

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODHOUSES VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Woodhouses near Failsworth

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105688

Headteacher: Mr G Leach

Reporting inspector: Mr P Mann
23219

Dates of inspection: 20th – 22nd January 2003

Inspection number: 252987

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 -11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ashton Road
Woodhouses
Failsworth
Manchester

Postcode: M35 9WL

Telephone number: 0161 6816793

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor Elaine Joynes

Date of previous inspection: 13th October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Phil Mann 23219	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Music Physical education	Standards - attainment and progress How well are pupils taught? Inclusion English as an additional language
Ann Taylor 19743	Lay inspector		Standards - attitudes, behaviour, personal development Attendance How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mark Madeley 22657	Team Inspector	Children under five Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History	How well is the school led and managed? Efficiency of the school
Stephanie Cook 14842	Team Inspector	English Art and design Religious education	Special educational needs How good are curricular and other opportunities? Spiritual, moral, social and cultural and personal development Monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development Educational and personal guidance - assessment

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woodhouses VC Primary School has 140 pupils on roll, aged 4 to 11, and the average class size is 28. The school is located in the village of Woodhouses on the fringe of Oldham. The original Victorian school was replaced by a new building in 1967 and there have been some modifications since then. The school building is surrounded by attractive play areas and a playing field. Pupils come from predominately above average backgrounds from the village and surrounding areas. The number of pupils who receive a free school meal is well below the national average. At the time of the inspection, there were 15 children under five in the reception class. The attainment of these children at the start of school is above average. The school has identified 11 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs. Of these, about half are at the early, school-based stages of assessment and provision and the other half receive support from the local education authority. There is only one pupil with a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Currently only two pupils speak English as an additional language which is below that found nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The strong Christian ethos and caring support provided by staff coupled with some effective teaching are ensuring that pupils make satisfactory achievement overall as they progress through the school. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school's work and new initiatives are being managed well. The quality of teaching is now more consistent across the school. Given the level of resources available, the attainment of pupils when they start school and the standards currently being achieved, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards overall in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11 years.
- Above average standards in music are achieved by pupils in the juniors and the quality of singing is very good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning; relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are very positive.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Provision for activities outside of lessons is very good.
- Parents are very supportive of the school's work.
- The recently appointed headteacher is providing clear educational direction for the work of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology at 11 years.
- The use of good pupil assessment information to ensure teachers' planning for lessons consistently meets the needs of all pupils.
- The governing body's long term planning for the future development of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has undergone a substantial change in staffing since the previous inspection but most of the key issues have been addressed successfully. Pupils' standards in design and technology have improved and the school now provides a good range of information for parents. The quality of teaching is now much better but teachers' marking of pupils' work and their use of assessment information to inform future planning is still inconsistent in quality. Staff awareness of child protection is now satisfactory, although there is still no school policy to provide effective guidance for staff. Following the changes in staffing that have taken place over the last year, the school's capacity for further improvement is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	C	C	E
Mathematics	A	A	C	D
Science	A	B	B	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

All pupils are making satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. Inspection findings judge that standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school at 11 in English, mathematics and science. These judgements on pupil standards represent good improvement overall on the 2002 national tests national tests where standards at 11 in English and mathematics were average but well above average in science. When results for all three subjects are compared against schools with similar circumstances standards are well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. The number of pupils in each year group however, is small, and the overall attainment of each year group can vary considerably year on year. Any comparison and analysis of past results needs to be treated with some degree of caution because of these variations and the small numbers of pupils.

There have been fluctuations in standards for 11 year olds since the previous inspection and the overall trend has been contrary to that found nationally. A change in staffing has provided good impetus to the raising of standards and especially towards the achievements of more able pupils. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are now improving and the school is on line to achieve its higher targets for 11 year olds this year.

Pupil standards meet national expectations in nearly all other subjects. Standards in music are above that normally expected for 11 year olds. The quality of singing is particularly good and pupils sing with much confidence and enthusiasm in lessons and assemblies. Pupils' standards are below expectations, however, in information and communication technology because there are insufficient resources to teach the necessary range of skills needed for pupils effectively to cover all the aspects of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy lessons and work hard. They are starting to be more confident in offering their opinions and influencing change through the active school council.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils have a keen understanding of right and wrong and the school is an orderly place to learn in.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and pupils are friendly and helpful. They like their teachers and there is a strong community feel to the school.
Attendance	Very good and well above national 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 across the school is satisfactory overall with some good features. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, with two out of three lessons being good or better. The bulk of this good or better teaching is for children in the reception and junior classes. Overall, this is a big improvement on the findings of the previous inspection where nearly one in eight lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.

All teachers display technical competence in the teaching of basic skills and this is especially so in the teaching of English and mathematics. Another good feature of teaching within this school is the sharing of subject expertise amongst the staff to provide effective teaching groups and interesting learning experiences for all pupils. This subject knowledge is good in several subjects such as literacy, numeracy, music, and physical education. Teachers also use a wide range of resources to make lessons interesting and explain new concepts.

All teachers gather much information about the progress of all individual pupils. However they are not yet using this information effectively to plan for new learning experiences to ensure that they fully meet the needs of all pupils. The quality of marking is still inconsistent in quality and homework is not always being effectively used to support the learning of junior pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Provision for children in the reception class is good and satisfactory for the infants and juniors. Teachers provide a wide range of educational visits and activities outside lessons. The curriculum is insufficiently well planned for pupils of the same age in mixed age classes to build on skills and knowledge in a systematic way. Some elements of the information and communication technology curriculum cannot be effectively taught due a lack of up to date resources.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good procedures are now in place. Although pupils are often supported well in lessons, teachers do not always include in their planning what pupils need to learn or targets set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Levels of support are appropriate when needed but currently these pupils speak English at a similar standard to other pupils in the school and are not in need of specialist support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides good provision for spiritual, moral and social development based on a strong Christian ethos and this is having a good impact on pupils' learning. Cultural development shows improvement and is satisfactory but there still needs to be a clearer focus on multi-cultural education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides strong Christian care and support. There are satisfactory procedures for health, safety and child protection, although related policies are not in place. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress linked both to the setting of targets and tracking pupils' progress. These systems are not, as yet, being used consistently to inform future planning.

The partnership with parents is developing well. The school has worked hard to provide parents with a good range of information about the life of the school and, in particular, the progress their children are making.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership. He has an effective relationship with his deputy and co-ordinators, all of whom welcome the opportunity to manage their responsibilities more fully.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They have a satisfactory overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and areas for development. There is however no long term plan for the future development of the school. The governing body is organised and supported well by the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance in a satisfactory way. The work of the governing body in acting as a critical friend to the school lacks rigour. However, governors with responsibility for a subject, particularly English and mathematics, are playing an increasingly important role in gathering information about the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well to enhance teaching and learning, except in information and communication technology where there is too little equipment to teach the skills in this subject effectively to a whole class.

Staffing ratios are good, staff are suitably skilled and roles of curriculum co-ordinators are developing well. The accommodation is satisfactory overall but currently, the roof leaks in some classrooms. Outdoor areas are pleasant and the new play area for younger children is of very good quality. Internally, space is at a premium and leaves no room for a library. There are not enough books and the small library area is very cramped. There are insufficient computers within the school to teach a whole class.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Sixteen parents attended the meeting and 50 per cent (66) returned the questionnaire.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The good leadership and management The good standard of behaviour Their child enjoys school Their child is expected to work hard and achieve his/her best The school is helping their child become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework Information about progress

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory and similar to those in many other schools but homework could be used more effectively to support learning in the juniors. The quality of information about progress is good. There are three parents' evenings per year and the quality of pupils' annual reports has improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. All pupils are making satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. Inspection findings judge that standards are above average by the time pupils leave the school at 11 in English, mathematics and science. Pupil standards meet national expectations in all other subjects except in music where standards are above that normally expected and in information and communication technology, where they are below. These findings are generally similar to those of the previous inspection; in the case of design and technology they are an improvement but, for information and communication technology, a decline.
2. These judgements on pupil standards represent good improvement overall on the 2002 national tests where standards at 11 in English and mathematics were average but well above average in science. When results for all three subjects are compared against schools with similar circumstances standards are well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. The number of pupils in each year group however, is small, and the overall attainment of each year group can vary considerably year on year. This is confirmed by the school's very detailed analysis of pupil achievement data. Any comparison and analysis of past results need to be treated with some degree of caution because of these variations and the small numbers of pupils. Analysis of these results indicates that there are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls at 7 and 11 years.
3. The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science judged by the inspection team and as achieved by last year's Year 2 and Year 6 in the tests, compared to all schools nationally and measured by what is known as points scores. These scores take into account the performance of all pupils in the year group.

