

INSPECTION REPORT

BAKEWELL METHODIST JUNIOR SCHOOL

Bakewell

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112870

Headteacher: Mrs G Sutcliffe

Reporting inspector: Mr D Gwinnett
16548

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th June 2001

Inspection number: 197509

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Junior |
| School category: | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 7-11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Stoney Close Bakewell Derbyshire |
| Postcode: | DE45 1FR |
| Telephone number: | 01629 812389 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Rev Nichola Jones |
| Date of previous inspection: | 15.9.1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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|--------------|------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 16548 | Don Gwinnett | Registered inspector | Mathematics Art & Design Music | How high are standards How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further |
| 19727 | Eric Langford | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents |
| 19596 | Bernard Treacey | Team inspector | Equality of opportunity English Information and communication technology History Physical education | How good are curricular and other opportunities |
| 13210 | Margaret Burslem | Team inspector | Special educational needs Science Design technology Geography History Religious education | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bakewell Methodist Junior School is a smaller than average school with 170 pupils from Year 3 to Year 6. There are 97 boys and 73 girls. The school is in a local authority housing estate, although draws from pupils all over Bakewell and from surrounding villages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Attainment on entry to the school fluctuates year on year, but is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average, although that of pupils having Statements of Special Educational Need is high. No pupils speak English as an additional language and all but three pupils are white. The school is emerging from a period of change and uncertainty. A new headteacher started in January and a new deputy headteacher started in April.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school achieves good standards in all that it does. There is good value added to pupils' education when comparing their attainments on entry, which are broadly average, to their attainments when they leave at age 11, which are well above average in English and above average in mathematics. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work, attend school regularly, develop very good relationships with each other and teachers, and learn well. The overall good quality of teaching provides motivation for pupils to learn well. The curriculum is balanced and valuable extra-curricular opportunities successfully enrich pupils' learning. There is good provision for the care and guidance of pupils, with satisfactory arrangements for assessing their progress. However, the results of assessments are not sufficiently used to improve the curriculum and teaching. The school keeps parents and carers well informed about what is being taught, and successfully encourages parents' involvement in the life of the school. Reports to parents are of satisfactory quality. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. Although the school has only made a recent response to the issues of the previous inspection, there is clarity about what will improve standards and provision, and the headteacher, staff and governors are working very well together to secure that improvement. Overall, bearing all these factors in mind, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements in the core subjects of English and mathematics are good, irrespective of their individual starting points.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is often very good or excellent.
- Attendance is well above the national average.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She is well supported by the newly appointed deputy headteacher and other staff, and by the well-informed governing body, who have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils' very good work attitudes and behaviour, and the very good relationships between pupils and with teachers, have a positive impact on standards.
- The very good provisions for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, combined with the very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, have a positive impact on the ethos for learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in science are below those in English and mathematics because the investigative aspects of the subject are not developed sufficiently and there is not enough tracking of individual pupils' progress to ensure that they achieve as well as they could.
- Standards in information and communication technology are low because the school has only recently acquired the necessary computer equipment to support learning across subjects.
- The subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently accountable for standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Assessment information is not used well to track pupils' progress or to plan improvements to the curriculum or teaching.

All these issues have been identified in the schools development planning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In its previous inspection of 1997, the school was found to provide a good education. Since then, there have been fluctuating standards that have coincided with changes to the senior management team and some long-term teacher absence. The school only returned to a stable staffing structure in April of this year. The key issues of the previous inspection report have only recently started to be rectified, following the appointment of a new headteacher. The role of subject co-ordinators is now being extended, although not all co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently accountable for standards in their subjects. Whilst individual teachers track pupils' progress, the school is aware that there are insufficient agreed routines to be used by all teachers. This is a key issue on the current school development plan. The school continues to have a good partnership with parents. Overall, the school has responded satisfactorily to the issues from the previous report, although much of this has only been done very recently. Since the last report, standards of work and the quality of teaching have been maintained and are now showing signs of further improvement. The school now has a very good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 |
| English | A | B | A | B |
| mathematics | A | C | B | C |
| Science | B | D | C | D |

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

This chart shows that standards in the 2000 national tests for 11-year olds were well above the national average in English, above the national average in mathematics and in line with the national average in science. Standards are lower in mathematics than English because there was insufficient training for teachers in the use of the National Numeracy Strategy when it was introduced in 1999. This has now been rectified. Science standards do not match those of English and mathematics because, until recently, pupils did not have enough practical experimental work. This is also being rectified. When compared to schools that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. Recent rigorous changes to the curriculum and closer monitoring of standards of work and teaching are having a positive impact. Whilst the trend over the last five years is slightly below the national average, there was significant improvement in English, mathematics and science in 2000.

In work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainments at age 11 are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. This year group contains a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Given their low starting point, pupils' achievements are good. In all other subjects except information and communication technology, pupils of all ages attain at average or above average levels. Standards in information and communication technology have been held back until recently through lack of equipment. Pupils are meeting the 2001 targets set for them in English and mathematics by the governing body in consultation with the Local Education Authority, and are on line to meet the targets for 2002. These targets are appropriately challenging. There is little difference between the achievements of boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of good support from support staff and teachers. Clear signs of recent improvement to standards coincide with the appointment of a new headteacher.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--------|---------|
|--------|---------|

| | |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils are eager to learn, have positive attitudes to school and act responsibly. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. The majority of pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils very good relationships with each other and teachers and their satisfactory personal development contribute positively to their learning. |
| Attendance | Very good. Attendance is well above the national average and most pupils enjoy coming to school. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | N/A | N/A | Good |

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

The quality of teaching is good. Seventy-five per cent of lessons were graded good or better, of which thirty-one per cent were very good or excellent. This is a high proportion of above average lessons. Twenty-five per cent of lessons were graded satisfactory and no lessons were graded unsatisfactory. The high quality of teaching has a positive impact on standards of learning, which are also good. Teachers' very good management of pupils' behaviour is a particular strength that results in well-ordered lessons where pupils work hard and learn well. Literacy skills are well taught and numeracy skills are satisfactorily taught across the subjects of the curriculum. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils; despite mixed ability and age classes, most teachers successfully support both higher and lower attainers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. Following the recent introduction of nationally recognised schemes of work, the quality and range of learning opportunities provide suitable practical and intellectual challenge for pupils. Good extra curricular provision further enriches pupils' learning. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Specialist teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual Education Plans contain clear targets, which are effectively used by class teachers and support assistants. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | There are no pupils with English as an additional language. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development help pupils to acquire strong values. Cultural provision is satisfactory overall, although opportunities for pupils to appreciate the richness of Britain's cultural diversity are limited. |
| How well the school cares | Good. The school provides a very happy and caring learning |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| for its pupils | environment. Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. The results of assessment are not well used to target future learning. There is good monitoring of pupils' attendance. |
|----------------|--|

The school is working increasingly successfully to improve the good links it has with parents. The curriculum is broad and balanced and there is good provision of extra-curricular activity that includes a wide range of sporting, environmental, musical and other cultural activities. There are regular beneficial visits to places of educational interest and visitors to the school effectively extend pupils' learning. There is suitable provision for sex education and learning about the dangers of drug abuse. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. There are very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety and Child Protection. Pupils are effectively encouraged to contribute their own ideas about how the school could be improved.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good overall. The headteacher, who is well supported by the new deputy, provides very strong leadership and skilled management. However, subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently accountable for standards or improvements within their areas of responsibility. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Good. The governing body fulfils its role well. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide good support for the headteacher. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. The school makes effective use of information from informal assessments by teachers, but does not yet make effective use of data that compares its performance to other schools nationally and similar schools. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. Resources are suitably used to support the developing curriculum. Whilst lack of computers has depressed standards, new machines have recently been provided through grant funding and standards look set to rise. Financial management is sound. |

The good number of teachers and classroom assistants ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have enough individual attention. The accommodation is good overall, with recent redecoration providing a bright and comfortable atmosphere in which to teach and learn. The school has sufficient books, computers, artefacts, display materials and audiovisual technology. The school strives to supply best value: sound financial planning and efficient procedures for the ordering and supply of goods ensure that funds are effectively used to improve standards. The school effectively listens to parents' views about how the school can be improved.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils like coming to school, behave well and are helped to become mature and responsible.• The quality of teaching is good.• Pupils are expected to work hard and therefore make good progress.• The new headteacher is making a big difference.• People are pulling hard together to improve the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils are not given enough work to do at home.• Parents have not had enough information about how their children are getting on.• The school has not worked closely enough with parents. |

Inspectors' judgements support parents' largely very positive views. The new headteacher is well aware of parents' concerns about homework. A new homework policy has been implemented that, in the views of inspectors, is improving the relevance and consistency of work set. The new headteacher welcomes parents' views and responds sensitively to complaints, and teachers are available to speak to parents before and after school. In the views of inspectors, this is no longer a weakness. The amount of information to parents about what is taught and their child's progress has improved. Reports are satisfactory. They describe what pupils do and normally identify aspects for improvement, although the level of detail is inconsistent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

