

INSPECTION REPORT

Mount Charles School

St Austell

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111907

Headteacher: Dr Duncan Jones

Reporting inspector: Mrs Christine Huard
27290

Dates of inspection: 11-12 July 2000

Inspection number: 191508

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Morven Road St Austell Cornwall
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Gallagher
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mount Charles School is a larger than average community primary school with 450 boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 11, including 11 pupils in the area special class, which the school accommodates. Pupils who attend the school are from a variety of backgrounds although there are very few pupils from ethnic minorities. There are 2 pupils for whom English is not their first language and neither of them is at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 68: this is 15 per cent and about average. There are 105 pupils on the school's special needs register. This is 23 per cent and above the national average. The pupils in the area special class all have moderate learning difficulties. There are 20 pupils with Statements - 4.8 per cent - which is well above the national average. The attainment of pupils when they first enter the school is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Mount Charles is a good school where pupils are taught well. The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher, governors and senior staff and provides a very effective environment for learning. Pupils reach good standards in their work and achieve exceptionally well in their personal development. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve standards in English that are well above average and in mathematics and science that are above average by the time they leave school.
- Very good provision for information technology enables pupils to achieve good standards.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and very good in Years 5 and 6, which encourages efficient learning.
- Standards of personal development and the quality of relationships are excellent.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs, particularly in the area special class, is very good and enables them to make good progress.
- The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher, senior management team and effective governing body.

What could be improved

- Standards in English and mathematics are not high enough in Key Stage 1.
- Not all pupils have equal access to the music curriculum in Years 3 and 4.
- Collective worship, when held in classrooms, does not always meet statutory requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996. Since then it has made good progress on the issues which were identified for improvement and in other key areas. It is well placed to continue to improve. The good standards in English, mathematics and science recorded at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and continue to rise in line with the national trend. The trend in Key Stage 1, however, has run counter to national improvements. The school has acted appropriately to improve provision at this key stage with improved results in national tests in 1999. Improvement continued this year with assessment test results showing a significant rise. However, inspection evidence shows that there is still room for standards to rise further. Those key issues for improvement from the last inspection which centred on how the curriculum was planned have been successfully addressed. The school took appropriate and successful action to reconsider the quality and depth of curriculum coverage. The progress of higher attaining pupils in English at Key Stage 2 has been improved and although action taken to address the issue at Key Stage 1 has not been so successful the early indications are that strategies adopted by the school are beginning to have an impact on standards. Day-to-day assessments are now effective in Key Stage 2 and allow work to be closely matched to pupils' needs. However, in Key Stage 1 routine assessments are not so consistent across all classes. The roles of the senior management team and co-ordinators have been developed and improved to include effective monitoring of the curriculum. The provision for pupils' cultural development has been improved. The good standards identified in the last report in teaching, pupils'

response and school management have been maintained. Standards in information technology have improved, with pupils attaining at an above average level; those in religious education are in line with expectations for the age group, maintaining the level identified in the previous report.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	C	C	A	A	well above average A above average B Average C Below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	C	B	B	
Science	C	C	B	B	

The results show an improvement in national tests last year. In 1999, the school's performance in English was well above both the national average and the average for schools with similar intakes. In mathematics and science pupils attained above average standards nationally and when compared with pupils from similar schools. Results have risen broadly in line with the national trend. The school exceeded the targets it set for its pupils in the national tests in 1999.

Inspection findings are that pupils' achievements are good in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. Pupils who are now at the end of Key Stage 2 achieve well above average standards in English and above average standards in mathematics and science. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is slightly below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The high standards in English in Key Stage 2 are underpinned by very good application of the literacy strategy, which has been adapted very well to meet the needs of the school. In English and mathematics in Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in all elements of the subjects but attain standards overall that are below average. This is because, although many pupils attain the required standard, very few reach higher levels of attainment. These standards are not high enough as, although pupils attainment on entry to the school is below the levels expected of five-year-olds, their rate of improvement is below that achieved nationally. Standards in information technology are above average and are enhanced by the very good provision in both teaching and equipment. In religious education, standards are broadly in line with expected levels by the end of each key stage.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and very interested and involved in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good overall in lessons, in the playground and around the school.

Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils develop very high levels of initiative and personal responsibility. Pupils treat each other and adults with great respect.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils arrive on time and sessions start promptly. Rates of unauthorised absence were above the national average last year but attendance overall was better than the national average.