	National Tests Year 2 2002	Inspection Judgements Year 2 2003	National tests Year 6 2002 [points scores]	Inspection judgements Year 6 2003
English	Reading Above average Writing Average	Reading Above average Writing Above average	Average	Above average
Mathematics	Average	Above average	Average	Above average
Science	By teacher assessment Below average	Average	Above average	Above average

4. There have been fluctuations in standards for 11 year olds since the previous inspection and the overall trend has been contrary to that found nationally. The school has undergone a period of change and several new staff have been appointed alongside a new headteacher. This change in staffing has provided good impetus to the raising of standards and especially towards the achievements of more able pupils. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are now improving and overall standards are above average for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science.
5. The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	By the age of 7	By the age of 11
Information and communication technology	Below that expected	Below that expected
Art and design	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Design and technology	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Geography	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
History	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Music	In line with that expected	Above that expected
Physical education	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
Religious education	In line with that expected	In line with that expected

6. Reception children make good progress overall as a result of good teaching and the well organised activities, matched to the needs of children. The testing that the school does with this age group indicates that standards of attainment are above average and that they have been rising for the last few years. These children receive good support from the teacher and teaching assistant, and this good provision effectively consolidates the children's learning before they embark on the National Curriculum. This is particularly so in the development of literacy and numeracy skills and the children's personal and social development.
7. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the infants and juniors because teachers care for their pupils well and try to provide a range of interesting and challenging learning experiences. Some impressive displays of pupils' work around the school confirm the high level of teachers' expectations and overall high standards of work achieved. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has been effective and basic skills are taught well by teachers and support staff in all classes. Learning is good across the school in design and technology, music and physical education. This is because the level of subject expertise amongst the teachers is good in these subjects and consequently teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in these lessons. The rate of progress in other subjects including English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall. The pace of learning could be more rapid if teachers in the infant and junior classes used the wealth of assessment data they have gathered on individual pupils more effectively to plan for the next steps in their learning.
8. Learning is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology and standards in Year 6 are below the national expectations. Pupils have not had the opportunity to learn and practise skills with sufficient regularity because the school has insufficient computers and control technology equipment. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory in everything except in the aspect of control technology. There has been insufficient investment by the school to keep pace with both the level of technological change and the need to teach skills to individual pupils regularly. This has been recognised by the school within its current plan for school improvement. However, resources are still inadequate to enable improvements to be made in pupils' standards. The governing body has no coherent plan to address these deficiencies.
9. The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is organised effectively to identify pupils who need additional help in class. Good quality individual education plans are in place for pupils but these are not sufficiently referred to by some teachers when planning each lesson. For example, one pupil in the older classes is a poor reader but only reads to an adult in school once a week. Consequently, he and some of the other pupils do not make as much progress towards their targets as they could. Sometimes pupils achieve well in lessons because of the good level of individual help they receive from classroom assistants or the teacher.

Arrangements for supporting pupils who have statements of special educational need are good and help them to attain standards that are in line with their prior achievements and to behave as well as their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes are good and they enjoy coming to school. They are enthusiastic in lessons and love learning. Behaviour is good and there are some very positive relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. This is one of the school's important strengths, helping pupils to learn effectively.
11. The school has successfully maintained the positive picture seen at the time of the previous inspection. Parents are pleased with the good standard of behaviour and agree that their children enjoy school. This is reflected in the very good attendance figures which are well above national averages.
12. Pupils respond well to their teachers and want to please. They sustain concentration and persevere well, even when tasks are difficult. Pupils with special educational needs try hard with their work and they respond well to additional help and support. These positive attitudes were displayed in a music lesson where they were improvising using percussion to learn a Beatles' song. Here, older pupils were singing solo parts confidently and with passion. The very fact that they were enjoying themselves and were totally immersed in the music shone through the lesson. Everyone had a musical instrument- brass, recorder, xylophone, no one misbehaved, and the pupils 'hung' on the teacher's every word. On this occasion, their behaviour and attitudes were excellent.
13. Behaviour is good and because of this, pupils make good progress in most lessons. They respond well to school rules and have a good understanding of right and wrong. They are accustomed to showing respect for other people's property and are polite and trustworthy. Instances of bullying are extremely rare. Pupils explained that there is some occasional name calling, which teachers help them to cope with and overcome. They described the school as being a happy, friendly place and inspectors agree. There have been no exclusions over the last year and this is the usual pattern for the school.
14. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils make very significant progress in developing their social skills. They get a growing number of opportunities to contribute to the life of the school and community and are doing so enthusiastically and responsibly. This is showing itself through the work of the class and whole school councils. During class council meetings for Years 5 and 6 pupils, they brought up a sensible range of issues. For example, they maturely debated if the allocation of pupils to houses and the way house points are given is fair. Both classes showed good levels of social responsibility, they listened to each other's views well, and showed their desire to influence change within the school.
15. Pupils demonstrate an ability to think of each other too. Their suggestion for a bench for pupils to sit on when they have no one to play with, so others can come and befriend them, will become reality in a few weeks' time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons during the inspection. In two out of three lessons it is good or better with one in five being very good. This is an improvement on the finding of the previous inspection when one in eight lessons was judged unsatisfactory. The bulk of this good or better teaching is for children in the reception class where all teaching is good or better. A large proportion of teaching in the juniors is also good or better. Parents at the meeting commented very positively on the level of good teaching in the school.
17. The quality of teaching for reception children is consistently good or better, providing a good foundation for learning when these children start school. Very good planning identifies clear learning targets in all areas. The balance between teacher and adult directed activity and opportunities for learning through play is good. This good organisation fosters a purposeful working atmosphere and as a result, these children work hard and behave very well. Children display increasing levels of concentration while listening to their teacher and classroom assistant and in their work. There are good assessment procedures for tracking children's progress, and information gathered is used very successfully to plan for the next step in children's learning. Support staff are deployed effectively in lessons to teach an appropriate curriculum to these children, while older pupils in the same class are taught in literacy, numeracy and science lessons.
18. A good feature of the teaching within this school is the sharing of subject expertise amongst the staff to provide effective teaching groups and interesting learning experiences for all pupils. This subject knowledge is good in several subjects such as literacy, numeracy, music, and physical education. All teachers display technical competence in the teaching of basic skills. This level of competence and the effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies have contributed to the maintenance of pupils' standards in English and mathematics during a period of change for the school.
19. Planning is satisfactory overall and learning aims and objectives are appropriately identified in both medium and short term planning. These are often shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons. Teachers are beginning to review these at the end of lessons to provide a useful method of assessing the pupils' level of understanding but this is not yet consistent practice across the school. All teachers know their pupils well and work is matched carefully to the ability of pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons; this is not always the case in lessons for science. Teachers are gathering assessment information about each individual pupil in nearly all subjects but as yet much of this data is not being used effectively to plan for the next stages in pupils' learning. However, teachers evaluate their lessons regularly and use this information well to guide their future planning.
20. Overall, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the level of challenge is high in most lessons. This is particularly so in the reception class and in the junior classes. Inspection evidence indicates that there is often insufficient challenge for the more able pupils in Year 2 especially in writing and in science.
21. Teaching methods are generally effective across the school. A good feature is the use of practical activity to ensure lessons are made interesting to ensure effective learning takes place. For instance, in a good music lesson for pupils in the infants, the teacher provided these pupils with good opportunities to develop their ability to compose a simple piece of music to represent a rainstorm using untuned percussion instruments. Pupils are grouped according to ability in most lessons and this enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory progress.

22. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. All staff have established a positive rapport with the pupils and this results in a pleasant and friendly working atmosphere during lessons. All of the pupils respond positively to this and as a result, behaviour in lessons is good overall. This caring approach is a major strength of the school and parents commented very favourably about this at the meeting. When the pace of lessons becomes too slow or work is insufficiently challenging, some pupils become restless and their overall behaviour is not as good. However, it is never less than satisfactory.
23. Teachers use time well in most lessons. Resources and especially information and communication technology are used effectively to support teaching in some lessons. For example, a multimedia projector was used very effectively to illustrate the use of laptop keyboard functions to enable the oldest junior pupils to use a mathematics program independently. Several other examples of teachers using computers to support the pupils' learning were observed during the inspection. However, the limited number of computers limits teachers' overall ability to utilise information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in lessons. All teachers use resources, such as whiteboards, flip charts and other practical equipment well to demonstrate teaching points and to assist pupils in their understanding of new concepts.
24. Good procedures have been put in place to help teachers monitor and assess the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and in nearly all other subjects. As a result, the progress of pupils is being monitored well. The use of this information to inform future planning is unsatisfactory by teachers of infant and junior classes. The quality of marking is variable. Some of it is very good but some is just a series of ticks and simple comments. Marking is still not being fully used to inform pupils about what they need to do next to improve. This was a key issue at the time of the previous inspection and progress on this aspect of teaching is unsatisfactory. The setting of individual targets for the pupils in literacy and numeracy is contributing positively to the raising of standards overall but these are not always shared with pupils during lessons.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Teachers' planning does not always take into account the precise needs of these pupils and does not always build on learning in the small steps necessary. Teachers often endeavour to work with these pupils at some time in the lesson or allocate the classroom assistant to offer support and help. This level of support is often good, particularly in literacy lessons and helps the pupils learn similar work to the rest of the class. Sometimes the classroom assistant in the infants sits and just listens in the question and answer discussions. This is not effective use of time as the assistant could be providing extra questioning and explanations to help pupils understand the work more fully. The school has some specific resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs but these are in short supply.
26. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for homework and often use it well to support learning in class. Inspectors reviewed the use of homework across the school. They judge that arrangements for homework are satisfactory and similar to many other schools but homework could be used more effectively to support pupils' learning in the juniors.

