, a pupil offered an alternative theory to who started the fire saying 'it wasn't the baker, it was the king' but the teacher did not explore this statement and continued with the planned lesson.
138. The subject is managed satisfactorily. New planning guidelines ensure a balanced coverage of the subject across the whole school. Assessment procedures are in the early stages of implementation. At the end of each unit of work pupils are assessed and teachers make a record of those who achieve above or below the expected levels. This is useful practice in checking pupils have understood the content of the topics taught. However, as yet, there are no criteria for assessing progression in skills of historical enquiry or historical interpretation.
139. The use of information and communication technology for research is developing. An evaluation of the subject is carried out through checks on teachers' planning and a

review of work in books. However, no lessons have been observed to check on how skills are being taught and so identify good practice which can be shared with colleagues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

140. Standards in information communication technology have steadily improved since the time of the previous inspection when they were failing due to weak teaching and poor subject knowledge. The decline in standards has been halted and they are now starting to rise although they remain below average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils are not making sufficient progress.
141. Analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons in Years 1 and 2 found very little evidence of pupils' use of information and communication technology. Computers were underused during the inspection. There was no work on display and workbooks for Year 2 showed immature and undeveloped work. Printed work using an art program to create pictures and design showed evidence that pupils can use controls to select different colours and size of brushes. However, the work was mainly random strokes and did not suggest pupils had attempted to create and improve their design. Overall, pupils in Year 2 lack confidence in keyboard skills. There is difficulty in using resources for the teaching of information communication technology with two computers per classroom and no large screen display of software for class demonstrations. This means that pupils have difficulty in viewing teachers' demonstrations of the skills to be learned and then pupils have to work with minimal support at tasks that are designed to develop understanding.
142. Standards in Year 6 are below average. However, discussions with pupils at the age of eleven together with analysis of their work finds a good range of experience and a suitable level of challenge in the work of the pupils. However, pupils show a keen interest in the subject and discussion with Year 6 pupils found enthusiasm and anticipation about their current work. Pupils have worked at a variety of tasks from graphics to text. They know about fonts, use of colour and size, editing and printing in word processing but seldom use these skills to write directly into the computer or for work in other subject areas. Pupils with special educational needs work with pupils who can support them in paired tasks and Year 6 do write directly into the software on occasions after class support assistants have scripted their thoughts on a whiteboard. They have used software to draw and design book covers. However, these skills have not been extended to give instructions for the computer to draw shapes such as triangles or to create repetitive designs that rotate about their starting point and so create 'star' designs. E-mail has been used with messages to other class groups and also on one occasion to the President of the United States of America. The pupils did receive a reply. Spreadsheets have been used to record information collected about water use and this information was represented in graphical form. Sequencing instructions for the control of traffic lights have been developed and resources are now in place for the pupils to use sensors in monitoring change of pressure. Access has been made to web sites and information gathered but this skill is not developed for use in other subjects such as history. However, almost all of these experiences are short tasks for completion whilst working in pairs during other lessons and so are not developed to any level of confident use that would enable information communication technology skills to be used for learning in other subject areas.

143. Teaching and learning is judged to be satisfactory overall. A significant improvement since the previous inspection is the use of new planning guidelines which is leading to more regular teaching of the skills of information communication technology. As a result, the full range of learning opportunities is provided. However, difficulties of teaching skills to a whole class on a small screen display mean that all pupils are not fully grasping the taught skill. Teachers are not fully promoting information and communication technology in other subjects and there is an inconsistency between classes in the amount of time allocated to teaching the subject. Consequently, pupils are not always getting sufficient opportunity to practise their new skills and this restricts their progress. During the inspection computers were often not in use and pupils get few opportunities to develop independent use of their skills.
144. Good teaching and learning was seen for Year 3 pupils about combining text and graphics. A clear structure was used for careful and thoughtful teaching that involved all pupils and gave opportunities for a majority to demonstrate and practice their skills in using the software. Pupils were very attentive and made many knowledgeable suggestions about how to select images and to change size and location. They learned to select key words from a text about Egyptian Pharaohs and to insert appropriate images at a suitable size within the passage.
145. When teaching and learning were less successful the process was slow. For example, a lesson about spreadsheets for Year 5 pupils used worksheets to illustrate what would be shown on a computer screen. Calculations were carried out on the worksheet before the software was used to show how the computer can analyse the data and pupils' interest waned. Although the school is basing teaching on government guidelines the suggestions are not always used well to develop pupils skills in using software.
146. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and changes have been introduced, although as yet these have not had a significant effect on standards. Funding has been used wisely to develop resources so that all class computers are linked to the Internet. Teachers' confidence has been improved as a result of training and all teachers are now using this to teach skills. However, teachers are not all sufficiently confident to use information communication technology to support learning in other subject areas. Nor are they familiar with the range of possibilities within the software available. Assessment procedures need development so that teachers have a more detailed picture of pupils' progress and can be sure tasks are extending pupils' skills. Although resources are much improved, the development of the subject is restricted since there is no large screen display of software for use when teaching new skills and this limits opportunities for pupils to gain immediate opportunities to practise and develop new skills effectively.