The school functions very well as an orderly community. Pupils are highly motivated and eager to learn because lessons are made interesting and stimulating. They are very attentive and responsive and show a delight at being in school. Pupils have developed very good learning skills and work independently in class and individually. They co-operate well. They take responsibility for a number of tasks around the classrooms and school. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The teaching seen was good overall and evidence from pupils' previous work indicates that standards in teaching have improved over time. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Seventy four per cent were good or better with 34 per cent being very good and 5 per cent excellent. Teaching in most aspects of the key skills of literacy and numeracy is good. It has benefited from the introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, which the school has implemented well. The school has taken appropriate action to improve the teaching in Key Stage 1 following disappointing test results and this is having an impact on pupils' attainment, although the problem is not yet fully resolved. Work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs to enable them to make satisfactory progress. The most capable pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always sufficiently challenged in their written work whilst the less able are sometimes over-challenged. However, most teachers provide activities which enable individuals to achieve well in their academic work and, most notably, in their personal development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A broad curriculum is provided which includes a range of visits, both day and residential, for pupils in both key stages. Not all pupils in Years 3 and 4 have equal access to the music curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils with special needs both in the special class and in the main school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Neither of the pupils at the school for whom English is an additional language is at an early stage of learning English. However, systems are in place should they be needed.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development and very good provision for their moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils.	There is very good provision for pupils' well-being.

Curriculum planning is of a high standard and includes cross-curricular elements that enrich pupils' learning. The school maintains a high level of good quality extra-curricular activities, mainly in sport and music. Pupils receive very good quality coaching in many sports and school teams compete in a number of competitions during the year with a considerable degree of success. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and self-esteem. Class assemblies focus on important topics but do not always meet the requirements for a daily act of worship. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and outside agencies are consulted when appropriate. Pupils have detailed Individual Education Plans and regular assessments of their progress are made. The school shows good standards of care for its pupils. There are regular health and safety checks. Behaviour and discipline policies are in place and consistently applied by all staff and adults in the school. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very strong, caring leadership and is supported well by an able deputy and senior management team. There is a strong spirit of teamwork and commitment to improvement among staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors support the school effectively. They are keen and enthusiastic and have greater awareness of their responsibilities than at the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its results, teaching and curriculum well and takes action to improve. It consults widely on its further development. The written development plans outline current and future priorities well.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. Funds are directed to priority areas and their use is controlled and monitored well.

The headteacher, senior staff and governors have maintained a good quality of education during a time of considerable staffing change. The school has a good long-term vision and strategy for further improvement. The present management of the school is very effective in seeking to ensure best value in its spending decisions by questioning what it does and ensuring that funds are spent wisely.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress. • Teachers expect children to work hard and do their best. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good. • Behaviour is generally good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework provided. • The extent to which the school works closely with parents and informs them of children's progress. • Some parents are concerned at teachers being out of school during the day on courses.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| • Their children like school. | |
|-------------------------------|--|

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Homework contributes well to pupils' learning when it is given, particularly in Years 5 and 6, but amounts set in other classes are inconsistent and teachers' expectations not always made clear to parents. The quality of information provided, including that about pupils' progress, is good. Some teachers have spent some time out of school on management and curricular courses, which have already had a positive impact on progress because teachers' expertise in specific areas, such as literacy and numeracy, has been increased.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science by the time they leave the school.