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

27. Children in the reception class benefit from a good curriculum. Provision is good because staff share a good understanding of how children learn. They plan carefully to ensure that learning experiences are relevant, practical, interesting and matched to children's developing needs. The recently built outdoor area is ensuring that all aspects of learning for children of this age are now being planned for effectively.
28. The curriculum for the infants and juniors is satisfactory overall and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the diocesan agreed syllabus for religious education, except in information and communication technology. Elements of the curriculum for information and communication technology, such as control technology, are not taught because the school does not have the necessary resources. The curriculum for design and technology has improved since the last inspection when it was identified as a key issue. There is currently no scheme of work for personal, social and health education, but there are plans for its development. Personal and social education is taught through 'circle time', and it provides sound opportunities for pupils to offer their opinions, develop their listening skills, and to work with each other co-operatively. The class and school councils also provide a good forum where pupils develop personally and improve their social skills. There is a draft policy for drugs awareness but no school specific policy for sex education and currently the arrangements for the teaching of sex education and drugs awareness are unsatisfactory.
29. The school has recently reviewed several of the policies for the curriculum but some policies are still in need of updating. The school recognises the need to ensure policies are up to date and has plans to review them in order of priority. The school uses the national guidelines as the basis for schemes of work for all subjects, except science. Long term planning gives a sound overview of the topics to be covered by each year group for each term. The medium term planning is satisfactory and provides a sound framework for the planning of lessons. However, there are some weaknesses in teachers' short-term plans. What is to be learned by pupils is identified but the objectives are sometimes not sufficiently specific and well enough matched to the individual needs of all pupils. As a consequence, pupils' skills and knowledge are not systematically built upon from one lesson to the next nor are they always built upon from class to class. The planning for the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher responsible has carefully and thoroughly planned suitable work for reception aged children, which builds on their prior attainment. The allocation of time to each subject is satisfactory and the school places a suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The practice of dividing the morning's lessons into approximately three one hour lessons is helpful in the juniors and enables these teachers to make the most of the time available. The school is implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively.
30. The school values all pupils equally, whatever their needs, and is committed to providing them with equal access to a wide ranging, well balanced curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the school's life. The curriculum provided for them is satisfactory and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. These pupils are often well supported in class because teachers and classroom assistants specifically target them for their attention. However, although teachers plan work for pupils with special educational needs that are appropriate to their level of attainment they do not always plan to address pupils' specific targets.
31. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. This includes football, netball, choir, recorders, keep fit, drama, art and provision for learning to play a number of musical instruments. The school takes part in competitive sports locally. Pupils

in Years 5 to 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit, to undertake adventurous activities and improve their information and communication technology skills. Parents are pleased with the range of activities provided outside the school.

32. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning, with the school having links with the Salvation Army, the local church and secondary school for the teaching of physical education. Visitors from the community, such as the vicar and local nurse provide sound enrichment to the curriculum. The school has made attempts to develop the pupils' awareness of other ethnic groups. For example, it invited an Indian dancer to work with all classes as part of a specific focus on the festival of Diwali. There are no links with local businesses.
33. The school has developed satisfactory curriculum links with partner institutions. These include pupils in Year 6 having induction days at receiving schools, and attending information and communication technology lessons. The local sports college arranges football and rugby tournaments and there are links with the local cricket club to organise coaching and matches. There are appropriate arrangements for the transfer of pupils' records. These links ensure that Year 6 pupils' transfer to the next stage of their education is a smooth one.
34. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. The school has a strong Christian atmosphere. Pupils are encouraged to develop a spiritual awareness through assemblies and religious education. For example, different music is played on each occasion; a candle burns and a wooden Christian cross is displayed at each assembly. This helps to achieve a good sense of ceremony and atmosphere. In assemblies and religious education lessons staff help pupils understand the values and beliefs of other people and time is given for pupils to reflect on their own and others' actions. A spiritual moment was observed in a dance lesson for the youngest junior pupils. In this lesson the teacher planned good opportunities for pupils to practise and perform imaginative dance phrases portraying a range of sporting activities to music.
35. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school promotes honesty, fairness and tolerance well, and the school places high value on good behaviour. Good reward systems are in place which encourage pupils to behave and work well. Good opportunities for moral development are planned in religious education lessons, such as the consideration of the moral meanings behind the stories Jesus told. Pupils are taught to speak and listen to one another with respect. Teachers provide very good models of respectful behaviour for their pupils.
36. The school provides well for pupils' social education. Pupils learn that they can help to improve issues in the wider community by their support for national charities. The class and school councils provide good opportunities to become socially responsible and develop a mature attitude. Staff plan lessons where pupils can work together co-operatively in pairs or groups, such as in drama lessons. Residential visits, extra-curricular activities and the before and after school clubs provide good chances for pupils to develop their skills in different contexts. Very good relationships within the school make a significant contribution to the school's atmosphere. The positive behaviour policy provides good opportunities for pupils to exhibit a sense of self-discipline.
37. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but some aspects of the provision are good. For instance, the school provides a good range of cultural activities through history, art, music, dance and language. The visits to museums and other places of historical and geographical interest greatly enrich pupils' classroom learning. As noted in the last

inspection report, there is still much scope for pupils to discover more about living in a pluralist society in Britain today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Staff provide caring support for pupils' welfare and guidance, within a strong Christian ethos. Arrangements for child protection, safety and welfare are sound. Teachers are aware of and sensitive to the personal and home circumstances of each pupil. A member of staff is the child protection co-ordinator and the headteacher is also trained to fulfil this role. However, the school has still not fully acted upon the key issue from the previous inspection, as there is no school policy in place.
39. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory. The school does not have a health and safety policy and this is another area for them to rectify. The headteacher has already recognised that such policies relating to pupils' welfare need to be in place. This is a minor issue for the school. Appropriate attention is given to ensure the site and buildings are safe, with governors taking an overview of developments, as necessary.
40. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Parents are very good at ensuring their child attends regularly and therefore the school has little need for elaborate procedures. Attendance monitoring procedures are well established and any unauthorised absences are followed up carefully. The headteacher is aware that the morning start time can slip and issues regular reminders about punctuality.
41. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Comments on pupils' annual reports show the clear insight teachers have into the way their pupils are developing as individuals. The small, friendly nature of the school means pupils are well known to all adults.
42. The school has developed good procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' learning and achievements in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and some of the other subjects. The assessment co-ordinator has worked hard to collect a great deal of information from the analysis of the results of a variety of tests, including national test results, to track pupils' progress over time, from when they enter the school. The school also uses this information to set targets for different groups of pupils to be incorporated into teachers' termly planning. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the use of assessment was identified as a key issue. However, although good systems are in place they are not yet embedded in practice in all classes. Some aspects of assessment and its implementation are still not good enough to have a positive influence on teaching and the progress pupils make. For instance, teachers have a reading record sheet to complete for the sessions where teachers read with a group of pupils. In some classes these are not being completed and as a result there is little information available to inform the teacher on what pupils need to learn next. Assessments are not carried out in all subjects, for example in art. Although teachers identify in their plans opportunities for assessment these are not always used, or detailed enough, to be helpful in planning the next stage in all pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents are very supportive of the school and it holds a special place within the village and church community. Parents express very positive views of the school. The overwhelming majority of parents returned their questionnaires, indicating high levels of interest in and support for the school. Communication with parents has improved since the previous inspection.
44. Nearly all of the replies were positive, especially about the good standards of leadership and management, the good behaviour, the way the school expects their child to work hard, and how the school is helping their child mature and become responsible. Parents agree that their child enjoys school.
45. A small minority of parents who replied had reservations about the amounts of homework and did not feel well informed about their child's progress. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views but do not support their concerns. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory and similar to that seen in many other primary schools. It could, however, be used more effectively to support learning in the juniors. The school has recently introduced a homework diary, which parents can use if they think their child is either getting too much, or not enough. The school plans to issue an information leaflet for parents, to ensure they understand the school's policy in due course. Information about pupils' progress is good and is covered in more depth below.
46. Parents are having a significant impact on the work of the school. This has largely been through the encouragement of the governing body and the successful work of the school association, who receive good support for the fundraising events they organise. The association recently made a very significant donation towards the cost of the new outdoor play area. In addition, parents carry out management roles with the Before and After School clubs and have an important presence through the work of governors, many of whom are parents. Several parents have volunteered to help in the classrooms in the past and have since been trained as teaching assistants who are now employed at the school.
47. The school has recently organised successful parents' information evenings on numeracy, homework and information and communications technology. These were positive moves, made in response to parents who asked to be better informed in order to help their child at home. The school recognises that currently parents do not know much about the work their child is doing in class. The headteacher sees this development as a very important part of improving the way the school works with parents and inspectors agree.
48. Information about pupils' progress is good. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very involved in the regular reviews held to look at their child's progress. There are three parents' evenings per year. Reports have improved since the previous inspection, when they formed part of a key issue for the school. They contain a wide amount of information about each subject including targets for numeracy, literacy and science. Some targets are more useful than others. For example 'use a wider range of punctuation such as brackets or dashes' gives parents something specific to work on with their child, whereas 'continue to build on his good progress' or 'continue to apply herself' does not. Teachers include useful general comments about how well the pupil has been working in class.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The recently appointed headteacher has shown good leadership in the short time he has been at the school. He has a clear vision for the school which staff and governors understand and he is beginning to establish an atmosphere of high expectations. In conjunction with the local authority advisor, he has identified the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. With staff and governors, he has drawn up a short-term plan to sustain good practice and improve other aspects in need of improvement within the school. Everyone realises that school improvement and the further raising of pupils' standards from their already high levels is a top priority for management. With nearly half the staff being relatively new, a key priority was to develop a team spirit in which the contribution of everyone was valued. The head and deputy headteacher, with the full support of the governors, have done well in this aspect. Staff are very motivated, and enjoy the challenge of their new responsibilities. They welcome the non-contact time the headteacher has allocated to them in order to carry out these responsibilities. The explicit aims and values of the school, particularly those connected with caring and behaviour, are fully reflected in its work.
50. The effective monitoring and evaluation of performance are an improving management feature of this school. This is especially related to the deputy headteacher's thorough evaluation of the national test scores achieved by pupils. Teaching is carefully and sensitively monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and the subject co-ordinators of English and mathematics. This good practice is yet to be developed further in other subjects such as science. Appropriate praise and targets for improvement are shared with colleagues. The school however, does not look to share good practice amongst its own staff sufficiently well. For instance teachers' planning varies from very good in some classes to satisfactory in others.
51. The school's procedures for appraisal and performance management are sound, and every member of staff has performance targets. Most are related to their individual needs, whilst a few refer to the general targets in the school development plan, such as challenging more able pupils. Teachers and support staff work together effectively to raise standards, particularly in the Foundation Stage and those providing additional support for computer work. All staff have a managerial responsibility and they display a good level of commitment and desire for the school to excel in what it does. Induction procedures for new staff are generally effective, though there is no current policy in place.
52. The governing body is reasonably effective in the way it discharges its duties. Governors are very committed to supporting the work of the school and its staff. They have a satisfactory level of understanding about the school's strengths and areas for development but most of their views are drawn from informal evidence gathering. This means that governors have insufficient first hand information with which to fully carry out their duties as a 'critical friend' to the school. The governors periodically monitor school improvement during the school year, mainly through the headteacher's report and informal observations. Governors with responsibility for a subject, particularly English and mathematics, are playing an increasingly important role in monitoring the school's work. The governing body ensures that it broadly fulfils its statutory duties. However, some essential policies, such as the teaching of sex education, are not in place and data by which parents can compare the school's national test scores in Year 6 with all English schools are not in the school brochure or the annual report to parents. There is a strong relationship between the headteacher and the governors. Governors regularly set rigorous targets for him, and appraise his performance. They appreciate his work to date, especially the greater emphasis he places on listening to the views of parents. The governing body has placed reasonable emphasis on addressing the key issues identified in the previous inspection.