MUSIC

147. Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards in Year 2 and 6 are as expected for pupils' ages. The high standards in the infants identified in the last inspection were not evident during this inspection. The drop is due to several factors:

- the co-ordinator is new and has not had time to get a complete overview of standards in the subject;
 - there is some confusion about the overall planning being followed by the school. The specialist teacher employed by the school is providing an outline of the topics she teaches but it is unclear which planning guidelines are being followed so that class teachers can extend learning in other lessons;
 - in the lessons seen, pupils in different years are combined and this leads to large classes. As a result, pupils have limited opportunity to play instruments and this restricts their progress.
148. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn a range of songs and hymns. They enjoy singing in a round and successfully sing *London's Burning* maintaining both the pitch and timing. Many recognise symbols can represent sounds and a few use currently the terms 'crotchets' and 'quavers'. All respond correctly to these symbols clapping to a simple tune. The teaching promotes appreciation of music and as a result, pupils are aware music can represent emotions. For example, they identified that loud music often reflects anger and soft music sadness. A few pupils confuse 'loud' and 'low' sounds. Pupils did not suggest how they could improve their performance and the large class size restricted the development of this skill.
149. No music was seen being taught in Year 6. In assembly, the older pupils sang, *Give me joy in my heart* tunefully and with enthusiasm. In Year 5, pupils show that they have increased their musical skills. They follow musical notation, recognise the music symbol for 'silence' and respond correctly clapping and playing musical instruments to short pieces of music. The pupils did not have an opportunity to compose their own work or discuss how they could improve their performance because teaching did not plan for the development of these skills.
150. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the extra teaching support available and are fully included in the activities. This leads to satisfactory progress in extending their musical skills and knowledge.
151. The great majority of lessons are taught by visiting teachers. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good subject knowledge encourages the use of terminology and many pupils show confidence using musical vocabulary in their responses. In Year 5, pupils are taught how to improve their singing and pupil appreciate that it is important to control their breathing. Lessons are managed well and all staff join in and make learning enjoyable for all. Links are made effectively to other subjects and this adds relevance to the learning. For example, the older pupils learnt to sing, 'We'll meet again' as part of their history topic on the Second World War. The limited time available for lessons and the large class sizes leads to some restriction in choice for pupils. For example, in selecting instruments to play and in improvising and composing their own their own patterns.
152. Overall, management is satisfactory and the co-ordinator has replenished resources and has made a start on identifying future areas for development. The subject extends pupils' cultural development and they recall the Mars music from the *Planet's Suite by Holst*. They understand how the composer used different instruments to represent war.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. Standards in physical education match those expected for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. Achievement for all pupils is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make satisfactory progress. A few pupils who find it difficult to maintain good behaviour are encouraged to participate in a sensible way and are supported well by staff and other pupils. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and standards remain the same.
154. Year 2 pupils show very good control as they move around the hall at various speeds in response to simple piano music by the teacher and show sensitive interpretation of the volume and pauses. In games, pupils show satisfactory co-ordination when practising throwing and stopping skills. However, a few pupils began to throw beanbags vigorously to their partners rather than developing the skills of accuracy and control. Pupils have a simple understanding that exercise is beneficial for the body.
155. Most Year 6 pupils are confident swimmers and are likely to achieve the recommended minimum distance. It was not possible to see Year 6 pupils take part in physical education because they were on a visit during the inspection. In games lessons, Year 3 pupils make good use of space and know how to change direction when receiving a pass but they cannot maintain their concentration and find themselves in a chasing game instead. Pupils in Year 4, show good control and imagination when making mirror images. They use unusual shapes and clearly think about the positions that they are using. However, they do not show awareness of the use of extended limbs as a way of giving their shape a greater impact. Pupils understand the effect of exercise on the body and recognise the importance of warming up and cooling down.
156. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons follow a suitable structure and the warm up routine is the most effective part of these lessons. This is vigorous and energetic so pupils became breathless and aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Pupils observe changes in body heat and heart rate. Good safe-handling techniques are developed with Year 4 pupils and they work together to carry mats with care and show an awareness of the need to co-operate and work as a group. Teachers manage pupils well and pupils respond to signals promptly and listen attentively to directions from the teachers. However, organisation and use of time in lessons are less effective. Pupils wait a long time whilst teachers allocate pupils to teams or give instructions. Teachers provide many opportunities for developing basic levels of skill in throwing and catching or developing sequences of movement. However, few opportunities are taken to use examples of good work as a way of encouraging pupils to learn from each other or for the better pupils to take their skills to a higher level. For example, when teaching throwing and stopping skills, pupils were challenged to score goals when a challenge to be more accurate may have supported better skill development.
157. Management is good and has led to the introduction of detailed planning guidelines that have helped teachers in their lesson planning. Resources are good and gymnastic equipment is appropriate for pupils. Training in games' skills has improved teachers' confidence in coaching specific skills. Photographic evidence shows all aspects of the physical education curriculum receive due attention. Teachers carry out evaluations about the attainment of groups of pupils according to achievement.

Parents are concerned at the lack of extra curricular activities and inspection evidence finds the range of opportunities limited for football and netball. The school is looking to develop this provision and has ideas ready for consideration.