

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **St MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Levenshulme, Manchester

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105534

Headteacher: Mr D Cunliffe

Reporting inspector: Mr M J Weaver  
9352

Dates of inspection: 3 - 6 December 2001

Inspection number: 193270

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Clare Road Levenshulme Manchester
Postcode:	M19 2QW
Telephone number:	0161 224 5995
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Holden
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
9352	Mr M J Weaver	Registered inspector		Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management What the school should do to improve further
31718	Mrs D Shields	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and the community
31801	Mrs Y Bacchetta	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	
11402	Dr T Gorman	Team inspector	English English as an additional language History	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
31853	Mrs A Thomas-Ramasut	Team inspector	Art and design Geography Equal opportunities	Quality and range of learning opportunities
23026	Ms M Mullan	Team inspector	Aspects of education for children in the Foundation Stage Music	
16930	Mr J Plumb	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical Education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic School is situated in the Levenshulme district of East Manchester. There are 356 pupils on roll: 183 boys and 173 girls aged between three and eleven years, including a 45-place Nursery, drawn from a wide catchment area. All but one child attend the Nursery full time. A little under a quarter of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than average. Nine per cent of pupils are included on the school's register of special educational needs, a proportion that is below the national average. There is a range of needs, including physical disabilities, emotional and behavioural difficulties and complex speech and language difficulties. Only one pupil has a statement of special educational need. Ten pupils, which is low compared with all schools, come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language. There are no travellers, asylum seekers or refugees. Attainment on entry to school is broadly in line with the national expectation.

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

This is a good school that provides a caring ethos in all of its work. The school has been effective in enabling pupils to attain standards that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science at eleven and it provides a satisfactory level of education overall. Standards in design and technology and geography are below average. Taking into account pupils' achievement when they enter the Reception class, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make at least satisfactory progress during their time in school, but good progress by the end of Year 6. The school has set its priorities on core subjects, particularly on writing in English, and has been successful in achieving higher standards in English in 2001. The quality of teaching seen is satisfactory overall, but has many strengths. The headteacher, supported strongly by a very effective deputy, provides a clear educational direction for the school that has a positive impact upon its pupils' learning and their personal development. The school aims are fulfilled effectively and as a result the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science are above the national average at eleven.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but much good and very good teaching is evident.
- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and deputy are good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and relationships are very good; their personal development is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, as are procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare.
- Very good links have been developed with parents, who have high regard for the school and provide good support at home and in school.
- Provision for pupils' with special educational needs is good and money is spent well in meeting their needs.

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

- The management role in co-ordinating the work in juniors and that of subject co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning
- The use of assessment information in planning future lessons, particularly for higher-attaining pupils
- Standards in design and technology in the infants and juniors, and geography in the juniors
- Information for parents explaining how well their children are learning

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

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

Since the last inspection in 1997, standards have improved in English but in mathematics and science they have fluctuated. Overall, the standards attained in national tests in 2001 were above the national average in all three core subjects. The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection by

maintaining a clear focus on the quality of education it provides for all of its pupils. The quality of teaching has improved, particularly in the infant classes, and is now good across the school overall. Further work is required, however, to fully address the key issues identified at that time. Progress has been unsatisfactory in ensuring that co-ordinators fulfil their management roles effectively.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The standards achieved by 11-year-olds in the national tests in 2001 indicate that standards in English have improved each year since 1999. Standards in mathematics are inconsistent but are still above average. Standards in science, having improved between 1999 and 2000, have been sustained in 2001. Standards in all three core subjects are well above average when compared to similar schools.

In teacher assessments and tests in 2001, pupils' achievement at age seven was well below average and indicated a considerable drop since the previous year. In examining pupils' records and test scores, it is evident that the group of pupils taking the tests in 2001 contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, resulting in lower than average attainment.

Inspection findings show that, in this first term, pupils are achieving standards that are at least in line with national expectation in most subjects and, with the good quality of teaching seen, are likely to be ahead at the end of the key stage. Standards in English are improving as a result of the good teaching and confirms pupils' attainment in the national tests. Pupils' achievement in English has also improved as a result of better marking of pupils' work and improved teacher assessment, leading to specific learning targets being given to pupils. Standards in geography in the juniors and design and technology in the infants and juniors are below average. The teaching seen throughout the school enables pupils to learn effectively and to achieve high standards by the time they leave school. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but with many strengths, enabling children to make very good progress in their personal development.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils work with interest and enthusiasm in lessons and in all the activities the school provides. Their attitudes to learning are very good and this has a positive impact on the standards they achieve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good throughout the school. In assemblies it is often exemplary.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and are a strength of the school. Pupils' personal development is no more than good as a result of insufficient opportunities being provided for them to carry out personal research.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are satisfactory and are broadly in line with the national average. Very few pupils arrive late for school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	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.*

Taking into account the lessons observed, pupils' work from the last 12 months and discussions with pupils, teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, however, much good and very good teaching was seen in many classes, particularly in the juniors. The strengths identified at the last inspection have been sustained, whilst the quality of teaching in the infants has significantly improved, with all lessons now satisfactory or better and with teaching in almost seven out of ten lessons being good or better. In the juniors, teaching is satisfactory or better in a little over nine out of ten lessons, with six out of ten being good or better and a little over one quarter being very good or better. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in over six out of ten lessons. Only three lessons in junior classes were unsatisfactory, two in geography and one in information and communication technology.

Teaching in all English and mathematics lessons was at least satisfactory, with better teaching seen in mathematics and in junior classes. Pupils' of all abilities make satisfactory progress in the infants and good progress by the end of Year 6. The school is effective in enabling pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum, but their use of numeracy in other subjects is not so widely developed.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It is broad and balanced but current planning causes provision in some foundation subjects to be squeezed, with not enough challenge in geography and insufficient coverage in design and technology. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Effective arrangements are in place for meeting the needs of pupils in class and in well-planned support groups outside of classes, although there are not enough teacher assistants to support all pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory provision is made for the few pupils needing language support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good overall. Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent; it is very good for their spiritual and social development and good for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils' health and welfare.

The school works very well in its relationship with parents, who are keen to support the school and provide effective support for their children's learning in school and at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher and deputy provide very good and effective guidance in all aspects of the school's work. The management role of co-ordinators is unsatisfactory as they do not all take responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. The reflection of the school's aims in its work is a strength.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their role well; they demonstrate keen support for the work of the school, despite the short term for which most of them have been in office, and are quickly gaining confidence and skills in evaluating the effectiveness of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Performance management objectives are fully in place and are also set for teaching assistants. Close attention is paid to the progress made by pupils and good arrangements have been implemented to resolve earlier concerns in pupils' rate of learning in infant classes. Insufficient evaluation has taken place to guide the systematic learning in junior classes or of the teaching and learning in all subjects across the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There are suitably qualified and experienced staff to teach the curriculum. The school makes good use of its teaching and support staff, particularly in meeting the needs of those with special educational needs. Financial planning is good and funds for special educational needs and English as a second language are spent very effectively. The school's application of the principles of best value in using performance information to review how well it is doing is satisfactory.

The school is adequately staffed. Induction of new staff is good and performance management has been fully implemented. The accommodation is adequate for teaching the curriculum and is used very effectively. The lack of a school library impedes pupils' personal research and prevents them from developing their library research skills. The resources for learning are satisfactory, but insufficient use is made of computers other than in whole-class teaching in the computer room, leading to little opportunity for pupils to develop their skills or to search the Internet for information.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard to achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school helps children become mature and responsible citizens.</li> <li>• The current teaching observed is good.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Children enjoy going to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are not kept well informed of their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school does not work closely enough with parents.</li> <li>• Their children do not receive an appropriate amount of homework.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the majority of parents' perceptions, although the children make satisfactory progress overall but good progress in core subjects by the time they leave school. The school is successful in working closely with parents and provides regular, good quality information to them but does not provide sufficient information to show how well their children are learning in different subjects. An adequate and generally consistent amount of homework is provided.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the Reception class with a wide spread of attainment that is broadly in line with national expectations overall, having received good provision in the Nursery class through well focused teaching and a wide range of learning opportunities. Through the satisfactory teaching they receive in the Reception class, they attain satisfactorily overall and by the time they are seven they are likely to have reached all of the early learning goals. This reflects the findings at the last inspection.
2. The standards attained by seven-year-olds in the 2001 national tests and assessments were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and results have declined since the last inspection. In science, teacher assessment also shows pupils' attainment to be below national expectation. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below average. Inspection findings show that the 2001 Year 2 class had one third of its pupils with special educational needs, which depressed the overall standards in pupils' achievement. Pupils without special educational needs attained standards in line with national expectations. Inspection findings also indicate that standards are now in line with national expectation and also show that the quality of assessment and marking by teachers is accurate. Effective support is given to pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make satisfactory progress appropriate to their abilities.
3. The results attained by 11-year-olds in the 2001 tests and assessments were above average in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement on the findings at the last inspection. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics was in line with the national average, but above in science. Trends in improvement show that increasingly effective teaching is enabling pupils to attain above the national trend in all three core subjects. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment is well above average, demonstrating that value is added in pupils' education during their time in school. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in infants or juniors.
4. Inspection findings indicate that, in this first term, pupils are achieving standards that are at least in line with expectation in all core subjects. In English, seven-year-olds' attainment in reading, writing, listening and speaking and in mathematics is in line with national expectations. For 11-year-olds, attainment in listening, speaking and writing is in line at present, but their listening and writing is likely to be above average by the end of the school year. In reading it is already above average. Pupils' achievement in mathematics and science is in line with national expectation.
5. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning in infant classes and good progress by the end of Year 6, where pupils are well prepared for the national tests. Good quality teaching seen in many classes builds well on pupils' earlier learning. Teaching techniques and teachers' expectation are satisfactory and enable most pupils to achieve at least satisfactory standards. Opportunities are often missed, however, in ensuring that higher-attaining pupils receive the appropriate level of challenge and, as a result, they do not make the extra progress of which they are capable. Pupils' learning in the infants is satisfactory overall and teaching strategies build soundly on pupils' attainment in the Reception class.
6. The standards that pupils achieve in basic skills are good throughout the school. Pupils have good reading skills and show their enjoyment of reading, both formally and informally. Good teaching of literacy skills enables pupils to develop their writing skills as they progress through the school. Infant pupils develop some narrative and descriptive writing linked satisfactorily to pictures, whilst older pupils in the juniors have a range of writing tasks enabling them to extend their writing well.

Pupils' spelling, use of grammar and sentence construction are generally accurate, and pupils' presentation of work is generally neat, although improvement in writing development continues correctly to be the school's main focus in improving English. The teaching of literacy is good and teachers ensure that all pupils make effective use of literacy across the curriculum. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory; numeracy is used well in geography where most pupils have good data-handling ability which is developed effectively through graph work and questionnaires, and in science, though it is less evident in other subjects.

7. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the standards attained are in line with national expectation in all subjects except art and design and information and communication technology in the infants which are above; standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory in the juniors. Design and technology in the infants and juniors and geography in the juniors are below national expectations. Teachers' expectations in design and technology are too low and do not develop pupils' learning in a systematic way. Although the design and technology curriculum allows sufficient time to study the programmes of study, insufficient work was available to show how effectively the subject is being taught. Discussions with staff and pupils indicate that, whilst infant pupils have an unsatisfactory level of knowledge and understanding, pupils in junior classes have a satisfactory level of achievement and make good progress in recovering lost ground. In geography, little evidence was seen in upper junior classes of pupils applying their existing knowledge and skills to extend their understanding. Their use of geographic terminology is unsatisfactory and the good progress made in the early part of the juniors is not sustained at the top end of the school.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in reading, spelling and numeracy work due to the good support they receive from their teachers working in an effective partnership with teacher assistants. Pupils receive support both individually and in small groups when withdrawn from classes, and these pupils and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Effective support is given for lower attainers in booster classes for pupils in Year 6 and springboard sessions in Years 3, 4 and 5, enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in developing their numeracy skills. The additional literacy scheme in Years 3, 4 and 5 supports pupils with their reading but too often they are withdrawn from other subjects to receive support and this impedes their progress in those subjects. The programme, however, makes a significant contribution to raising standards in reading, spelling and writing. Pupils with physical disabilities, complex behavioural needs and speech difficulties make good progress because of the quality of support they receive.
9. The school has set fully achievable targets for 2002 in English and mathematics for the end of Year 6 and is currently well on track to achieve them. Pupils' targets, which are changed termly and on occasions weekly, are usefully used in English and mathematics, and pupils are clearly aware of how they are doing in achieving them. The school is judged to have good commitment and capacity to sustain continued improvement in pupils' learning.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with each other and adults are all very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' personal development, however, is only satisfactory. These positive features help to create an atmosphere where pupils enjoy learning, which contributes to the progress they make.
11. Children's attitudes and behaviour throughout the school are a strength. In the Nursery and Reception classes, pupils are eager to join in the range of activities provided and concentrate well. They listen closely to teachers and adults and readily follow instructions given to them. Children work independently and also co-operate well with one another when required. They readily help in clearing away after the tasks they have been involved with. Throughout the infant and junior classes, pupils are eager to learn and very keen to participate in all the activities offered. Pupils'

very positive attitudes to school and to learning are underpinned by the very good relationships that are a feature of the school. They take an interest in and gain enjoyment from their lessons. They listen to their teachers and because of this they are clear about what they are to do next. Pupils concentrate very well; for example during an art and design lesson pupils persevered with observational drawing, tried hard and were very proud of their efforts. Pupils willingly answer questions, and offer sensible comments about the work they are doing.

12. In classrooms and when moving around the school building, pupils' behaviour is very good. There are occasions when behaviour is exemplary, such as during the junior assembly observed during the inspection. Pupils know the school conventions and try hard to live up to them. For example, they walk quietly into assembly, sit down and wait patiently, without fidgeting, for it to start. Pupils are polite and friendly to all adults and take a keen interest in what visitors have to say. In other areas of the school, such as in the dining hall at lunchtime or outside in the playground, pupils' behaviour is also very good and they play very well together. Infant and junior pupils understand the need for the code of conduct and appreciate the house points, certificates and small prizes, awarded for good behaviour and work. Because pupils have very good behaviour and attitudes this contributes to the standards they achieve.
13. Very occasionally in classrooms, behaviour is no more than satisfactory; this is because lessons and activities do not gain pupils' full interest and attention and because teachers' behaviour management techniques are not fully effective. On these few occasions, pupils become restless and drift 'off task', their behaviour distracts others and they lose interest in their work.
14. Relationships between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are very good. They are based on mutual trust and respect. Pupils know that all adults who work in the school are approachable and this gives them the confidence to seek help when they need it. Because of the high priority the school gives to ensuring each pupil is valued, whatever their cultural heritage, pupils are skilfully encouraged to develop acceptance and tolerance of each other. As a result of this, racial harmony exists throughout the school and pupils play and socialise together without any problems. There have been no exclusions and instances of bullying are very rare; pupils confirm this. Parents and pupils express confidence that, if any incidents did occur, they would be dealt with promptly and effectively.
15. When given the opportunity, pupils are happy to take on responsibility. For example, younger pupils undertake simple duties for their teachers, such as taking the register to the office. Most responsibilities are for older pupils, such as helping with the breakfast club or running the tuck shop. All pupils take great pride in carrying out even the simplest tasks. Pupils enjoy and are learning to become confident in performing in front of an audience, for example during class assemblies. In lessons, they work well in small groups and pairs and share equipment and resources sensibly. On occasions, pupils have shown initiative and organised fund-raising activities. However, because teachers provide too few opportunities, pupils rarely show initiative during lessons or offer to take responsibility for their own learning. They rarely select their own equipment or resources or volunteer to research information to support their learning.
16. Pupils say they enjoy attending school. Attendance rates are broadly in line with national figures but above the local average. Unauthorised absence is above average. Overall rates of attendance are depressed because of the long-term absence of a very small number of pupils. Other absences are due to illness and a number of families who take their holiday during term time. Most pupils arrive at school on time.

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

17. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but has many strengths. The strengths identified at the last inspection have been sustained, whilst the quality of teaching in the infants has significantly

improved with all lessons now satisfactory or better. Teaching in almost seven out of ten lessons seen is good or better. In lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all lessons, with six out of ten being good or better and three were excellent. Only three lessons observed in junior classes were unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when almost one quarter of lessons in infant classes was unsatisfactory. In the better lessons, the teaching was stimulating, challenging and imaginative, enabling all pupils, irrespective of ability or gender, to make good progress. In the unsatisfactory lessons, teaching was uninspiring and pupils of all abilities were insufficiently challenged. In only one lesson the teacher lacked suitable subject expertise to fully engage and stimulate the pupils.

18. The teaching seen in Nursery classes was consistently good and arrangements for meeting the varying needs of all pupils were achieved through the good ratio of adults to children. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good in the Foundation Stage, but satisfactory in the infants and juniors. Good quality teaching however in core subjects, supported by the additional help for lower attainers, enables pupils at the end of Year 6 to achieve standards above average in English, science and mathematics. Teaching is also good in art and design in the infants and in information and communication technology in the infants and juniors. Overall, pupils' basic skills and their learning throughout the school are built upon well, although many pupils could do better if teachers provided more challenge, such as in geography in junior classes and design and technology in infants and juniors. The teaching of literacy is good but is only satisfactory in the development of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory; computers are used effectively to build on pupils' English and mathematical knowledge and understanding.
19. Teachers' planning is good in Nursery and Reception classes and at least satisfactory throughout the rest of the school. Learning intentions are regularly shared with pupils at the start of lessons and most lessons finish with a review of what pupils have learned. Some good planning in the Year 4/5 class ensured that pupils in different year groups learned appropriately to their needs and reviewed their learning accordingly. In many other lessons, good planning provides interesting lessons that meet the needs of all, drawing well upon posters and source material to enthuse pupils in their learning. Teachers' daily and termly planning is satisfactory in ensuring steady incremental learning for most pupils but, in some lessons, there is a lack of detailed planning for extending more-able pupils. Teachers' expectations are satisfactory overall, whilst some teachers in the infants and the juniors have very high expectations. This is evident in Year 6 where pupils' attainment accelerated and was above average by the time they were 11. Weaknesses are apparent, however, in teachers' having too low an expectation in geography in Year 5 and in one Year 6 class, resulting in insufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities and particularly for higher attainers. More appropriate work for higher attainers linked to high teacher expectation is an area for development.
20. Most teachers are effective in their teaching methods. Many good teaching strategies, linked with good class organisation and good awareness of pupils' abilities and needs, enable pupils to become involved with work that interests them and encourages them to achieve. Whilst work is generally appropriate to their needs, the emphasis in many classes has been on meeting the needs of the average and lower attainers.
21. Teachers' management of pupils is very good overall. The relationship that teachers build with children is very good and all children, including those in the Nursery class, are secure with the adults helping them. This is a strength of the school and an area where the headteacher and deputy have put in much effort to ensure a good base from which pupils can learn effectively. As a result, pupils clearly demonstrate respect for teachers.
22. Time is used well in infant and junior classes and very well in Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers and pupils are punctual in arriving at their classes and lessons start and finish on time. On some occasions, the planned curriculum time demands a break in some lessons, such as history, to enable a gymnastics lesson to take place. On these occasions the teachers seek to

provide clear teaching during the time children are changing in class. Whilst this works in practice for achieving a planned time slot for using the hall, it does not always result in pupils' getting the best out of the gymnastics lesson and opportunities for personal or group evaluation are lost.

23. Teaching assistants, principally involved with the support for pupils with special educational needs, make a very significant contribution to the good teaching of these pupils, particularly when withdrawn from classes, enabling pupils' learning to be good. The co-ordinator is very effective and her supportive approach ensures that pupils are very productive and make at least satisfactory progress in acquiring new skills. Teachers and teaching assistants operate as an effective team, ensuring that pupils are fully included in class discussion and lesson activities. Pupils' individual education plans have specific literacy, numeracy and personal development targets that are used effectively by teachers when planning their lessons so that they impact positively on pupils' learning. The quality of teaching in the 'springboard' mathematics and additional literacy sessions is good. However, some pupils are withdrawn too often from mainstream lessons and the school recognises the need to review its support programme with a view to making it more inclusive.
24. The school has identified three pupils who are at an early stage of the acquisition of English as an additional language and have need of focused support for learning. Some in-class support is provided for them by teaching assistants, and additional instruction is given by the special educational needs co-ordinator to a pupil in Year 6. In each case class, teachers show an awareness of the need to make the content of lessons accessible to these pupils, each of whom make good progress in language acquisition.
25. The use of ongoing assessment is good in English and mathematics but it is irregular in many other subjects and varies between teachers. The school has not begun to monitor the progress of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds separately from their peers. As a result, teachers are not sufficiently effective in ensuring that appropriately challenging work is systematically provided for pupils or that all pupils become involved in reviewing their progress.
26. Teachers regularly mark work in pupils' books but often it is more supportive than it is for identifying pointers for improvement or for diagnosing pupils' learning needs. On occasions pupils are given pointers for improving their work, but this is not consistent across the school or in subjects. Where marking is done well, the pupils receive clear indication as to how they might improve their work and their learning targets are commented upon. The provision of homework is good and most homework is marked promptly.

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

27. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are provided with a suitably wide range of experiences in order to make satisfactory progress towards achieving the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The curriculum in the infants and juniors is broad and balanced overall, and meets statutory requirements for all subjects including religious education and provision for collective acts of worship, but there is not yet an Email facility for junior pupils. The curriculum is well designed to enable the school to achieve its mission statement of helping all pupils to attain high academic standards, to develop personal integrity and positive relationships. Curricular opportunities for infants and juniors in English and mathematics are good, but the science curriculum does not reflect all the changes required in Curriculum 2000, resulting in different work being followed in parallel classes.
28. In the foundation subjects, the curriculum is at least satisfactory with the exception of design and technology, where it does not provide sufficient coverage, and geography in Years 5 and 6 where it lacks sufficient challenge. Access to the breadth of the curriculum is well provided for girls and boys, pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils with special educational

needs. Since the previous inspection, good progress has been made in information and communication technology provision, which has had a positive impact on standards. Curriculum planning is now satisfactory. The implementation of a uniform system of short and medium-term planning has had a beneficial effect on standards of teaching and learning, particularly in the core curriculum. Continuity and progression remain an issue in design and technology across the school and in geography at the top end of the juniors.