1. The results achieved by the school's 11-year-olds in national tests last year in English, mathematics and science showed a significant improvement over the results of previous years. In 1999 pupils achieved standards in English which were well above average, and in mathematics and science which were above average when compared both with schools nationally and with schools with similar intakes (based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals). The overall trend in results over recent years shows the school improving broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings for the current Year 6 group are that pupils achieve above average levels in all aspects of English, mathematics and science.
2. The school has adapted the National Literacy Strategy and is using the framework in a way that meets the needs of the pupils in the school. The attainment of higher attaining pupils was a concern in English at the last inspection and the school has made special provision for this and built in extra time for extended writing sessions in which all pupils are challenged appropriately. The literacy strategy has been carefully adapted and pupils have been re-grouped according to attainment so that all pupils are set tasks which align well with their abilities. Through careful planning the school now has a programme for English that is varied and matches the needs of all the pupils. It provides a stimulating curriculum, which challenges and excites the pupils and enables them to tackle a range of texts, such as those used by Year 6 pupils studying the poetry of Roger McGough, with confidence and enthusiasm.
3. The focus on achieving high standards is apparent throughout Key Stage 2. In English, pupils are attentive and effective listeners. They listen carefully to their teachers and their classmates, speak in a range of situations and take account of the ideas and opinions of others. Pupils in Year 6 were seen responding well to a discussion about advertising in Victorian times. They responded thoughtfully to others' contributions, often speaking in extended sentences with a wide vocabulary. They were confident and articulate, identifying how types of language such as exaggerated, persuasive and emotional forms are used in the literature. They could effectively compare the style of writing with that used today. The pupils also attain well in writing. Teachers encourage them to experiment with new and more complex vocabulary by giving them challenging and absorbing tasks. As a result of their discussion about advertising, pupils were then able to write an advertisement for a modern day appliance in the style of the Victorians. They show a good understanding of the vocabulary used and also of the Victorian obsession with health. One higher-attaining pupil began his description of an electric toothbrush with "a new mechanical invention designed to rid your mouth and gums of germs and infections". They write independently at length when required and standards of spelling, punctuation and handwriting are good. Pupils read fluently and accurately and show good recall and comprehension. Many are keen readers and express well-considered preferences for genres and authors. They can explain clearly their enjoyment of the poetry of Roger McGough and cite examples of pun - 'no peas for the wicked' - and parody - 'toboggan or not toboggan' - as reasons for their preferences. A strength in pupils' attainment is their ability to apply their good literacy and oracy skills to their work across the entire curriculum. Teachers give them frequent opportunities for carefully planned cross-curricular work and pupils respond well to these.
4. Throughout the school the National Numeracy Strategy has been embraced with enthusiasm. In Key Stage 2 pupils are set for mathematics, which is effective in raising standards as teachers do not have to provide for such a wide range of abilities in each lesson. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a secure grasp of the four operations of number and have developed a wide range of numeracy and problem-solving skills. They are able to apply these well in other subjects, such as when handling data in science. They develop alternative strategies for calculation and can explain their thinking. This was seen during the inspection when pupils proficiently carried out investigations into the use and effectiveness of a range of

measuring instruments, calibrated in imperial or metric measures. Higher attaining pupils could successfully convert one to the other. Pupils present their work well, for example by using appropriate tables and graphs to record the results of an investigation. Their teachers provide a varied programme of interesting activities, which cover all the elements required in the Programme of Study. They use daily sessions to practise mental calculation and recall. Teachers generally make effective and thoughtful use of the published scheme and supplement or reinforce this where necessary.

5. Standards in science have risen over the past year because the Year 6 class teachers have carried out an effective analysis of previous test papers to identify weaknesses and taken steps to address these. A high emphasis is placed on the pupils being able to plan their own investigations in order to gain the knowledge they need. In order to ensure that pupils acquire the appropriate knowledge investigations are discussed fully with teachers and pupils are guided towards the appropriate procedures. This may mean that on occasions some of the recorded work is shown as an agreed whole-class conclusion and may include a collaborative table of results. As a result of this approach pupils are thus able to question effectively and develop their scientific skills and knowledge in a planned and cohesive way. Pupils' work is carefully monitored and assessed and in Year 6 a computer program is used to devise tasks at the end of each topic which are presented in the same format as national test questions. This enables the pupils to become familiar with the kind of questions they are likely to be asked and also provides an effective assessment of what they have learned in each element of the Programme of Study. This is a useful way of identifying if any work needs further reinforcement or extension.
6. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good. A high priority is given to the development of the key skills of oracy, literacy and numeracy. Tasks are planned and organised to cater for the needs of all attainment levels, including those who need extra help with basic skills and the most capable pupils. Teachers have high expectations and the pupils respond extremely well. Positive relationships with pupils enhance teachers' abilities to maintain pupils' attention and ensure their active participation in lessons. Pupils answer questions confidently from an early age and share ideas and strategies for planning scientific investigations and solving mathematical problems which build on previous work and methods. This, together with a review of the objectives which are shared at the beginning of a lesson, ensures that pupils understand what they are doing, why they are doing it, how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Homework is set regularly, which effectively supplements the work carried out in school.

Very good provision for information technology enables the pupils to achieve good standards.

7. Pupils are achieving standards in information technology which are above those expected because of the good and sometimes very good teaching that they receive to enable them to use the very good quality equipment the school has installed.
8. The school has introduced a scheme of work which is based on nationally recognised guidelines and this ensures that the teaching of information technology skills is tackled progressively. Parallel classes work on similar work throughout the year.
9. Pupils are timetabled for whole-class information technology lessons from the time they enter the school. Lessons are taught mainly by class teachers who have received appropriate training, are confident and have considerable expertise. Skills are taught in a systematic manner. Pupils in reception are taught in short twenty minute sessions, which allow them to learn and practise a skill for an appropriate amount of time for their ages. The atmosphere in the class is calm and purposeful. The teacher gives very clear instructions enabling pupils to log on and log off competently. The lessons proceed at a good pace and time is well used. Pupils are taught how to use the mouse to click, drag and drop, using a program where they have to dress the teddy. After clear instruction pupils are given time to practise the skill they have just learned, which enables them to improve their techniques. The teacher is able to address queries as they arise because of the policy of circulating around the class. Some

pupils find difficulty in controlling the mouse because their co-ordination is not well developed and currently the school does not have a mouse with a large roller ball, which these pupils would find easier to use.