53. The school development plan is unsatisfactory. This is because it only covers the current year and is too short term. However, it closely matches the areas for improvement of the local authority review, and as such, is entirely appropriate. Whilst the governing body has provided sound continuity of leadership during this period of change in school staffing they could have provided greater guidance to the new headteacher in formulating a longer-term view of the school's direction. Most aspects of the school's financial planning are satisfactory and help to support educational priorities. However, the governors have no planned use for the regular year-on-year 'underspend' of between 8 and 10 per cent other than as contingency. This is unsatisfactory in a school, which lacks, for instance, sufficient resources and equipment to raise standards of attainment in information and communication technology.
54. The day-to-day financial administration systems are effective and efficient and the use of local authority financial support is proving good value for money. The senior management team periodically reviews the school finances. The school's use of new technology is appropriate. Teachers are starting to use computers to plan their lessons and prepare work sheets and the office staff use them well, for instance to prepare financial data. The school receives few specific grants but they have used grant money well to develop the Foundation Stage play area and the toilets for the younger pupils; both of which are outstanding features. The school monitors the effectiveness of its spending satisfactorily and keeps governors fully informed. The school's objectives and the outcome of expenditure are not satisfactorily matched because the comparatively large 'under spend' could be used to raise standards even further.
55. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily in this school to further the opportunities open to the pupils. The school compares its costs with those of other schools in the local authority and makes effective use of benchmarking to make further efficiencies. Competitive tendering is well established, though the process of staff identifying and justifying their spending on resources is only just starting. The school usually consults widely on major expenditure decisions, often using the local authority's list of approved contractors.
56. The headteacher has undertaken the responsibilities of special educational needs co-ordinator. He has improved the writing of pupils' individual education plans which are drawn up with the class teacher and identify clearly the next steps in pupils' learning. Procedures for the early identification of pupils have improved. The headteacher has introduced a system of termly meetings with staff and parents to review pupils' progress and to set new targets. He is well aware of what further needs to be improved to fully implement the new Code of Practice.
57. The overall range of teachers' skills and staffing levels are appropriately matched to the requirements of the school. The school has experienced a significant turnover of staff in recent times, and over half of staff, including the headteacher, are relatively new appointments. The school makes good use of a visiting specialist to teach music. Pupils benefit from extra support from a visiting information and communication technology technician as part of an arrangement with other local small schools.
58. The accommodation is satisfactorily matched to meet current demands. It comprises of a main school building with later additions, including a new classroom. The school does not have a library because space is very tight. This is a distinct disadvantage for pupils' learning. Provision outdoors is good, especially the new play area for younger pupils and an interesting nature area which is currently being developed. Maintenance is satisfactory and although the roof leaks, plans are in place for its repair.

59. Resources are satisfactory overall. They are good for history, geography, music and those especially for the youngest pupils. The school makes good use of museums, galleries and field centres to enrich the curriculum. However, resources for English and information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. In English, there are few information books (such as those usually found in a library) and the reading scheme is old. There are insufficient specialist resources for teachers to use with pupils with special educational needs. There are not enough laptops to teach a whole class and not enough desktop computers. This is a major reason why standards in information and communications technology are lower than they should be.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To develop the effectiveness of the school further and continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- raise standards in information and communication technology at 7 and 11 by ensuring that:
 - there are sufficient computers available to teach new skills to all pupils in lessons;
 - all elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are taught to sufficient depth;

Paragraphs: 1, 8, 23, 28, 53, 115-118

- make better use of assessment information to plan for the next stages in pupils' learning by:
 - improving the quality of teachers' marking;
 - setting individual pupils targets for improvement;

Paragraphs: 7, 19, 24, 42, 84-85, 98

- ensure governors take a greater role in the school's long-term planning for school improvement.

Paragraphs: 52-53

In addition to the key issues above, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- provide a stronger emphasis on multi-cultural development within all aspects of pupils' learning;
- the effective teaching of drugs awareness and sex education;
- publish a school health and safety policy.

Paragraphs: 38-40

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	7	16	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	46	34	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	140
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (100)	89 (100)	94 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (100)	89 (100)	89 (100)
	National	85 (89)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	10	9	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	14	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (83)	74 (94)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (100)	89 (100)	100 (100)
	National	73 (74)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Some data is not included because there are less than ten pupils in each category.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
136	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3:1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
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	£
Total income	350,286
Total expenditure	316,996
Expenditure per pupil	2,264.25
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,865
Balance carried forward to next year	33,290

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 47%

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	25	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	36	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	29	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	39	12	2	2
The teaching is good.	58	37	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	39	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	15	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	21	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	44	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	35	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	35	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	44	3	3	6

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

61. The school follows the local authority procedures in its admissions policy. Children start school in the reception class in the school year in which they will be five. They all attend full time. There are currently 20 children in the Foundation Stage. The school regularly has more applications than it has places in the reception class.
62. The school promotes good initial links with families through a range of meetings and visits. The teacher intends to improve these links next year by visiting the new children in their nurseries. The links enable children to settle quickly and confidently into school routines.
63. The reception class follows the curriculum guidance for the ¹Foundation Stage, which is measured at the end of the year by the early learning goals. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *Stepping Stones* from which standards and progress can be measured.
64. The testing that the school does with this age group indicates that standards of attainment are above average and that they have been rising for the last few years. All the children have benefited from attending a pre-school playgroup or nursery before coming to school. They are at least on the second level of the *Stepping Stones*, with higher attaining pupils already on the third step. Most children come to school with well-developed personal and social skills, which enable them to mix well, play co-operatively and take care of their personal needs. Children also speak clearly and use a wide range of vocabulary for their age. For instance some knew, and used correctly, the words 'terraced' and 'semi-detached' in topic work on homes. Their writing skills are less well developed, and this year few could write their own name well. The children's mathematical skills are very well developed. They count chorally to 20 comfortably and recognise and write most of the numbers to 9. Overall, the children achieve satisfactorily during the Foundation Stage. They receive good teaching and the lessons are well organised to help them learn within the limitations of having 10 Year 1 pupils also in the class. Standards and progress are the same as at the last inspection. Virtually all the children will reach and exceed the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Standards are above average and most children will be working within, and occasionally beyond, Level 1 of the National Curriculum. This is particularly true in mathematics where the teacher has built well on what the children already know and understand. There are no children identified as having special educational needs in the Foundation Stage.
65. Teaching and learning are good. This represents an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The teacher uses her secure knowledge and understanding of the programme to plan interesting activities for the children, which often includes practical work in which they have a chance to be independent. Insufficient use is made of the good outside area – partly because the weather is cold and partly because there is no door from the class that opens directly on to it. The teacher and class assistant make a very good team, planning and sharing expertise together well for the benefit of the children.

¹ ON FOUNDATION STAGE

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.

Relationships between staff and children are very good and children are managed very well by using praise and encouragement. This promotes the children's self-esteem and helps them to become even more confident learners. The room is well resourced and beautifully decorated with the children's work. What the children are to learn is not shared often enough with them and subsequently not revisited at the end of the lesson.

66. Staff make day-to-day assessments of children at work and they are accurately recorded in the extensive records. This information is used well to plan the next stage in a group's learning. There is currently neither a policy nor a scheme of work for Foundation Stage and, whilst the teacher intends to remedy this in the near future, this is unsatisfactory.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Children come to school with a 'spring in their step' and rush into the room. They all know what is expected of them and quickly settle into the well-established routines. They are mature enough to wait their turn or listen attentively to the contribution of others. Children are keen to take on responsibility when named as a 'special helper'. They are confident, for instance to take the register to the office. They take care of their own needs well and show some independence in choosing activities, especially in the afternoons. Children learn about Christianity but have yet to consider the beliefs of others. Teaching and learning are good. Staff set high standards and make their expectations clear. They use incidents throughout the day to reinforce the children's positive attitudes to one another and to learning.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children enjoy listening to stories. They join in with the repetitive lines of 'Not now, Bernard!' and pay close attention to the story, showing good concentration. They answer questions using a broad vocabulary and describe the monster as 'ugly' and 'terrible'. In other situations most children speak clearly and without hesitation because they are confident. Speaking and listening skills are very strong for most children.
69. Children's reading skills are above average. They are aware that print carries meaning. Higher attaining children read 40 or more words, chat freely about their book and already read it quite well. Average and lower attaining pupils retell the story in their own words recalling some words or phrases from the book. Children have done considerable work on the letter sounds but are reluctant to use these skills when they come across a word they do not know. Writing skills have been developed well and higher attaining children write short stories unaided. Average and lower attaining children also try to write freely but need support from an adult. Letters are made accurately with few reversals.
70. Teaching is good. The teacher plans well-structured lessons mostly based on the literacy strategy. Shared reading of 'Big Books' is a strong feature of every lesson and this is followed by purposeful group work. Both the teacher and class assistant work with children to improve their skills. Most written work is challenging for all children. An area for improvement is group reading, which is not emphasised enough as children only read to an adult once a week.