29. The deputy headteacher now co-ordinates the curriculum and is examining strategies for improving the timetabling of foundation subjects so that they are not unduly squeezed by the school's focus on the core curriculum. She is aware of the concern which many teachers have with respect to delivering well-planned practical lessons in half-hour sessions.
30. Satisfactory policies are in place for all subjects. The school has chosen to use either the national guidelines or the local education authority schemes in most non-core subjects that provide at least satisfactory guidance for teachers. There are good strategies for the development of literacy and numeracy. Both national initiatives have been successfully implemented and there has been a rise in standards. The school has introduced setting in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 and booster classes are provided for pupils requiring extra help before they take the statutory assessment tests at the end of Year 6. The additional literacy strategy for lower-attaining pupils in Year 3 is effective in raising standards and accelerating progress.
31. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. There is a wide range of stimulating activities which enhance the quality of education provided by the school. Participation in sports, music, dance, art, gardening and chess clubs, together with visits from theatre groups, poets and artists, all help to widen pupils' horizons and build confidence and self esteem. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential trips within the UK and abroad, which promote independence and good relationships as well as supporting the curriculum. A high percentage of pupils of all ages take part in the extra-curricular activities and visits arranged by the school. The Breakfast Club and After-School Club provide a much appreciated valuable service to working parents. They are both well organised and very 'user friendly', offering opportunities for pupils to engage in a range of activities, to read, do homework or sometimes just relax. Whilst the greater number of pupils has full access to the curriculum, too much withdrawal from mainstream lessons and also assemblies for additional and individual support results in some pupils missing the rich experiences that their peers receive. Despite the school's considered planning for supporting individuals, withdrawal at regular times of the school day mitigates against the school's laudable aim of full inclusion for all.
32. The school provides appropriate guidance in health, drug awareness and sex education, which is delivered mainly through the religious education programme for pupils in Year 6. A new personal, social and health programme is at an early stage of development but is set for implementation in 2002 to develop the health, drugs and safety awareness that will closely involve parents. A co-ordinator has recently been appointed. She has already attended a number of training sessions and is beginning to share this information with colleagues. A draft drugs policy has been presented to the governing body for approval. A 'Buddy' Scheme is at the planning stage to train senior pupils to help take responsibility for younger pupils in the playground with the aim of developing trust and good school citizenship.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. As a result they make good progress toward their individual educational plans, but only satisfactory progress overall in some foundation subjects because they miss lessons or parts of lessons and do not always receive the appropriate level of support. The creative and innovative co-ordinator draws very effectively on the support of the external agencies and also on the expertise of the speech therapy service to draw up individual educational plans to support these pupils.

34. The school has a very strong community spirit, intrinsically linked to its very close relationship with the church. The very good partnership regularly brings members of the parish, school, parents and community together, for example during the project to develop the school grounds. In the nearby community pupils sing at Christmas time at a local senior citizens residential home. Members of the local community are invited to concerts and also a special Christmas lunch. The immediate and wider locality is used well for educational visits, such as to science exhibitions or museums and the millennium dome; these visits support aspects of the curriculum. There is a good range of visitors each year, including poets and storytellers, theatre companies and a Zulu dance group, which enriches pupils' curricular experiences. The school also benefits from the support of local business and commerce who regularly provide prizes for raffles. They also gave tremendous support when the school grounds were developed, by the provision of items such as heavy plant hire equipment and grass turf. The links the school has established with the parish and local community are very good.
35. Relationships with partner institutions are good. There is good liaison with other primary schools for sporting events. The school regularly accepts pupils on work placements from nearby further education colleges and secondary schools. Although in previous years the school has accepted trainee teachers on placements, this year there is no liaison with higher education institutions. There are good links with the local education authority and external agencies that support a number of pupils.
36. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is very good overall; provision for their cultural development is good. At the last inspection, the report stated that the school achieved significant success in implementing its mission statement, which emphasised the importance of spiritual, personal and academic growth. This is still the case. The Catholic ethos of the school is positively pervasive and affects many aspects of school life. The assemblies observed were joyful celebrations of the communal life of the school and of the shared faith of staff, pupils and a number of parents. Pupils are given many opportunities to pray and they are also able to reflect on fundamental issues, such as 'who we are' in the context of Christian faith. They are also given some opportunities to explore aspects of the values and beliefs of other faith communities, through subjects such as art and design and history and through reading stories or hearing them read. Infant pupils take part in Circle Time when they can express their thoughts and inner feelings, but this opportunity is not available to all pupils. However, planned opportunities for spiritual development in subjects across the curriculum are limited and, although the teachers are enthusiastic, opportunities to promote spirituality in mathematics for example are often missed.
37. Provision for the moral development of pupils is excellent. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on moral values and strong emphasis is laid on helping them to understand the differences between right and wrong, particularly with respect to their behaviour toward others. From an early age they learn to relate well to each other and to take responsibility for their own actions. All pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on the aims of the school and to interpret them in terms of their own insights. For example, in a list of three main aspirations, Year 5 pupils had listed the following: 'to welcome people and let them join in our games'; and 'we will help the poor, elderly and unfortunate around the world'. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about and support numerous charities at home and abroad that are concerned with assisting others less fortunate than themselves, such as the 'Town of Hope' for victims of Aids and a village in Chiapas in Mexico. Church links provide personal contacts with a number of people and projects in developing countries such as Peru, Ghana and South Africa.
38. Provision for social development is very good and is an improvement since the last inspection. The relationships between teachers and pupils in class are warm and relaxed and teachers provide very good models of courtesy and respect for others. This provides a good foundation for the development of good relationships and co-operative activities among the pupils themselves. Both in class and in extra-curricular activities, pupils are encouraged in many ways to collaborate

together purposefully. For example, in a physical education lesson, boys and girls in Year 6 developed dance routines in groups in response to music and verse. Older pupils help younger ones in activities such as reading and during the Breakfast Club. However, the ways in which older pupils are able to show initiative and independence is limited. The very close links with the local parish provide good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of what is involved in living in the wider community. Through such activities as the 'Golden Book' awards, appropriate emphasis is given to the encouragement of different aspects of personal development. Awards were given, for example, both for academic and sporting achievements and for the demonstration of qualities such as kindness, helpfulness to others and hard work in class.

39. Since the last inspection, the school has made a good effort to ensure that provision for the cultural development of pupils has been widened. In addition to their exposure to, and experience of, aspects of British and European culture in subjects such as art and design and music and in assemblies, efforts have been made to increase pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of other cultures. For example, visiting experts are invited to share their experiences in day-long sessions on topics such as Zulu dance, costumes and dances associated with Hindu life and worship, Aboriginal art and design, and Chinese calligraphy. In an assembly, two older pupils gave an excellent presentation of Irish dancing. While the school has made a good start in widening this aspect of the curriculum to incorporate evidence relating to other cultures and ways of life, there is more scope for development in the extent to which the rich diversity of cultural life in British society is celebrated. Teachers do not always link the different aspects of cultural development with work in the curriculum, such as in the study of the Indian village of Chembakolli in a Year 3 lesson.

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

40. The school takes very good care of all pupils; this is an improvement on the findings at the last inspection and is a strength of the school. All pupils are equally valued, cherished and continually praised and encouraged to try their best. The secretarial staff, classroom assistants and midday supervisors as well as teachers all play an important part in the success of this aspect of the school's work. Because of this high level of care and support, pupils work confidently and grow in self-esteem; this makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve.
41. The arrangements for child protection are very good. The designated person has received appropriate training and teachers are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about pupils in their care. Issues are dealt with very sensitively and with great care. Overall arrangements for health, safety and welfare are very good. Health and safety procedures are good but on a day-to-day basis they are informal. The local education authority carries out regular risk assessments on behalf of the school. Occasional safety tours are made by the headteacher and a premises governor, but no regular, formal safety tours are conducted of the school building and site. First aid training for a sufficient number of staff is up to date, and very effective arrangements ensure that parents are informed about their child's illness or accidents at school. Pupils are well supervised at all times and the midday supervisors have received appropriate guidance and training to undertake their roles. There are good arrangements to settle children into nursery education and to support them when they move to the Reception class to start full-time education. Good liaison with the secondary school to which the pupils transfer ensures their smooth transition to their next stage of education.
42. The school's arrangements to monitor and promote appropriate behaviour to eliminate bullying and any form of harassment are very good. The very good relationships, mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils, and the values of co-operation, which are promoted very well from pupils' earliest days in the school, all contribute to the success in this area. Appropriate behaviour, effort and achievement in all aspects of school life are regularly and frequently rewarded. Punishment is used only rarely because self-discipline and respect for others are promoted very well as part of the schools ethos.

43. The arrangements to monitor pupils' attendance are good. Class teachers and the educational social worker regularly review registers. Because of this the school is able to identify any pupils whose attendance is causing concern. Although monitoring is good, procedures to promote and improve attendance are only satisfactory. Whilst high levels of attendance are rewarded, there are no specific initiatives in place to improve overall rates to above the national average and therefore meet the schools target of 95 per cent.
44. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics are very good. Statutory assessments are used effectively to analyse performance and to set challenging targets for school improvement. Data from a variety of other tests across the school assists in assessing strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Targets are set for individual pupils in English and mathematics and progress is carefully monitored against predictions. Where progress is identified as slow, appropriate action is taken to identify problems and institute remedial support. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are sound and the information is used effectively to prepare detailed individual education plans. Lack of professional expertise in assessment of English as an additional language means that assessment of needs and subsequent planning for progress in language acquisition is a relative weakness of the school. The assessment of children under five on entry to Reception is satisfactory but there is no formal recording of achievement in different areas of learning throughout the year. The good practice in English and mathematics in the infants and juniors has not yet been extended to science or to other curriculum areas, so the use of assessment in science and the foundation subjects is unsatisfactory in infant and junior classes.
45. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very good. Teachers know their pupils very well and constantly share and record information about individual pupils; this enables a comprehensive profile of each pupil to be built up during their time at school.
46. Arrangements to support pupils' personal development are good. Extra-curricular activities, the chance to take part in school assemblies and to take part in fund-raising activities all contribute to raising pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Most opportunities to take on responsibilities, however, are very much only for the oldest pupils. Teachers do not consistently plan regular opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or to show initiative. There is no school council at present as a mechanism to encourage and prepare pupils for taking a more active role in the running of their school. The school has developed good links with external agencies, including the behaviour therapist, the teacher of the deaf and the speech and language therapy service, to ensure high quality support for pupils with special educational needs. The school has liased effectively with its educational psychologist and the behaviour strategy therapist to enable pupils with complex behavioural difficulties to be fully included. This good support enables these pupils to gain in confidence and self-esteem, and this contributes very significantly to improved learning for them.