THE SCHOOL'S RESULTS AND PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in English, have been maintained in mathematics, but have declined in science. In the 2000 national tests, standards were well above the national average in English, above the national average in mathematics and in line with the national average in science. In each subject, pupils performed better in 2000 than they did in 1999. Science has been consistently weaker than English and mathematics and the school has only recently begun to get to the bottom of this. The school is now successfully improving standards in science by providing more practical experimental work. In the views of inspectors, this will make some difference, but other reasons for the lower performance in comparison to other core subjects include the lack of target setting based on analysis and interpretation of assessment data. The school has matched the realistic English and mathematics targets for the 2000 national tests that it set for itself in consultation with the Local Education Authority. When compared to schools that have a similar proportion eligible for free school meals, standards in the 2000 tests were above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science.
2. The trend in the school's improvement has not kept pace with the trend nationally. At the time of the last inspection (1997), national test scores were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The results remained high in 1998, but dropped back seriously in 1999. There was some recovery in the results in 2000, but not quite to the levels of 1997. In the view of inspectors, this decline and gradual recovery coincides with staffing problems in the school. The previous headteacher had extended illness after the last inspection and the deputy headteacher had to spend time as acting headteacher that would otherwise be spent in the classroom. Also, a member of staff was granted five terms leave of absence just as the previous headteacher became ill. As a consequence of all this, the school had to make extensive use of temporary teachers. The overall quality of teaching fell and this affected the standards of pupils' work. The staffing is now stable again, and there are very clear signs that the original high standards enjoyed by the school are being re-established. There was a high proportion of above average teaching observed during the inspection.
3. In work seen during the inspection, the standards of work of 11 year-olds are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements are broadly good since this group has significantly more special educational needs pupils than most other years. Not surprisingly, this year group have regularly performed less well than other year groups in tests and assessments. Nevertheless, inspectors feel that this group could perform as well as last year's 11 year-olds in the national tests despite having a higher proportion with more serious learning problems. This group have achieved well therefore when comparing their current standards to their prior attainments; they make good progress in individual lessons and over time. Pupils look set to exceed their realistically pitched targets.
4. Standards in English are above average. Whilst higher attaining pupils express themselves at some length and can adapt their style and vocabulary to particular circumstances, lower attaining pupils tend to speak hesitantly and often express themselves briefly. Reading is a relative strength in the school. By the age of 11 most pupils read fluently and independently, although relatively few pupils read aloud with the quality of expression that might be expected. By the age of 11, many pupils enjoy writing their own stories and often write at some length. All but the lowest attaining pupils understand the basic conventions of spelling and punctuation. Standards in mathematics are rapidly improving as a result of teachers' improving confidence in using the National Numeracy Strategy materials. Standards in science are also improving. There has been some recovery from the below average national test results as a result of improved use of practical experimental work. A factor that skews the national test results are the significant minority of pupils who join the school in the summer term of Year 5, as their parents want them to attend the popular local secondary school. A number of these pupils take time to

adjust and do not all do as well as they could in the national tests. This slightly lowers the overall standards obtained by the school.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and obtain appropriate standards in relation to their specific targets and goals. Progress for these pupils is particularly good in English and mathematics, subjects where grouping and specialist support is having a particularly strong impact. However, another successful focus of the school's work in this area is the development of pupils' self esteem. Pupils' needs are identified early and appropriate targets are set. There are appropriate strategies in place for liaison with partner infant schools to ensure that the transfer from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 is as smooth as possible.
6. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls. There are perceptible differences from year to year, although no clearly identifiable pattern emerges. Over the last three years, boys performed rather better than girls in English and science, although girls performed better than boys in mathematics. When averaging out scores across the three subjects, there is no difference between scores of boys and girls. Both boys and girls average points scores are above boys and girls nationally over the last three years.
7. The National Literacy Strategy, introduced in 1998, has had a positive impact on standards. Teachers use the materials confidently. Pupils' reading has benefited from the intensive focus that is given to this area and, though there is less focus on aspects of writing in the Strategy, available resources are effectively used, and so pupils make good progress. The Strategy also focuses on pupils' speaking and listening skills. The regular opportunities for discussion and shared evaluation of work encourage pupils to express themselves clearly and precisely, using a varied vocabulary. However, some pupils lack confidence when presenting their views and have difficulty expressing themselves in a fluent way. More could be done to help them by encouraging pupils to become more independent in their learning. The National Numeracy Strategy was introduced in 1999. At that time, the school was going through staffing problems and so the Strategy was not successfully implemented. Staff did not receive a thorough training in its use and have only recently begun to feel confident using the newly introduced materials. For this reason, national test results in mathematics were well behind those of English in 1999 and were still a little behind in 2000. The new headteacher arranged for the proper training just before Easter, and this has been welcomed by the teachers and has had a positive impact. Pupils are now responding well to the additional opportunities for mental mathematics, which they enjoy, and are achieving higher standards in their use of number and understanding of space, measure and data use. In some classes, mathematics is not successfully applied to everyday situations. Because of this, some pupils do not do as well in the national tests as they might because they are thrown by having to apply their skills to new situations. The co-ordinator is introducing new materials to compensate for this as funds become available.
8. Standards are below expected levels in information and communication technology. This is because the school has not had enough equipment to enable pupils to have regular access. Also, teachers have not had intensive training in the educational use of computers. All this is set to change as the school has recently acquired some new computers through grant aid and has funds to train teachers in their use. Standards of pupils' work in religious education are above average, and during the inspection two lessons of excellent quality were seen. In other subjects, standards are above average in art, music and design technology and are average in history, geography and physical education. Whilst pupils' achievements in the foundation subjects are rarely less than satisfactory, and are sometimes good, more consistently good results would be achieved if subject co-ordinators were more accountable for the school-wide standards in their subjects, and there was more informed use of assessment data to track pupils' progress and to adjust teaching and the curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

9. The very good work attitudes and overall behaviour of pupils are even better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are keen to come to school, quickly settle down to their work and have good interpersonal skills, which enable them to take an active part in class lessons. The great majority show high levels of commitment to their work and are well-motivated and

enthusiastic learners. Many sustain very good levels of concentration during their lessons and collaborate with each other in group and paired activities. Most pupils confidently discuss their learning with others. For example, in a Year 3 geography lesson, pupils expressed opinions about the community and wildlife benefits of a major local reservoir conservation project in a very mature and responsible manner.

10. Pupils' very good behaviour in and around the school underpins the very positive relationships between staff and pupils. Parents are very pleased with the improvements in behaviour over recent years, including the good behaviour outside of school. High standards of behaviour result from teachers' very good management of pupils and the effective application of recently introduced procedures for managing behaviour. Rewards and sanctions are clearly understood by pupils, who respond well to their consistent application by staff. There have been no pupil exclusions in recent years and no inappropriate behaviour was seen during the inspection. An anti-bullying culture is actively promoted within the school. Parents and pupils agree that staff swiftly and effectively deal with incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
11. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Pupils are friendly and considerate towards each other, to staff and to visitors. They know right from wrong. Many display sensitivity and awareness of others, often giving help to each other and adults. Observed examples included the care shown when a pupil fell in the playground, holding doors open for each other, and saying sorry when they upset others. Inspectors noted the polite way in which pupils responded to them during the inspection. Pupils' pride in their school was well illustrated in a Year 3/4 science lesson when, without being asked, a pupil quickly cleaned up some potting compost that had spilt on the floor. There is no evidence of any graffiti, litter or property damage in or around the school.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils willingly undertake responsibilities in school with pride. Year 6 pupils take their prefect and lunchtime server responsibilities seriously and, consequently, contribute to the very good behaviour. Pupils contribute successfully to the recently introduced school council, discussing and influencing decisions that improve the school's facilities. Pupils respond well to opportunities for initiative, although the slightly over-prescriptive approach that occurs in occasional lessons limits pupils' opportunities for self-development. Attendance is well above the national average and reflects the high levels of parental support for the school. Pupils' prompt arrival at lessons helps them to get off to a good start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The overall good quality of teaching echoes the high standards of teaching that were reported in the previous inspection. However, following the last inspection, the school went through a low patch. Teacher illness and leave of absence resulted in much use being made of temporary teachers. This resulted in a lowering of standards. However, the school's staffing is once again stable, and standards are picking up very quickly. In the view of inspectors, the good quality of teaching is a strength of the school that promotes a happy working ethos, trusting relationships and steadily improving academic standards. In lessons seen during the inspection, 31 per cent of lessons were graded very good or excellent, 44 per cent were graded good and 25 per cent were graded satisfactory. No lessons were graded unsatisfactory. There is a good level of consistency in the quality of teaching from class to class that successfully compensates for weaknesses in the strategic management of some foundation subjects.
14. The only flaws in the last inspection were the lack of pace in some physical education, religious education and science lessons. This is no longer the case, with regular good or very good teaching observed in each of these subjects. This is particularly so in religious education, where two lessons were graded excellent. This was because the teachers had gone to a lot of trouble to replicate a Jewish Passover feast. Pupils had real food, that was similar to Passover food, and the symbolic rituals were explained and re-enacted in a way that brought the learning wonderfully alive. These were both exceptional lessons. At the time of the last inspection, there was also some justified concern by parents at the lack of homework given by teachers. This has

improved recently with the introduction of a homework diary and a clear policy that has brought greater consistency of practice across classes.

15. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught. They are well supported in lessons by their teacher and education care officers (ECOs), and when being withdrawn for specialist help. As a result they take full part in all activities and learn well. In a withdrawn literacy session, seen during the inspection, for example, pupils were challenged and their tasks were closely linked to the targets in their Individual Education Plans. All staff have high expectations of the pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, the pupils work very hard. They are keen to succeed and make good progress.
16. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall. However, until recently, teachers had not benefited from sufficient training in the National Numeracy Strategy that was introduced in 1999. This resulted in a lack of teacher confidence when using the new materials. Following training before Easter, teachers now use the materials in a more informed and flexible way. As a result, pupils' learning is improving and the gap in standards between mathematics and English is closing. In a Year 6 lesson, for instance, the teacher skilfully fired questions about Value Added Tax that challenged the whole attainment range. The teacher reacted well to the pupils' responses, knowing just what to say to take their learning forward. The teacher had a good grasp of how to use the available mathematics resources and came across as assured and confident. The teaching of Literacy is also assured with over half of the lessons graded good or very good.
17. Teachers' planning is detailed. All teachers complete long, medium and short term planning, much of which is based on nationally recognised schemes of work that provide well balanced and relevant projects that are written with particular age groups in mind. Whilst some of these schemes have been introduced only very recently, teachers are beginning to successfully adapt them to the wide age and attainment spread in their classes. Particular consideration is given to the needs of special educational needs pupils, who progress well, and there is suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils. For instance, in the mathematics lesson mentioned above, one very able pupil was using books that had been borrowed by the teacher from the local secondary school. This boy was ready for this more advanced work and the teacher's willingness to make these arrangements ensured the correct level of challenge for the boy to forge ahead in his understanding.
18. Teachers vary their approaches and use different methods to hold pupils' interest. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to discuss what they are doing so that they develop well socially. In a Year 6 PSHE lesson, for instance, pupils participated well in a group discussion, showing respect for the teacher and each other as they discussed the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol on the body. Whilst teachers provide opportunities for discussion, inspectors noticed in a number of lessons that teachers did not encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. In an otherwise good art lesson with a younger class, for instance, the teachers' explanations were very clear, but the teacher did not give the pupils a chance to decide the best way forward for themselves. Also, whilst the teacher gave lots of well-deserved praise, she didn't tell the pupils what they had to do to improve. As a result, they were too dependent on the teacher and didn't take enough responsibility for their own learning.
19. The very good management of pupils' behaviour ensures that the learning atmosphere is settled and that pupils progress smoothly without interruptions or disruption. Teachers motivate pupils by praising good work and attitudes rather than dwelling on weaker aspects or criticizing pupils. As a result, pupils want to learn and enjoy showing the teacher or support assistant how well they are doing. When it is necessary to correct a pupil, teachers do this sensitively without making a big issue out of it. This helps to avoid unnecessary confrontation and pupils work harmoniously in an atmosphere that is free from recrimination. The good example set by teachers has an impact on the way that pupils behave to each other. Most pupils are courteous and kind, learning to appreciate each other's efforts and giving help if asked. All this has a positive impact on pupils' learning, creating a productive learning atmosphere.
20. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is often good, although not consistently so. Whilst there are regular instances when weak spelling, grammar and punctuation are corrected, not all teachers

are rigorous about this. Most of the time, teachers' written and verbal comments are regular and positive. However, some teachers do not always clearly identify what pupils need to do to improve. Sometimes, teachers over-praise pupils, and particularly the higher attaining pupils. This happened in a Year 3/4 history lesson where the teacher praised higher attaining pupils for work that was fairly easy for them. Consequently, these pupils were not challenged enough over how to improve and tended to coast a little. This variety of marking is due to the lack of agreed systems across all subjects. This is not a major weakness, but marking lacks a fine-tuning to make sure that all pupils are clearly told how to improve. On a larger scale, teachers do not make the most effective use of assessments to predict where pupils should reach in the future or to set ambitious new learning goals. The exception is the good use that is made of assessment data in English, where individual pupils' progress is carefully mapped and followed through to make sure each pupil maximises their potential. This is one of the reasons that national test results in English are above those in mathematics and science.

21. The quality of learning is good overall and most pupils achieve well. This is because pupils enjoy learning and want to do well. The parents' questionnaire showed that all but two per cent of pupils enjoyed coming to school and the overwhelming majority felt that teaching was good. These views are well-supported by inspection findings. Most pupils sense that they are learning well, although teachers are not always crystal clear about saying what it is that is good. In most lessons, pupils listen well, settle sensibly to work and learn well. However, some children are over dependent on their teacher and tend not to show initiative or independence. These pupils would benefit from even more opportunities to exercise discretion about their own learning. Almost all pupils felt that teachers are fair and are interested in their learning. Pupils trust adults, who work well as a team, and so learn to trust each other. All this has a beneficial impact on their learning.

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

22. As at the time of the last inspection, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is broad and balanced with the exception of information and communication technology, where lack of equipment and software has held back some aspects of learning. This is now being improved. The Locally Agreed Syllabus is being followed in religious education, and the school has recently started to extend the teaching of personal, health and social education so that it now includes all pupils. There is a daily collective act of worship. The proportion of time allocated during the week for most subjects is broadly in line with the national average with the exception of music, which is below the national average. However, this does not adversely affect standards because pupils sing and listen to music each day in assembly, and there is regular very good quality extra curricular music provision.
23. Teachers successfully plan their work at different levels, providing a long-term overview of the topics to be covered as well as half termly plans and weekly plans. This ensures that there is continuity of learning. In English and mathematics, where pupils are taught in sets according to prior attainment, planning ensures pupils are suitably challenged. In other subjects, however, planning does not consistently take into account how to present all pupils, according to their prior attainment, with a suitable level of challenge. However, the headteacher and staff are aware of the shortcomings of the present system and are actively reviewing and improving it.
24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are very effectively supported in lessons by their teachers and education care officers (ECOs). When appropriate, they are withdrawn for specialist help. There are also booster groups. Planning for these pupils and the work provided is fully based on targets identified in their Individual Education Plans. Statutory reviews are carried out as required and fully involve parents and outside agencies. The school has a high regard for equality of opportunity and its provision completely reflects this. The curriculum is inclusive with no group of pupils denied access on the grounds of gender, physical or social circumstances, or other identifiable characteristics.
25. The school's strategy for teaching literacy skills is good. All subjects are seen as providing opportunities to learn new words and for pupils to learn how to use and spell them correctly. Pupils are provided with many opportunities in the full range of subjects to write at length and to

produce different types of writing, for example, stories, notes, reports and descriptions. Pupils are provided with a variety of opportunities to use their reading skills. Whilst pupils' mathematics skills are suitably reinforced in other lessons of the curriculum, for instance in design technology and science, teachers do not always expect pupils to work at a compatible level to that required in mathematics lessons. Consequently, some opportunities to reinforce their understanding at an appropriate level are lost.

26. Provision for extra curricular activities is good. Pupils have the chance to take part in a wide range of sports, including football, netball, tag rugby and quick cricket. The school is successful when competing against other schools and recently, for example, came first in a rugby competition that included over twenty schools. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to take part in musical activities. The choir meets weekly and there are regular performances given by the band and the choir. Visits to places of educational interest are organised on a regular basis and there have been recent visits to, for example, Haddon Hall, Poole's Cavern and the Peak Park Woodland Day.
27. Provision for pupils' personal, health and social education is satisfactory. However, developments in this area have been very recent. At present teachers have reached agreement on what they will cover with their own classes. Suitable resources have been provided and the topics covered are relevant to pupils' needs and complement the academic curriculum. However, the work is yet to be co-ordinated on a whole school basis. Provision for sex education is satisfactory. Questions about human life processes are answered factually and honestly, and older pupils receive further details from the school nurse about changes that occur to them as they mature. There is suitable provision for pupils to learn about the dangers of drug abuse.
28. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. There are particularly strong links with the Methodist church. The minister is the chair of the governing body, visits the school frequently and takes an assembly each week. Other visitors include other members of the governing body, one of whom spoke to pupils about the Jewish faith, local councillors and the police. There are satisfactory links with the local secondary school. The headteacher is currently working with the head of the feeder infants' school to create closer links than have previously been in place.
29. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has been successfully maintained since the previous inspection.
30. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Assemblies are often inspirational and provide pupils with an uplifting start to their day. Pupils enter and leave the assembly hall in a quiet and orderly fashion to the sound of music, which provides them with opportunities for reflection. Artefacts, including a crucifix, flowers and a globe are arranged to produce an eye-catching and thought-provoking display. Other such displays are found elsewhere in the school, one such, on the theme of conflict in the Middle East, being prominently placed near the lower juniors' classrooms. Assemblies are used to communicate clear moral messages and also include prayers. Pupils readily participate in hymn singing. Teachers are imaginative in finding other opportunities for pupils to be reflective. For example, a sculpture donated to the school by Peak Parks served as the inspiration for writing poems.

31. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and ensure they know the difference between right and wrong. In lessons, pupils work in pairs and groups and in doing so they learn how to be co-operative and how to respect the views of others. Pupils are encouraged to consider others less fortunate than themselves and there are regular collections for charities, such as Save the Children, Millennium Trees Fund and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Assemblies are used to encourage pupils to be aware of moral issues. Teachers provide good role models.
32. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Many opportunities are created in which pupils develop their collaborative skills. In physical education, for example, pupils were required to agree amongst themselves what game they would like to play in the latter part of a lesson and how they might adapt the rules of the game according to the size of the group. Despite not being closely supervised, the pupils worked harmoniously together. Pupils also learn how to adapt their behaviour to particular circumstances. At the start of assemblies and lunchtime, for example, they recognise the relative formality of the situation and behave accordingly. Pupils are also given responsibilities, which they are ready to accept. At lunchtime, for example, pupils act as monitors for the toy store and ensure that toys are fairly shared and are collected in afterwards. Pupils also play an active part in the school council and contribute their views on matters of school routine. Good conduct is acknowledged and celebrated in assemblies.
33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have regular opportunities to find out about their own culture. They read a good variety of literature and in art explore different types of painting and drawing, including, for example, modern cartoons and the work of LS Lowry. Pupils also have the chance to visit places that enable them to have a greater awareness of issues in contemporary society. For example, pupils visited Carsington Water, which involved giving consideration as to how water could be conserved. Additionally, pupils learn of other cultures, especially in art and music. In history they also learn of past civilizations, particularly those of the Greeks and the Aztecs. However, despite the school having developed links with a multi-ethnic school in London, opportunities to learn about different cultures in a multi-ethnic society are limited. This means that pupils do not fully understand the responsibilities and privileges of living in an ethnically diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Provision for the care and welfare of the pupils, which has improved since the last inspection, is very good and is a strength of the school. Very good Child Protection procedures are well understood and acted upon by staff in the best interests of the pupils. The headteacher is fully trained in Child Protection, and staff continuously monitor the well being and personal development of pupils in their care. Staff respond in a discreet and sensitive manner to any personal queries raised by pupils. As a result, pupils trust adults and there is a settled ethos for learning that has a positive impact on standards.
35. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and successfully support them in their learning and personal development. Pupils are effectively encouraged to contribute their own ideas about how the school could be improved through the school council. The toy library loan system is an example of several ways in which pupils are encouraged to show initiative. Pupils feel safe and happy in school and have the confidence to ask for help if they are upset.
36. Effective strategies have been established to identify and support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils at stage 3 and above in the Code of Practice are assessed every term and the results used to set new targets for them in their Individual Education Plans.
37. Very good health and safety procedures ensure a secure environment for pupils and staff. Effective arrangements govern the correct recording and administration of medicines and the effective management and reporting of pupil injuries. Examples were seen during the inspection of the high quality care and attention given by qualified first-aid staff, and of the trust and reliance in them shown by injured pupils. Pupils and adults are aware of the need to work safely. Regular fire evacuation drills and health and safety audits are undertaken and acted upon by the governors. There are suitable risk assessment procedures and significant improvements have

been recently introduced to restrict and control access within the grounds to ensure the greater security of the school. The premises are maintained to a good level of cleanliness and kept tidy. Very good standards of catering provide appetising meals and a well-balanced and nutritious diet for pupils.

38. Good attendance reporting procedures effectively promote the well above average attendance achieved by the pupils. These incorporate effective recording and monitoring procedures relating to pupil lateness and non-attendance. Pupil registration procedures fully comply with statutory requirements.
39. Very good behaviour management routines have recently been introduced to further promote the pupils' very good attitudes to learning. Suitable incentives encourage and reward good work and behaviour. The whole-school code of conduct, that is discussed and personalised in each classroom, focuses pupils' attention on their teacher's expectations. The clear, simple and well documented behaviour procedures are fully understood by pupils, have been shared with parents and are applied in a fair and consistent manner by staff. There is very little oppressive bullying or harassment of pupils; incidents of inappropriate behaviour are judged by pupils and parents to be swiftly and effectively dealt with by staff.
40. Procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge, understanding and achievements are satisfactory. All pupils are assessed on entry to the school using nationally recognised systems as well as others developed by the school. This provides a clear picture of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses and allows the school to compare itself with other local schools. The school is understandably cautious about using Key Stage 1 test data to make retrospective analysis of pupils' progress by comparing their performance in national tests at the end of Year 6 with their previous test results at Year 2. This is because there are some discrepancies between the school's own scores and those achieved at the end of Key Stage 1.
41. The school tests pupils at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 to ensure they are making secure progress as they move towards the national tests that all pupils take at the end of Year 6. In addition, trial national tests were introduced in January 2001 to prepare pupils for the actual tests in the summer. This provided Year 6 teachers with valuable information regarding pupils' progress towards the final tests. In science, teachers test pupils' knowledge at the end of each topic. The information is helpful in tracking pupils' progress. However, these science tests do not fully evaluate pupils' ability to use factual knowledge within practical investigative situations and it is this application of knowledge that has let pupils down in previous national tests. In addition to formal tests, teachers make interim assessments as necessary in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to track pupils' progress. Assessments in the foundation subjects are not so well established. Individual teachers evaluate pupils' progress as they see fit, although these assessments are not formalized and do not therefore provide a cumulative record of pupils' achievements. This is partly because new schemes have recently been introduced in a number of subjects and the corresponding assessments are not yet securely in place.
42. The use of assessment to predict pupils' future results and to make adjustments to the curriculum and teaching is unsatisfactory. The headteacher and core co-ordinators have begun to use pupils' past test scores to project their likely attainment in future tests. For instance, the English co-ordinator has listed where each pupils is at and has a clear idea of what they need to do to achieve at or above expectation in the future. This form of analysis is beginning to have an impact on planning and teaching. Whilst teachers still tend to use informed guesses rather than calculating statistically valid and reliable projections, the school is aware of this and is poised to introduce greater analytical objectivity in the use and interpretation of assessment data.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents are very supportive of the school, hold the staff in high regard and believe their children receive a high quality of care and education during their time in school. The school has worked hard to establish good partnership links with parents and provides a suitable range of

opportunities for them to exercise regular involvement in their children's education and personal development.

44. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. The school's Parent, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) organise fund-raising social events each half term, all of which are well attended and provide quality opportunities for informal exchange between parents and staff. Parents are welcome in school and encouraged to become involved in their children's learning. Home-school agreements are in place and meetings are well attended by parents. Teachers appreciate the valuable contribution of a small number of regular parent and governor volunteer helpers, who provide a pre-planned weekly input and support to pupils in class. Other parents accompany and support pupils on out-of-school visits. Of worthy note are the large number of parents and community friends who gave freely of their own time recently to help redecorate the school's interior. This has resulted in a bright and modern learning atmosphere.
45. The new head teacher promotes an "open door" approach, encouraging parents to share their concerns and suggestions. Teachers make themselves available at the beginning and end of the school day to talk to any concerned parents. The good attendance of parents at the various meetings organised to raise their educational awareness have helped to promote greater parental involvement in their children's learning at home. This represents a significant improvement since the last Ofsted inspection.
46. The quality and range of information provided to parents is good and has improved since the last inspection. Parents are kept well informed on a regular basis on all aspects of school life. The increased regularity of formal and informal meetings for teacher and parents provide a good two-way flow of information about pupils' welfare and progress. The three weekly newsletters and regular "dear parent" correspondence keep parents well informed about school events and pupils' achievements. The school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report are suitably detailed, although several minor pieces of information are missing from the Annual report. However, these omissions do not adversely affect standards of work. End-of-year progress reports are informative, easy to read and provide a satisfactory level of detail about pupils' achievements and standards. However, there are some inconsistencies in the level of detail relating to pupil's achievements in the areas of development that pupils need to work on.
47. Good use are made of recently introduced homework diaries and termly curriculum topic letters keep parents aware of, and involved in, their children's education. Inspectors recognise the concerns of parents about these areas, but feel that the recent improvements will go a long way towards satisfying them. A new homework policy has been shared with parents and implemented across the school and, in the view of inspectors, is improving the relevance and consistency of work set for pupils thus supporting their standards and achievements. Inspectors also feel that the decision to hold termly teacher and parent consultation meetings will improve the parents' involvement in their child's education in the school and at home.
48. Effective use is made of the school gate and school entrance lobby parent notice boards to keep parents aware of current school information, and the school has plans to include a reference display of school policies for parents to see in the school lobby. This improving level of information, and the close working liaison that exists between teachers and parents, has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and their achievements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She has a clear vision for the school, has accurately identified those factors that will improve standards and has gained the loyal support of staff, parents and governing body since she arrived in January 2001. Teachers are aware of the rapid changes that are occurring, but feel comfortable with the pace of change. This is because the headteacher consults with others, taking notice of their ideas and suggestions. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in April and is beginning to provide very good support to the headteacher in the implementation of new initiatives and the recently defined development planning targets. Together, the headteacher and deputy headteacher provide the basis of a very good senior management team. Other senior managers include the lower school co-ordinator and staff development co-ordinator; both have clear job specifications and contribute capably to the operational effectiveness of the new management structure. The collaborative style of the headteacher is evident in the good relationships that have been forged with the governing body, who are more actively integrated into the decision making process than they were a year ago. The school's aims are clearly stated in relevant documents, although these aims are too broad and do not drive the work of the school.
50. Subject co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently accountable for standards in their areas of responsibility. This is improving as the headteacher promotes better monitoring of teaching and the curriculum, and better use of performance data to measure and predict individual pupils' standards of work and achievement. However, two of the three key issues from the last inspection were to extend the role of the subject co-ordinator and to improve the tracking of pupils' progress. Whilst some progress has been made, the school still has some way to go before it is fully effective in both of these areas. The new headteacher has introduced a system of lesson observation with formal feedback. There has been some analysis of national tests and the optional tests that are sat by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, although the level of analysis is still somewhat superficial. Little was done to move these things forward before the arrival of the new headteacher, but much has been done since her arrival. Consequently, inspectors feel that the school is now moving on these issues and see no reason why this progress should not continue. The subject co-ordinators are supporting the headteacher and are working hard to improve their own efficiency and the overall effectiveness of the school.
51. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) provides very good leadership. She has release time, which is used to ensure that the needs of the pupils are fully and effectively met. She works with staff to ensure that the requirements of the Code of Practice are fully implemented. She maintains very effective systems to ensure that information is readily available for staff, parents and outside agencies. The governor assigned to special educational needs is actively involved in supporting these areas and reporting back to all governors regularly. The school has made a good investment in the provision of a team of highly skilled education care officers who work alongside teachers.
52. The contribution of governors to the work of the school is good. The last inspection found the contribution of governors to be sound, although some feel that they were over dependent on the headteacher when taking decisions. Governors did not know all the facts about the school and so lacked the confidence to arrive at independent decisions. This is now changing. The headteacher and chair meet weekly for a full exchange of information and views. The governors receive regular detailed reports from the headteacher and, when necessary, ask individual staff to attend meetings in order to provide up-to-date briefing about the latest developments in particular areas. For instance, the governors have been briefed about developments in literacy and numeracy. Each of the sub committees has a chair, who regularly report back to the full governing body, and the chair of the finance committee plays a strategic role in monitoring and setting the budget. There are governors with responsibilities for major areas of provision such as literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. These governors come into school to ensure that decisions taken by the governing body are effective in action. Other governors go into lessons as helpers, and this is welcomed by the staff, who appreciate the interest taken. Governors' attendance at training sessions in performance management, school management