10. Tasks for the pupils are challenging and interesting. For example, Year 1 pupils were given a task to show whether they could classify information and present their findings appropriately. The learning objectives of the session were shared so that the pupils knew exactly what was expected of them. The teacher was enthusiastic and had a very good rapport with the pupils' which relaxed them, gave them confidence to ask questions and added significantly to their self-esteem. The pupils worked hard to complete the task to a good standard and were very enthusiastic. Their levels of concentration were high. They showed a good level of keyboard skills and by the end of the lesson all the pupils had succeeded in drawing the tally chart - more than half totally independently. The vast majority of the class could, with guidance, change the colours on the graph and put in an appropriate title. They reacted with amazement when they were shown how they could change the colours of the graph and this excited and fascinated them. The higher attaining pupils could interpret the data shown confidently and worked at a well above average level. Pupils printed and saved their work efficiently. In the class session at the end of the lesson the teacher made skilful use of questions which covered the main points of the lesson very effectively to assess what the pupils have learned.
11. Year groups are expected to complete the elements of the information technology curriculum appropriate to them during the year. A good quality assessment system has been put into place and this allows teachers to ensure all elements of the scheme of work have been covered effectively. One Year 4 class had not completed work using a control program earlier in the term during a period of absence of the teacher. This class was catching up on what the parallel class had already done. The teacher had good subject knowledge and was confident. Support staff worked effectively with individuals in this class as more than a third of pupils have special educational needs. By the end of the session the majority of pupils had made sound progress and completed the work successfully. Higher attaining pupils were provided with appropriate extension work.
12. Lessons become more challenging as pupils move through the school and their knowledge and understanding increase. In the upper half of Key Stage 2 pupils are confident and competent. In the lesson observed, the learning objectives for a session were shared. Pupils selected the program they were to use and studied the commands and instructions. The teacher had high expectations of their learning and, having read the instructions, pupils settled down quickly to log on and load up their program. This was one where they had to draft out a sequence of program lines to develop shapes and place these within given parameters. They had a very good command of basic keyboard skills and understood how to program their instructions. They helped each other and there was a buzz of enthusiasm as they discussed the work they were doing. The teacher made very good use of the big screen to reinforce and demonstrate next stages in learning and this helped the lesson flow successfully. By the end of the session all pupils could plot and enter procedures and could edit and develop. Nearly all could place the octagon, pentagon and square into set parameters. The teacher made good use of time targets to challenge the higher attaining pupils.
13. All pupils in the school make full use of the equipment. Pupils in the special class are taught how to use a graphics program to develop a picture. They select the appropriate tools and modify the images they create. The teacher builds very well on what the pupils have learned before and skilfully questions pupils to elicit information and ideas. The pupils are interested and very positive about their work. They settle quickly to their task. The teachers and support assistants work quietly with the pupils to support and guide them. Expectations are high and pupils are expected to work independently as far as they are able. Pupils' attitudes are mature and they pay great attention to detail. The work is individualised and each pupil is challenged. They are bold and confident and experiment freely with the tools available. Some pupils use the 'zoom' tool and spray/brush colours with thinner and thicker pencils. The pupils achieve standards that are above what might be expected given their prior attainment.
14. The school has installed a suite of 17 computers, which are all networked with a window box program and the internet facility. In addition to this there is some access to the network from

the stand-alone computers in the classrooms. A large whiteboard screen can be set up in classrooms which is of considerable assistance for whole-class teaching. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. He has ensured that staff have received the training they need in order to be able to teach the curriculum confidently, thus enabling the pupils to achieve standards above those expected. The scheme of work is planned to be comprehensive and covers all areas of the information technology curriculum. A good assessment system has been put in place which tracks pupils' progress in each topic. This has a positive impact on standards because areas which need reinforcing can be instantly identified.

Teaching is good throughout the school and very good in Years 5 and 6, which encourages efficient learning.