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

47. Parents' views of the school are very positive. Both during the pre-inspection meeting and in discussion with parents during the inspection, parents expressed overwhelming praise for the school's work. They say they are always made to feel welcome in school and express the unanimous view that any concerns they raise are dealt with quickly and competently. The partnership that has been established with parents is very good and a strength of the school. This reflects the findings of the last report.
48. A number of parents regularly help in school with a variety of activities; their help is valued and the support they provide has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. They also support the work their children do at home well, such as in hearing them read. Although there is no parents association, when asked, parents get involved in school activities. A major project that has

recently been completed was the development of the school grounds for which very many parents offered help and support. Parents regularly support class assemblies and attendance at parents' evenings is reported to be very good. Through the close involvement with the parish church, parents are also involved in the sacramental programme for their children. The home school agreement appropriately reflects the school's aims and has been signed by many parents; this signifies their support for the school's work. The school has recently sought the views of parents and has responded to a number of suggestions, including the provision of the breakfast club, whilst consideration is being given to the formation of a parents group.

49. The information provided for parents is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Regular class and school newsletters give parents an insight into what their children will be learning and when homework will be set. It also reminds them of key dates and events, such as parents' evenings. There is also a good flow of general day-to-day information. There is very useful pre-school information for parents of children about to enter the nursery or reception class. In addition, the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are both well presented and contain detailed and relevant information about the school and its work. Parents receive a useful report each term that gives them a brief overview of their children's behaviour and attitude to work. Although there is much good practice, annual written reports for parents about their children's progress are unsatisfactory. They do not contain sufficient information about pupils' progress and what they know and can do in all National Curriculum subjects. The school is aware of this and has identified it as an area for improvement.
50. There are good arrangements to involve the parents of pupils with a statement of special educational need in the annual review. An excellent relationship has been established with parents of pupils with very challenging behaviour and an effective partnership developed between school and home in supporting pupils in the management of their behaviour. The school is exploring the most effective way to establish a parent support group for pupils with special educational needs.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy are good, giving a clear educational direction for the school and ensuring that the caring ethos of the school, in which all pupils are valued, is sustained. This reflects the finding at the last inspection. The leadership and management of the school is otherwise satisfactory overall. The work of senior staff is satisfactory, and management of the Foundation Stage and infants is satisfactory, but it is unsatisfactory in the juniors.
52. The school has a very good ethos rooted firmly in its Christian provision for pupils' holistic development. Pupils' behaviour is very good and often exemplary. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good, and young children in the Nursery are secure in their surroundings and when talking with adults and visitors. The school's mission statement is met very well.
53. Good management by the headteacher and deputy has led to review of some of the leadership and management issues, resulting in the recent re-deployment of a senior member of staff to be responsible for children in the Nursery, Foundation Stage and infants. Review of the end of last year's Year 2 test results has been undertaken and now confirms that the lower standards attained were due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs which impacted on pupils' achievement overall. Leadership of the junior classes, however, is unsatisfactory, as the co-ordinator does not ensure the progressive learning of pupils throughout the key stage. A key issue at the last inspection identified the need for the management role of co-ordinators to be improved by monitoring the teaching and learning of pupils in all classes. The slow response of the school to this issue has resulted in unsatisfactory progress in the development of the role of subject leaders with the exception of English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Subject co-ordinators do not have release time in which to undertake this role. As a result, monitoring of the level of challenge for higher-attaining pupils is inconsistent and is often insufficient. The school has also identified the need to further challenge higher attainers as an area for development. The science curriculum, whilst satisfactory in the infants, is unsatisfactory in the juniors as it does not meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Although the science curriculum was replanned twelve months ago, it has not kept pace with statutory requirements and the co-ordination of the science curriculum in junior classes is unsatisfactory.
54. Satisfactory improvement has taken place in addressing the majority of the key issues from the last inspection, but further work is required to fully address them all including: improving curricular planning, monitoring and evaluation; improving the use of assessment in short-term planning; developing the management role of the co-ordinators. All other key issues have been fully addressed. The major priorities identified in the school development plan are appropriate, manageable and clearly measurable for improving the quality of education provided. The school targets in English and mathematics are fully realisable, based on the current performance of pupils in Year 6.
55. Governors are fully supportive of the school and are keen to become more involved in shaping its direction. Although most of the governors have been in post for only one year, they are receiving the necessary training to enable them to become a critical friend to the school. A finance governor has recently received training in the principles of best value and is able to advise his colleagues on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school in meeting its objectives and the value it provides. This was previously an area of weakness and governors are now well placed to fulfil this requirement. Several governors are now linked to subjects and have visited classes to view lessons and this has proven beneficial in aiding them to better understand the work of the school and its good practice. The headteacher's reports to governors keep them informed of the areas requiring development and, as a result, governors are generally aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body is properly constituted and fulfils its legal obligations well, although improvement in the quality of pupils' annual reports is necessary to fulfil requirements.

56. The headteacher, senior members of staff and the mathematics co-ordinator have undertaken some lesson observations, and subject co-ordinators have monitored pupils' work and teachers' planning. This good quality monitoring has clearly identified strengths and areas for development in teaching, but the data has yet to be used effectively to further improve the quality of teaching across the whole school by all teachers. Subject co-ordinators have action plans with clear targets identified to improve the quality of provision in the subjects for which they have a lead responsibility. However, they have not been trained in monitoring teaching and learning and do not have non-contact time to carry out this duty. Consequently the role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped and this is a weakness.
57. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership. Good arrangements ensure that parents of pupils with a statement of special educational need are involved in their annual review, whilst an excellent relationship has been established with parents of pupils with very challenging behaviour. The school is seeking to improve the good quality provision by exploring the most effective way to establish a parent support group for pupils with special educational needs. Satisfactory emphasis is placed on all pupils having equal access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs, although on regular occasions a few pupils are removed from assemblies and classes for support in their learning. This is unsatisfactory.
58. The co-ordinator for pupils where English is an additional language provides satisfactory leadership. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to support pupils in lessons and include, where appropriate, individual attention after school. Extra funding has been identified to provide for the needs of these few pupils from financial grants, but this funding has not yet been received. The school, in conjunction with the local education authority, has identified that no specific external expertise is available locally. Good relationships are held with parents who support the school well in meeting the language needs of their children.
59. Newly qualified teachers are mentored well and given good opportunities for professional development. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers and new staff are now written down and the weakness identified at the time of the last inspection has been addressed fully. The school did not meet statutory requirements for teacher appraisal at the time of the last inspection. This weakness has been fully addressed and all teachers have objectives linked to their own professional development and the school's commitment to raising standards.
60. Financial planning and management are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The governing body has sound procedures for preparation of the annual budget and allocations to support the school's priorities as detailed in the school development plan are planned effectively. The educational aims are well supported with co-ordinators taking responsibility for monitoring the expenditure in their subjects to ensure that spending does not exceed agreed commitments. Careful consideration is given to purchases to ensure that value for money is obtained. Governors are rapidly developing an overview of spending of its delegated budget, particularly with the allocations for meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and for pupils for whom English is an additional language. The carry forward at 6.2 per cent is slightly higher than recommendations and needs to be reviewed for appropriate allocation. The school has recently been awarded a specific grant for this latter category of needs but has yet to receive this money.
61. The recommendations of the latest audit report have been fully implemented. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily with the school challenging its own performance and implementing management changes to address areas of weakness. The school, however, has yet to challenge fully its provision for meeting the needs of the higher-attaining pupils. Efficient systems for day-to-day administration are in place enabling the school to run smoothly, and the quality of information is accurate and up to date.

62. The school has sufficient teachers with relevant expertise and experience. Their commitment and capacity to raise standards makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs but there are not enough of them. In one Reception class the learning is slowed down when there is no teaching assistant present because a few pupils in this class have complex behavioural and learning difficulties and they are not yet ready to work independently from the teacher. This presents a particular problem in group work, as evidenced in a numeracy lesson.
63. Following consultation with the staff, the headteacher has introduced an innovative and creative plan to ensure that attendance at meetings and duties are shared equitably amongst all staff. His sensitive approach has lifted the morale of all staff and this impacts positively on the learning experiences for pupils. Staff enjoy their stint of playground duty at break and lunch-times and they successfully engage the pupils in structured play activities. The caretaker and cleaning staff take a pride in their work and maintain a very high standard of cleanliness. The administrative staff work very hard and welcome all visitors to the school with a warm smile. The kitchen staff provide wholesome food and serve the pupils with care which reflects the Christian love that pervades this school.
64. The accommodation for delivery of the curriculum is good. The school library, however, has been replaced to become the school computer room, resulting in pupils' having less opportunity to undertake personal research from a wider book source than that provided in classrooms, and the opportunity for teaching library skills is lost. Most classrooms are of good size and the large hall enables older pupils to have full access to large physical education equipment in safety. Many parts of the school lend themselves as areas for supporting pupils withdrawn from classes and the large resource area in infants is good. The school accommodation is used very effectively, including the hall and computer room. The outdoor areas are substantially improved since the last inspection with high quality provision for children in the Nursery and larger hard play areas for all other pupils. In addition, the school now has a particularly pleasant grassed area which has ample shade for summer and a large environmental area which continues to be developed. The safety concern raised at the last inspection has been resolved. Resources are satisfactory overall with the exception of geography, history and control equipment for computers. Satisfactory use is made of external resources, including museums, the sports field at the neighbouring high school and a local swimming pool.
65. Inspection findings indicate that standards in core subjects are in line with expectations. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs is good. Taking these factors into account, the attainment of pupils on entry being broadly in line and the spending per pupil, which is average, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should take the following actions:

Raise standards in geography in the juniors and design and technology in the infants and juniors by:

- raising teachers' expectations as to what pupils can do and understand.  
(Paragraphs 7, 19, 28, 113-116, 117-122)
- Improve the curriculum provision in science by:
- updating the curriculum and ensure more consistent progress is made across all junior classes.  
(Paragraphs 27, 53, 105)
- Use assessment to plan future lessons to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attainers.  
(Paragraphs 19, 25, 44, 80, 85, 100, 112, 122, 128)

Develop the management role of co-ordinators by:

- ensuring that the work in junior classes is planned and monitored to ensure the continuity and progression for pupils' learning;

- providing release time for subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate standards, and teaching and learning across the school.  
(Paragraphs 51, 53-54, 56, 112, 122, 128, 133, 149)

Ensure the support for pupils with special educational needs does not exempt them from the full breadth of the curriculum:

(Paragraphs 31, 33, 57)

Improve the quality of pupils' annual reports to parents to identify how well pupils are learning in all subjects of the curriculum.

