

INSPECTION REPORT

ST THOMAS CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Annes-on-Sea

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119552

Headteacher: Miss P Johnson

Reporting inspector: Mr Philip Schofield
(Ofsted No: 1616)

Dates of inspection: 4 - 7 December 2000

Inspection number: 197530

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St Thomas' Road
Lytham St Annes
Lancashire

Postcode: FY8 1JN

Telephone number: 01253 722022

Fax number: 01253 722886

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Revd. Peter Law-Jones

Date of previous inspection: 16 September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr P Schofield (Ofsted No: 1616)	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Physical education	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs B Moore (Ofsted No: 9306)	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr J Young (Ofsted No: 25386)	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Information and communication technology	
		Music	
Mrs J Fisher (Ofsted No: 19709)	Team inspector	Foundation stage	
		Equal opportunities	
		Art	
		Geography	
		History	
Mr C Deane-Hall (Ofsted No: 23757)	Team Inspector	Mathematics	
		French	
		Design technology	
		Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school situated in the parish of St Thomas, St Annes-on-Sea. The school is housed in a single storey building that has been extended and improved over the years to provide a good range of teaching and administrative facilities. The immediate catchment area of the school comprises mixed housing; a proportion of properties is rented and in multiple occupation. A significant proportion of pupils come from transient families. Some factors such as the mobility of some pupils impact on the standards attained in the school but, in the main, it is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged.

There are 224 pupils on roll, all of whom are of white ethnic origin. Many of the 25 children who attend reception class previously attended the private nursery that is on site. Their attainment on entry to the school was average. Thirteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which below the average for schools of this type. 32 pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs of whom thirteen are at the higher levels, requiring support from outside agencies. Of these, three have formal statements.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides very good education for its pupils. Pupils' attainment is above national averages. In Key Stage 1, standards are above national averages in English, mathematics, science, art, music, history and physical education. In Key Stage 2, standards are above national averages in English, physical education, music, art and history. Children in the reception class are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year.

The school is led and managed well and uses the financial resources available to it carefully and sensibly. The quality of teaching is good. The school's expenditure per pupil is average. It is a school that provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching leads to higher standards in English, music, physical education, science and the foundation stage
- The school's merit system encourages very good behaviour and contributes significantly to the pupils' positive attitudes to school and very good relationships
- The school is very effective in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The school is led and managed well and financial management is very good
- The school analyses data well and uses the information effectively to improve provision
- The school bases its work on a well-written range of non-curricular policies
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities

What could be improved

- Higher expectations and a closer match of work to the needs of pupils in some lessons would improve standards
- The very good work in data analysis needs to be extended to include the tracking of performance and setting of targets for individual pupils and cohorts
- The School Development Plan is detailed and comprehensive, but needs to be reorganised so that the school's priorities are more evident

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. Results in national tests have improved at the same rate as results nationally. Since that time, standards have been maintained. The key issues identified in that inspection have been addressed in most respects. There is a programme of classroom observation that provides useful information on the quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum co-ordinators have opportunities to monitor the health of their subjects. Literacy and numeracy are included in the daily programme of every class. Children under five have a secure play area and a better range of

large play equipment. The playground area for older children has been extended. A new path ensures safe entry to school for pedestrians.

Lesson plans provide a clear structure for teaching lessons. Some planning does not include sufficient provision for more able pupils. Plans to introduce assessment in all the foundation subjects have been slowed down because of changes to National Curriculum requirements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	C	C	C	
science	C	C	D	D	

The tests show that standards in English are above national averages; those in mathematics are in line and those for science are slightly below. The school has sustained the performance of pupils in English over the past three years. Standards of performance in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 fell in the last two years but are again improving and are at least in line. Pupils also achieve well in music, physical education, art and some aspects of history. Some pupils, particularly those in lower Key Stage 2, do not achieve their full potential because they are insufficiently challenged in the core subjects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with expectations.

The targets the school has set for improvement are sufficiently challenging and the school is set to meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very positive attitudes to school and enjoy the challenges and opportunities that the curriculum offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in classrooms is very good and often exemplary, although a few children engage occasionally in low-level disturbances in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and respond very well to the responsibilities they are given. The quality of relationships is very good.
Attendance	The attendance of pupils is good, although some move from the school during the term because of the seasonal nature of their parents' employment. This leads to variations in attendance statistics.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	good	satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is very good in the reception class and good in Key Stage 1 classes. This is a strength of the school. It is often good in the upper part of Key Stage 2. It is satisfactory in the lower part of Key Stage 2. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Forty-two per cent of lessons were good and twenty-six per cent were very good. One lesson was excellent. Improvements in the performance of the pupils in numeracy and literacy can be attributed to the implementation of carefully structured and well-organised lessons in which good quality direct teaching is a feature. Teaching assistants provide very good support to individuals and small groups.

The majority of pupils learn well and make good progress. Those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Higher achieving pupils do not always make enough progress because they are insufficiently challenged in some lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the spiritual development of the pupils. They learn core values and the importance of reflection and celebration. Pupils are helped to distinguish right from wrong and to understand that actions have consequences. They have very good opportunities to develop social skills and learn to take on responsibility. They learn about different cultures and customs very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides very good support and guidance for its pupils. Academic and personal progress is monitored and the information gained is used to enhance provision for individual pupils, although some teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of higher attaining pupils.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy has improved. The school makes very good provision for music, dance, art, games and swimming, leading to high standards.

The school cares very well for its pupils. Throughout their time at the school, pupils receive excellent support in their personal and academic development. Pupils with special needs receive additional help from the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior management team provide strong and effective leadership. Middle managers are becoming more influential as they have opportunities to monitor and report on the health of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well organised and effective in the conduct of its business. It fulfils all its statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has developed a culture of self-improvement and is increasingly using available information to help it improve and develop.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its finances very effectively to provide resources that are matched closely to the needs of the children and the demands of the curriculum.

The well-qualified and experienced staff are deployed effectively throughout the school. The school provides good teaching and administrative facilities and has a good range of learning resources.

The school is led and managed very efficiently. The headteacher works closely and efficiently with the governing body and the senior management team. The budget is managed and administered very well. The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children's positive attitudes to school • The progress their children make • The approachability of the headteacher and teachers • The quality of information provided • Links with the church • The school's merit system • Quality of relationships • Exciting, challenging learning environment • Support for children with special needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in the number of male role models • Improvements in the setting of homework • Reduction in class size in Key Stage 1 • Improved information about the teaching programme, particularly in Key Stage 2 • Better provision of extra-curricular activities for the younger children

Most parents have confidence in the school, the headteacher and the class teachers. They feel that they are approachable and take their concerns seriously.

Evidence from the inspection confirms in the main the views of the parents and carers. The governing body is aware of the need for male role models in school but has to apply equal opportunity policy when employing staff. Most teachers set homework regularly and make very good use of this in subsequent lessons. Inconsistencies in the setting of homework have now been rectified. The building of a new classroom will have the effect of reducing class sizes for children under seven. The teaching programme is published but is not readily available to those parents who do not accompany their children to school. The school has a very good range of extra-curricular activities and it is appropriate that these are available to older pupils in the first instance.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Attainment on entry to school is in line with that of the majority of four-year-olds. Most pupils move from reception to Key Stage one having exceeded the Early Learning Goals. By the end of Key Stage one, most pupils have done well and achieve standards above the national average in most subjects. The rate of progress slows a little in the early part of Key Stage 2 and, by the end of the key stage, attainment is in line or slightly above national expectations in most subjects. Levels of attainment reported in the last inspection have been maintained in most subjects. In mathematics and science, they fell slightly, but are now improving to be at least in line with national expectations.
2. Standards in English are above the national average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop good speaking and listening skills and can read simple text confidently and fluently. They write simple stories and descriptions well. Most pupils read more complex fiction and non-fiction accurately and with understanding by the end of Key Stage 2. They do not have sufficient opportunities to write extended pieces and, consequently, standards are lower. Standards in mathematics are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 and are in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' numerical skills have improved over time and most have adequate strategies for mental calculation by the time they leave the school. Standards in science are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' ability to hypothesise and investigate has improved. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with expectations. Pupils do not yet use the Internet sufficiently which restricts their opportunities to communicate and research through this medium.
3. National test results for the end of the last academic year show that standards in English were above national averages; those in mathematics were in line and, in science were slightly below. The school has taken steps to remedy underachievement in mathematics and science by identifying underachievement by some girls in mathematics, restructuring teaching groups and providing additional training for staff.
4. Effective teaching and careful planning ensure that standards in music, art, physical education, and aspects of history are high throughout the school. Standards of singing, swimming, dance and the use of historical evidence to form hypotheses are particularly high. Attainment in design technology is in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. No lessons were seen for geography, but scrutiny of work indicates that standards are in line with expectations.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. Those with a statement of special educational need often make good progress because they are supported well by additional staff from the local authority's Support Service. These staff keep valuable, regular records of pupils' progress. Information from these is used well to ensure that pupils are provided with activities that build upon their prior level of attainment. This helps pupils to achieve their agreed targets. Pupils on the lower stages of the special educational needs register are provided with individual education plans which help teachers and support staff to provide pupils with suitable activities. However, teachers' planning does not always identify what these pupils are expected to learn in order to help pupils move towards achieving their agreed targets.
6. The school has around 50 pupils who are admitted or leave the school at times other than at the usual time. For example, in the present Year 6, 35 per cent of the pupils have joined or left the school during the last year. This often has the effect of temporarily slowing the rate at which these pupils learn and has the effect of depressing standards at the end of the key stage. However, the school is well aware of the situation and does all it can to support pupils' integration into the school.

7. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. The results of the monitoring and assessment process are used carefully to help staff, including outside support agencies, to provide pupils with activities which build successfully on what pupils already know, understand and can do.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were judged to have very positive attitudes to learning. They have been maintained. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and are a strength. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and are keen to participate in school activities and the day-to-day life of the school. This enthusiasm is reflected in the very good quality of behaviour. Pupils behave very well in and around school; they work co-operatively and enjoy learning. From early in their school life, children form very good relationships with one another and with adults. They are courteous and polite, very welcoming to visitors and eager to share their achievements with others.
9. The personal development of pupils is very good. Pupils take responsibility for some daily routines and they undertake their tasks with quiet efficiency. They show initiative in these activities and take pride in the responsibility they have been given. They have developed strong skills in working together; this was especially evident in the dance and mime routines in the Christmas production.
10. Attendance levels at the school are good and above the national average. Levels of unauthorised absence are below the national average. Children are happy to come to school and the school day starts promptly. Throughout the daily life of the school the pupils' understanding and respect for others reflect the school's mission statement creating a Christian ethos where everyone is valued.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching overall is good. It is very good in the reception and good in Key Stage 1 classes. It is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2, and often good or very good in the upper part of the key stage. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Seventy per cent of lessons were good, very good or excellent. Forty-two per cent of lessons were good and twenty-six per cent were very good. One lesson in the reception class was excellent. Teachers are very effective in ensuring that all pupils can benefit from the curriculum offered.
12. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage and the way in which teachers in Key Stage 1 engage children with their learning is a strength of the school. Teaching is based on effective planning and the best is carefully structured to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use a range of teaching strategies, including skilful use of questions, clear instruction and helpful demonstration. Teachers ensure that the needs of the majority of pupils are met, but some do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for more able pupils.
13. Teachers ensure that the pupils understand the objectives of lessons in most cases. They manage pupils well and use whole class teaching, group and individual work effectively. In a minority of lessons in Key Stage 2, low-level disturbance on the part of a small number of pupils is tolerated or ignored. This detracts from the overall effectiveness of these lessons. Time is used well to ensure the maximum benefit from lessons. Support staff know what is expected of them and make a valuable and significant contribution to the quality of lessons. ICT is used well to support some lessons, for example in processing data from experiments with wind-up toys in Key Stage 2.
14. Teachers set homework at an appropriate level and use it effectively to support and extend learning in school. Some work in class is dependent on homework being completed and pupils who do not produce the work can be disadvantaged. Some inconsistencies in the setting of

homework occurred and this caused concern to some parents. The matter has now been resolved with the return of the regular class teacher.

15. Improvements over time in the performance of the pupils in numeracy and literacy can be attributed to the implementation of carefully structured and well-organised lessons in which good quality direct teaching is a feature. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and ensure that lessons are taught in a lively and challenging way. They place particular emphasis on the development of phonics, mental recall and other basic skills. Some teachers in Key Stage 2 do not provide sufficient opportunities to practise skills of mental recall; this results in pupils' mental agility not being as well-developed as it could be.
16. The teaching of mathematics and English is good in Key Stage 1 and at least satisfactory and often good in Key Stage 2. In some lessons that were judged satisfactory work did not always match the needs of all pupils and the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged, for example, in a history lesson where all pupils worked on the same task. The teaching of science has improved since the last inspection and more emphasis is placed on investigative skills. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils know how to ask questions and use fair testing procedures to find answers. The teaching of ICT is at least satisfactory. Teachers ensure that basic keyboard skills are known and make good use of drawing and data handling programs to support work in other subjects. The organisation of ICT around two computers based in classrooms means that pupils' contact with the computer is restricted.
17. The teaching of physical education, music and history is good and often very good. The teachers' enthusiasm for their subject ensures that lively, interesting and challenging lessons take place. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use a range of strategies to ensure that pupils make good progress. For example, in physical education, teachers used demonstration to help pupils improve the control of their movements and, in history careful questioning enabled pupils to offer explanations for the differences between old and new toys. The teaching of music is enhanced significantly by a high level of expertise and opportunities for performance, for example in the Christmas play and through choir recitals. The teaching of design technology in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory; insufficient teaching was seen in Key Stage 1 to make a judgement. No teaching of geography or art was seen although evidence from planning and pupils' work indicates that teachers prepare well and provide interesting and challenging work for the pupils. Teaching in the foundation stage is very good and sometimes excellent. The high quality of relationships, careful management of activities and imaginative interactions with the children ensured good responses and active engagement with the work.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils receive effective support and their work is generally matched satisfactorily to their needs. Careful assessment generally ensures that pupils receive suitable teaching from support assistants and teachers, particularly those pupils with a statement of educational need. Pupils are supported in groups or individually and, sometimes, out of the classroom. For example, the arrangements whereby a teacher supports pupils in Years 1 and 2 out of class have a beneficial impact on pupils' learning. A few pupils receive effective individual support from special support assistants. Teachers generally make satisfactory provision for their pupils and are aware of learning and behavioural difficulties. However, occasionally, teachers do not adapt their plans to take account of individual education plans, and pupils' progress towards achieving their targets is thereby hindered.
19. The contribution of non-teaching staff to lessons is significant. They are skilful and sensitive in their support of individuals and small groups and work hard to reinforce or extend the teaching.

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

20. The school has continued to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum since the last inspection. Much good work has been undertaken to introduce the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Lessons are organised well and follow the format set out in the literacy and numeracy frameworks. The strategies for teaching numeracy have only recently been

addressed and as a consequence, standards are lower than those for literacy. Other subjects have received full attention in the school's drive to maintain and improve standards in the core subjects. Exciting and meaningful curricular opportunities are to be found in many lessons and activities throughout the school.

21. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. All classes have periods of "circle time" which are effective in developing pupils' personal and social skills. Frequent opportunities are provided during these sessions for pupils to express their concerns and worries. Year 6 pupils set their own challenging targets to improve the class environment by agreeing to concentrate more, finish their work on time and not disturbing fellow pupils. A very effective sex education policy sets out the school's common-sense approach to sex and relationship education. The teachers and governors have set out an effective teaching programme and the school nurse is invited to give input on sensitive issues.
22. From the age of five to 11, pupils experience an effective curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. Good use is made of the government's recommended schemes of work and schemes designed locally. These ensure pupils make good gains in their learning by building on pupils' previous knowledge. Teachers' medium-term planning is effective in setting out approaches to learning, curricular objectives, skills and knowledge, National Curriculum levels and evaluation targets. Teachers occasionally confuse task outcomes with learning outcomes in their planning which reduces the effectiveness of lessons. Some teachers do not plan sufficiently challenging activities for higher attaining pupils.
23. Provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils have appropriate individual education plans to support teachers in monitoring the progress of these pupils. The individual education plans are drawn up by the co-ordinator for special educational needs in consultation with class teachers and parents. Regular review meetings take place and parents are always invited to these. In lessons, the support assistants help pupils effectively and this enables them to make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported well by local authority staff. Pupils have full access to all activities in school and enjoy the extra-curricular opportunities offered.
24. The school is fully committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils and has regard to all statutory requirements. All pupils benefit from what the school has to offer both in the formal and informal curriculum. The education the pupils receive is free from bias and discrimination and the school promotes fairness and equality overall. There is an equal opportunity policy in place that complies with legislation. A series of individual policies and school documents cover the legal framework and comply with legislation for pupils with special educational needs. Both sexes have full and equal access to the curriculum including the wider aspects of school life. The school caters positively and monitors well for gender differences in the curriculum it provides. Boys and girls work well together in lessons. The school's arrangements ensure that both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, have full access to the complete range of curriculum activities, including educational visits, during and after school time.
25. Excellent provision is made for pupils' extra-curricular activities and this enhances the curriculum. The school provides a wide range of sporting activities including football, netball and hockey. The hockey team have competed in competition successfully. The school provides many musical activities including music club, recorder club, choir and instrumental lessons that enhance its reputation for high standards in music. The art club provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge of the subject.
26. The school has very strong links with the community. The church and school share several fundraising activities throughout the year including treasure hunts, barbecues and quiz nights. Pupils attend the church's Christingle and Christmas Eve crib services. Year 6 pupils gained a good grounding in the rudiments of music when St. Thomas' organist visited the school to explain how he had written a carol for Christmas. The strong partnership between the school and the church has resulted in the planning of an after school club to be organised and run by church volunteers in the church hall for the benefit of St. Thomas' pupils. Good liaison takes place between the reception class and the private nursery adjoining the school site.