15. The quality of teaching is good overall and is a major strength of the school. In all the lessons observed the teaching was sound or better. The teaching and the opportunities it provides for pupils to improve their learning skills are the major factors which contribute to the good standards the school is constantly striving for and achieving. The overall quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection and the unsatisfactory elements identified then have now been eliminated.
16. Teachers' planning is thorough and detailed. Teachers plan across parallel classes to ensure consistency in what is taught and this helps maintain the high standards achieved throughout the school. Lessons are carefully sequenced to ensure full coverage of a topic or Programme of Study. Plans outline clear learning objectives for each lesson and teachers tell the pupils exactly what they are going to learn and how they are going to learn it. The objectives are reviewed at the end of the session. Grouping is considered carefully and teachers ensure that activities are planned which match the attainment level of all pupils. A brief recap at the start of each lesson prompts pupils' memories and allows some useful assessment to take place. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils could remember poetry they had studied during the autumn term, showing very good recall before going on to analyse features within the poetry of Roger McGough. The pace set is lively throughout and lessons are well structured and relevant to sustain pupils' interest. Written tasks are fully explained to pupils before they carry them out and pupils record work in a variety of appropriate ways.
17. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well implemented and all pupils are fully occupied with suitably challenging tasks during the times when the class teacher is concentrating on one group of pupils. Pupils are able to work unaided because the work is carefully matched to the pupils in each group and teachers give clear instructions as to the work to be tackled and ensure that the pupils understand what they are to do before they start.
18. The expertise and enjoyment that teachers bring to their lessons is evident. In a music lesson in Year 5 the teacher used an enthusiastic and engaging style which successfully stimulated the pupils. They worked extremely well together. Pupils practised co-ordinated clapping, which lead on to composing using 4 notes and finally performed the result. The teacher had prepared a range of practical activities to reinforce what the pupils were learning about rhythm. She had high expectations of the pupils' abilities to achieve well and supported learning effectively throughout the lesson. She introduced new vocabulary and demonstrated what this meant, for example 'legato' and 'staccato'. She constantly reinforced and used the correct terminology when posing questions 'How did we play?' with the pupils replying "legato", "rallentando" as appropriate. Musical knowledge and skills were very successfully extended throughout the lesson as pupils moved from whole-class activities into small groups to play instruments together before coming together to perform as a class.

Standards of personal development and the quality of relationships are excellent.

19. The personal development of pupils is excellent and reflects the aim of the school which states

that 'everyone is valued as an individual and as a member of the community'. They show confidence and care and concern for each other's feelings, supporting each other in lessons and listening to each other's views with respect and tolerance. Pupils are given a high level of responsibility, to which they respond extremely well. The school operates a house system. House captains and prefects take their role seriously and perform conscientiously. Pupils are given responsibility to assist in the daily life of the school - for example, by showing visitors around, dealing with registers and completing a number of classroom tasks. On a wider front pupils raise commendable sums for charities such as the NSPCC and in this way develop an understanding of the differing needs of other groups in society. Residential trips offered to pupils in Years 2 and 6 give them the opportunity to live at close quarters with a wide range of people in situations that are new and challenging for most of them.

20. Pupils show high levels of perseverance and work well collaboratively from the time that they enter the school. They tackle new and challenging tasks with enthusiasm. For example, Year 3 pupils, when asked to find and identify examples of alliteration and onomatopoeia in 'Going on a Bear Hunt' and 'One Wet Wellington', set about the task willingly. Pupils are enthusiastic and responsible towards their work. They are confident, outgoing and keen to answer questions and take part in discussions. They develop independence and younger pupils use dictionaries and other resource material to help them with their writing. As they get older and move through the school, pupils increasingly use other reference material such as thesauri and information technology to help them with their work.
21. Pupils behave very well, both in the classroom and around the school. They are proud of their school and are welcoming and friendly. They respond quickly to teachers' requests for silence and are attentive and well mannered. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect. Pupils appreciate the house system and are delighted to receive house points. School property is well cared for and equipment treated carefully.
22. Pupils form excellent and constructive relationships with adults and with each other. These relationships permeate the life of the school as a community. Good manners are very important and the school motto 'manners makyth man' is reinforced in all areas of school life. There is a mutual respect between adults and pupils in which the authority of the adults in the school is in no way compromised. There is an excellent rapport between children and adults and the example is set by the caring leadership of the headteacher. He knows his pupils very well and always addresses them by name when he is speaking to them. The pupils respond very well to this and it effectively develops their self-esteem. The 'success board' is also highly effective in recognising pupils' achievements. Each week the headteacher takes photographs of pupils in each class who have performed particularly well in some aspect of school life. These, together with a short sentence describing each pupil's achievement, are then displayed on a board in the entrance hall where parents may be brought to see them.
23. In lessons pupils work together very effectively in pairs or small groups. Groups work well together to distribute tasks fairly amongst themselves. Good relationships extend out into the dining hall where Year 6 pupils help the younger ones at lunchtimes. Pupils ensure that no one is left to play on their own at playtimes and these are generally happy and active times.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs, particularly in the area special class, is very good and enables them to make good progress.