(Paragraph 49, 55)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	85

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	33	28	3	0	0
Percentage	4	18	40	34	4	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	44	312
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	85

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	0.4

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	23	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	23
	Girls	16	18	20
	Total	39	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (83)	80 (88)	84 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	24
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	41	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (86)	82 (95)	84 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	36	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	16
	Girls	30	29	34
	Total	45	43	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (83)	81 (80)	94 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	30	29	34
	Total	45	43	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (68)	81 (73)	94 (80)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

*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	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### *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	0	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.*

### *Teachers and classes*

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	25.9

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	22

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	701,173
Total expenditure	737,237
Expenditure per pupil	2,037
Balance brought forward from previous year	79,588
Balance carried forward to next year	43,524

### *Recruitment of teachers*

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
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
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

*Results of the survey of parents and carers*

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	336
Number of questionnaires returned	137

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	29	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	62	31	3	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	31	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	40	11	2	4
The teaching is good.	61	34	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	46	11	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	34	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	21	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	39	12	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	71	28	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	40	5	1	9

## **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**

66. Children are admitted into the Nursery class, the majority on a full-time basis, in the autumn term following their third birthday. This is their first experience of formal education. Practical induction procedures ensure that a smooth start is made and children are well prepared to benefit from the curriculum provided. Standards on entry are average overall, but with quite wide variation in levels of speech. Inspection findings show that, as a result of good teaching, many children make good progress despite their weaknesses in speech and are on target to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They are consequently well prepared for National Curriculum work in Year 1. This is a broadly similar finding to the previous inspection.
67. Assessments made at this stage show that children in the Reception class are of average standard. At present, there are 44 children in the Nursery class and 50 in Reception. Inspection evidence shows that the great majority make good progress and are on target to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

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

68. Very good standards are achieved in these important areas in both the Nursery and Reception classes. As a result of this, children grow in confidence and are able to join in the comprehensive range of activities provided. Teaching in this aspect of learning is very good. Consistency of approach, shared values, and the common ability to convey to children the standards expected by the school help ensure particularly good outcomes in behaviour. The children are beginning to develop a genuine sense of right and wrong and demonstrate great consideration for others. They show a real sense of emotional security, and a tangible feeling of community pervades.

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

69. Satisfactory standards are achieved overall. Teaching of this aspect is satisfactory but with some good features, for example children's learning is well planned and structured. Good links are made with other areas of development, for example through such topics as the 'Bear Hunt'. Good emphasis is placed on the development of listening skills. As a result, most children are enabled to gain a great deal from the many learning opportunities provided. In the Nursery class, plenty of experience of stories and rhymes lays a firm foundation for later literacy. In Reception classes, an early start is made on recognising letters and words. Children learn their sounds quickly. Many are already beginning to apply this knowledge and are making a good start in writing simple text independently. Teachers and support staff regularly use a number of opportunities well to reinforce children's language skills in activities such as when Nursery children have their drink at break-time and in PSHE Circle Time. Children are regularly encouraged to describe and explain how their time is used at weekends, securing children's greater confidence and ability in expressing themselves.
70. All children have full access to the learning opportunities provided, including those with difficulties in using the English language.

#### **Mathematical development**

71. Satisfactory progress is made towards the expected goals. Teaching is satisfactory with good elements in teachers' planning, and relevant activities are well organised. From the earliest stages in the Nursery class, children develop their numbers skills through such challenges as the outside number trail in the natural area and in role-play using cash tills. They learn to recite relevant rhymes and jingles to support their knowledge. In Reception classes, constant practice in counting

and managing small numbers is well provided. Children can name and sort coins and know that money has value and is necessary for shopping. More-able children can identify and name silver coinage, including £1 and £2 pound coins, and articulate their answers satisfactorily. The majority can sort coins in table games but lower-attaining children are unable to correctly compare number accurately such as  $2 \times 5 = 1 \times 10$ . In all classes, ideas of weight and capacity are satisfactorily developed through such appropriately planned activities as sand and water. Their knowledge of shape is routinely developed and many children are able to identify basic shapes correctly.

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

72. Children's learning is developed satisfactorily through the range of activities and experiences organised. The teaching of this aspect of learning is good with work suitably planned to meet current learning needs. Topics, such as 'Healthy eating' in Reception, encourage good development of investigative skills through appropriate use of the senses. Concepts of place and location are fostered, for example through work on Greendale village and activities related to the post office. Children start to use a computer early in the Nursery year, which is developed well through good whole-class teaching in Reception. All pupils are confident in using relevant computer programs and know the name of, and use, the mouse satisfactorily. More-able children demonstrate marked confidence and skill in using drawing programs such as 'Dazzle', for example, and know how to close a window.

### **Physical development**

73. Children's achievement is in line with national expectations. They are carefully taught to use pencils, crayons, brushes and other small tools efficiently and to apply these skills to many activities. They learn to cut, paste and join materials correctly and develop hand and eye co-ordination as they work. Provision for outdoor play in the Nursery is very good. Children make suitable use of the challenging climbing apparatus available to develop varied strategies for movement and balance. They also demonstrate good control when using wheeled vehicles. In Reception they know how to use space when moving and positioning their bodies appropriately. They also have a suitable elementary understanding of how exercise affects their hearts and breathing.

### **Creative development**

74. Children make sound progress as they explore their ideas and feelings through such tasks as drawing, painting and modeling. In the Nursery children work competently making individual Christmas pieces from differing materials, for example. Older children also produce a quite broad range of creative items, such as two-dimensional hot air balloons with glitter or prints, and more-able children construct puzzles and jigsaws rapidly. In music they can sing a range of rhymes and songs satisfactorily. They can distinguish higher and lower sounds and display a suitable sense of rhythm. In the Nursery, small groups of children readily join in role-play, enacting 'St Mary's Diner' enthusiastically and jumping into action by donning serving aprons when a customer arrives.
75. Teaching of this area of development and leadership of the Foundation Stage are at least satisfactory. Planning, however, is a strength that is used efficiently and good links are made to support learning in many other curriculum areas.

## **ENGLISH**

76. Above average standards were attained in the 2001 national tests for 11-year-olds. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. The attainment of seven-year-olds was well below the national average in 2001 tests and assessments, mainly as a result of three fifths of the pupils

having special educational needs, which impacted upon overall standards achieved. Compared with similar schools their attainment was below. This shows a decline in standards since the last inspection. Inspection findings, however, show that the attainment of pupils aged seven in reading, writing, listening and speaking is now in line with national expectations and is an improvement since the last inspection and the national tests and assessments in 2001. For 11-year-olds, attainment in listening, speaking and writing is only in line at present. This lower attainment is a result of there being more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 than in last year's Year 6 group. In reading, however, it is above average and their listening and writing are likely to be above average by the end of the school year. Inspection findings also indicate that pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall as a result of the sound arrangements for supporting them in lessons and after school.

77. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are sound. In the infants, pupils are given many opportunities both to listen to their teachers reading stories and to read aloud with them in groups and as individuals. Pupils are encouraged to answer questions and to express their understanding of what is read and, typically, they do this with eagerness. The warm relationship that teachers and pupils have in these years encourages the pupils to express themselves freely. In consequence, in two of the lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, a good standard of attainment in speaking was shown when the pupils read out nursery rhymes or contributed very enthusiastically to rap poems.
78. Older pupils are also given opportunities, particularly in the context of the literacy hour, to express their interpretation of what they read and to give their opinions. Teachers provide good role models generally for clear and confident speaking and pupils also have had the opportunity to listen to a storyteller. However, during the inspection, the range of opportunities provided for pupils to express themselves was limited. At present, apart from assemblies, there are relatively few planned opportunities for pupils to use talk for different purposes and to communicate with different types of audiences and, in the longer term, this has a negative effect on higher attainment.
79. Pupils' reading skills are good overall and are an improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the school pupils are provided with good opportunities to read. In the infants, appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of phonics and to strategies for word recognition and word attack. In Year 1, higher-attaining pupils read with confidence and understanding and with good expression; all pupils learn to enjoy reading. In Year 2, pupils who have reached an appropriate stage in their progress through graded readers are given interesting, ungraded books to read, selected by the teacher, and this has a positive effect on their reading attainment. The help given by parents at home and by parent helpers and members of the community in hearing pupils read in school also makes a significant contribution to their progress, as does the fact that teachers and classroom assistants ensure that a careful record is kept in each class of the pupils' supervised reading. Throughout the school, both in the context of the literacy hour and elsewhere, the effective teaching of strategies for extracting information from non-fiction books ensures that pupils learn to make efficient use of cues such as contents pages and indexes. In Year 6, pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress and, with good support, were able, in one lesson, to read a graded reading book.
80. Pupils' writing skills continue to be in line with the national average and reflect the findings of the last report. Good teaching of basic literacy skills in the infants also ensures that pupils learn to write words and sentences accurately. The greater majority of pupils in Year 1 are able to use a computer to write a coherent sentence in the context of an information and communication technology lesson. In class, pupils are provided with good opportunities in Years 1 and 2 for narrative writing on personal topics. Some satisfactory descriptive writing linked to pictures was also observed. In the upper school the range of writing that pupils produce is extended. However, the scrutiny of written work indicated that more emphasis is given to maintaining an appropriate balance between creative and expository writing in some classes, such as those in Years 4 and 6, than in others. In Year 5, higher-attaining pupils rapidly complete worksheets when identifying

key statements in text and write about the perceived feelings of the author that are well justified by specific features of the source text. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, however, write only short statements selecting an adjective from a choice of two, for example, with one lower-attaining pupil showing inability to write using cursive script. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are capable of planning and drafting extended writing, making confident use of paragraphs. Good examples of extended biographies are on display in Year 6, although some supplementary tasks are not sufficiently challenging for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language receive satisfactory support from a teaching assistant in completing appropriate sentence construction tasks that consolidates their learning satisfactorily.

81. In the previous report, it was remarked that the marking of children's writing was unsystematic. This is no longer the case. Because the school has taken effective measures to introduce a systematic approach to the marking and assessment of pupils' writing, written work is now assessed well. Typically, marking is selective but systematic and the teacher's comments are frequently constructive, pointing the way forward. Pupils themselves are usually aware of the targets they need to keep in mind so as to improve. Appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of handwriting and spelling and this also continues in later years.
82. The use of literacy skills in other subjects is good. In several subjects other than English clear written accounts were observed which showed the effective application of literacy across the curriculum. For example, in Year 2 coherent accounts of historical characters were on display. In Year 3 pupils had written 'Psalms' expressing thanks to God. In Year 4, satisfactory written accounts comparing Chembakolli with Levenshulme were on display and Year 6 pupils' commentaries on features of Tudor life brightened up the corridor. The effective use of computers in writing was observed in the context of the preparation of CVs in Year 6 and chronological accounts in Year 2.
83. Teaching of the literacy strategy is good. The majority of teachers apply the strategies associated with the literacy hour well. Their management of the pupils is generally good and teachers' relationships with their pupils are very good overall. In most classes, the initial plenary sessions, which usually involve shared reading, were characterised by effective questioning which ensured that all pupils had the opportunity to respond. However, in the supplementary group activities that followed, the tasks were not always adapted to the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment and this reflects a weakness in lesson planning. In some classes also, for example in Year 3, the scrutiny of work revealed a heavy reliance on the use of commercial texts and worksheets, which did not always provide tasks relevant to the specific needs of the pupils, particularly the higher attainers. In the very good lessons, teachers demonstrated high expectations of work and behaviour and provided suitable extended work for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, however, are usually given tasks that are suitable for their level of attainment.
84. The co-ordinator, who is well qualified to carry out her numerous responsibilities, has, with other members of the senior management team, led her colleagues in identifying appropriate priorities for subject development through a suitable literacy action plan. A good start has been made on systematically monitoring pupils' attainment in writing and reading and on monitoring teaching to a lesser extent. The introduction of procedures for collecting and analysing evidence about pupils' writing across the school has already had very positive effects on attainment. The school is making effective use of initiatives such as additional literacy support and the local education authority service for inclusion strategy. The co-ordinator is also taking steps to ensure that teachers can benefit from other current initiatives, such as the 'Grammar for Writing' materials. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in English are very good. Evidence from assessment is now used well to inform teachers' planning. For example, the school has identified a need through the analysis of national test materials for further emphasis on inferential reading and has identified funds to purchase appropriate teaching materials.