27. Good links are maintained with other schools in the area. There is regular liaison with the local secondary school. Teachers from this school visit St. Thomas' with some of their Year 7 pupils to work with pupils in Year 6. There are plans to extend this good practice and for Key Stage 2 teachers to work in the secondary school with older pupils in Key Stage 3. The school is fortunate to receive good resources and expertise from secondary colleagues to enable pupils to undertake an exciting project on designing and making bridges using computers in the planning, modelling and assessment features of the project.
28. Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development. They experience a variety of opportunities to express their own feelings and ideas knowing that adults and peers alike will respect these. Collective worship provides a strong daily opportunity for a spiritual focus and pupils sing together with obvious great enjoyment. During the inspection, assemblies focused on Advent. Pupils were able to reflect on the meaning of Advent and very good comparisons were made between the Christian festival and pupils' own preparation for Christmas. Teachers are very sensitive to pupils' feelings and emotional topics such as bereavement are handled with great care and sensitivity. The creation of lively classroom environments where pupils' work is valued through attractive displays helps raise pupils' self-esteem.
29. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong and provision for moral education is very good. There are many useful opportunities during "circle time" for pupils to create and review their own class rules and codes of conduct. Year 6 pupils have recently agreed to set good examples to other pupils by not pushing or shoving people in class or around the school. Teachers are very good role models for their pupils in the fair and respectful ways they respond to their pupils' personalities. Good behaviour is praised but equally pupils know that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated in the school.
30. Provision for pupils' social education is also very good. Warm, caring and respectful relationships exist amongst all the school community. Teachers are sensitive and supportive of their pupils and each other. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their sense of belonging both in classes and within the whole school. A very successful house point system is in place that encourages pupils to work hard and behave well for both the good of themselves and their team. Teachers teach pupils how to listen well and to be disciplined in taking turns in speaking. Plenary sessions in many lessons give pupils rich opportunities to share their opinions with peers. Social interaction is important to many other aspects of learning. For example, pupils worked well together in small groups during a literacy lesson as they planned, discussed and improved their "monster" poems and recited them to their appreciative class peers. In regular celebration assemblies pupils acknowledge each other's learning and certificates are awarded for good achievement.
31. The school makes good efforts to provide for the cultural development of its pupils through an extensive range of cross-curricular opportunities. In art lessons, pupils are encouraged to study and create Australian Aboriginal bark paintings. Good comparisons are made with similar artwork from Mexico. Pupils are encouraged to explore the Aboriginal Dreamtime theme further in their music lessons. The school's excellent choir participates in musical activities for the benefit of the school and the community. Good use is made of visits to local art galleries where pupils are taught draw and paint in charcoal and watercolour. Visitors to the school are effective in developing pupils' cultural knowledge. Recently a "Tudor Soldier" was welcomed in school to demonstrate Tudor toys, armour and weaponry. Music of the week forms a regular though underdeveloped feature of daily assemblies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Since the last inspection this aspect has improved in many ways. Teachers know and understand their pupils very well. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The care of pupils through the educational and personal support and guidance offered is very good. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that all the related matters of health, safety, security and first aid are dealt with to a high standard.

33. Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance, personal development and attendance is good. The successful implementation of the behaviour policy, which is carefully monitored, results in the very good behaviour of the pupils. The merit system, which the school has adopted, has made a very positive contribution to the standard of behaviour throughout the school. The very effective support provided by staff makes a positive contribution to children's well-being, and enables pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.
34. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good. However, the use of information gained about progress for those pupils on stages two and three of the special educational needs register is not always used effectively to plan next steps. The school has identified this as an area for further development.
35. The school has a new policy for assessment that gives useful guidance to staff on data analysis and makes clear the links between planning and assessment. Good procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are in place. The assessment co-ordinator keeps summative records of the results of baseline, published assessment test materials and statutory assessments. Assessments are used effectively to target pupils in Key Stage 2 who are not likely to reach the required standard in literacy at the end of Year 6. These pupils are given extra help by a teacher who is not class based using the National Literacy Strategy additional literacy materials.
36. Teachers make good use of assessment to inform their curriculum planning. The results of pupils' answers to each question in the national tests in both key stages are analysed and the information gained is used to adjust teachers' planning. This has improved standards in literacy at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's effective analysis of assessment data has resulted in a slight restructuring of the teaching of numeracy in upper Key Stage 2. More time has been allocated to the teaching of ratio, proportion and problem solving in order to improve standards in these areas. At the end of each academic year, teachers meet to discuss the abilities of pupils who are transferring classes within the school. This is effective in ensuring pupils develop their learning and build on the skills, knowledge and understanding gained in the previous class. Teachers' short-term planning provides good opportunities for the evaluation of teaching and learning and these assessments are used to inform the planning of lessons in the future. Marking rarely provides ideas or targets for pupils to improve their work.
37. Analysis of test levels has provided the school with useful information on pupils' progress between the two key stages. The good quality assessment data collected by the school for each year group should now be extended to track all pupils' progress and set challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Since the last inspection report the school's partnership with parents has improved and is consistently very good. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school is successful in encouraging parental involvement. Parents have a very positive view of the school. According to the parental survey and the pre-inspection meeting, parents feel that consultation evenings are constructive and that reports about their children's progress are informative. The school makes every effort to maintain its very good links with parents. Most parents are committed fully to supporting their children's education. Parents have great confidence in the school and feel that they are taken seriously when they approach the school with concerns. They are particularly impressed with the accessibility of the headteacher.
39. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved appropriately with the school's procedures of reviewing the targets set for their children's progress. They have a positive view of the provision the school makes for their children. Every effort is made to keep parents properly informed. Letters are sent home when parents are unable to attend review meetings, detailing the targets that have been set for their child.
40. Newsletters provide a valuable link between school and home, they are clearly written and very informative. Annual reports are very good providing parents with a clear view of their child's progress. Parents speak highly of all staff who are always welcoming and helpful to parents and visitors. Parental contribution to children's learning at school and at home is good and parents

support the many school activities. There is a very supportive Friends of the School association which raises valuable additional funds to support children's education. This money is used well by the school to provide additional resources to help improve pupils' work. One such resource, a mobile stage, was greatly appreciated by pupils, staff and parents when it was used very effectively for the Christmas play.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school is led and managed efficiently and effectively. The school's aims are stated clearly and are set within a framework of Christian values. The headteacher ensures that everyone knows the school's values and expectations and this is instrumental in establishing a calm, orderly and supportive environment for the pupils. The positive ethos of the school promotes high standards of attainment, good relationships and ensures that all pupils have equal access to the opportunities offered by the school.
42. The headteacher understands the needs of the school and manages the work of others well to ensure that they remain focused on the needs of the children. She has put in place management structures that are appropriate to the size and complexity of the organisation. Each person knows what they are expected to do and how they relate to other members of the team. The headteacher has successfully created a climate in which individuals and teams are constantly seeking to improve.
43. The senior management team meets regularly to plan the day-to-day management of the school and to oversee significant developments. Most key developments are managed effectively through the senior management team. The school's system for managing behaviour was developed in this way and was taken from the senior management team to the staff for discussion and adoption. There is no systematic way of recording this. This detracts from the overall effectiveness of an otherwise influential group.
44. The headteacher has placed particular emphasis on the need to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The school is beginning to use the outcomes of data analysis to determine priorities and agendas for action. The senior management team is aware of the need to develop this further and to introduce a more sophisticated method of tracking pupils' performance over time. This will enable particular groups such as the higher attaining pupils to be identified and given more effective provision.
45. The quality of communications within the school is very good. Staff are informed well about the daily business of the school and good use has been made of in-service training opportunities to ensure that they are up-to-date with recent developments. Teachers make time to explain the purpose of learning activities to pupils.
46. Staff and governors have contributed to the construction of the School Development Plan. This identifies over 100 priorities and targets, some of which are significant and some minor. The time-scales of some targets are imprecise and the reporting arrangements to the governing body are not always clear. The plan does provide a useful and cohesive framework for development across the whole spectrum of school life, but would be strengthened by being reorganised to show priorities by including more precise information.
47. The school has a full range of policies in place, these set the framework of the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils. The policies are very well written and offer very useful guidance on each aspect of school life. Some need to be revised to take account of current legislation, but still provide the school with clear direction. Several of the documents, for example, the anti-bullying policy and the communications policy are exemplars of good practice. Staff and governors are consulted fully prior to the adoption of policies.
48. The school has sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff who are suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum to this age of pupils. The work of teaching and non-teaching staff is managed effectively and their performance is monitored systematically by the headteacher and co-ordinators. Staff know the priorities of the school and appropriate support and training is given to

ensure that they can contribute fully. The staff handbook is written in a clear and accessible way and provides very useful practical guidance on all matters related to the daily routines of the school. The school has a recently adopted performance management policy but has not yet implemented performance reviews for staff. However, the previous system of staff appraisal provided good opportunities for professional discussion. The policy for the induction of new staff is clear, helpful and comprehensive. Very good mentoring arrangements are in place for a student on placement and an acting co-ordinator.