24. The school has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including a special class which accommodates 11 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The provision for all these pupils is highly effective. Activities in class lessons generally cater for the full range of abilities including those with special needs and the most able. There are clear Individual Education Plans for pupils who need extra support in their learning. The school is also well aware of its most able pupils and provides work which both challenges them and seeks to improve on any areas of relative weakness. As a result, pupils generally learn at a rate which is appropriate to them and maintain their interest in their work. Teachers' planning effectively builds on what has gone before so that they efficiently recap, reinforce and extend pupils' learning in ways which ensure that their retention and recall are very good.
25. The quality of teaching in the special class is very good and enables pupils to achieve higher standards than would be expected given their abilities. The teacher and support staff all have an expert knowledge of the pupils' needs, which results in work being very well related to the individual abilities of each pupil. The class teacher uses questioning effectively to provide the appropriate amount of challenge for each pupil: an answer will often be followed with "tell me more about..." or "what else?" as she gently probes pupils for more information whilst also giving them time to think through their replies. The teacher retains the attention of pupils by asking questions specific to each one and in this way their concentration spans are extended. Repetition and recap help to reinforce the work they are carrying out: for example, the repetition of the story being told in literacy, leading to sequencing of the story, and later, saying whether events picked out are true or false. The pupils' personal development is a very important part of the education process in the classroom and pupils are reminded to put their hands up and to listen to each other carefully through the lesson. During the whole-class session support assistants complete observation sheets on which they record the responses of the pupils. This helps develop a detailed and useful record of pupils' progress over time and also identifies where there are specific weaknesses in their development in both academic and social spheres. This then enables the teacher to take steps when planning work to accommodate appropriate extension or reinforcement strategies. Pupils work with support teachers on group tasks according to their abilities, not their age. The quality of support is very good with very good questioning techniques being used and pupils' concentration levels high. Work takes place in relatively short bursts in order that pupils maintain the highest level of concentration.
26. The pupils in the special class benefit from a learning environment which is bright, lively and stimulating. The displays on the walls relate to the topic being covered. At the time of the inspection it was World War 2. The displays covered a variety of aspects and events and were supplemented by a number of artefacts such as clothes from the period, books and posters, so they could more closely visualise the events at that time and improve their knowledge and understanding. For some sessions pupils are integrated into the mainstream school. They use the information technology suite regularly and achieve standards in excess of what would be expected.
27. Throughout the school support for special educational needs is good. Parents are interviewed termly by the special needs co-ordinator in order to review Individual Education Plans. There is a good system for the employment of auxiliary staff, which enables the school to call upon them in a flexible manner as and when they are required. The co-ordinator has a good relationship with outside agencies including the psychologist, with whom she has a termly meeting to prioritise appointments and discuss individual needs. The teaching staff have good relationships with their support assistants and use them effectively in classrooms. They are encouraged to attend relevant courses, which are paid for by the school.

The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher, senior management team and effective governing body.