85. In each class, there is a collection of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils to use and they make good use of these. However, the absence of a central library facility means that pupils are not always able to get access to appropriate reading materials, either for purposes of reference or for personal enjoyment. The majority of pupils who were heard to read in Year 6 were reading books purchased by themselves or their parents. The unavailability of a wide range of reference materials and of fiction for pupils generally, and for older higher-attaining pupils in particular, has a detrimental effect on the development of the skills required to extract, interpret and synthesise information from different written sources across the curriculum, and on the development of independence in and enjoyment of the reading of literature.

## **MATHEMATICS**

86. In the national tests in 2001, pupils in Year 2 attained standards well below the national average compared with all schools and below the average compared with similar schools. This represents a drop in standards since the last inspection. Inspection evidence, however, indicates that the number of pupils with special educational needs was much higher than average and that a significant number of pupils in the current Year 3 struggle with mathematics. When this information is extracted from test results the remaining pupils are seen to achieve average standards.
87. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the infants and current pupils attain standards in line with the national average. Overall, the quality of provision, standards of teaching, procedures for assessment and the level of resourcing are much improved since the last inspection.
88. Year 6 pupils attained standards above the national average and well above the average for similar schools in the 2001 national tests. Pupils make good progress towards the end of the juniors, and lower attainers are very well supported by the booster class and 'Springboard' initiatives. However, it is to be noted that there are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 than in last year's Year 6 group, resulting in pupils' current achievement being lower than last year. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' learning is generally good, although a significant proportion of lower-attaining Year 6 pupils have difficulty in recognising number bonds to 1000.
89. Pupils with special educational needs are almost always well supported and included in numeracy lessons by effective teaching assistants through activities that have been planned to meet their needs. Teaching assistants and class teachers work in an effective partnership to ensure that these pupils make satisfactory gains in their understanding of the rules of number in lessons. There is no special work for pupils with English as an additional language, but the 'Springboard' programme for infant and junior pupils allows them to have personal support in lessons and so they make good progress. As mathematical notation is a universal language, the teacher is able to model methods using the whiteboard and so pupils at an early stage of English as an additional language acquisition make good progress through working out examples from the sheet on the basis of the method explained to them. The school has not identified any gifted and talented pupils in mathematics and this is an issue, as some teachers do not sufficiently challenge the highest attainers.
90. By the age of 7, pupils are able to investigate numbers up to 100, composing addition and subtraction sums of their own. They have a good grasp of their 2 x and 10 x tables, and the vast majority can use multiplication by 5 as well. They can interpret charts and classify numbers or objects in pictorial displays. Sorting by two non-distinct criteria using a Carroll diagram is a particular strength. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to gain a good understanding of fractions and they can add and subtract three-digit numbers with confidence. Their measuring and estimating skills are average. The highest attainers in Year 2 are beginning to understand subtraction as the inverse of addition and they can solve problems quickly during the initial mental-

oral session of the lessons. They offer confident responses during these sessions. These pupils tell the time with accuracy, have a reasonable grasp of place value and can count backwards to a standard in line with the average for their age. In Year 2, pupils with special educational needs tackle work with great confidence and make sound progress in their number work.

91. By the age of 11, most pupils are able to carry out investigations on time, speed and distance to a standard in line with the national average. They translate analogue times to those on a digital clock, whilst involved in problem solving with time. Pupils' skills in carrying out investigations are much better than what they were at the time of the last inspection. They are learning how to convert common fractions to decimals, using division and cancelling. They can identify and measure the parts of a circle and they have a good grasp of perpendicular and parallel lines. Without difficulty most of them can convert miles to kilometres. The highest attainers are particularly skilled at measuring angles to the nearest degree and calculating area. Their grasp of fractions as equivalents is satisfactory. The very highest attainers in Year 6 demonstrate that they can construct conversion graphs using pounds sterling and French francs, and can engage in higher level analysis by setting and testing hypotheses.
92. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning and their behaviour is consistently good and, on occasions, excellent. Excellent behaviour in a Year 4 class resulted in pupils making excellent progress in converting £s to pence and back again, and also in solving money problems. Concentration during mental mathematics sessions, whilst using their small white boards, is very good. A high proportion of pupils state that they have lots of fun in mathematics and that they enjoy the subject. Routines in lessons are well established and no time is wasted. Pupils are used to the teacher saying: 'You have 30 seconds to work that one out'. Because Year 6 pupils listen so carefully in lessons they make good progress.
93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infants, but is good overall in the juniors. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a good knowledge of the numeracy strategy and lessons are very well planned. When teaching is excellent, for example in one Year 4 class, expectations were very high, pupils were taught at a cracking pace and they were challenged to move on as soon as they have finished a task. In the best lessons relationships are very secure and pupils have the confidence to ask their teachers questions and to self-correct their work. Where there are shortcomings in the otherwise satisfactory teaching the pace drops when sorting the pupils into groups and the work is not always sufficiently challenging for the highest attainers such as in a Year 5 lesson on shape and calculating an area. Teachers help pupils to build on previous learning and very good use is made of questioning to check pupils' knowledge and understanding before moving them on. Effective use is made of homework to consolidate work learnt in class and also to extend mathematical thinking. Homework is differentiated according to pupils' mathematical ability and this is good practice. The sharing of objectives is done very well so pupils are crystal clear about what it is they have to do in lessons.
94. The use of assessment is very good in mathematics. An analysis of the Year 5 optional test papers indicated that pupils struggled with scale and this information has been used to inform subsequent planning to raise standards. Assessment is used well in the infants and very well in junior classes, resulting in appropriate work being set for pupils. Good use is made of half-termly tests and the analysis of test papers to set targets, and pupils are rigorously monitored against these targets. Pupils are grouped in Year 6 and the borderline Level 3 / Level 4 pupils are given very focused support to raise their achievement.
95. The use of computers to develop mathematical knowledge is satisfactory. In mathematics lessons teachers are confident in using computers to support their teaching. Data handling programs are used effectively for graph work and to construct questionnaires. Numeracy is used satisfactorily in other subjects, particularly in geography and science, to record information in tabular or graphical forms. There is some evidence of mathematical skills being developed in music through counting the beats and in dance in the joining together of movements and forming shapes.

96. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, hard working and has successfully implemented a programme of work which ensures improved breadth and balance in the mathematics curriculum since the last inspection. Procedures for assessment have improved very significantly since the last inspection. He has provided a detailed action plan to improve standards and provides high quality demonstration lessons for his colleagues. Although he drew up a plan to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics across the school, he has not had sufficient non-contact time to make this happen. He has not had any formal training in how to conduct classroom observations or in the skills required to provide constructive feedback. He is rigorous in monitoring teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work and uses the outcomes from this activity to support teachers in improving their teaching of mathematics. He has improved the amount and quality of learning resources since the last inspection. Good investment has been made in the purchase of high quality tactile resources to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The capacity for further improvement is good, but closer analysis of standards is required to further develop strategies to improve standards.

## SCIENCE

97. Standards of work seen during the inspection were average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and this represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 were above average.
98. Teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2001 indicated that standards were well below the national average. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 standards were well above those of pupils at similar schools and above when compared with all schools nationally. Pupils are well prepared for these tests, aided by science work in an after-school club, which impacts favourably on their achievement. There is no marked difference between the performance of boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
99. By the age of seven, pupils correctly group familiar materials that have the same property, although some lower attainers are unable to sort into sets. They co-operate well in small groups to follow instructions to test fabrics in the same way to discover why they are chosen for a particular purpose. Several pupils do not understand the purpose of investigation sufficiently and their interpretation of scientific tests is weak, for example confusing absorbency with waterproof. The majority make careful drawings of changes they observe when materials melt, burn or dissolve in hot water. Many use the correct terms to suggest what might happen or to describe these changes. They have a good understanding of categories of food from keeping a diary of what they eat, and use the computer effectively to generate a graph from information they collect about food. Most pupils properly identify a healthy meal.
100. By the age of eleven, pupils recognise that the same material can change into different forms but are insecure in applying their knowledge about materials to explain how to separate a mixture. From taking accurate measurements pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how forces affect movement, but many do not use scientific language when explaining forces orally or in their writing. They make satisfactory use of the computer to generate graphs from recorded data. Generally throughout the junior classes, pupils interpret trends and patterns in charts and appropriate forms of graphs to improve their understanding. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are over reliant upon the teacher to design or plan tests to explore their own ideas.
101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in the infants and juniors but some excellent teaching was seen in the Year 4/5 class. Where teaching was excellent the teacher had high expectations for pupils of all abilities. Pupils with physical or learning difficulties were fully included in this lesson and supported effectively by classroom assistants. However, in two lessons

observed, pupils with special educational needs missed important teaching and learning activities when they were withdrawn for additional support.

102. When teaching was carefully structured and actively involved pupils in clear learning intentions, pupils' behaviour was very good and in one lesson outstanding. This had a positive effect upon their learning and achievement. In a lesson that did not plan for younger pupils to investigate for themselves, pupils lost interest in the purpose of the lesson. On occasions there is no indication in lessons of the learning intentions and pupils' understanding is not always ascertained, resulting in insufficient challenge for many pupils.
103. Pupils generally throughout the school enjoy science activities and are eager to learn. Because of the secure, relaxed interaction between themselves, teachers and other adults, pupils are confident in sharing their ideas orally in almost all lessons. Visitors to the school increase pupils' understanding of the relevance of their investigations to everyday life. Although the school has adequate resources these are not sufficiently accessible to teachers in junior classes.
104. Most teachers make effective use of assessment in lessons by questioning pupils to establish what they understand. Where teaching failed to use effective questioning strategies, several pupils developed misconceptions. There is inconsistency in marking, although good practice was seen, including remarks relating to what pupils are expected to have learned. Marking fails to extend pupils' use of scientific terms in their written interpretations of results from investigations. Assessment is not used to monitor pupils' progress through the school or to set pupils' individual targets based upon their previous achievement. This results in some pupils having work that is not closely matched to their abilities.
105. Co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is also no systematically planned scheme of work. Failure to remove elements from the scheme of work to bring the curriculum into line for 2000 has had a negative impact on the focus of lessons in Year 6. Ineffective monitoring of planning, teaching and learning results in differences in the quality of experience being delivered in the parallel age groups. Although there are good examples in the school of joint planning within year groups to share ideas, this is not general practice throughout the school. Insufficient management of the subject provides little guidance for teachers to assess pupils' scientific inquiry skills or to ensure that these are built in a systematic way as pupils' progress through the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106. By the age of seven, standards in art and design are good. This represents good progress since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. By the age of 11, standards are in line with expectations, as they were previously, with junior pupils being too dependent upon the teacher to guide them. This, together with the short time span of some junior lessons, inhibits the systematic development of pupils' skills in junior classes, with junior pupils' progress, although slower than in the infants, being satisfactory. The work of pupils of all ages is celebrated in imaginative displays of high quality throughout the school. These greatly enhance the learning environment and promote and encourage pupils to aspire to high standards.
107. Infant pupils use colour with confidence. They select and group appropriate colours for a purpose such as illustrating words associated with heat. Pupils' work on repeating patterns using fluorescent colours is of a good standard, demonstrating a choice of strong, vivid colours and effective shapes. In their focus on the work of modern artists such as Patrick Heron, pupils produce very good work in the style of the artist that captures the mood of the original well.
108. The simple line-drawing of self-portraits enables pupils to express themselves and show an emerging awareness of how to communicate feelings through art. Pupils have a good knowledge

of the particular style of artists such as Modigliani and Seurat, and can explain the features and techniques which make their work instantly recognisable. They achieve good standards in their portrait collages using natural materials in the style of Modigliani, and computer art programs enable pupils to produce imaginative colour patterns influenced by Matisse's Snail.