49. The management of special educational needs is good. Special educational needs is co-ordinated by a part time member of staff during the absence of the co-ordinator. The school works closely with outside agencies and ensures that reviews of pupils' progress towards achieving their agreed targets are regularly carried out and that parents are appropriately involved. Arrangements to support pupils who transfer to other schools are managed effectively.
50. The school has very good administrative systems in place. These help to ensure that the school runs smoothly and reduces the burden of administration on teaching staff. There are regular meetings between the headteacher and key administrative staff to ensure a good flow of information. The school uses information technology effectively to support the management and administration of the school, but the lack of internet access for administrative purposes is a constraining factor.
51. Careful financial planning supports the educational priorities of the school. The process of budget setting is well established and very effective. Three budget options are created that take account of traditional patterns of expenditure, the school's priorities and external priorities. The current budget provides for additional investment in the school and includes £10,000 from reserves for school improvement. The budget is running according to plan and is in good health. Specific grants allocated to the school have been used for the specified purpose. Day-to-day administration of the budget and the system of financial controls are very effective and provide a strong and secure base from which to manage the available resources.
52. The governing body manages its business efficiently. Governors use their committees and main meetings effectively to extend their knowledge of the school, monitor the quality of education provided and set the strategic direction for the school. The committees and main body receive useful and relevant reports from the headteacher and others with responsibility in the school and are well-informed about their respective roles. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties; both the annual report and prospectus for example contain the full range of required information. The frequent involvement of the Chair of Governors in the life and work of the school ensures very good communication between the school and governing body. He creates a very strong link between the school, governing body, church and community.
53. The building has been extended thoughtfully and tastefully over time to provide sufficient space to teach the curriculum. However, the fact that the building is at several levels connected by stairs severely restricts access for people with mobility problems. The accommodation is maintained to a very high standard by the site management staff. Teaching and non-teaching areas are clean, attractive and safe for pupils to use.
54. Additional classroom space is under construction and will provide more permanent opportunities to reduce class size in Key Stage 1. The new pedestrian access at the front of the school has reduced the risk of accident that was identified in the previous report. A new playground has further enhanced the outdoor play facilities and the school now has sufficient hard and grassed areas to meet the needs of the pupils. The play area for the reception class is secure and enables the delivery of the full foundation stage curriculum. Some rooms provide accommodation for larger classes; these are cramped although they are used sensibly and effectively. Good use is made of local facilities. The local swimming pool is used regularly and various museums, galleries and other attractions are visited occasionally in support of the curriculum.
55. There are sufficient learning resources to support the teaching of all subjects. Provision in music is satisfactory; in all other subjects, it is good. There are insufficient items of large play apparatus to provide the full range of outdoor experiences that the reception children should be experiencing.

56. All classes have at least two computers and classes in Key Stage 2 have access to the internet. The school has very good provision of fiction and non-fiction library books; these are housed both in classrooms and a central library. The colour and numerical coding schemes mean that pupils have easy access to books. The local authority museums and library services provide useful additional resources many of which are displayed attractively around the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to build on the strengths of the school and ensure that the school improves even further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:
- Improve the quality of the teaching that has been judged satisfactory by matching work more closely to the needs of children, raising expectations of what pupils should achieve, particularly those of higher ability and by using available information to set targets for individual improvement; (Para 16)
 - Extend the very good analysis of data that is already in place to include the tracking of the performance of individuals and cohorts of pupils over time so that realistic and challenging targets for improvement can be set; (Para 37)
 - Ensure that the school's main priorities have prominence in the School Development Plan; (Para 46)
 - Maintain minutes of senior management team meetings so that reference can be made easily to key decisions, responsibilities and actions. (Para 43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	26	42	30	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	R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	224
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	R – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	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	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

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 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	19	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	13
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91(91)	91 (85)	91 (91)
	National	79 (82)	83 (83)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (94)	91 (91)	94 (91)
	National	86 (82)	86 (86)	87 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	20	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	16	11	16
	Total	29	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (75)	68 (72)	89 (78)
	National	67 (70)	69 (69)	75 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	14	16	15
	Total	25	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (77)	83 (78)	83 (78)
	National	67 (68)	69 (69)	75 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	199
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	1:32

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	401749
Total expenditure	423770
Expenditure per pupil	1632
Balance brought forward from previous year	29791
Balance carried forward to next year	7770

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	224
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	55	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	55	9	1	0
The teaching is good.	57	46	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	43	15	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	36	1	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	38	9	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	58	35	3	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	42	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	45	12	0	7

Other issues raised by parents

The school lacks male role models.

There are some inconsistencies in the setting of homework.

Parents would like smaller classes in Key Stage 1.

Parents want better access to information about the teaching programme, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Some parents would like better provision of extra-curricular activities for the younger children.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

58. There have been considerable improvements in all areas of the foundation stage since the last inspection. The school has built on the good practice that existed and the provision for children under five years of age in the reception class is now a strength of the school. This is because of the very good quality of the new curriculum, its successful implementation and the teacher's very good knowledge of all the areas of the foundation stage. This is shown in the very good planning and assessment procedures and relationships that exist between the staff. The school has put in place the recommendations following the previous inspection but is conscious of the need to develop further the provision and organisation for the development of children's gross motor skills, particularly outdoors.
59. Initial assessment records show that the majority of children under five enter school with above average speaking and listening skills, and personal and social skills. Children achieve well in all areas of learning. The very good provision seen in the foundation stage makes it likely that by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. They are on course to exceed them in communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development and personal, social, and emotional development. Very good assessment procedures are in place to plan suitable programmes of work and record individual children's work for development, which are given to parents at the end of the year. Individual children's assessment folders, containing a photograph of the child on entry acts as an effective personal record of how each child has changed over time.
60. Appropriate attention is given to the personal, social and emotional needs of young children, who achieve well. This reflects the skilful teaching and very good provision where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve, form good relationships, look after themselves responsibly and behave very well. They have positive attitudes towards their learning and enjoy coming to school. Children take responsibility for personal hygiene, work independently and learn the importance of taking turns and sharing construction equipment, such as building blocks, fairly. They listen attentively to familiar adults, concentrate very well on tasks such as reading and mathematics and show self-restraint when and where appropriate, for example, when waiting to go into assembly.
61. Children get off to an early but appropriate start in communication, language and literacy development and as a result they achieve well in lessons and make good gains in their learning. Most children are on course to exceed national expectations by the time they start in Year 1. This is because of very good teaching of reading, writing and handwriting skills and the successful National Literacy Strategy support that underpins all classroom activities. Children interact well with others, speak confidently, and take turns in conversation. They listen attentively to stories, including taped stories, for an appropriate length of time. Most know that print carries meaning and can talk in general terms about the stories. They are aware of the format of a story and are beginning to recognise punctuation such as capital letters and full stops. Most develop the early skills of writing and progress from making marks on paper to writing.
62. Most children are on course to exceed the standards expected for mathematical development by the end of the foundation stage. Children get off to an early but appropriate start and as a result they achieve well in lessons and make good gains in their learning. They do well because of the very good teaching and the support of the National Numeracy Strategy. Children develop mathematical skills through effective use of practical activities, number rhymes, games and songs. Most children can count to 20 and some beyond and sustain concentration well. They are able to count on and back and show the answers correctly on a number line. Children can identify match and draw basic shapes. They use arbitrary measurement in their work and explore capacity through structured sand and water play. Mathematical vocabulary of number, time, shape, pattern and measures is used confidently. Computers are used daily to enhance mathematical skills.