28. The overall leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for its work and has a very good working relationship with the deputy headteacher and rest of the staff team. The school has a positive learning atmosphere and a strong sense of community. Effective leadership and management strategies are evident in the successful implementation of the National Strategies for both numeracy and literacy. The monitoring of teaching and pupils' attainment to ensure high quality and the thorough analysis of the school's performance in order to set targets for the future are also particularly strong.
29. The governors are fully involved in the management of the school and show a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They work together very effectively, guided by a very knowledgeable and competent chairman. They are well aware of the school's main strengths and relative weaknesses and work with the headteacher and staff in order to ensure that the school is constantly seeking to improve standards. Their levels of expertise have increased since the last inspection after effective training and governors now have a greater understanding of their responsibilities. The school's aims are constantly under review and governors visit the school regularly, occasionally focusing on how a particular aim is met. The aims are consistently reflected in all the school's policies and practice and in its rules.
30. The senior management team takes a lead in the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and learning. Information from the school's results in national and optional tests is carefully analysed to set future targets for development. The headteacher and deputy head are well informed about the quality of teaching and the curriculum. The senior management team work closely together to focus efforts on improving weaker areas and maintaining high standards. The School Development Plan sets out priorities and targets well for the current year, embracing initiatives such as literacy and numeracy as well as an on-going review of all policies and schemes of work. The plan has detailed objectives for the raising of standards in the school together with clear targets to be achieved. It is the product of detailed discussions between staff and governors and underpins development initiatives well.
31. The roles of subject co-ordinators have been substantially improved and developed since the last inspection. Co-ordinators contribute an action plan for their subject to the school improvement plan, giving an overview of progress to date and detailing further improvements that need to be made. They monitor their subjects through examining and evaluating termly planning and undertaking some moderation of pupils' work, although the monitoring of teaching is currently carried out only by the headteacher and core subject co-ordinators. This focuses on an area identified in the school improvement plan and written and oral feedback is given in order that improvements can be made to enable pupils to achieve more highly.
32. Pupils' work is continually assessed. Through this tracking of individuals and cohorts challenging but realistic targets have been set for their future achievement. The school is well aware of the areas in which it needs to improve and many strategies, such as monitoring of teaching, have been put into place. However, there is no system of monitoring pupils' work on a systematic basis, which means that some weaknesses, such as a lack of differentiation in some work in some classes, have not been identified. Good quality recording systems have been developed for all monitoring activities which define who is to carry out the task and when; specific details of what is to be monitored, resources required, evaluations and targets are all included.
33. Financial planning by the headteacher and governors is detailed and thorough and enables the school to make good use of its resources. Financial regulations and controls are fully in place and the most recent auditors' report was positive. The earmarked funding for special educational needs, staff training and other national and local initiatives is carefully targeted, managed and documented. The school increasingly seeks to ensure best value in the use of its resources by comparing its performance with other schools, by questioning the effectiveness of what it does, by consulting on its further development and by carefully comparing prices and contracts.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in English and mathematics are not high enough in Key Stage 1

34. Results in national tests this year and last showed an improvement in standards reached by the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 in English and mathematics. However, in recent years, the school's results in the national tests and Teacher Assessments for its oldest pupils in English and mathematics in Key Stage 1 have been below average. They have barely maintained the standards reached at the time of the last inspection and do not compare well with the performance of pupils in Key Stage 2. Results in reading, writing and mathematics at the age of 7 have been erratic from year to year but have shown a slight downward trend overall, which is at odds with the improving situation nationally.
35. One reason for the drop in standards has been the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. This was especially significant in the results for 1998 where levels of special needs in Year 2 were high - about 32 percent - in relation to the rest of the school.
36. In 1999, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards in reading which were below the national average, whilst those in writing and mathematics were well below average. Standards were well below average overall when compared with schools with similar intakes. A high proportion of pupils obtaining level 2 achieved level 2C which indicates an insecure understanding of the subjects and very few pupils attained a level 3, which would have shown an above average understanding. However, the percentage of pupils with special needs was again comparatively high - 35 per cent - and the results did show a considerable improvement over the previous year. Early indications are that this year's tests show a further improvement, with more pupils attaining secure level 2s and a small increase in the percentage obtaining the higher level 3.
37. The school has only recently begun to gather formal information about pupils' attainment on entry as five-year-olds. Indications are that pupils enter the school with levels of attainment which are generally below expectations. These factors should be borne in mind when considering their results.
38. Inspection findings are that pupils in Year 2 currently achieve standards overall which are broadly average in English and mathematics and this reflects sound progress across the key stage. However, although many pupils are achieving the expected levels for their age there is little evidence of pupils achieving the higher level 3. In an analysis of pupils' work it is evident that there is some discrepancy in the quality and quantity of work being covered in parallel classes in Key Stage 1 and also in the marking of such work. There is little evidence of work being closely matched to the pupils' abilities, since nearly all pupils complete the same work at the same time.
39. In mathematics in particular, an examination of work shows that pupils are working through the scheme books and in some cases pupils are being given work that is too difficult for them to complete successfully, while higher attaining pupils are being made to complete work that is patently too simple. Although extension material is supposed to be available for them, there is scope to increase the levels of challenge for the most capable pupils. For example, although work is planned to include extension tasks to cater for this group, there is little evidence of this occurring and not enough consideration is given to whether pupils need first to carry out the more routine activities set for the entire class. In some classes there is evidence of a lot of undated work, which makes tracking the progress of pupils difficult.