and personnel issues has given them a keener appreciation of current aspects of school leadership.

53. The most recent school development plan is clear and successfully focuses on aspects that will have a direct bearing on academic standards. Before the new headteacher arrived, there had been no formal development planning for four years, and so there was insufficient agreement over what needed to be done to help the school to improve. On her arrival, the headteacher issued an interim development plan that focused on immediate issues. This was superseded a few weeks later by another slightly longer-term plan. The governing body, following consultation between the headteacher, governors and staff, agreed the full school development plan in April. Thus, in the absence of a previous detailed plan, the school has been kept fully informed of the thrust of the headteacher's thinking and staff have been invited to contribute their ideas at each stage. The plan is suitably detailed, giving due weight to issues that will move the school forward. Improvements to literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology are prominent, with appropriate attention also given to issues such as the accommodation, financial management and community relations. Importantly, the plan is clear in its intention to improve monitoring of teaching, the quality of subject leadership and the use made of assessments to make the school more self-evaluative. All targets are timed and costed and are subject to success criteria. Whilst the predominant focus is on the current year, some targets, such as those relating to standards, look aptly ahead to 2002 and 2003.
54. The quality of financial planning is satisfactory. Only recently have firmer links been established between the school's development planning and its financial planning. However, the lack of development planning before the arrival of the new headteacher has meant that the cycles of financial and development planning have not been successfully synchronized to ensure that each informs the other at each stage in the school calendar. Consequently, costings for the current development plan had to be determined after the budget was set. This was inevitable this year, because the new headteacher only took up her post very recently and it was important to undertake an audit of the operational effectiveness of the school before attempting to integrate the financial and development planning. Whilst there is now much greater clarity about financial planning, there is a degree of expediency that will be resolved in subsequent years. As mentioned, the chair of the finance sub committee is involved in financial deliberation, and there is a much greater understanding and ownership of the financial affairs of the school by governors. Financial grants are monitored to ensure they are used for their intended purpose. The last full audit of the school's financial affairs of 1999 found very little wrong and the few items identified for improvement have all been successfully attended to. The school secretary maintains records in an effective way and contributes significantly in this respect to the overall efficiency of the school.
55. All teachers are suitably qualified and there are sufficient teachers for the number of pupils in the school. The size of classes is above the national average with approximately 28 pupils in each class. The school spends an above average proportion of its budget on classroom support assistants, which somewhat compensates for the mixed age and mixed ability classes, since support assistants are often used to help lower attaining pupils requiring individual or small group support. There are sufficient helpers for pupils who have statements of special educational needs and support is carefully targeted so that these pupils receive help in the lessons where they most need it. The school has sufficient resources for the planned curriculum, including the number of computers, which have recently improved as a result of grant funding. A key issue of the last inspection was the low number of books per child. This has improved and is now in line with the national average.
56. The accommodation is good. Rooms are suitably spacious and there are useful resource and practical areas adjacent to teaching rooms. This means that there is sufficient space for pupils to enjoy lessons in art, design technology and other practical activities. The outside facilities are also good with two well-drained and level football pitches and pleasant social and environmental areas. The library is housed in a separate room, which provides a pleasant space where pupils can browse and select books.
57. The school is beginning to successfully apply the principles of best value. It compares its results to other schools to ensure it stays competitive, although there is room for deeper analysis as

subject co-ordinators are made more responsible for standards in their areas. The school secures efficient and effective competitive services from outside providers. There is improving consultation with parents whose ideas, suggestions or complaints are taken seriously. The school has started to be much more self reflective and alert to aspects that need improving. Most importantly, pupils' achievements are good. However, much of this is very recent and has not yet bedded down. Given these recent improvements, the school supplies good value for money, although there is continuing scope for further improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to improve standards the governing body should:

- Further improve standards in science by (a) providing more opportunities for investigative work and (b) identifying areas of weakness by tracking individual pupils' progress.
(Paragraphs 1, 41, 73)
- Further improve standards in information and communication technology (ICT) by ensuring that new equipment is used effectively to support learning across all subjects of the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 8, 94)
- Further improve pupils' achievements in the foundation subjects by making subject co-ordinators more accountable for standards across the school in their areas of responsibility.
(Paragraphs 8, 13, 50, 57, 81, 85, 89, 93, 105)
- Improve the use that is made of assessment data to track pupils' progress and to adjust teaching and the curriculum in order to further raise standards of work and pupils' achievements.
(Paragraphs 8, 20, 41, 42, 50, 81, 105)

ALL THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED IN THE SCHOOL'S DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 36 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 66 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 6 | 25 | 44 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | Y3 – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | N/A | 170 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | N/A | 13 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | Y3 – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | N/A | 9 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | N/A | 34 |

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

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 9 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 1 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.4 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 25 | 26 | 51 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 20 | 19 | 21 |
| | Girls | 24 | 23 | 22 |
| | Total | 44 | 42 | 43 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 86 (89) | 82 (68) | 84 (81) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 20 | 19 | 20 |
| | Girls | 23 | 23 | 21 |
| | Total | 43 | 42 | 41 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 84 (81) | 82 (76) | 80 (76) |
| | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69) | 80 (75) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 3 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 167 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 6.7 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25 |
| Average class size | 28 |

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 77 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 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.

Financial information

| | |
|--|--------|
| Financial year | 2000 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 331189 |
| Total expenditure | 342889 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2017 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 15112 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 3412 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 171 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 46 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 59 | 39 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 63 | 28 | 7 | 0 | 2 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 39 | 59 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 28 | 41 | 26 | 4 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 59 | 35 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 37 | 39 | 17 | 7 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 67 | 22 | 9 | 2 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 64 | 30 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 37 | 46 | 9 | 9 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 61 | 30 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 50 | 43 | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 50 | 39 | 9 | 2 | 0 |

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Inspectors support parents' largely positive views of the school. Until recently, homework was not well used to support work done in class or to promote independent learning. The recent introduction of a homework diary is having a positive impact on standards. The new headteacher has taken note of parents' concerns about the amount of information about how their children are getting on. Further opportunities have been provided for parents to meet teachers at the beginning and end of the school day and an additional parents' meetings has been scheduled into the school calendar.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

59. In 2000, the average national test score obtained in English tests for 11 year-old pupils was well above the national average for all schools and above the average for similar schools. Girls performed better than boys in the 2000 tests, though when the average over the five years is taken into account, boys have performed better than girls. Results have been consistent over the past three years, with the exception of 1999, when they dipped slightly. The dip coincided with staffing problems in the school. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
60. Inspection findings indicate that current standards of Year 6 pupils are above the national average. However, this does not represent a decline in standards from 2000, but rather that pupils' attainments vary from year to year. In the current Year 6, there are a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. When their prior attainment is taken into account, pupils' achievements are good. The achievements of pupils who are average and higher attainers are also good. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The National Literacy Strategy, introduced in 1998, has had a positive impact on standards. Teachers use the materials confidently. The quality of pupils' reading has particularly benefited from the intensive focus that is given to this area. The school is now focusing more energy on improving the quality of pupils' writing, which is given less emphasis in the Strategy. Available resources are effectively used, and so pupils make good progress. The effective support for literacy in the other subjects of the curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' overall skills.
61. Higher attaining pupils speak confidently, can express themselves at some length and can adapt their style and vocabulary to particular circumstances. This was seen, for example, when such pupils in a Year 5 and 6 class on the religion of Ancient Greece, discussed how they might present to the rest of the class information they had obtained from the Internet. Lower attaining pupils tend to speak hesitantly and often express themselves briefly. Most pupils engage readily in group work. They help each other to clarify their thinking and are willing to ask the teacher questions.
62. Reading is a relative strength in the school. By the age of 11 most pupils can read independently. They read fluently and are able to outline plots and to describe characters. Some can give good explanations of why an author chose to use a particular turn of phrase or to write in a particular way. This was seen, for example, when a group of Year 6 pupils analysed passages from Jacqueline Wilson's "The Suitcase Kid". Many pupils enjoy reading and welcome the opportunities that the curriculum provides for silent reading. Pupils keep a log of what they have read and many can name a favourite author or subject. Most are able to use the correct vocabulary to describe particular features in writing. Whilst pupils often display a good understanding of what they have studied, pupils often don't read aloud expressively. Higher attaining pupils do not develop the skills necessary to conduct their own research sufficiently.
63. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of different types of writing. By the age of 11 they gain experience of writing stories, poems, reports, play-scripts, letters, descriptions and setting out instructions. Many pupils enjoy writing their own stories and often write at some length. Year 4 pupils, for example, produced some good atmospheric writing under the title of "Desert Mystery". On some occasions, teachers provide pupils with a written list of the requirements for a particular piece of work. This enables many middle and higher attaining pupils to assess the quality of their work. All but the lowest attaining pupils understand the basic conventions of spelling and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils use simple sentences: higher attaining pupils are able to use complex sentences. Pupils are encouraged to write neatly and the majority do so.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good. When teaching is most effective, teachers display good subject knowledge which arouses interest in the pupils and leads them to ask questions. When teachers devise a number of tasks for pupils to perform in order to consolidate their understanding, then learning becomes more effective. This was seen, for example, in a Year 4