63. No direct teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world was seen but photographs, plans and talking to adults and children indicate that children are on course to exceed the expected level by the end of the foundation stage. Children learn more about themselves, other people and their environment through topics such as 'Ourselves'. All children gain a sense of the passing of time through the regular use of significant times of the day, days of the week and daily routines. They learn about significant events in the calendar year and church year. They learn about other religious celebrations such as Divali, which enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world and different cultures.
64. The majority of children are on course to achieve standards above those expected for physical development. Outdoor large play equipment has improved since the last inspection and children now have satisfactory opportunities to use wheeled toys, a climbing frame and a seesaw to help them learn how to coordinate their movements. A wider range of equipment and regular, systematic planning and assessment of its use would further enhance these skills. All children use a variety of tools for drawing, colouring and cutting. Children develop good skill and control and show increasing dexterity as they handle scissors, pencils, crayons, and paintbrushes.
65. Children's creative development is good. Most children make good progress and are on course to exceed the standards expected for this area of learning by the time they are ready to start in Year 1. Children are encouraged to express their feelings through exploring media and materials, music, dance, story making and imaginative play. They have opportunities to experience colour, texture, shape, form and space in two-dimensional art and regular opportunities to explore colour through painting, printing, collage and crayoning. Children recognise familiar songs, nursery rhymes and jingles and sing them in unison with enjoyment, natural exuberance and zest. They use number rhymes and jingles to reinforce literacy and numeracy. Children experience imaginative and role-play which helps them to develop social and negotiating skills.
66. Children use a range of constructional equipment to design and build models and are able to cut, stick and join materials. They have good opportunities to explore and investigate through sand and water play and use negotiating skills in home corner play. All children are able to use the listening tapes independently and respond to the stories appreciatively. The computer is used with enjoyment and increasing confidence. Children can select resources and use equipment safely to construct, build, cut and stick.
67. The quality of teaching is very good. Systematic planning and provision allows children to progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Adults provide very good role models, treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. The children respond well, and a bond of trust is quickly formed. There are well-established, ordered routines which offer security to the children. Lunchtime and group activities such as role-play in the home corner provide good group experiences when children talk to one another confidently and learn social skills. Children's work is assessed thoroughly and regular observations take place to assess progress. The teaching was excellent in one mathematical development lesson. The use of a hand puppet challenged children's thinking and extended their mathematical understanding. The pace of the lesson kept them eager, interested and motivated.
68. Adults develop children's communication skills effectively. For example, children were given opportunities to express their likes and dislikes in respect of the biscuits they had baked. The teacher encouraged them to listen carefully to one another and speak confidently when discussing letter sounds and punctuation. Adults introduce effectively activities such as 'shared reading' and the recognition of letter sounds. Children are taught phonic skills well using familiar words, well-known stories, and rhymes. Writing is promoted well.
69. The quality of teaching of physical development is very good. Children are taught how to move in a controlled way and to link movements together. Standards in writing, colouring, cutting out, painting, and sticking are improved by the attention given to physical development. Due regard is given to safety when children handle these tools. Very good support by adults contributes effectively to the acquisition and development of these fine motor skills. Effective intervention by staff helps to support and extend children's ideas and understanding in their creative development.

70. Resources are good and used skilfully. Supplies of paper, pencils, pens, crayons and other materials are readily available; this aids children's developing independence. Books are attractive and displayed well. Computers are used to enhance reading skills, and children enjoy these opportunities. Reading books are taken home daily.
71. The nursery nurse is deployed effectively and contributes very well to the good progress made in lessons, for example in work involving recognition and writing of numbers or words.

ENGLISH

72. Standards in English at the time of the previous inspection in 1997 were above the national average at the end of both key stages. The school has maintained these high standards and pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is above average. National assessment tests in 2000 show standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 to be well above average and standards in writing to be above average. These results are the same in comparison to schools in a similar social context. Test results in English at the end of Key Stage 2 show standards have improved from average in 1999, to above average in 2000.
73. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above average at the end of both key stages. Good use is made of whole class learning time at the beginning of the literacy hour to promote speaking and listening skills. In Year 1, descriptive writing lessons, pupils listen very attentively as fellow pupils take great care to make accurate descriptions of their own teddy bears. When working on the use of exclamation marks, Year 3 pupils respond quickly to suggestions that a member of their family has suddenly become a pop star with exclamations such as "You'll be famous!" or "I can be one!" Year 6 pupils are very effective at building on, and improving, each other's suggestions when drafting poems.
74. The school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy effectively. During the literacy hour pupils have rich, enjoyable opportunities for shared reading and writing. With the exception of a small minority of higher attaining pupils, teachers' good management of pupils and their effective planning of challenging work for pupils of varying ability enables the majority of pupils to make good progress in their learning. Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to write extended pieces and, consequently, standards are lower. As a result of gaps in some teachers' planning, there are missed opportunities for more able pupils to acquire new skills and knowledge in writing. The work planned for pupils who have special educational needs and the additional literacy materials and support from teaching assistants in lessons, help these pupils to make satisfactory progress in their reading and writing.
75. Pupils' attitudes to reading are very good. Effective reading diaries track pupils' reading at home and school. This has a very positive impact on reading standards throughout the school as pupils experience many occasions when they can read individually to an adult and develop skills learnt in the literacy hour. Although there are no diagnostic observations or highlighted areas for improvement in the diaries, teachers keep their own checklists of pupils' progress in reading. Challenging opportunities for pupils in Year 2 to re-read their own stories help them to value and improve their reading. Lower attaining pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of phonics very well to build up unfamiliar vocabulary such as "indeed" and "company". More able pupils in this year group use this same knowledge to make a good attempt at reading former German footballers' names such as "Gerd Muller" and "Franz Beckenbauer". Pupils in Year 6 enjoy reading a wide range of children's literature such as "The Secret Garden" and books by contemporary authors. They are very careful to observe all punctuation marks when reading in order to make sense of difficult text.

76. The great majority of pupils make good progress in writing during literacy lessons. Teachers demonstrate to their pupils effective ways of structuring their writing. Lower attaining pupils in Year 2 are given effective support to enable them to provide written answers to questions drawn from their reading books. More able pupils in Year 2 use nouns, verbs and adjectives very effectively in their writing. Examples of these are “sizzling, sweet bacon” and “the air rustling and crisps crackling”. When attaching appropriate suffixes to given words, pupils in Year 4 use good neat handwriting in a flowing, joined and uniform style. Pupils in Year 5 use direct speech in their writing very well. They are encouraged to use interesting adverbs such as “angrily” and “anxiously” to make their writing more appealing to an audience. In Year 6, pupils are very keen to write, draft and recite poems. They work well in groups to improve the text and incorporate evocative sentences such as “Stalks his defenceless prey.” and “The dragon of death and his fire-lit eyes.” Pupils are successful at writing to entertain an audience. They chant their poems very well using good expression and variation in the pitch and dynamics of their voices. Much of their poetry contains humour and a deliberate touch of irony in the closing verses. The rich musical tradition in the school has given pupils a good feel for rhythm. This has been very beneficial to pupils’ use of rhythm and metre in their poetry writing. Many pupils use word processing effectively to enhance the presentation of their writing.
77. Pupils have good attitudes to work in English lessons. They are keen to complete their work in neat, well-formed handwriting. Pupils behave well in lessons and often show a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement, particularly when they are able to read their stories or poems to the rest of the class. They value other people’s work and give genuine praise and encouragement to fellow pupils. This was very evident in a Year 4 class when pupils were able to recite their “counting “ poems to the whole class. Very occasionally, when group work or individual sessions are coming to a close some pupils lose concentration and quietly engage in activities unrelated to the lesson.
78. The quality of teaching in English is always satisfactory and is good in the majority of lessons. Teachers understand their pupils well and prepare their lessons carefully to meet the varied range of abilities of the vast majority of pupils in their classes. On occasions, teachers do not plan for the needs of more able pupils. These pupils mark time for part of the lesson and their progress slows down.
79. Teachers are very effective at structuring reading and writing activities at the beginning of the literacy hour. This helps pupils extend their learning by developing their understanding in areas of English including phonics, punctuation and poetry and play script writing. The good use of literacy resources is effective in helping pupils learn. Pupils develop a good understanding of the use of adverbs in direct speech as a result of the “speaker” and “response” cards prepared by the teacher. Teachers have very good strategies for maintaining good order and discipline in their lessons. The good use of open questioning helps teachers assess pupils’ levels of understanding and extend their learning. Quick-fire statements from teachers, which require immediate responses from pupils, are very effective in developing Year 3 pupils’ knowledge and use of exclamation marks. Guided reading sessions in the literacy hour are very effective. Teachers transfer their love of literature to their pupils. This is the case throughout the school and can be seen in the pupils’ and teachers’ shared excitement of a book about dinosaur eggs in Year 1 and pupils’ pride at reading their play scripts in Year 6.
80. The subject is led well. The English co-ordinator is an experienced manager of the subject and has played an important part in training and supporting staff, as well as purchasing good quality resources for the literacy strategy. The co-ordinator and senior members of staff carefully monitor the teaching and learning of English. This has helped to maintain the good standards of English in the school. Effective procedures are in place for the assessment of pupils’ progress. Good use is made of these assessments to target areas for pupils’ future learning in some classes. However, this is not consistent throughout the school which reduces the quality of provision for some pupils. Pupils have developed good library skills and all classes have a good range of fiction and non-fiction books available to pupils. The temporary use of the school library as a classroom is restricting pupils’ access to books for the purpose of individual research.