Mathematical development

71. Children join in enthusiastically with number songs and enjoy showing that they can count to 30 in ones and to 100 in tens! Most recognise and write the numbers to 9 accurately. Higher attaining children add 'one more than' in their head or on their fingers successfully and cope well with addition sums within 20 in their books. All children recognise and describe the simple flat shapes and most of them also name the common solid shapes.

72. Teaching is good. The teacher plans well and make lessons interesting, such as the lesson on balances in which the children learned how to weigh. Explanations are easy to follow and resources are used very well to aid children's understanding. There is an over reliance on the use of the National Numeracy Strategy, which suits the higher attaining children but is too complex and too drawn out for lower attaining ones.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Children talk confidently about their families and their place in the 'family tree', thus starting to develop a sense of history. They use good vocabulary to describe their trip to school, homes and animal habitats. Children have a growing knowledge of the Christmas story and understand the main characters in it. They confidently use the computer selecting simple programs and giving instructions by using the mouse to draw and colour a house. They also benefit from the work of the support assistant who takes groups out of class to work on programs such as 'Dressing Teddy'. Children show above average attainment in this type of activity. Teaching is good because topics are well organised and well taught and teachers always use the correct vocabulary. Follow up work, like the animal habitats display, stimulates children's interest through practical work.

Physical development

74. The children join pieces of construction material accurately to make, and play with, rockets and cars. They handle a range of tools, like play dough cutters and whisks, well. Their work with pencil and paintbrushes shows good skill too. When taking part in the physical education lesson in the hall they explore space well, demonstrating good control over their movements. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teacher demonstrates skills in dance well and encourages the children to join in. She provides good opportunities for the children to extend their skills in handling small apparatus like scissors, crayons and paintbrushes. Some activities are too teacher-directed and do not offer the children sufficient opportunity to explore. The outdoor play area is underused as a resource for learning.

Creative development

75. Role-play is not a strong feature because children are often completing their language or mathematics work. The area is of good quality and has new equipment for the children to play with. When using the area children play imaginatively and use good vocabulary. Working with construction toys the boys played 'space' well, co-operating with each other. Children explore colour well, often mixing their own powder paints and colour blends. They have created beautiful pictures using 'cold' and 'hot' colours as well as rainbows. They explore the effect of crayons when drawing pictures of foods which are good for their teeth. There are many opportunities for model making and collage work, which extend children's imaginative skills, and children are already starting to learn about famous artists, creating pictures in the style of Kandinsky. Teaching of creative skills is good but planned use of role-play is satisfactory. The teacher shows children the skills and allows them to develop them in their own way to a limited degree. Resources, such as paints and junk for modelling, are always available when children have free time.

ENGLISH

76. Results in the national tests for 7 and 11 year olds indicate a downward trend in the previous two years. National test results in 2002 showed that pupils attained in line with national expectations but when compared with similar schools, were well below average. In this year group, about a quarter of the 19 pupils taking the test had special educational needs and did not reach the national standard of Level 4. Additionally, the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 fell below the national figure by 8 per cent. The small number of the pupils in the year group makes fair comparisons difficult. When these pupils are compared with their prior attainment at the age of seven they made above average progress. Inspection evidence shows standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. This is a similar picture to the time of the previous inspection. Standards attained in the statutory assessments for seven year olds in 2002 were above average in reading and average in writing. Most pupils gained the national average in both aspects of reading and writing but only one pupil gained the higher Level 3 in writing, compared to nearly 30 per cent of pupils in reading. When compared to similar schools their attainment is average in reading and below average in writing. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys or girls. All pupils make satisfactory progress over time; in some classes in the juniors the progress is faster because of the better teaching.
77. The school identified through analysis of last year's test results and the tracking of pupils' progress, weaknesses in the curriculum, planning and teaching, particularly in writing. The school has highlighted as a priority on the school's improvement plan relevant areas to improve. Some initiatives are already in place and are effective in making the hour devoted to literacy more effective and improving the quality of pupils' writing. These include:
- ensuring medium term and weekly planning is more coherent and reviewed regularly;
 - in-service training on how to promote reading skills in small groups;
 - the tracking of pupils' progress;
 - improving pupils' knowledge of phonics;
 - giving more emphasis to pupils' writing at an extended length.
- However, although the school has made some progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in pupils' writing, staff are not yet providing all pupils with sufficient opportunities to write at length, particularly stories. Sometimes opportunities are missed for pupils in the infants to write. For instance, in a Years 1 and 2 lesson pupils arranged words on cards to form sentences. Many pupils were capable, and keen, to write their own sentences containing three adjectives, as evidenced by their ability to do this orally.
78. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils usually work hard and sometimes achieve well because of the high quality of teaching and support they receive from the teacher or classroom assistant when working in small groups. Staff are sensitive to their needs and encourage them to concentrate and gain confidence. The few pupils of Chinese origin who speak English as an additional language often achieve as well as their peers. They have a good working knowledge of English and try hard to write neatly.
79. Standards in speaking and listening are above those expected nationally in both the infants and juniors. Teachers in all classes are skilful in motivating pupils to respond to questions enthusiastically. They help pupils extend their answers by judicious prompts and follow-up questions. Pupils in the infants readily tell their news to the whole class or relate how they feel about a story and many speak confidently and clearly. Older juniors are good at negotiating with one another to produce dialogue for a sketch in drama. For instance, all pupils in a drama lesson quickly made up lively arguments, for or against, either in the role of child or parent to allow the 'child' to do something which would gain disapproval from the parents. This lesson stimulated a great deal of discussion and gave pupils opportunities to think of a range of reasons to support their role. All of the sketches

were amusing and confidently performed, showing an astute awareness of parental responses! The tasks were very well matched to pupils' abilities and interests and as a consequence they were highly motivated to perform and learnt to take account of differing opinions.

80. Attainment in reading is above average for pupils at 7 and 11 years. Pupils are keen readers and appreciate the good teaching they receive in the shared group reading sessions. In these lessons younger infant pupils are helped to gain knowledge of books through the emphasis put on reading the title, and the author and discussion of what the book is about. Pupils enjoy supplying the 'missing' words the teacher has covered up in the 'Big Books' and pupils are keen to join in with the words they can read. When they come to dialogue parts in 'Not Now Bernard' and the story of 'The Runaway Chapati' they join in the words with relish and increase the volume for strong emphasis. Older infants are encouraged by the teacher to work out unfamiliar words and they increase their vocabulary by looking at the text for particular words. The teacher ensures that the pupils understand all the text by constantly asking pertinent questions.
81. Pupils enjoy reading for themselves and show how well they have understood by the quality of their answers. Higher attaining pupils are very keen to talk about their books. By the end of Year 6 pupils are reading fluently, accurately and with expression. They justify their choices of books and discuss their opinions of authors and books they have read with maturity. Younger juniors read fluently and are developing their expression. They use a variety of ways to decipher unfamiliar words. Pupils' library skills are not well developed because the school does not have a library. Some pupils visit the local library and class libraries have sufficient stocks of books but many are outdated and are in need of replacement. Most pupils read regularly at home and reading plays a large part in the homework given to pupils. Year 6 pupils have a target to read one book a week and they find this motivating. The amount of reading done at home, with many parents hearing their child read makes a very positive contribution to pupils' skills in reading.
82. By the ages of 7 and 11 pupils' standards in writing are improving and are above average. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise the technical skills of grammar and punctuation in all classes. By the time they are seven pupils use capital letters relatively consistently in their writing and know how to use exclamation and speech marks. Even the youngest pupils in Year 1 identify speech marks in the Big Book they read together with the teacher. Pupils have sound opportunities to practise their handwriting and produce neat and carefully scripted letters in their handwriting books. They also work neatly when the occasion demands, for example, when producing work for display. They do not consistently transfer these skills to their class work. In a Years 4 and 5 lesson, one or two lower attaining pupils were using capital letters instead of lower case letters and these errors had not been picked up by the teacher's marking.
83. Pupils are beginning to write at greater length, particularly in some subjects such as religious education and history. This writing makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils learn how to use figurative language in a shared writing session where the teacher scribes and collates pupils' own words and ideas to form a poem. This was particularly successful in a Years 4 and 5 class where the pupils made a list of words that described a volcano erupting, such as 'bellowing, spitting and shaking' and then used these words to make an amusing poem entitled 'The Demon Headteacher'. Years 5 and 6 pupils investigate the features of an explanation and use these to write instructions of how to find 30 per cent of a given number. This work helps pupils understand the differences in writing for different purposes and makes a very good link to mathematics. Written work by higher attaining pupils in Year 6 shows a marked improvement in the length, structure and coherence of work. The writing group in Year 6, taken by the headteacher, shows pupils are making good progress

in their writing. Pupils in this group have a very good awareness of their own progress because of the way they discuss their writing with the headteacher and their peers. They record specific aspects of their progress such as what connectives they have used to join sentences. Work from this group shows that a much higher percentage of pupils will gain the higher Level 5 in the national tests this year and borderline pupils are likely to gain the national standard.

84. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in both the infants and the juniors. In the juniors, the teaching seen in the inspection was good or very good. The satisfactory judgement reflects a lack of high quality teaching which will lead to good progress for pupils over time. Planning of lessons is sometimes good and what is to be learned is shared with pupils at the beginning of all lessons. The ends of lessons are mostly used effectively to establish what pupils have understood and gained from the lesson. However, planning does not always take into account assessments of what pupils have learned in lessons and feed into the planning for the next lesson. This means that on some occasions work is not well matched to pupils needs. Activities are interesting and enjoyable but do not always challenge the higher attaining pupils, particularly in writing tasks in the infants. As a result pupils sometimes becomes restless in the pursuit of their tasks.
85. Pupils in the juniors are well managed but occasionally do not produce as much work as they could in the time available because teachers do not set time targets or make clear their expectations of the quantity and quality of writing expected. Targets are identified for pupils to improve but too few pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve. Teacher's marking does not inform pupils sufficiently of what they need to do to make their work better and the quality of marking is inconsistent. In some classes pupils are encouraged, for example, to correct their spellings but in others these are not pointed out and lower attaining pupils and those with special needs especially repeat the same mistakes. For example, words such as 'when and saw' were spelt incorrectly. Information and communication technology is used occasionally for word processing but pupils have too little access to computers because of a lack of equipment.
86. Pupils' attitudes in English are good. They are keen to contribute to lessons and are well behaved. They work well in pairs or small groups. The very good relationships between adults and pupils create a pleasant atmosphere for pupils to grow in confidence and develop their skills and understanding.
87. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The subject manager has worked hard to collate a range of assessments and progress tracking systems. These provide a good range of information to use to make the curriculum more effective, to set targets for pupils and to improve pupils' rate of progress. The subject manager has a clear vision of what needs to be done to raise standards further. The school has implemented the literacy strategy effectively. Pupils benefit from the opportunities to take part in the drama club after school. The amount of written homework for Year 6 pupils could be increased, to enable these pupils to be better prepared for the national tests and their transfer to secondary school. English makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development because of the opportunities for working together, reflecting upon descriptive language in a wide range of literature and developing independence of thought.

MATHEMATICS

88. Standards are above the national average in both Years 2 and 6. Most pupils are working with good understanding at an appropriate standard. Virtually all are likely to achieve at least the average grade (Level 2 for Year 2 and Level 4 for Year 6) with some reaching the higher grade (Level 3 and Level 5 respectively). This is slightly at odds with last year's national test scores, which were lower than usual. The downturn was specific to that year group and was not a reflection on teaching and learning in the school. Even though pupils' scores were lower than usual the school met its Year 6 target. The targets for 2003 are very challenging at 90 per cent of pupils achieving the average grade and 50 per cent of pupils achieving the higher grade (Level 5). The school is unlikely to meet these targets because Year 6 have not yet covered sufficient higher grade work in data handling and shape and space. Boys' and girls' results in the national tests and attainment in class are broadly similar. Standards overall are very similar to those found at the last inspection.
89. Standards in Year 2 are above average. Pupils are being extended, especially in arithmetic, and have completed volumes of work since September. They have a good understanding of place value to 1,000 and they use their recall of number facts to solve simple problems. They have limited experience in their books of applying mathematics though there were some good examples of solving patterns and sequences. Their knowledge of flat and solid shapes is good and improving and they are able to use accurate mathematical vocabulary to describe them. The few lower attaining pupils are doing similar work at an easier level but still find it a struggle, for instance their measuring wasn't accurate.
90. Standards in Year 6 are above average. Pupils work confidently and generally accurately with the four rules of number. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of place value to millions but average and lower attaining ones are more comfortable with thousands. They all work confidently with shape using the correct technical vocabulary to describe flat and solid shapes but do not yet have a clear understanding of the symmetries in them. Pupils use coordinates well to map shapes on to a single quadrant grid. Later, higher and average attaining pupils extended this work into all four quadrants and showed their ability to work comfortably with negative numbers. Areas are calculated accurately using whole numbers and higher attaining pupils calculate it well using decimals. There was insufficient 'using and applying' of mathematics seen in books or lessons.
91. Pupils come to Year 1 with above average attainment. They make sound progress through the school thanks to good teaching and leave with above average attainment. Most pupils achieve the average level in Years 2 and 6 but too few achieve the higher grades given the prior attainment of these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their specific needs are identified, for example learning the multiplication tables. Teachers and support assistants give them lots of help. The very few pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress. They have a sound standard of English but need help with technical vocabulary. Much of this help comes from friends because teachers are not sufficiently aware of the language problems these pupils face.
92. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use the three-part lesson of the National Numeracy Strategy well. The first mental session is usually lively with quick fire questions testing pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables, flat shapes or word puzzles using different words associated with addition. The pupils enjoy these sessions very much, partly because they are challenged. They are quick and keen to answer. Teachers generally, but not always, share what is to be learned in the main part of the lesson with the pupils. Here they explain clearly, using the correct vocabulary, what to do and how to do it. A good example of this was a Year 5 lesson on fractions where the teacher's clever

questioning got the pupils to explain the correct methods to the class. Resources are used well to help explanations and to solve problems, as with using cubes and ten-sticks in the Year 2 lesson on addition. Support staff are usually fully involved during explanations and then help groups with their exercises. Pupils who need help appreciate this and show good concentration. Arithmetic methods are well taught but only in Year 3 was there a significant amount of work on using and applying mathematics. This work challenged pupils' thinking fully. Target setting for pupils is not done well enough. Not all teachers do it and pupils don't always know their target. The main drawback to the use of the National Numeracy Strategy is the mixed age classes. They create difficulties for the class teachers because it is hard to know at what level to set the explanation and general theme. They try hard to ensure that all pupils have work at their own level but even so higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently well.

93. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is a useful policy, which is known by all staff, and the school has adopted the national strategy as its scheme of work. The new headteacher has given the co-ordinator a clear job description and the time to carry out her duties, which she greatly welcomes. The monitoring of colleagues' lessons has begun, as has a review of teachers' planning and their pupils' work. National test scores have been very carefully analysed question by question and the outcome discussed with staff, who then modified their planning. The local authority mathematics consultant has been in school advising on the way forward. A very successful evening for parents to explain arithmetic methods was organised. The co-ordinator knows that challenging the higher attaining pupils and thus increasing the number of higher grades achieved in Years 2 and 6 is the next important step forward.

SCIENCE

94. The 2002 teacher assessments of pupils aged seven indicated that their performance was below average. In the 2002 national tests for 11-year-olds, results were very high and all pupils attained the expected level for this age. Just over a third of these pupils attained the higher grade of Level 5. Inspection findings based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and the observation of two lessons indicate that standards in the current Year 2 are average and above average for Year 6 pupils. Pupils are making satisfactory progress through the school because they enter the school with an above average level of knowledge and understanding overall. Standards have fluctuated over the last few years but the overall trend is broadly in line with improvements being made nationally. Year group sizes are quite small and overall attainment in each can vary considerably. At the time of the previous inspection standards were average overall. The school has attempted to provide more opportunities for investigative work and this is particularly evident in the junior pupils' books.
95. Pupils' written work shows satisfactory coverage of all aspects of science across the junior classes with a good emphasis on investigation. Pupils in the class for Year 6 and most able 5 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the human body by their work on the digestive, circulatory and nervous systems. They also have a good understanding of forces such as gravity and friction. A good feature is the investigative approach to teaching and this was effectively demonstrated in a lesson for a class of Years 5 and 6 pupils. The teacher provided good opportunities for these pupils to plan a challenging investigation based on the absorbency rates of different types of paper. The teacher used questions well to challenge the pupils' thinking and to explore their potential ideas for planning out the investigation. Good opportunities were provided for speaking and listening in pairs as pupils discussed their ideas with a partner. Visual aids were used well by the teacher to illustrate a possible structure for planning out the investigation to be completed in the next lesson. Furthermore, good planning of this task to the ability of different pupils ensured that all in the class were fully challenged by this activity.