lesson on punctuation, where the performance of a series of tasks ensured pupils' full understanding. When teachers explain the aims of the lesson to pupils and constantly enable pupils to make links with previous learning, pupils become confident and feel they are making progress. A good range of activities within a lesson engages the interest and enthusiasm of pupils, as was seen, for example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson on poetic forms, in which pupils had the opportunity to watch a video, use computers, work with others in a group to write a poem on an overhead transparency and generally explore ideas together. In all lessons seen, teachers exercise quiet but firm discipline, which ensures that pupils can concentrate upon their learning. When teaching is less effective, teachers tend to speak to pupils for rather lengthy periods, ask questions that require only a brief response and generally do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills. Marking is mostly good and indicates to pupils what they need to do to improve. Pupils behave well in lessons and have a positive attitude towards learning.

65. Progress since the last inspection has been good. Standards have consistently been above or well above national expectations. The range and quality of books has improved. The co-ordinator now successfully monitors teaching across the whole school. Consequently, there is a good understanding of those factors that promote or limit effective learning. Good use is made of assessment data to map individual pupils' progress. Targets are set and followed through to make sure each pupil maximises their potential. This is one of the reasons that national test results in English are above those in mathematics and science.

MATHEMATICS

66. Pupils' achievements are good. Pupils' standards on entry to the school are slightly lower than that expected for their age, with some fluctuation from year to year. By the end of Year 6, an average of the last three years national tests scores shows that standards are broadly above the national average. This shows that pupils' achievements are good since they come in slightly below the national average and go out above the national average. Standards match those found in similar schools and there is little difference between the standards attained by boys or girls. Although there was a dip in pupils' attainments, which coincided with unavoidable use of temporary staff in 1999, standards have recovered and are similar to those reported in the last inspection.
67. Although pupils' achievements are good overall compared to their previous starting points, the rate of improvement in national test scores has not matched the rate of improvement nationally over the last five years. This is because of the weaker teaching that occurred when temporary staff were employed to cover for staff absence during 1999 and 2000, and also because the National Numeracy Strategy, which started in 1999, was not introduced into the school as well as it should have been. Teachers did not have their full training and so lacked confidence in using the new materials. As a result, standards dipped and the upward trend that had been evident in previous years was reversed. There is now stable staffing once again, after several years of instability, and so standards are beginning to rise. In the Year 2000 national tests, there was a very clear improvement.
68. In lessons seen at the end of Key Stage 2, standards of work in the current Year 6 match the national average, whereas the standards of last year's Year 6 were above. The differences between the year groups result from the relatively higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6. These pupils, who started in Year 3 clearly below average, are expected to match the national average when their results are published later this year. These pupils' achievements are good given their low starting point. Most pupils are working confidently within the expected Level 4 of the National Curriculum, and many are able to complete some parts of the more advanced Level 5. In one Year 6 class, for instance, average-attaining pupils calculated the Value Added Tax that had to be added to items for sale. Higher attainers were also expected to include a percentage deposit in their calculations. This added expectation of higher attainers meant that they were successfully challenged at a level appropriate to their understanding. Lower attainers, and those with special educational needs are also successfully supported. In a lesson with lower-attaining Year 6 pupils, for instance, the teacher asked them to find the equivalents between fractions, decimals and percentages. Quick

fire questions such as “What is 25% as a fraction?” got an immediate response from most pupils, who eagerly calculated the answer.

69. Pupils’ mathematics skills are reinforced in other lessons of the curriculum, for instance in design technology and science. However, teachers do not always expect pupils to work at a compatible level to that required in mathematics lessons, and so opportunities to reinforce their understanding at an appropriate level are sometimes lost.
70. The quality of teaching is good overall with all lessons observed graded good or very good. Teachers plan for lessons in detail. They still tend to be wary of adapting the Numeracy Strategy materials to suit their particular circumstances, although one teacher has arranged for a higher attaining pupil to have books from the local secondary school in order to stretch the pupil more. Teachers successfully support slower attaining pupils and the help given by education care officers helps special educational needs pupils to achieve well given their lower starting point. Because teachers are concerned to cater for the full age and attainment range, pupils learn well, making swift progress. Teachers are now much more confident in using the National Numeracy Strategy materials due to good recent training. Consequently, lessons have a clear structure that helps pupils to learn in a sequential and well-organised way. Teachers make increasingly good use of available resources to bring lessons alive. When they do this, learning takes an upward turn. Sometimes, however, teachers do not encourage pupils to apply their mathematics skills to everyday situations, and so pupils tend to feel more comfortable with repetitive exercises that become a little routine. When this happens, the pace of learning slows. In a Year 3/4 lesson, for instance, pupils were doing repetitive calculations such as $336-183$ and 70×75 . These were well pitched for the pupils’ current stage of need, but were not presented in an engaging way. In an earlier lesson with the same class, pupils had learnt about co-ordinates by plotting their way around an imaginary island. This was a more exciting way of consolidating pupils’ understanding because the pupils were intrigued by the questions, which were more like puzzles than mathematics exercises. The books used by some teachers do not help; whilst these books reinforce skills that are accurately pitched to the pupils’ current levels of need, they do not use the everyday examples that would make the learning immediately relevant. Teachers manage pupils very well, supporting those who need extra help and making sure the atmosphere is conducive to learning. As a result, pupils learn in a stress-free atmosphere without interruption or silliness. Homework is starting to be used successfully, although this is only recently, following the introduction of a homework policy and diary. The use of homework successfully encourages pupils to learn independently and provides good opportunities for parents to understand how pupils learn.
71. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has started to monitor standards of teaching and learning and is becoming more aware of what needs to happen for standards to improve even more rapidly. However, the quality of teaching and the curriculum have only begun recently to be monitored, and so factors that might improve standards have not always been identified. Also, whilst pupils’ attainment and progress is assessed at regular intervals, the data that is gathered has not been sufficiently analysed to plan for or predict future learning. The co-ordinator helps colleagues, providing advice and recommending which materials to use. Available space is well used and there is effective deployment of classroom assistants, who provide valuable help, particularly to lower attaining pupils. The only criticism in the previous report was that there was insufficient monitoring of teaching and so some weaknesses remained undetected. Following a period of relative inertia, this development need is now being addressed.

SCIENCE

72. Standards in Science are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils are aged 11. This judgement is based on lessons observed, work seen, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils during the inspection, and is broadly supported by the national tests taken in 2000, where pupils' average points score matched the national average. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
73. However, attainment in science is lower than at the time of the last inspection. When looking at the four aspects of the subject, attainments are higher in life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes than in the area of scientific enquiry. In recent years the pupils have had insufficient opportunities for scientific enquiry. However, this is currently being addressed and pupils are being given more opportunities to engage in scientific investigations. As yet, however, this has not had sufficient impact on the raising of standards. Another reason that the pupils do not make as much progress in science as they do in the core subjects of English and mathematics is that there is insufficient tracking of the progress of individual pupils and therefore planning does not always build upon the pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the effective support they receive in lessons and the understanding of their needs shown by education care officers (ECOs). Inspection evidence suggests that the introduction of a nationally recognised scheme of work is having a positive impact upon the raising of standards, particularly in the area of scientific enquiry.
74. Standards in the current Year 6 are in line with the national average. By the age of 11, pupils develop a sound factual knowledge and a range of scientific vocabulary, which they use with varying degrees of confidence. In all classes, teachers are beginning to meaningfully involve pupils in practical investigations. The majority of pupils understand the basic principles of experimentation. They make careful observations and are satisfactorily developing the ability to evaluate scientific evidence and to make predictions. Pupils record in a variety of ways appropriate to their ages and abilities.
75. Teaching is very good overall. As a result pupils learn very well. The teachers show great enthusiasm and this ensures that pupils are fully involved in lessons. Pupils are highly motivated and make a great deal of effort throughout lessons. In a Year 3/4 lesson on plants, the teacher effectively held the pupils' attention by providing a wide range of plants so that pupils could examine different roots. The manner in which the teacher handled the plants ensured that the pupils handled the exhibits with care. Good use of scientific vocabulary by the teacher, the range of plants and focused questions helped the pupils make very good progress within the lesson. Higher attaining pupils are extended by the judicious use of questions designed to challenge and stimulate them. Teachers prepare lessons well and have a suitable range of resources to hand. In Years 5/6, pupils investigate breathing rates when at rest, after moderate exercise and after vigorous exercise. A helpful sheet encourages pupils to record their observations using scientific method. Clear instructions and good demonstrations by teachers and other adults enable the pupils to be successful in their investigations. Classes are led carefully through the investigative process and this ensures that they develop skills of prediction, testing and evaluating. In lessons seen, good use of plenary sessions reinforced learning. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs receive good support from their teachers and ECO's. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged and appropriately challenged to make progress and to achieve well. There are effective links with other subjects, notably mathematics, information and communication technology and geography.
76. In all lessons seen, strong and effective pupil management contributed positively to the quality of learning. All teachers establish good relationships with pupils and this helps to promote positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils enjoy science, are well motivated, show curiosity, listen attentively and are interested in their work. Throughout the school pupils co-operate well with each other and contribute to class discussions. They use equipment and resources safely and with care. All pupils show a productive curiosity for science.
77. The science co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management and has made a start in raising standards. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning have started but,