MATHEMATICS

81. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are above those expected in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, shape, space and measures). By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are in line with the level expected nationally. The results of the end of key stage tests for pupils at age seven and 11 in 2000, provide a similar picture of attainment. They also show that, in comparison with similar schools, standards were average. Over the last three years standards have improved at the end of Key Stage 1 and have been maintained by the end of Key Stage 2. Between 1999 and 2000, there has been an increase in the proportion of 11-year-olds reaching standards above those expected in the national tests. Standards are not yet as high as they should be but improvements are working their way through the school. Pupils in Year 6, attain the standards expected in numeracy and in all areas of mathematics except data handling, where little evidence of attainment was seen.
82. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 1000 and use this to solve simple problems. They use their understanding of place value to correctly add on 10 or 11 to a given number. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their ideas both in oral work and when they record their work in their books. Pupils know some of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and they are starting to tell the time using hours and minutes. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop their understanding of simple fractions, such as one half and a quarter of a whole shape.
83. By the age of 11, pupils deepen their understanding of fractions and begin to understand the relationship between ratios and fractions. There is steady improvement in pupils' understanding of percentages and many correctly convert these to decimal fractions. Pupils' understanding of shapes and measures is secure. Average and higher attaining pupils successfully calculate the areas of irregular two-dimensional shapes using a formula. However, pupils' mental agility, though improving is not as good as it could be and they are less secure in checking their answers. This is because, not all teachers encourage pupils sufficiently in this approach. Throughout the school, pupils lack confidence in solving written problems. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge to problems. No evidence was seen of attainment of work in data handling but an appropriate level of work is planned for later in the year.
84. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but some aspects of satisfactory lessons could be improved. In the lessons seen in Key Stage 1, the teaching was good but in Key Stage 2, it varied between being very good and satisfactory, with the majority being satisfactory. In the lower part of Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is not as good as in the upper part of the key stage.
85. The introductory part of most lessons is often good but, where teaching is satisfactory, group work does not always match the needs of more able pupils. The rate of pupils' learning is slower in Year 3 than in other year groups and pupils' progress is therefore limited. The work provided for these pupils does not always build sufficiently on what pupils already know and understand. This is because average and higher attaining pupils are set work that is very similar. Higher attaining pupils' learning is slowed down because they are required to complete work which is not sufficiently challenging before moving on to activities which more closely match their needs.
86. The teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is well established and planning is good. However, in a few lessons, too long is spent on the introductory part. This slows the pace of the lesson and reduces the rate of pupils' progress. This is also happening when the main activity 'runs on' at the end of the lesson, leaving insufficient time for the important process of consolidating learning. In most classes, teachers use questions well to develop pupils' understanding of new concepts and to assess what pupils understand. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this develops the pupils' ability to use the correct mathematical terms to explain their ideas both orally and in their writing. The oral and mental sessions are well paced and delivered with enthusiasm. Pupils, particularly older ones, show an increasing ability to carry out calculations in their heads. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills and in this part of the lesson the majority of teachers manage pupils and resources efficiently. In the majority of classes, tasks are well matched but where teaching is only satisfactory overall the tasks were too easy for higher attaining pupils.

87. In all areas of the school the pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is satisfactory. The school has benefited recently from the National Grid for Learning initiative. However, it is too early to judge its impact on pupils' learning. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use their mathematics to help learning in other subjects. For example, in design and technology, pupils use and develop their numeracy to plan and record their designs.
88. Teachers use formal assessments to assess pupils' attainment well. However, where learning is slow, teachers do not always use information gained from informal assessment sufficiently to support their planning for pupils' next steps in learning. In a number of classes, information from marking pupils' work was used effectively to help improve pupils' confidence in the subject. However, marking rarely provides ideas or targets for pupils to improve their own work.
89. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. Standards are rising and the mathematics curriculum is planned well. The co-ordination of the subject is effective and all aspects of provision for the subject are monitored and evaluated rigorously. The analysis of results, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, is very good. The school has a clear view of what it needs to improve, to continue to raise standards.

SCIENCE

90. Standards of attainment in science are in line with national averages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages. It is above the national average in *materials and their properties* and well above in *physical processes* and *experimental and investigative science*. End of Key Stage 2 assessments showed that attainment was slightly below national averages. Evidence from pupils' work and from their responses in lessons indicates that the standards attained by the current cohort of Year 6 pupils are in line with national expectations. Attainment overall is slightly lower than when the school was inspected in 1997, but indications are that performance is improving.
91. Pupils in Year 2 can observe, explore and ask questions about the world around them. They use first-hand experience to gather evidence and form simple scientific ideas. In their work with toy cars, Year 1 pupils showed understanding of the effect of different surfaces and slopes on the speed of the car. They are able to share their ideas in simple descriptive writing, drawings, charts and tables. They are beginning to develop a good sense of whether or not a test is fair. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a wider knowledge of living things, materials and phenomena. They are beginning to connect scientific ideas and explanations to make sense of what they observe. They carry out systematic investigations and structure their observations in a scientific way. When Year 6 pupils investigated the energy stored in wind-up toys, they were able to devise fair tests and change the variables in a controlled way. They could record their findings and present the results on a computer-generated chart. They were able to communicate their ideas effectively using a wide range of scientific language.
92. Pupils in both key stages make good progress. Pupils in Year 2 learned about changes to bread when it is toasted. They knew about the process and gained understanding of the changes that take place through the lesson. At the beginning of the lesson, most pupils thought that the bread would not change size but would become heavier. By the end of the lesson they had tested that hypothesis and revised their predictions. Pupils in Year 5 gained understanding through practical activities that condensation is the reverse of evaporation. Evidence of work over time indicates that pupils develop the skills needed to carry out systematic investigations. Their recording of experiments is increasingly well structured and contains more scientific language. By the time they reach Year 6, most are beginning to offer explanations that demonstrate good levels of scientific thinking.
93. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They enjoy investigations and are eager to offer ideas and explanations. They co-operate well and help each other by checking the accuracy of measurements, giving advice and talking through possible explanations. Most respond enthusiastically to questions and sustain interest in the lessons. Most stay on task throughout

the lesson and work hard to complete assignments on time. The level of concentration during practical work is very good and the quality of discussion about their experiments is high. A very small number of pupils, particularly in the lower part of Key Stage 2, lose concentration when the activities become too challenging or experiments fail to work.

94. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are planned well and there is good attention to scientific processes. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and use scientific language appropriately. Good use is made of questioning to draw out scientific ideas and of demonstration to help pupils gain knowledge and understanding. One teacher in Year 6 turned a potential problem to significant advantage by teaching the children to stop and think if something did not work. Teachers help pupils to consider the importance of fair testing.
95. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well and ensures that teachers are informed and work is monitored regularly. The subject is planned well and the teaching programme takes account of all aspects of the National Curriculum. Medium-term plans show that topics are organised sensibly over time and indicate that pupils are taught scientific knowledge, skills and understanding progressively. Teachers' lesson plans state the learning objective and how the lesson will be taught clearly. Pupils' progress is tested through informal observation and more formal testing. Pupils are assessed against National Curriculum criteria at the end of each year and helpful information is passed on to the receiving teacher. Reports to parents give good information about the progress and attainment of pupils in science.
96. The quality and quantity of resources for this subject are satisfactory. They are readily accessible and are used well by teachers. ICT is used appropriately to help pupils to process data and record their findings. Proper attention is paid to safety matters and pupils are taught to care for themselves and the equipment they are using.

ART

97. It was not possible to see any teaching during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils and staff, photographs and displays. The evidence indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning. Pupils achieve standards that exceed those typical for their age. The good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
98. Observational drawing and sketching form the foundation of the pupils' two-dimensional work for pupils under the age of seven and they have experiences of a range of media and the application of colour, shape and pattern using pastel, chalk, paint and crayon. Sketches of fish, vegetables and teddy bears show a developing eye for detail and the use of light and dark shading. Through a study of famous artists pupils learn new techniques, for example the lively and colourful designs in the style of David Hockney. They mix paint with increasing confidence and pupils are acquiring a good knowledge of tones, tints and hues through the use of paint and application of single colour tissue sheets such as blue. Younger pupils link their art with design and technology. They design and make colourful collages of pizzas on paper plates using a wide range of materials. Pupils use a simple art program satisfactorily to compose a variety of designs by selecting a range of colours and controlling their application.
99. By the age of 11, standards in drawing, painting, printmaking, collage and sculpture are good. Pupils express their own ideas and interpretations with increasing confidence and sophistication as they move through the school. They continue to develop their understanding of the formal elements of line, tone, pattern shape, texture and colour. Pupils use quill pens made from geese feathers and replicate illuminated text. Pupils build on their knowledge of famous artists and use a wide range of suitable materials to capture the 'feel' of the masterpieces. For example, they have opportunities to paint using the brush style of Monet. Older pupils' collages are more complex as reflected in Year 5 collages of 'autumn leaves', using string printed tree trunks and a variety of techniques and media such as sponge painting, smudged pastel and real leaves. Modelling skills are well developed as seen in the attractive Egyptian canopic pots, a large sized mummy and a sarcophagus and masks of Egyptian gods. Little evidence was seen of the refinement of

techniques and skills used in textiles such as pleating, overlapping and cutting skills, and the making of articles such as embroidered purses, wallets and pincushions.