96. Analysis of pupils' work in the infants confirms that most seven year olds are working at the expected level. This work includes investigations into the characteristics and properties of natural and synthetic materials with a wide range of work completed during the autumn term. Lessons observed during the inspection focused on the properties of sound. Teaching of pupils in the infants is satisfactory overall with some good use of practical activities to bring lessons to life. For instance, the playing of a didgeridoo as an introduction to making sounds provided good opportunities for cultural development and an excitement for learning. Subject knowledge is secure. Teachers are planning for the different age groups within the mixed aged classes to ensure that learning experiences are similar for all pupils in the same year group. This is particularly so for the Year 1 pupils in the reception class. For instance, these pupils are provided with science lessons within this class specifically tailored to their needs.
97. Pupils enjoy studying science and their attitudes to learning and behaviour are good in lessons. They are keen to discover facts about the world around them and living things within it. Pupils listen attentively to teachers in lessons and readily join in with class discussions, appreciating each other's contributions. Many respond well to the good opportunities for personal and social development provided by investigative work. The presentation of written work by the junior pupils is good and pupils take a pride in the recording of their investigations.
98. The curriculum includes a good emphasis on investigative work but is unsatisfactory overall. Sex education is not effectively taught to pupils in Year 6 apart from aspects of reproduction covered incidentally in other topics. Review of the pupils' books indicates that the current scheme of work does not fully take into account the level of work that pupils in the same year group are following if they are in different classes. For example, the Year 5 pupils in the class with Year 6 pupils are working at a much higher level both in skill development and level of understanding than their colleagues in the class with Year 4 pupils. The absence of an effective method to assess and record pupils' achievements makes it difficult for teachers to ensure always that work planned is effectively matched to the ability of pupils in each mixed age class. The school has recognised this and the co-ordinator is currently reviewing the current scheme of work to readdress this issue. There has been very little monitoring of teaching and learning in the past and this is not satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for further developments including a greater use of the local environment to support learning in the classrooms. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory and stored effectively in a central place.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' work in art, including that of those who speak English as an additional language is of a standard expected for their age. Often pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. All pupils make at least steady and sometimes good or very good progress in their art lessons. However, although work is planned to cover all the aspects of art, work in clay and textiles is under-represented and pupils do not make enough progress in these aspects. The school is aware of this.
100. The work of all pupils becomes progressively more precise and thoughtful as they move from class to class, so that they learn to appreciate, interpret and try for themselves some of the techniques used by well-known artists. The use of the work of famous artists to exemplify techniques and representational art is a particular strength of the curriculum. For example, recently completed work show collages and paintings in the styles of Kandinsky, Matisse and Picasso, amongst others. A feature of the work, for example in a Year 3 and Year 4 class, is the way pupils learn about the life and works of famous

painters and record key facts. Pupils in Year 3 explored a website devoted to the works of Claude Monet. They delighted in discovering different paintings that Monet had painted from various parts of his garden. They were intrigued by what they found out and built extensively on the knowledge they had previously recorded in their books. The work on famous artists greatly benefits pupils' cultural development.

101. Pupils in reception and Year 1 produce some eye-catching collages, based on the use of different shapes and the work of Kandinsky, which show careful consideration of how to place and use a wide variety of materials. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' collages based on a collection of natural objects such as small parts of fir trees and slices of orange are unusual and also show care in the placement of the different items. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 concentrate and try hard to fix a tissue overlay to form a background for their printing. They satisfactorily cut round templates of leaves and make appropriate choices of colours to make a pattern. Although the pupils made satisfactory progress in this lesson the teacher did not sufficiently draw pupils' attention to the features of pattern making. Consequently, some pupils had a limited understanding of how to make a repeated pattern.
102. By the time they reach the age of 11, most pupils develop satisfactory skills in drawing and sketching. Sketchbooks are used effectively throughout the juniors to promote drawing and pupils show care in the execution of drawings from close observation. Some particularly effective drawings in Years 5 and 6, of still life objects drawn from different viewpoints, show the skills with which pupils represent tone, shade and proportion. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn to appreciate how the same painting can be changed dramatically by the use of different colours and backgrounds when they look at the different ways Andy Warhol portrayed icons, such as Marilyn Monroe. They enthusiastically prepare simple traced outline sketches, taken from photographs of themselves, to develop into a series of paintings, showing how the use of colour can affect an image.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but with some good and very good teaching and learning evident in the juniors. Planning is satisfactory but often brief with insufficient information on how the lesson is to progress. Lessons are well organised and motivating so pupils throughout the school enjoy their artwork, whether they work individually or in groups. Pupils are keen to do their best and are proud of their work. Teachers manage their pupils well and during art lessons, the classrooms are usually calm, with a quiet hum of concentrated activity. Pupils take a reasonable level of responsibility for organising themselves and tidying up. In one class, classical music is played, requested by the class council, and this is enjoyed by both the pupils and the teacher and helps to keep a calm restful atmosphere. Good use is made of resources. In one lesson the teacher made very good use of technology to demonstrate a website devoted to the work of Andy Warhol to stimulate pupils' interest and to promote their understanding of 'Pop Art'. In another junior lesson the teacher used photographs, garden books and pamphlets and a model of Monet's garden to help pupils choose what features they would like in their gardens they were sketching. These resources greatly helped pupils make informed choices and helped them become more knowledgeable. Teachers mostly have a good knowledge of the subject which they use well to teach the skills of drawing, painting and collage work. The opportunities for pupils to work in clay and textiles are limited and although chances are given for pupils to learn about tones and the mixing of colours too many pupils in Year 4 cannot confidently name the primary colours needed to make, for example, green, brown or purple.
104. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is no policy but staff use the national guidance to plan for work. This is satisfactory but the school in its planning does not yet provide for skills to be learnt in one class to be built upon in the next. Monitoring of the subject has started with planning being evaluated but as yet there is no formal

assessments of pupils' progress. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for what needs to be done next to improve the subject further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. It was not possible to observe any teaching during the inspection. Judgements are based wholly on the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils, and a review of teachers' planning. Standards overall are in line at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when standards at the end of the infants were judged to be below national expectations.
106. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge through the quality of their planning. This is reflected in the standard of the pupils' work and on the quality of their model making. Teachers have adopted a consistent approach to the teaching and development of important skills with the pupils; such as planning, making and evaluating. They use simple but effective worksheets to provide all pupils with an opportunity to plan out their models or product accurately. Making skills are effectively supported through investigative work in the joining of various resistant materials. This was clearly demonstrated in the beautifully displayed model shelters made by the oldest pupils in the juniors and the precise nature of their investigations as to the possible methods of joining paper straws. These were recorded carefully in the pupils' sketchbooks. This careful approach to work is also demonstrated by pupils in the class for the youngest juniors by their carefully constructed model chairs.
107. Design and making activities are also effectively displayed in the infant class through carefully made house interiors as part of a project on the home. Carefully sewn felt glove puppets also demonstrate the level of care and attention to detail by these pupils.
108. The newly appointed co-ordinator has continued to develop the subject following the improvements made after the previous inspection. A thorough audit of materials has taken place and there is a consistent approach to whole school planning. A good start has also been made on the monitoring of pupils' standards through effective review of pupils' work. For example, teachers and pupils are being encouraged to use the new digital camera to record the various activities undertaken in lessons. These are to be used as part of a portfolio of work for future reference.

GEOGRAPHY

109. Because of the way the school teaches topics in geography it was only possible to observe lessons in the junior years so no judgement about standards and teaching and learning in Year 2 has been made. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is in line with national expectations and this is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils compare and contrast their locality with other places inside England, for example Chester, and outside England, for example Kenya. They name major countries in Europe and have a reasonable awareness of where they are on a map. They use atlases quite well to learn about the world's rivers. Their knowledge of the water cycle is good and they learn the technical vocabulary, such as evaporation and precipitation. All pupils make satisfactory progress through the junior years. As their national test results show, they are capable of more and tasks are not open-ended enough really to test the higher attaining pupils.
110. Teaching and learning are good and this is an improvement on the last inspection. Teachers show good subject knowledge by using the technical vocabulary regularly and expecting the pupils to use it as well. Explanations during lessons are presented in a lively way, which maintains pupils' interest and concentration. Teachers use resources well to explain complex ideas, like in Year 6 the steam and the goldfish bowl to explain

condensation. Pupils in Year 5 locate desert areas on a world map easily and are helped to understand the difference between drought areas and desert areas through good role-play. However tasks are sometimes low level, like colouring a map, and do not extend higher attaining pupils sufficiently. Pupils set to work 'with a will' but quickly tire of the mundane task. Younger pupils in Year 3 consider what to take on holiday. This device helps them relate to the areas they are studying and the weather they would find there. Visits to local wild life parks and rivers help pupils to understand aspects of physical geography and the effect of pollution.

111. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The scheme of work meets the needs of the teachers and ensures that no pupil studies the same topic twice. Resources are adequate and well organised. Insufficient use is made of pupils' computing skills, for instance in researching their topic or in presenting their work.

HISTORY

112. It was not possible to see any history being taught because of the way the school rotates its topics. However, after scrutiny of pupils' topic books from last term it is clear that standards are similar to those found during the last inspection. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is similar to that found in other schools. Pupils have a growing awareness of time and how to place events on a time line. They know about homes in Victorian times and the difficulties faced by both children and adults in that era. In Year 6 pupils' attainment is also similar to that found in other schools. Pupils have an awareness of how the topics they have studied through the school fit together in a progression from Ancient Egypt to The Second World War. They know something of what life was like in many different eras and how both children and adults generally had a hard life. They recall some of the important people they have studied like the Pharaohs and Winston Churchill and their impact on history.
113. Through the school all pupils make sound progress because there are many interesting topics. The resources and visits to help them understand are good. However, most pupils are capable of much more. Pupils' topic work is sparse and not particularly neatly presented. They seem to have had few opportunities for independent research and extended writing.
114. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards of teaching and learning because there were no history lessons to observe during the inspection. The scrutiny of pupils' work suggests that, whilst teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory, to improve the school should note the following:
- some teachers give the same tasks to all ability levels in the class, and this does not challenge the higher attaining pupils
 - the quality of presentation in pupils' work is not stressed sufficiently.
 - in the junior classes, there is insufficient extended writing
 - pupils have insufficient opportunities to use reference material and the Internet.