109. In the juniors, pupils continue to be provided with many opportunities to appreciate the work of famous artists, which is reflected in their own work. Year 3 pupils sketch and then develop flower designs in the style of Kandinsky using pencil and oil-based crayons. Most use line and colour satisfactorily in their final drawings, but a minority lack confidence in transferring their original designs to a larger scale and their use of colour is limited. Compared with other junior classes, Year 4 pupils make good progress in thinking about how to use colour and tone to differentiate between foreground and background in their computer-aided designs in the style of Seurat. They are aware that some media and tools are more appropriate than others for drawing and painting in this style and they work carefully to achieve the desired effect. Most pupils use single colours and their pictures lack depth, but several pupils achieve light and shade through the judicious use of colour and tone. Better understanding of tone was seen in the earth colours used in the Aboriginal style of work displayed in the main hall. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work hard to make observational drawings based on Japanese art showing good attention to line and shape. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in these lessons. Pupils' Aboriginal art is satisfactory, but opportunities to create three-dimensional work using a range of media are limited. Drawings of flowers for transfer onto glass are satisfactory overall with several imaginative and bold representations of a higher standard.
110. The quality of teaching in the infants is good. Confident subject knowledge and expertise enriches pupils' learning and motivates them to develop their knowledge and skills in making art. Lesson planning is clear and well organised. In junior classes teaching is satisfactory overall but subject knowledge is less secure. The valuable contributions of visiting specialists are evident in the Rainforest and Aboriginal displays to which pupils of all ages contributed. These displays indicate the use of a wide range of techniques and materials which are less evident in most junior class lesson plans.
111. The quality of pupils' learning is good in the infants. They are very keen to achieve and they work confidently with good concentration and imagination. Junior pupils' attitudes are also very positive. They answer questions promptly and engage in discussion in a mature manner but they are less confident in their artwork. This is due in part to the timetabling of lessons which are often very short and do not allow time for the development of ideas and the practising of skills, and in part to the insecure subject knowledge of some teachers.
112. Leadership of the subject is just satisfactory although there are several weaknesses in co-ordination of the subject. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and advises colleagues when help is required. The scheme of work, however, lacks sufficient detail to support non-specialists and there is little guidance on the development of skills progression across the school. This is reflected in the slower progress made in the juniors. Resources are satisfactory but insufficient attention has been paid to the availability of a range of media for three-dimensional work. The management role in monitoring teaching and learning is underdeveloped. Although teachers individually assess pupils work in lessons, assessment is unsatisfactory overall, resulting in insufficient awareness of all pupils' development and the lack of assessment information to plan future lessons.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is unsatisfactory. This broadly reflects the judgement made at the last inspection. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6, however, is judged to be satisfactory, based on discussion with pupils and the scrutiny of their work. The curriculum has not received

sufficient attention from the co-ordinator, and is insufficiently broad to ensure that all aspects of design and technology are covered. Too few opportunities are provided to systematically develop pupils' skills. As a result, unsatisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.

114. Pupils in Year 2 undertake a project on making vehicles using pictures of vehicles for ideas. Because of the lack of expectation by the teacher, pupils do not draw simple diagrams of their ideas employing words in preparation for making and testing a wheeled vehicle; no evidence is available from pupils' work to show they have an awareness of using measurement in their designs or evaluating for improvement. From discussion with pupils in Years 4 and 5, they enthusiastically explain and demonstrate how mechanisms use air or how cams move their models. They have a good idea of the process of planning for a purpose and carry out some research before drawing their designs. Pupils properly list their chosen materials and plan a sequence for making. They clearly describe how they used tools carefully and why they have improved their original designs, for example to make their products more stable and attractive.
115. The quality of teaching seen in the one lesson observed in Year 2 was good. The lesson was well planned and well prepared, enabling pupils to build upon recent work in model making. Although no lessons were able to be observed in the juniors, evidence from pupils' work in Years 4 and 5 indicated that teachers' expectations were appropriate and that teachers' subject knowledge enabled pupils to develop some design and technology skills satisfactorily. The teachers' lesson plans were well structured and activities planned contained satisfactory challenge for pupils' knowledge of mechanisms. This level of work was in line with national expectations.
116. Co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory and insufficient attention has been given to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are delivered. As a result of unsatisfactory leadership, the headteacher has recently taken responsibility for the co-ordination of the subject and is fully aware that this is an area needing immediate attention and development. Although funding for the subject has been identified, plans for the development of the subject have not yet been drawn up. The school has adopted and adapted national guidelines to deliver its own scheme of work, although it does not identify links with other subjects of the curriculum of this school. There is no system of assessment. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching carried out by the headteacher has identified the urgent need for effective leadership.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

117. By the age of seven, standards in geography are satisfactory, but the steady progress which pupils make in Years 3 and 4 is not sustained in Years 5 and 6 so that, by the age of 11, standards are unsatisfactory. At the last inspection, standards were judged to vary but were satisfactory overall at the end of both key stages. From the lessons seen in this inspection, together with evidence of pupils' work and conversations with pupils, standards have been maintained as satisfactory at the end of Year 2, 3 and 4 but they are unsatisfactory at the top end of the school. This represents unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. This is due to the mixed-age Year 4/5 class, where Year 5 pupils carry out the same work as Year 4 pupils, and the insufficiently challenging work set for Year 6 pupils.
118. Infant pupils build on the good introduction to the subject they receive in Reception and they have a firm grasp of some of the physical features of different locations. They are able to compare the area where the school is situated with a seaside town. They use secondary sources such as photographs and post cards confidently to identify important features and to discuss differences between Levenshulme and Blackpool. They understand the concept of a coastline and can recognise this on a map of Great Britain. They know that changes in the tide cause sea water to wash over the rocks and break them down into smaller fragments such as pebbles. Pupils are beginning to use appropriate geographic vocabulary and progress is good.

119. At the beginning of the juniors, pupils begin to develop a satisfactory knowledge of some basic geographic features of India and are aware of the differences in climate between India and Great Britain; they understand how this affects the food that is grown and the way people live. By Year 4, pupils use their knowledge and understanding effectively to compare and contrast the physical features of Levenshulme and Chembakolli. They are developing a sound understanding of the link between location and economic activity, and are able to make insightful predictions about people's lifestyles and the work that they do. Pupils use aerial photographs well to locate their school and major features of the area. More-able pupils are able to recognise changes when examining aerial photographs taken at different points in time.
120. Year 5 pupils, who work on the same topic, are able to locate information more independently, but the work which is set for them lacks sufficient challenge for them to move ahead in their learning. In Year 6, pupils build on their prior learning well when discussing the location and primary physical features of different ranges of mountains, and understand that temperature is linked to altitude. They recognise that human activity impacts on the environment and can list the advantages and disadvantages of tourism on an area. Pupils use maps, globes and atlases satisfactorily to find where places are located. However, little evidence was seen of pupils applying their existing knowledge and skills to extend their understanding. Information downloaded from the Internet was filed in project work but few pupils wrote about any aspect of mountains in their own words or produced their own maps. Use of geographic terminology is unsatisfactory. The good progress made in the early part of juniors is not sustained at the top end of the school.
121. Teaching in infant and junior classes is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The better features of lessons seen were the enthusiasm of the teacher, a wide range of questioning to establish understanding and a brisk pace, which captured the full attention of all pupils. The good and very good teaching in most junior classes was characterised by secure subject knowledge, good lesson planning with a range of relevant activities and tasks to extend the learning of all pupils, and probing questioning which enabled pupils to make perceptive predictions. Weaknesses in teaching at both key stages were evident in the planning of activities without a clear geographic focus. Of the seven lessons seen in junior classes, only two lessons in Years 5 and 6 were unsatisfactory, as a result of low teacher expectations. Pupils enjoy geography and are keen to contribute to lessons. They respond promptly to questions and work well in pairs and small groups, for example when examining secondary sources such as photographs or when building a model of the physical features of a village in India.
122. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and the policy and guidelines are good. The curriculum is sound in the infants but there is a lack of progression in the juniors. Resources are of satisfactory quality, with a good range of maps, globes and atlases throughout the school but the Year 6 topic is under resourced and this has a negative impact on teaching and learning. The monitoring role of the curriculum co-ordinator is underdeveloped, as the co-ordinator is not aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject or unable to influence practice. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

123. On the basis of the two lessons observed, the scrutiny of written work, pupils' work on display and discussions with pupils in Year 6 and with teachers, the attainment of pupils aged seven and 11 is satisfactory and sustains the judgement at the last inspection. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as a second language make satisfactory progress.
124. In the infants a good start is made to help pupils place events and objects in chronological order and to use words and phrases relating to the passing of time. This is done firstly in relation to events in their family history and, secondly, in relation to objects such as children's toys. In Year

1, for example, pupils have learnt to think about how children's toys have changed since the 1900s. A good classroom display reinforced their ideas about this topic. In Year 2, the teacher has constructed a very informative historical 'time-line' linked to all the historical periods that pupils are to encounter in their progress through the syllabus. In consequence, members of the class have a more secure understanding of chronology than is normally the case. The teacher has also shown imagination and initiative in modifying the syllabus slightly to give pupils the opportunity to think and write about famous women in history. One pupil was so enthused by what she learnt about the life and death of the British queen, Boudicca, in these lessons that she wrote out for her own record the complete text of a book giving an account of the life and death of this warrior queen. In this and other activities, a very good link was established between the teaching of history and the teaching of literacy in this class.