100. Pupils enjoy art and have very positive attitudes. They talk knowledgeably about their work. They appreciate those displays that celebrate their individual achievement.
101. Productive links are formed with other subjects of the curriculum, for example in a study of Greek history where pupils make pots and mosaics. Comparisons of the style of Mexican and Aboriginal style bark printing enhance the pupils' techniques in art and understanding of other cultures.
102. The co-ordinator of art is very effective and there is a good input into the subject. The many art displays throughout the school are of a high standard and enrich the learning. There is a well-attended art club run by the Year 1 teacher and good examples of pupils' work are displayed around the school. A good policy and a scheme of work identify the projects to be taught and allow the art curriculum to be delivered in a systematic way throughout the school. Regular sketchbook work provides a valuable contribution to the development of ideas, knowledge and understanding in Key Stage 2. The co-ordinator monitors the medium-term plans, but the monitoring of teaching has not begun. The school has plans to develop further the assessment in art. Pupils have a record of their achievement in art but presently there are few examples in some of their folders. The school is conscious of the need to update the skills and progression in its scheme of work in the light of new requirements. Resources are good, are easily accessible and are well used.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards in design and technology are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Although there were only limited opportunities to observe the teaching of design and technology, other evidence was obtained by looking at examples of pupils' work, photographs, teachers' lesson plans and from discussions with staff.
104. By the age of seven, pupils generate ideas and use pictures and models to communicate their designs. Teachers encourage pupils to design. For example, in Year 1, pupils plan and design toy vehicles. They record their thoughts in simple sentences and draw their design with clear, subject specific labels, such as 'chassis', 'axles' and 'wheels'. They assemble their designs and join and decorate materials in a variety of ways using paper, card, plastic, wooden discs, scissors and glue. As they move through the school, pupils increase satisfactorily their knowledge of design and technology.
105. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils deepen their understanding of design. For example, they widen their understanding of bridges using a commercial construction equipment, and then transfer and develop their understanding to design, make and evaluate their own wooden bridges, including suspension bridges. Their finished models display a good understanding of the strength and rigidity of shapes and how to utilise them in their designs. Throughout the school, pupils are helped to think about the materials that they will need to make their models and to evaluate and revise their plans, designs and models.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There were insufficient lessons seen in Key Stage 1, to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, in the lesson seen, teaching provided a rich learning environment where pupils are encouraged to explain their ideas, to select appropriate materials for the design and to record their thinking in words and pictures. Pupils are well motivated by the teacher and non-teaching staff, and show great interest in their own and others' models. Nearly all pupils are confident when explaining their design and several are beginning to evaluate their finished product. As they move through Key Stage 2, teachers encourage pupils to widen their understanding of different materials. For example, as well as working with wood, pupils use a variety of fabrics and plastic. When working with wood, they measure, mark, cut and assemble with good accuracy. For example, in Year 4, pupils design and make rooms in miniature. From other evidence of work on display, it is clear that pupils

make steady gains in learning over time, and that those pupils, who have special educational needs make progress at the same rate as others of the same age.

107. The curriculum for design technology is planned well, with a clear focus for learning each half term and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, outcomes of assessment do not yet guide teachers' planning for pupils' next steps in learning. The subject co-ordinator provides informal support and guidance for colleagues. However, although monitoring of teachers' planning is regular, there has been limited opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.
108. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The curriculum and planning have been revised and resources are of good quality and range.

GEOGRAPHY

109. It was not possible to see any teaching of geography during the inspection because of timetabling arrangements. It is not possible, therefore, to make overall judgements of the standards reached by pupils at the ages of seven and 11. In the previous inspection standards were at the expected level for all pupils and satisfactory progress was made throughout the school. The limited evidence available suggests that this is still the case. Geography is taught through topics in Key Stage 1, and study units in Key Stage 2. These cover the work that has to be learned in the National Curriculum.
110. The majority of pupils in the school have a sound understanding of the geographical concepts and satisfactory knowledge. Their skills in geographical enquiry have improved since the last inspection and are appropriately developed by visits to their own locality when they make observations of the characteristics of the buildings in the vicinity, such as the shops and the variety of housing. Pupils gain increasing awareness of the physical and human features of St. Annes and compare them with those of other localities. Year 1 pupils draw and label simple maps of the classroom and their journey to school. They begin to recognise local features such as the church and road signs and use appropriate geographical vocabulary such as roundabouts and bridge.
111. By the age of 11, pupils are able to use and interpret information from pictorial and written sources and have a greater understanding as they study maps of different scales and features. Pupils build satisfactorily on their earlier mapping skills, and use maps of different types and scales. They use secondary sources such as aerial photographs, ordnance survey maps, globes and atlases to support their work as they locate continents, oceans and major countries. They progress from the study of the area they know and gain a world perspective. For example, Year 5 pupils link their science work on the 'Water cycle' well with a more detailed study of a local river. Year 3 pupils locate the relevant places on maps of Ancient Greece in their historical studies.
112. Visits are used satisfactorily to enhance the geography curriculum, such as a visit to St Annes and Fleetwood Museum. The provision of information and communication technology software resources in geography has been extended.
113. Pupils' literacy skills are developed further through the subject. All pupils write about some aspect of geography, such as tourism or transport. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read maps and recognise road signs. Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 pupils use photographs and documentation to research the geographical units they study.
114. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning in geography. They enjoy drawing maps and are interested in their work such on the study of the Ribble valley. Geography makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral and cultural development. For example, pupils have opportunities to discuss the issues raised by pollution.
115. The management of geography is very good and this helps to ensure that standards are maintained. There has been a significant input by the highly qualified and highly experienced co-ordinator who shares her subject knowledge and expertise with the class teachers. She has clear ideas as to how she wishes the school to proceed and prioritises very well according to need and

finance available. A very good modified scheme of work is in place and is to be formally adopted by the governing body. Plans are monitored well by the co-ordinator and there are satisfactory opportunities for her to monitor classroom practice. Assessment procedures have been modified and supplemented to bring them in line with the new national initiatives. The school has plans to promote further use of pupils' data handling and its systematic analysis and the further development of classroom assistants' geographical skills.

116. Resources in geography are good, well used and cover all the work to be studied. Further purchases are to be made in the light of the recently introduced National Curriculum, for example, sets of atlases and large-scale aerial photographs of the school.

HISTORY

117. Attainment in history exceeds the standard expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection for pupils up to the age of seven and standards have been maintained for pupils up to the age of eleven. Good progress is made in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress is made in Key Stage 2 in the acquisition of historical enquiry skills and in knowledge of historical facts. The majority of pupils attain an appropriate quality of work in relation to their ages at the end of both key stages and there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Most pupils acquire, use and extend history skills and vocabulary through investigations. Pupils' lack of opportunities to undertake personal research, as highlighted in the previous report, has been addressed satisfactorily.
118. The majority of pupils have a sound understanding of the historical concepts and knowledge expected of seven-year-olds by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils gain a satisfactory awareness of chronology by sequencing events in their own lives from when they were born to the present day. Year 1 pupils begin to understand the passage of time by discussing the differences between the past and the present in relation to their own lives. Pupils in Year 1 make good comparisons between wooden and mechanical toys of the past such as spinning tops, toy cars and teddy bears and those of the present. Year 2 pupils know about life in the past and have a satisfactory understanding of how houses and homes have changed over time. They know and write accounts about famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. Their skills in historical enquiry are appropriately developed by visits to see the Victorian buildings of St Annes.
119. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a greater understanding of chronology and are able to find and link information from a variety of sources. Year 4 pupils gain insight into what life was like for people living in significant periods in English history such as the Tudors and the Elizabethans. Pupils are able to use and interpret information from pictorial and written sources and are aware that there are different versions of the same historical events. Year 6 pupils increase their historical knowledge as they recognise and identify the different ways in which the life and times of Ancient Egypt have been represented and interpreted. Year 5 pupils research the local history of St Annes in more depth and look for evidence of change. Links with other subjects are good. Year 6 pupils learn about the impact of the River Nile on the life and work of Egyptians today and in the past.
120. Visits and visitors are used effectively to enhance the history curriculum. Pupils in reception, Years 1 and 2 visit buildings, such as hotels, restaurants and shops associated with the local industry. At the time of the inspection they were involved in burying a time capsule at a recently refurbished local hotel.
121. Literacy skills are developed well in history through reading and extended writing. In Year 2, pupils write knowledgeably about historical characters. In Year 3 pupils gain an insight into Greek history by reading myths and legends. In Year 6, pupils research into the Egyptian history and present their findings neatly and correctly on time lines.
122. Most pupils have positive attitudes to history. Pupils show high levels of interest and work well together, sharing resources amicably. They respond readily to the teachers' questions and work with interest, but a minority of older pupils in Key Stage 2 become restless and lose concentration when the tasks are repetitive.