Management of the subject is satisfactory and improving. The topics have been well planned so that despite classes being of mixed age groups pupils will not study the same aspects of history twice. All the resources needed are freely available to teachers and each class computer has access to the Internet for research. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, which will help raise the quality of teaching. Teachers reinforce the learning in their topic by taking their class on an education visit to one of the many places of historical and geographical interest in the area.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. There were no lessons to observe in Years 1 and 2, and there was very little work to see, so these judgements relate specifically to the junior years. Standards in Year 6 are below the national expectation and pupils' progress has been unsatisfactory. They have not had the opportunity to learn and practise skills with sufficient regularity because the school has insufficient computers and control technology equipment. This is a downturn since the last inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory in everything except in the control technology aspect. These pupils are capable of achieving much more in this subject, not least because of their exposure to computers and computer games consoles at home.
116. Year 6 pupils use a word processing package to present topic work tidily. They change the font size and use colour for effect whilst making the labels for their shapes. They know how to organise information into a database and use the Internet to find out information for their history topic. They have some experience of using e-mail. Most are aware of the need for caution when using the Internet. Their knowledge of control technology is limited to using a programmable toy.
117. Teaching and learning in the lessons observed were good. Teachers showed that they had sufficient subject knowledge to provide clear and understandable explanations to the class using the computer whiteboard and projector well. The task in Year 6 showed good links to the current mathematics work on shape, but was too easy for many. They worked independently and were very motivated. They generally handled the drawing program with ease, drawing the shapes, filling them with the appropriate colours and writing a label. In Year 5 the lesson was held in the Year 6 class and the teacher again linked the lesson well with the class's science work on planets. Pupils enjoyed this link because they knew most of the data already and could answer the teacher's questions easily at first. Individuals demonstrated how to fill in information on a database. The teacher's questioning made pupils think carefully and explore their knowledge and understanding of the process. However, the lesson was not well timed and was cut short at an interesting stage by the other class returning from music in the hall. In both lessons teachers' planning lacked detail, particularly the vocabulary the teacher intended to introduce.
118. The subject manager is relatively newly appointed and has many other duties. He has successfully organised training for the staff, which has significantly improved their expertise. The national guidelines have been adopted and are used well to help teachers plan their lessons. Whilst there are plans in place, there is no equipment to teach one aspect of the curriculum in the junior years. This means that the statutory curriculum is not fully taught. New laptop computers have recently been purchased but they are too few in number. An example of this was the Years 5/6 lesson which was a ten-minute exercise if there were sufficient machines. It took the whole class all day to complete the exercise and they would have little access to the laptops for another week. The support worker who teaches on Wednesdays is a valuable resource and brings significant expertise to school. There are Internet access links in every classroom along with one computer and the Internet access policy is very comprehensive. It is unsatisfactory that there is no up-to-date policy for the subject and the development plan does not make it clear how standards in the subject will be moved forward.

MUSIC

119. The good standards achieved at the time of the last inspection have been maintained despite a change in teacher expertise. Standards in music are above average overall for 11 year olds and the quality of their singing is well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are making good progress. Many pupils in the juniors demonstrate an ability to play a musical instrument by the time they leave school. Some pupils receive tuition on piano and violin but a number are being taught to play a brass instrument in the newly formed school band. Several older boys attend the Oldham choir for specialist tuition in singing.
120. The teaching of music is good overall across the school with strong features in the juniors. Skills of music making and simple composition are taught well to all pupils in Years 1 and 2 during well-planned lessons taken by the newly appointed co-ordinator. Good opportunities are provided in these lessons for pupils to experiment with a range of unpitched instruments to make sounds that represent a rainstorm. They are becoming quite adept at recording these sounds in simple graphic form on paper as a short composition.
121. All junior pupils are taught by a visiting peripatetic teacher from the local education authority's music centre. Her very good subject knowledge and high expectations for what the pupils can achieve is ensuring that pupils make good progress in their music making. This teacher's passion and love of music is clearly having an impact on the enthusiasm of the pupils. This was very clearly demonstrated in the series of lessons observed during a morning of the inspection. During these lessons, the pupils provided a good insight into the quality and range of their musical ability by singing several difficult songs in a round and performing compositions created in previous lessons. The standard of singing by the oldest pupils was particularly good and several pupils were able to sing a solo part with considerable confidence and skill. The tempo of the songs was maintained well and the variation in dynamics created a beautiful sound for all in the school to hear. A good emphasis has been placed on singing songs from non-western cultures. The enthusiastic rendition of an African song exemplified the efforts being made by the school to support the furthering of multi-cultural awareness amongst the pupils.
122. The curriculum is good and it includes a wide range of enriching experiences for the pupils to take part in. The newly appointed co-ordinator is providing good leadership. She has reviewed the quantity and quality of instruments and effectively implemented a programme of renewal. As a result there are enough percussion instruments for every pupil to play in a lesson and the numbers of tuned instruments have been increased. A resource box of multi-cultural instruments has also been purchased for pupils in the infants as part of the school's efforts to broaden the pupils' awareness of other cultures. The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to make music both in school time and outside of lessons. These vary from individual tuition in violin and brass to singing and making music at local concerts. All of these activities provide very good opportunities for cultural and spiritual development, greatly appreciated by the pupils and parents alike.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Standards in gymnastics and dance are above average for 11 year olds. This is similar to findings of the previous inspection despite a significant change in staff and expertise. It was not possible to observe any outdoor games lessons and therefore no judgement can be made on this aspect of the subject for those pupils aged 11. Standards in games for seven year olds are in line with national expectations. Teachers' records and discussions with the co-ordinator confirm that nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school at 11.

124. All pupils in the juniors, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in a range of physical skills as they move up through the school because teachers plan lessons effectively and display good levels of subject expertise. This is particularly so in dance and gymnastics. Teachers plan these lessons according to the pre-determined scheme of work. They identify learning intentions clearly for each lesson. They provide good opportunities for all pupils to take part in vigorous warm-up activities to music and all pupils respond well to these elements of the lesson.
125. Basic skills in gymnastics and dance are taught well and teachers display high expectations for what pupils can achieve. For example, in a dance lesson for a class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, the teacher demonstrated dramatic athletic dance postures to encourage pupils to be creative and imaginative in their own work. As a result, these pupils responded very well and persevered with their own dance phrases, gaining much satisfaction from their performances. Gymnastic skills such as a headstand are taught well to the oldest junior pupils with some considerable success. These pupils are clearly confident with a range of gymnastic skills and as a result they are confident to attempt such a demanding task. All teachers in the juniors provide pupils with an opportunity to perform to their classmates. Many relish this and useful comments to help further improvement are volunteered by those watching. This provides pupils with good opportunities for spiritual development as they observe the quality of others' work.
126. Pupils in the infants are making satisfactory progress in their games skills as demonstrated in a lesson for the oldest infant pupils. They throw and catch a small ball with accuracy and control, effectively using these skills in pairs to improve their own performance. Appropriate opportunities were provided for these pupils to utilise these skills in short competitive games. Such activities provide good opportunities for personal and social development. No judgements can be made on the standard of gymnastics or dance for this age group.
127. The newly appointed co-ordinator is building on the good work undertaken by the previous post-holder. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall with some good features. Junior pupils have opportunities to take part in activities outside of lessons and in competitive games against other local schools. The oldest pupils are now provided with an opportunity to take part in a residential trip focused on adventurous activities. The quality and range of resources is satisfactory and carefully stored in a central area adjacent to the hall.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, including those for whom English is an additional language, are typical to those expected by the diocesan agreed syllabus and most pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and some improvements have been made.
129. The co-ordinator has drawn up a new policy and a scheme of work which is now being implemented. Teachers are now more confident with the content of the material being taught and lessons are regularly planned over the year. Teachers place a strong focus on written work to follow up work in religious education. As a result of this, good quality recorded work in the pupils' books confirms that the subject, particularly Christianity is beginning to become embedded within the school's curriculum. For example, in the infants the Parable of the Sower is retold and older pupils in the junior write at length about the Israelites leaving Egypt. This practice is helping the development of literacy skills. Good chances are given for pupils to express their own values and beliefs and this aids

their speaking and listening skills. However, although work is planned to teach the major faiths, apart from Christianity and Judaism work in these faiths is not well represented.

130. Pupils in both the infants and the juniors have a good knowledge of Christianity. Work in assemblies effectively enhances pupils' knowledge of Christianity where pupils have opportunities to reflect and understand Christian beliefs and values. By the age of seven, most pupils have an understanding of an outline of Jesus' life. They know why people attend church and why and when they read the Bible. They have a good knowledge of stories Jesus told and are beginning to understand the moral values that underpin stories. Teachers try hard to help pupils understand moral concepts and use a variety of resources and situations from pupils' own experiences to help them. For instance, in a lesson for a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils the teacher encouraged pupils to think of an experience when they were jealous, sorry for what they had done or when they had been forgiven, to highlight the moral behind the story of the Prodigal Son. Pupils with special educational needs in the lesson were helped to understand difficult concepts through the teacher's additional support and the talking through of ideas. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson about the story of 'The Lost Sheep' questions such as 'What was Jesus telling people in this story?' help pupils think through their ideas and give higher attaining pupils opportunities to understand the deeper meaning of the story and to gain a more thorough understanding of Christian values.
131. Good questioning was a feature of both the lessons with the result that pupils confidently expressed themselves and answered at length. Teachers were well organised and made the stories come alive for pupils. Pupils listened with rapt attention and were interested and enthusiastic in their responses and keen to write down their experiences. In the lesson in the infants pupils were well behaved but became a little restless when the teacher was unable to get round to all the pupils to help them with their writing. Consequently, the written work was not as of such a good standard as previous work in their books.
132. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is appropriate guidance to inform teachers' planning based on the diocesan agreed syllabus. Although what is to be learned in lessons is identified in teachers' planning there is insufficient detail of how the lessons will proceed. The plans are not good enough for any other teacher to take over the class should it be necessary. Procedures for assessment are currently underdeveloped, with the result that teachers are unable to gauge pupils' progress over time accurately and measure standards against the diocesan agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator has a very clear vision of what needs to be done next, such as the implementation of more effective assessments of pupils' achievements.