as yet, are insufficiently systematic and rigorous. A school policy statement and the new scheme of work help teachers to plan their lessons. The measures taken so far and the quality of teaching seen during the inspection will have a positive effect on the standards of attainment. A useful assessment system is in place, enabling staff to record pupils' achievements, but it is insufficiently detailed to assist teachers in setting targets for further improvements to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. The school makes good use of the local environment. Resources are satisfactory, but some books are old and in need of replacement. The time allocation for science is satisfactory and the planned work meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

78. At the time of the last inspection, standards in art were above expected levels. During this inspection, although only a very small amount of teaching was seen, scrutiny of artwork and conversations with pupils and teachers show that standards remain above expectations by the time pupils leave school at age 11. There are good levels of achievement evident across the age range and amongst different groups of pupils. Special educational needs pupils achieve well as a result of well-chosen topics that interest them and higher attainers also achieve well because the open ended projects give room for ingenuity and originality. There is no significant difference between the artwork of boys or girls.
79. By the end of Key Stage 2, 11 year-olds produce interesting work in a range of media. In a Year 6 lesson for instance, pupils were creating imaginative theatre masks based on the fictional characters of Perseus and Medusa. Pupils successfully used a variety of paper sculpting techniques including tearing, cutting, punching, scoring, pleating, rolling and scrunching. Pupils have also explored these characters using pencil, crayon and collage, and in the near future will be using plaster and clay. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made decorative Aztec masks that show an understanding of symbolic motifs. Pupils take notice of the stylistic features of well-known painters. In the hall, for instance, there are pictures that accurately replicate the distinctive styles of the artists Picasso, Matisse and Lowrie. These paintings show attention to detail and a real understanding of the techniques favoured by each artist. In several rooms there are striking examples of computer-generated art. These show attention to use of space and colour and a facility with many of the features offered by the particular computer application. Although there is a good range of media in regular use, there is not a great deal of eye catching large-scale work.
80. Although insufficient teaching of art was seen to form a conclusive judgement about its quality, it is clear that teachers are making increasingly good use of a nationally recognised scheme in planning lessons. Teachers avoid dull and repetitive routines in favour of projects that interest pupils. As a result, pupils feel confident about their learning and are well motivated. Teachers successfully use a range of materials, which inspires pupils, encouraging them to use their imagination and creativity as they learn to manipulate the materials. Most pupils behave very well and are interested in their work. Pupils enjoy seeing their work displayed and enthusiastically talk about this with visitors.
81. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall, although there is little time for the co-ordinator to work alongside colleagues or to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator provides what support she can to other teachers in the way of ideas and advice. Because there is no development plan for art, teachers are dependent on their own ideas and imagination. The lack of a consistent approach means that there is some variability between the work produced in different classes. Also, the lack of an agreed procedure for measuring pupils' achievements limits teachers' grasp of the progress of individual pupils. There are attractive displays of pupils' work in many rooms and corridors. This successfully celebrates pupils' efforts and encourages them to do well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Due to timetabling arrangements it was only possible to see one lesson of design and technology during the inspection. Judgements, therefore, are based on the one lesson seen, teachers' planning, pupils' work, discussions with staff and pupils and scrutiny of displays and resources. Standards in design and technology are above expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils are aged 11. The high standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
83. Pupils design and construct moving models using a range of materials, adhesives and equipment. The models are planned in detail, modified where appropriate and evaluated when completed. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils produce suitable designs for hand puppets and soft toys. The finished products are attractive, well sewn and attractively decorated. In the one lesson observed, the pupils were investigating packages. Later on in the series of lessons pupils will design and make the packages. The pupils accurately described the various packages and thoughtfully explained their purposes. They were able to disassemble the boxes and examine the nets required to make them.
84. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive. They are careful with their work. They concentrate hard and make good gains in their learning and take considerable pride in their finished artefacts. They co-operate well, working in pairs or in groups. Teaching was good in the one lesson observed during the inspection. The teacher had high expectations of the pupils, asking searching questions to ensure good learning and consolidation of designing skills. The pupils were successfully encouraged to discuss their work, which helped to extend the language needed to develop their evaluations. Planning is detailed and tasks appropriately challenging. This extends pupils' skills. The teacher's good management of the pupils and the organisation of the groups, together with the skilled support of the education care officers, ensure that the pupils are well motivated and remain on task, thus promoting effective learning.
85. The school provides a broad and balanced design and technology curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements. Planning is soundly based on a two-year programme and on nationally produced guidance. The co-ordinator has a clear view of how the subject needs to be developed, although little time has been allowed for formal monitoring of teaching and the curriculum. Consequently, factors that might interfere with good quality learning are not always quickly identified and rectified.

GEOGRAPHY

86. Due to the timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Years 5 and 6. Judgements are based on the two lessons seen in Years 3 and 4, analysis of pupils' work teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and teachers and scrutiny of displays. These indicate that pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the levels expected at the age of 11. This is unchanged from the previous inspection. All pupils, irrespective of their age or prior attainment, make good gains in their learning and achieve well.
87. Behaviour is good. Pupils concentrate on their work and enjoy their activities. Pupils are encouraged to consider global and environmental issues. They have positive and constructive attitudes to the subject. Pupils are able to listen attentively to each other and to accept others' points of view. Their good attitudes have a positive impact on their learning. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good. Using a recent visit to Carsington Water, teachers successfully encouraged pupils to discuss how areas change. Teachers helped pupils to appreciate the moral issues relating to flooding an area to provide a reservoir. The teachers make links with other areas of the curriculum, for instance, by reminding pupils of their work in literacy lessons. Work is differentiated and makes appropriate demands on the older and more able pupils. Pupils produce good quality work.
88. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study various places in the United Kingdom. They successfully compare and contrast coastal towns, busy cities and country areas. They use the information gained to present a tourist information guide. They describe the places, draw maps and give information

about the main attractions and make judgements about the types of tourists that each place would attract. This work in geography provides very good literacy development by extending writing skills and by enabling pupils to use other skills acquired in literacy lessons. Pupils accurately examine varied geographical areas, identifying the similarities and differences between them. They are able to examine maps and to explain the key symbols. They successfully use a range of data, working in pairs to collect evidence, which they analyse and interpret to arrive at well-formulated judgements. By the age of eleven, pupils develop good geographical knowledge of the wider world and they apply their knowledge in other subject areas, for example in history when looking at the Aztecs. Good use is made of the local area with pupils studying the river Wye comparing what happens to the river when it is passing over limestone or shale.

89. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In many lessons there are opportunities to study the world and its wonders and to reflect on the environment. There is a strong moral dimension in lessons where pupils are taught to respect each other and to know right from wrong. In lessons pupils are able to work together and are taught to share, take turns and to listen to others' points of view. The social and cultural impact of the subject is enhanced by field visits. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a high level of planning and discussion about the subject that has led to effective cross-curricular work. However, as at the time of the last inspection, formal monitoring of teaching and learning is not established across the school. Consequently, there is no strategic identification of factors that would lead to improving standards.