125. In studying the Ancient Greeks, a Year 3 teacher and pupils contributed to an informative display focusing on aspects of Greek theatre in the context of more general information about Ancient Greece. A visiting educational drama group had provided a lively stimulus to this enquiry. In a second Year 3 class some links with the teaching of art were apparent in displayed designs for Greek pottery, which were linked to a written account of a potter's work in that period. In class, the pupils' responses showed that they had acquired a general knowledge and understanding of some differences between the different way of life adopted in Athens and in Sparta. They were also able to recognise a number of ways in which the Olympics of Ancient Greece differed from contemporary Olympic Games.
126. Older pupils have studied aspects of life in Tudor times. In discussion, they showed a satisfactory understanding of chronological sequence in relation to the topics they had studied at school. They were able to communicate what they knew in a variety of ways. There were effective links established between the teaching of history and the teaching of literacy, for example in their independent accounts of how modern towns differ from Tudor towns and in accounts of the character and motivation of Henry VIII. Pupils had been given the opportunity to find out about the past from computer sources and photographs of people and historic buildings, which were provided by teachers. However, their skills of historical enquiry are undeveloped because of the lack of access to a variety of relevant books and sources of historical information, as are their skills of historical interpretation. No evidence was found to indicate that higher-attaining pupils are given opportunities to investigate topics in depth, using and developing the skills needed to interpret and collate information from different sources. In the lessons observed there was no evidence of the adaptation of tasks to suit the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment. This is unsatisfactory.
127. Teaching is satisfactory in the infants and juniors but has weaknesses in provision for the juniors. Teachers have made commendable efforts in some classes to provide appropriate sources of information, but the shortage of suitable written materials is evident, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and when pupils in different classes are studying the same topic. Such resources as are available are not effectively catalogued and resources for specific topics on the revised syllabus such as the local history study are lacking. However, some efforts have been made to counter the negative effect on the pupils' attainment of the limited sources of historical evidence. For example, Year 6 pupils recalled with pleasure a visit to a museum in the previous year, where they had learnt about some aspects of life in World War 2 such as rationing and they had also enjoyed an educational drama group's portrayal of Henry VIII.
128. Co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. While the school has adopted the national guidelines, the resources required to support the revised curriculum are not adequate. Unsatisfactory progress has been made on the analyses of pupils' written work in history, although according to the school development plan, this is due to be completed in January 2002. Arrangements for the development of procedures for monitoring and assessment in the subject have not been considered in practical detail and both are unsatisfactory. Consequently, there is

currently no way of ensuring the progressive development of historical skills as pupils move through the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

129. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Standards are above national expectations at seven. By the end of Year 6, however, standards are close to national expectations. Infant pupils make good progress throughout the school, but the attainment of junior pupils is not as high and their progress continues to be impeded by the lack of suitable resources, particularly in control technology. Pupils in all classes use computers in the computer room on a regular timetabled basis. Pupils use computers generally satisfactorily to support their work in several subject areas of the curriculum, particularly in English, mathematics and art and design. The school has yet to successfully set up an Email facility and provide appropriate equipment to fulfil statutory requirements for control in design and technology.
130. By the age of seven all pupils know how to log on independently use on-screen menus and save their work. They understand how to use a keyboard to edit their work by changing letters or words to improve the sentence structure and punctuation in their own work. They make effective use of the computer to draw graphs and charts from information they collect as part of their work in science, which helps them make sense of the information. Pupils thoroughly enjoy experimenting with on-screen tools to generate good quality representations of pictures in the style of well-known artists. They happily discuss and make decisions to change colour and shapes and are eager to achieve well. Younger pupils in the key stage demonstrate very good mouse control and collaborate well in pairs.
131. By the age of eleven, due to low prior attainment, pupils' keyboard skills are slow to develop and many continue to type with one hand. They achieve well in importing pictures to illustrate text and create web pages with links to further information about a topic, but the topic selected is not linked particularly to other subjects to enable them to build specifically on prior learning. When using the computer for writing, pupils select the appropriate size and style of font to match the work to the audience and purpose of the work. They use the Internet for finding information in history, but have yet to improve skills in selecting relevant extracts. Pupils in the mixed-age Year 4/5 class enhance their standards of calculation by the appropriate use of calculators and a spreadsheet. These pupils develop good skills in importing scanned pictures of a place of study in geography and make effective use of a database to illustrate information about weather in a different country. In Year 3, pupils skilfully combine their own patterns of reflective symmetry with text to make covers for their book reviews.
132. Teaching is good overall in both key stages. The good teaching in junior classes has enabled pupils to recover much ground previously lost and reach standards which are close to the national expectation by the end of Year 6. Excellent teaching was seen when the teacher had high expectations and used classroom time well so that pupils worked in the suite with a high level of independence. A very good example of the purposeful use of computers for teaching and learning was seen when the activity for pupils to use spreadsheets was based on a weakness observed in a numeracy lesson and homework was provided to reinforce pupils' improved skill. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one junior class when the work was not well matched to pupils of all abilities and pupils did not have adequate resources to succeed in the spelling task. Pupils enjoy using computers and readily respond to instructions. They are keen to develop their design in art and design and build on their literacy and mathematical development satisfactorily.
133. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge but has not had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching to raise standards further. The use of ongoing assessment is good and ensures that work is set appropriate to pupils' needs. Although the school has sensors for monitoring changes such as temperature this is not included in the scheme of

work. The deficiency in equipment for control technology which appeared in the previous report has not been rectified for junior pupils and this constrains the standards they attain.

## MUSIC

134. The attainment of infant and junior pupils of all abilities meets the average levels expected nationally. These findings show that, in the infants, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. A similarly satisfactory standard is now confirmed in juniors, where previously insufficient evidence was available for a secure judgement to be made.
135. Infant pupils sing satisfactorily. They are able to follow relevant signals appropriately to control their voices. The juniors' singing in assemblies is good and sometimes beautiful. Pupils have a good repertoire of hymns and songs and sing out well, using suitable actions very effectively. They show a good ability to vary the quality of their singing to meet the requirements of the piece.
136. Infant pupils are developing an adequate knowledge of pulse and rhythm and make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. They are able to read and clap a simple sequence of notes satisfactorily. Pupils listen closely to rhythm and use percussion instruments to repeat more complex rhythms quite accurately. Pupils are beginning to acquire a sound knowledge of relevant musical terminology to match their growing understanding. When listening to a piece of music, for example from 'The Nutcracker Suite', they are able to make a satisfactory response.
137. All junior pupils make steady progress in developing their skills, particularly in listening and in instrumental playing. Younger pupils in the juniors listen satisfactorily and can discriminate between differing sounds, speeds and levels of loudness and softness. They know the names of several classical composers as well as those of a few instruments. Older pupils in the key stage use drums to send, and reply to, rhythmic patterns. They can answer simple questions satisfactorily, such as which instrument is being played when listening to Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons'. A general appreciation of quality music is developing soundly. Whole classes are benefiting from the advantages of learning the violin. They can read and play a range of basic notes as well tap a simple jazz rhythm.
138. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall. However, there are a number of strengths, particularly in the quality of the peripatetic provision in classes, which is often very good. Where this occurs, very good subject knowledge is effectively utilised. It ensures that the demands of the subject are made accessible to all older pupils who are given good opportunities to learn effectively. Many teachers manage their pupils well and this results in lesson objectives being achieved, as well as in the development of a fondness for music in the pupils. Teachers are largely making effective use of the extra peripatetic teaching provision available to extend their own knowledge and skills.
139. Pupils appreciate their lessons and show good attitudes towards their learning. They mostly pay good attention and try to do their best. A good response when listening to recorded music is observable, as pupils are increasingly becoming aware of a broader range of music from other cultures. They enjoy performing where the opportunity occurs and are appreciative of the efforts of others.
140. The subject is satisfactorily managed. There is an appropriate policy for music in place. Good use is made of the local education authority music service to guide planning and to support teaching. The use of ongoing assessment is satisfactory. Lost opportunities for appraising, arising from limitations in listening to recorded music, identified in the previous report, have been rectified as taped music forms a regular feature in all lessons throughout the school.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in all aspects by the end of Years 2 and 6, except in dance where standards are above national expectations. This indicates an improving picture from the previous inspection when standards were in line in dance. Although swimming could not be seen during the inspection, records indicate that all but two pupils in Year 6 can swim 25 metres unaided. Arrangements are in hand for the two pupils who cannot swim 25 metres, who joined the school after Year 4 when swimming instruction takes place.
142. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 2 are able to put a sequence of three movements together whilst moving over apparatus. By Year 6, pupils attain appropriate levels of creativity and accuracy in body movements. By Year 2, pupils are able to practise skills learned in game lessons during their time in the infants in team game situations, which they enjoy; they use space well and can throw and catch balls with a high degree of accuracy. By Year 6, pupils build upon these skills effectively and the majority of pupils collaborate well during team game situations, and this makes a significant contribution to their attainment; a significant proportion attain standards above the national expectation.
143. Standards in dance are above the national expectation at the end of Years 2 and 6, because the school has very successfully focused on improving this aspect of the curriculum. The richness and enthusiasm for dance in the Irish community served by the school also contributes to the high standard in dance and to the cultural development of all pupils. All pupils enjoy dance performances and creative movement to music is exceptionally good.
144. Adventurous activities were not observed during the inspection, but other evidence indicates that by the age of 11 the vast majority of pupils experience activities such as canoeing, abseiling and rock climbing as part of a residential experience in Year 6. The wide range of extra-curricular clubs makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' gains in a good range of sports activities and dance that are open to all pupils. Inter-school games fixtures in football and netball contribute very well to the social and personal development of those pupils who participate and pupils with special educational needs play in the football and netball teams. Only boys participate in the inter-school Catholic football cup competition and similarly only girls participate in the inter-school Catholic netball cup competition as set by the Catholic organising committees.
145. Progress in most lessons is good throughout the school due to pupils' consistent progress across a range of sports. However, in some Year 3 and Year 5 lessons short term gains made by pupils are only satisfactory because the teachers have weaker subject knowledge. Effective use of 'Top Sport' trainers is evident to support teachers with lack of subject expertise. In addition, the co-ordinator is supporting teachers and building their confidence by providing demonstration lessons for them. Because of a lack of confidence on the part of teachers lower down the school it is not until the upper end of the juniors that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to evaluate their own performance and also that of others and this is a weakness.
146. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and have a lot of fun in their learning. The productivity and pace of learning in dance is a particular strength. Pupils experience joy in movement to music as evidenced by their gorgeous smiles and this contributes to their spiritual development. Behaviour is consistently good and often very good and this contributes significantly to pupils' good gains in learning.
147. Pupils with physical disabilities are fully included in all lessons and in swimming. Careful planning ensures that those with hearing impairment are able to hear instructions and so make good progress. Although there is no special provision for pupils with English as an additional language they are fully included in all aspects of physical education.
148. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory with many strengths. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Many good and very good lessons were seen during the

inspection. This was characterised by very good subject knowledge, confidence in the requirements of the subject, enthusiasm in teaching and a cracking pace. In the better lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate their own and others' performance and this contributes to good gains in their learning. In these lessons, sufficient time is given to good warm-up and cool-down routines and so pupils gain a very good understanding of the importance of stretching before taking exercise. Some shortcomings were evident in lessons that were squeezed between the start and end of a class lesson and no chance was given for pupils to evaluate their own or others' work. In these lessons, pupils were informed of the learning intentions whilst they were changing and were not always fully attentive. A significant contributory factor to the good teaching is the good management of behaviour and this contributes to good learning as all pupils are engaged and focused on the activities in the lesson. The teaching of dance is consistently very good across the school.

149. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory with a number of good features. The co-ordinator has effectively introduced the local education authority scheme of work and has ensured good breadth and balance in the curriculum. An appropriate assessment scheme has been developed, but it is not used consistently by all teachers and this is a weakness. The co-ordinator has enabled teachers to access good training and she provides supportive demonstration lessons to teachers who lack confidence. However, she does not have release time in which to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and this is a shortcoming. Resources are good and are used well.