40. In English, sound progress is being made in reading, with pupils reading relatively fluently and developing confidence and the ability to discuss their books. Written work, however, shows fluctuations in standards achieved between classes. The standard of marking is erratic and is not as effective as it could be in raising standards. For example, a word that is comparatively easy to spell, such as 'fly', goes unmarked when it is spelt 'fliy' , whilst mistakes in more difficult words such as 'caught' are corrected. Some mistakes are marked as being correct, which is poor practice and has a negative impact on standards. On occasions where constructive marking takes place and a pupil is exhorted to continue to use joined handwriting, this is not followed up when the pupil reverts to print a few lessons later, with the result that the habit continues, slowing progress in handwriting development.
41. The school has paid attention to the trends indicated by its results and has acted to improve its performance. It has analysed data carefully and set this information in the context of the school, taking account, for example, of changes in the teaching staff. However, although monitoring of teaching has taken place and some limited moderation of pupils' work, pupils' work is not monitored on a systematic basis to ensure that there is consistency in the practice and achievement of parallel classes.
42. Several initiatives have been put in place to raise standards in Key Stage 1 but have not yet had time to make a full impact on the standards achieved by the oldest pupils in the key stage. These include the use of an extra teacher in Year 1 to provide extra support in the mornings in the teaching of literacy and numeracy and directing support to the lower attaining group in Year 2 each Literacy Hour to provide small group teaching. All staff have received additional training in the teaching of reading and the breaking down of words into the sounds made by their letters. The new Key Stage 1 co-ordinator has an appropriate vision for the raising of standards and the school improvement plan contains detailed plans for how improvements could be achieved, together with success criteria and monitoring arrangements.

Not all pupils have equal access to the music curriculum in Years 3 and 4

43. The school has a reputation for achieving high standards in music and at the time of the last inspection attainment was found to be good at both key stages. Standards achieved in the lessons seen during the inspection were still good but the music teaching observed in Years 3 and 4 is only available to a limited number of pupils - those who have been selected to participate in the choir. This is inappropriate and unsatisfactory: music is an integral part of the National Curriculum and the subject should be available to all pupils equally.
44. Whilst the pupils in the choir are singing, the remainder of the classes use the time to have a story or finish off art work: the time is not used for music. This means that the pupils who are not included in the choir do not cover the music curriculum at all, which means they make no progress. The choir itself learns a variety of songs often related to specific topics and events but even they do not cover all elements of the music curriculum fully. For example, they have few opportunities to listen to and appraise music, or compose. This is unsatisfactory. In the same way that non-participants have no opportunities to make or listen to music, pupils in the choir have fewer opportunities to listen to the range of literature in the stories told, or opportunities to complete their art work. The school should review its practice to ensure that all pupils in Years 3 and 4 have equal access to the music curriculum and that they cover all the elements of the programme of study in a balanced way.

Collective worship, when held in classrooms, does not always meet statutory requirements.

45. The school has decided for logistical reasons to hold acts of collective worship in classrooms on three days of the week. This is a perfectly acceptable practice given the size of the school hall, the numbers of children and the time involved in assembling all pupils together. There is a weekly programme for assemblies and topics for these have been well thought through and are appropriate. However, they have not been monitored to ensure that pupils are properly prepared and the atmosphere set appropriately with a time for reflection included. The assembly observed was rushed. It failed to create an appropriate atmosphere or time for reflection for the pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. The school has many strengths. In order to build on these and improve the overall quality of provision and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 by:
 - fully implementing the agreed strategies outlined in the school improvement plan;
 - ensuring that the work set is more closely matched to the abilities of the pupils;
 - instigating a marking policy to ensure rigour and consistency across all classes;
 - monitoring pupils' work on a regular and systematic basis to ensure that the practice of teachers and the relative achievements of pupils are consistent across parallel year groups.
 - ensure that all pupils in Years 3 and 4 have equal access to the music curriculum and that all elements of the programme of study are covered in their music lessons.
 - take steps to ensure that acts of worship in classes meet statutory requirements.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	19
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	34	35	26	0	0	0

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

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)	450
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	68

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	116

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	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	35	24	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	33
	Girls	20	20	18
	Total	45	47	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (72)	80 (68)	86 (82)
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	33	27
	Girls	20	18	15
	Total	45	51	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (73)	86 (93)	71 (74)
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	29	43	72

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	25
	Girls	35	31	35
	Total	57	54	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (69)	75 (55)	83 (76)
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	22	23
	Girls	30	35	37
	Total	51	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (61)	79 (63)	83 (80)
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	387
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	340

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	756037
Total expenditure	748538
Expenditure per pupil	1664
Balance brought forward from previous year	19548
Balance carried forward to next year	27047

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	450
Number of questionnaires returned	145

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	51	3	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	50	11	5	0
The teaching is good.	57	38	4	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	45	13	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	30	4	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	2	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	50	5	6	1
The school is well led and managed.	41	46	5	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	48	6	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	46	7	2	4

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents were concerned that the responsibility for extra-curricular activities fell on a limited number of staff.

Some concern was expressed at teachers being out of school during the day on courses.