HISTORY

90. By the age of 11 standards are in line with the levels expected and pupils' achievement is satisfactory when their prior attainment is taken into account.
91. From the time they enter the school, pupils continue to develop their sense of chronology and have a good awareness of the most important events and personalities of the periods they have studied. Middle and higher attaining pupils, for example, are able to describe the main features of the groups of settlers who invaded England up to 1066, placing them in the right order. Lower attaining pupils are able to give some of the characteristics but are unclear about when or in what order the invasions took place. Pupils can make comparisons between the dwelling places of the Celts and the Aztecs, relating their comparisons to the contrasting climates in which the two civilizations developed. Pupils are aware of the richness of the culture of Ancient Greece, and can explain the significance of the major gods and goddesses, have an awareness of domestic life in the ancient world and can explain how some features of modern life have their origins in Greece, for example, the Olympic games. Most middle and higher attaining pupils can explain the meaning of democracy and how it developed in Athens. However, whilst pupils do gain a sound knowledge of events and ideas, they do not develop some skills to the extent that might be expected. In particular, higher attaining pupils do not have the chance to develop their capacity to assess different types of historical evidence or to conduct their own research.
92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and this results in satisfactory learning. When teaching is most effective, teachers display good subject knowledge, which is valuable in arousing the interest and enthusiasm of pupils for the topics studied. Teachers also perceive the potential the subject has to improve pupils' basic skills and good attention was paid as to how pupils might structure information when, for example, a Year 3/4 were drawing comparisons between the life styles of Celts and Aztecs. Many opportunities were provided for pupils to extend their vocabularies and to make sure they knew how to spell new words accurately. When teaching is less effective, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not engage in their own research as might be expected. Attitudes to the work are good. Pupils complete the tasks they are set promptly and efficiently and work sensibly in pairs and groups when required to do so.
93. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory, since standards have dropped from above the national average to being in line with it. This is explained in some part by staffing difficulties. At the time of the last inspection, library books needed updating. There has

been some improvement, but now some of the books used in lessons are rather old and are not attractive. The co-ordinator is not yet monitoring the quality of teaching and so aspects that might improve provision are not always quickly identified.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. By the age of 11 pupils' standards in information and communication technology are below the levels expected. When pupils' prior attainment is taken into account, achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because, until very recently, the school lacked the necessary equipment to provide regular lessons for pupils. There was, and still remains, a lack of suitable software to improve pupils' skills in information and communication technology across all subjects. Additionally, whilst attainment at the time of the last inspection matched national expectations at that time, staffing difficulties since then meant that the impetus necessary to stay in line with improving standards nationally was not satisfactorily maintained. The recent improvements include the appointment of a deputy headteacher who is responsible for the co-ordination of the subject, the acquisition of lap-top computers that can be used in all rooms, the services of a technician for one day a week and the use of an overhead projector that can project a magnified computer screen that can be used for whole-class instruction. Unfortunately, the latter has to be shared with other schools. All rooms are connected to the Internet and each classroom in the school now has an up-to-date computer.
95. In a lesson that was specifically dedicated to information and technology skills, Year 6 pupils were able to use computers to design attractive invitations to parents for school events. In doing this they were able to identify suitable applications and select their choice of wizard, which provided them with a suitable format, and were then able to go on to manipulate text and graphics. They could also experiment with different fonts and add colour to further enhance the quality of their work. Pupils also use computers in other subjects. In English, for example, pupils in Year 5 were able to use word processing techniques to produce their own "concrete poetry". Most pupils are able to re-draft, edit and check their work for accuracy in spelling and grammar using a computer. In geography pupils are able to obtain information on the weather by using the Internet. In a Year 5 science lesson pupils recorded the results of an experiment on breathing on an electronic database. However, some aspects of the National Curriculum are not satisfactorily covered, notably control and modelling, and the general level of skills of all the pupils is below the level that would be expected nationally.
96. Insufficient teaching of the subject was seen to be able to form a secure judgement about its quality. When a specific information and communication technology lesson was observed, the teacher displayed very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, the lesson moved along at a lively pace and rapid learning took place. Teachers have ensured that all pupils have had some opportunities to use the computers available and to develop important basic skills in, for example, word processing and gaining access to the Internet. They are growing in confidence in using the software available. Pupils are encouraged to carry out some investigative work. Teachers have started to explore some more sophisticated aspects of the new technology, such as the digital camera, and there is effective use of the Internet, particularly by older pupils.
97. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. However, given the recent developments, the school is now poised to move on to considerably improve pupils' standards in the subject and, indeed, the process has clearly started. Whilst the subject coverage complies with National Curriculum requirements, provisional plans are in place to ensure a fuller coverage in those areas where provision is weak.

MUSIC

98. At the time of the last inspection, standards in music were in line with expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 when pupils were aged 11. Standards of attainment seen in this inspection were above the expected levels of 11 year-olds and there has therefore been good progress since the last inspection. Although very little teaching was seen, conversations with pupils and teachers

and attendance at assemblies and rehearsals show that pupils achieve well over time, despite the time allocated to music being well below the national average. This is because there are very regular opportunities for pupils to sing outside the normal music lessons and more than half the pupils belong to one of the thriving extra curricular groups. The achievement of pupils who receive instrumental lessons is well above average. The practical nature of music lessons enables those with special educational needs to participate at a level that ensures they achieve well, and higher attaining pupils achieve well as a result of participating in performances.

99. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils sing with accurate intonation and obvious enthusiasm. In the choir, there is secure two-part singing, and, although this was not seen, pupils say that there is regular two-part singing in lessons. Pupils sing a mixed repertoire of songs, paying attention to different aspects of style required by the song. Pupils play tuned percussion with rhythmic and melodic accuracy, paying attention to and accurately reflecting musical subtleties in their playing, such as dynamic markings. Pupils work well in small groups and are able to sustain an independent part when playing with others. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils improvised their own rhythmic pieces to capture a particular mood. However, some pupils have difficulty recalling the simple structures of music, such as drone or ostinato, when composing their own music. Pupils who sing in the choir or play in one of the bands attain high standards, often performing together in assembly and outside school. When listening to music, pupils discuss the musical qualities of what they hear using basic musical language as well as general descriptive language.
100. Very little teaching was seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to reach a firm judgement about its quality. Nevertheless, there are regular lessons using a recently introduced nationally recommended scheme. This gives interesting musical projects for pupils to work on that they enjoy. The teacher of music is very animated in her manner, communicating and sharing her own enthusiasm and enjoyment. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and make rapid progress. The direction of extra curricular musical activities is particularly good and provides pupils with regular excellent opportunities to develop their musical teamworking skills. For instance, fifty pupils joined together for a band rehearsal during the inspection. They played a demanding repertoire and did so with musical panache and enthusiasm.
101. The management of the subject is good. The new scheme, which is just in the process of being introduced, provides plenty of good ideas intended to help non-specialists. There is a suitable range of resources, including pitched and non-pitched classroom instruments. The spaces available in classrooms and resource areas are well used to support practical music making.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

102. By the age of 11 pupils' standards are in line with the levels expected of 11 year-olds and their achievement is satisfactory when their prior attainment is taken into account. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection.
103. By the age of 11 pupils have had the opportunity to participate in a well-balanced range of activities and to develop a suitable breadth of skills. They change for physical education and understand the hygiene considerations associated with strenuous exertions. They know how to warm up at the start of lessons and how to cool down afterwards. Pupils know how to aim, pass and return different types of balls. Most pupils are able to do this effectively from a stationary position. Higher attaining pupils are able to do so whilst moving, as was seen in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were developing their skills in handling a rugby ball. In a Year 3 and 4 class, pupils had sound ball-catching skills and possessed a determination to improve their skills through practice. All pupils in the school understood the rules of the games they played and a willingness to co-operate together. Pupils take part in dance. In a lesson on country dancing, pupils in Years 3 and 4 participated enthusiastically. Most displayed sound levels of co-ordination when moving and clapping in time to music. Though it was not possible to observe them during the inspection, Year 5 pupils have swimming lessons.
104. In the limited amount of teaching seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall and this resulted in satisfactory learning. Some good teaching was also seen. Teaching is most effective

when teachers display good subject knowledge, ensure that lessons contain a range of activities, maintain a lively pace and are able to demonstrate the skills they are teaching. In these lessons there is a good level of challenge and pupils exert themselves well. Teaching is least effective pupils are not suitably challenged. In one lesson, for instance, pupils were allowed to finish an exercise too early because they were out of breath.

105. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The pace of lessons now suitably motivates pupils and appropriate use is made of indoor and outdoor facilities. It remains the case that the monitoring of teaching and the use of assessment information is limited.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

106. At the age of 11 the standards of pupils' work are above those required in the county's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

107. By the age of 11 pupils have developed a wide factual knowledge of a number of the major world religions. They are able, for example, to understand how the main beliefs of Judaism affect peoples' everyday lives. They describe what is sacred in a number of religions. Year 5 and 6 pupils understand the significance of the signs and symbols used in St John's gospel. They accurately describe the differences between Judaism and Christianity and to begin to examine the influence of religion on peoples' lives.

108. In the previous report teaching ranged from excellent to satisfactory. It is now very good overall, with two excellent lessons being observed with pupils at the lower end of the key stage. The teachers have very good pupil management strategies; they have a quiet authority and good humour. Relationships between pupils and with teachers are very good. This leads to a relaxed but businesslike working atmosphere, and is a strong contributory factor to the high standards. Teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to encourage pupils to develop their ideas and to think for themselves. However, at the upper end of the Key Stage, teachers do not always make sufficient use of discussions between pupils to enable them to examine their own views and beliefs and those of their peers. All teachers have very good factual knowledge of the religions and faiths covered in the syllabus. This enables them to teach confidently so that there are rapid gains in learning. Teachers have a good range of methods that not only maintain interest in the lesson, but also reinforce pupils' learning. These often include role-play, discussions about the meaning of religious beliefs, talks from visiting speakers as well as written work. There is good teamwork between all staff. Teachers make good links with literacy by reading stories and encourage pupils to write independently. The use of information and communications technology is undeveloped, however.

109. Pupils take care over the presentation of their work and show very good attitudes to the subject. Behaviour in class is very good. The religious education curriculum is good, providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In lessons there are opportunities for pupils to reflect on other religions. There is a strong moral dimension in lessons where pupils learn the principles of a range of religions as well as Christianity. Teachers provide good role models and pupils are taught right from wrong in lessons. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their social skills through discussions in class, taking turns and working together. The good links with the local Methodist church contribute successfully to pupils' cultural, social and spiritual development, and visitors to school further enhance this. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. All aspects of the previous report that needed improvement have been addressed. The quality of teaching has improved and standards have risen as a result. There has been good progress in the subject since that time.