123. Teaching is very good for pupils under the age of seven and this represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. It is never less than satisfactory and often very good for pupils between the ages of seven and 11, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and, in particular, the very secure subject knowledge of the teachers and the lively pace of the lessons contributes significantly to the very good progress made by pupils, particularly in reception, Key Stage 1 and Years five and six. Successful management of pupils and an appropriate balance between teacher talk and pupils' tasks makes the work meaningful to all pupils. Relationships are very good. In the satisfactory teaching seen in Key Stage 2, good use was made of the taped videos and pupils researched effectively into events in Victorian Britain and Ancient Greece.
124. The subject is managed effectively. The co-ordinator of the subject is clear-sighted and energetic. She shares her subject knowledge, professional training and expertise with class teachers through informal meetings. She has clear ideas as to how she wishes the school to proceed and prioritises according to need and finance available. Planning of work is monitored on a regular basis. There is no opportunity for the subject manager to monitor teaching and learning at the present time, but there are plans for this to take place. The newly introduced scheme of work when used consistently throughout the school will provide opportunity for the continuous development of skills and act as a tool to support assessment, recording and reporting. Resources are good and have improved since the previous inspection. History makes a positive contribution to the pupils' cultural development. All pupils are developing awareness of their cultural heritage through the study of the curriculum and relevant visits.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. There were limited opportunities to observe direct teaching in ICT during the inspection. Evidence from observation and discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of their work indicates that standards in ICT are broadly in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This reflects the standards achieved in the previous inspection in 1997. The school has only received internet linked computers in recent weeks and, although a good start has been made by pupils to access information from children's web sites, pupils' learning in this area of the subject is below the national expectation.
126. At the age of seven and 11, with the exception of the use of e-mail and the retrieval of information from the World Wide Web, pupils are attaining the knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age.
127. Pupils learn progressively to use the control devices of the computer. They manipulate the mouse with increasing levels of confidence and skill in hand and eye co-ordination. They gain an appropriate technical vocabulary with which to name such items as the keyboard, printer and mouse. Strong links with other subjects are quickly established. Pupils in Year 2 can create effective and colourful symmetrical patterns on the screen. They know how to save and print their work. In literacy lessons in Year 1, pupils make satisfactory use of simple word processing programs to complete sentences on the theme of the "Three Billy Goats".
128. Satisfactory use is made of interactive CD-ROMs in history lessons. Year 3 pupils can explore the discs to find information about Ancient Greek heroes. Some more able pupils in Year 5 can access and copy pictures and text on the "Victorians" from the internet. They share their findings well in history lessons with pupils who have researched information from textbooks. Art programs are used satisfactorily by pupils in Year 4 to create imaginative drawings of aliens. A minority of pupils experience difficulty when adding text to their completed drawings. Pupils in Year 6 are able to insert simple graphics from a graphics program to a word processing document. Some pupils need help from fellow pupils to complete this process. Year 6 pupils make sound use of ICT in their science lessons. They can record readings from a forces experiment on the computer to plot a line graph for how far an object travelled in relation to the amount of tension with which it was propelled.
129. Pupils enjoy working on computers and they sustain concentration well in order to complete their work. If they experience difficulty, such as locating suitable pictures to insert in their word-

processed writing, they persevere until they are successful or ask a fellow pupil or teacher for help.

130. From the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning documents and observations and discussions with pupils during the inspection, it is clear that teachers plan activities for pupils that build on their current levels of knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator has compiled a useful portfolio of pupils' work, which is carefully annotated to show both the area of work completed and the National Curriculum level achieved by pupils. This is a useful assessment reference document for teachers when judging pupils' attainment.
131. ICT is managed well. The co-ordinator has worked hard to keep colleagues informed of new hardware and software. The school has suffered from a lack of local support for its connection to the National Grid for Learning and the co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure the school has all the necessary equipment for access to the internet. Good links with the local technology college have resulted in the provision of an ICT technician who is available to all feeder schools. The school makes good use of this valuable asset. There are plans to locate a new suite of six networked personal computers in the library when space is available after the new Key Stage 1 classroom is built. This will greatly enhance the ICT provision in the school.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

132. The teaching of French is provided for pupils in Year 6. A suitably qualified and experienced teacher teaches pupils once a week. The scheme of work focuses on the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills, although written work is also included.
133. French is taught effectively to pupils for 45 minutes each week. Pupils show satisfactory recall of vocabulary previously learnt. Although pupils begin French lessons at the start of the school year, many are developing an effective core vocabulary. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They follow simple instructions and respond to the teacher's questions with enthusiasm. In the one lesson seen, pupils repeated words with increasing confidence and accuracy. By the end of the lesson several were prepared to tell the class what they had in their pencil case. They show a deepening awareness of pronunciation and try hard to improve their accent.
134. Pupils enjoy their work and listen intently to their teacher. They often repeat new words which helps them to hear and practise the new sounds. The activities are varied and suitably challenging and teaching provides pupils with a good model to help them improve their vocabulary, pronunciation and confidence. Several pupils practise and use simple phrases, such as 'please' and 'thank you', when working with their friends, and help each other sensibly. Pupils are provided with suitable opportunities to develop their written French. Towards the end of the lesson pupils are sufficiently confident to play 'Je touche' and name an increasingly lengthy list of various objects in the classroom. This exercise helps pupils to consolidate what they have previously learnt and allows them to increase their vocabulary.
135. The encouraging and supportive approach of the teacher, together with the highly motivated and enthusiastic pupils, combine to affect positively the quality of learning. Pupils are expected to use French all of the time during lessons and the teacher slips easily and skilfully from French to English and back again to support pupils' learning. The programme provides a secure foundation for pupils' development of the language at secondary school. In addition, the programme supports those pupils with special educational needs by raising their level of confidence and so helping them in their work in other areas of the curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its good provision.

MUSIC

136. Standards in music are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection when they were reported to be in line with national expectations. High standards at Key Stage 2 have been maintained. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate excellent vocal skills and their singing is of an extremely high quality.
137. Younger pupils make good use of singing in many areas of their learning. Effective use is made of rhyme, rhythm and melody in literacy lessons where pupils learn vowel and consonant blends such as "aw". Year 6 pupils confidently transfer their knowledge and experience of rhythm and metre gained in music lessons to the writing of poems in the literacy hour.
138. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good sense of rhythm and can sustain a repeated rhythmic pattern at a steady tempo. They use this effectively when performing clapping accompaniments to songs such as "You Shall Go Out With Joy". They are very keen to join in the whole school singing in assemblies and the Key Stage 1 Christmas entertainment. Pupils generally pitch notes accurately and sing with a developing clear tone.
139. The quality of singing in Key Stage 2 is excellent. Pupils maintain a very good tonal quality when singing both loudly or softly and when performing in the higher or lower vocal registers. The good quality of music teaching helps pupils improve their phrasing. Teaching techniques enable pupils to shape vocal phrases in one breath. Phrases begin quietly and progress through a gradual crescendo and diminuendo to a level of dynamics where they began.
140. The Australian Aboriginal story of "Tidlaik" is interpreted well by pupils in Year 4 as they re-create the effect of an eel dance on tuned percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 5 can use the pentatonic scale CDEGA effectively to compose tunes with ascending and descending characteristics. They vary the rhythm of their compositions well using minims, crotchets and quavers.
141. The quality of music teaching is good. Teachers have a high level of expertise that helps pupils progress well in their learning. The standard of accompaniment for pupils is very high. This is very effective in supporting pupils' singing, particularly when prominence is given to the melody line in the accompaniment to enable pupils to learn and pitch unfamiliar repertoire accurately. Pupils respond well in music lessons. They are very keen to take part in instrumental and vocal work and generally work well to achieve a pleasing group performance. During lessons on composition, a small minority of pupils concentrate on their own work and fail to enhance the performance of their group.
142. Music plays an important part in the extra-curricular life of the school. The school choir is of a very high standard and meets weekly. The choir performs in St. Thomas' Church and entertains senior citizens in local residential homes. Pupils take part in the out of school recorder club and several pupils benefit from instrumental tuition by visiting teachers. The school has set up a music club where all pupils who play an instrument can join in regardless of the standard of their playing.
143. The subject is well organised and led by an able co-ordinator who ensures the full music curriculum is taught in the school. The co-ordinator has a high level of musical expertise. Resources are adequate for the teaching of music but there is a lack of quality, tuned percussion instruments to give more texture to pupils' instrumental composition and performance.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. Standards of attainment in physical education are above national expectations in both key stages. In swimming in Key Stage 2 they are particularly high. Pupils in Key Stage 1 build on their natural enthusiasm for movement and develop co-ordination and control both individually and with partners. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn new skills and find out how to use them in different ways. They learn to co-operate and compete with each other and how to evaluate their own work in order to improve.
145. Pupils in Key Stage 1 practise existing skills and learn new skills that enable them to create sequences of movement that show control and confidence. Pupils in Year 2 linked movements fluently and introduced balances successfully using different body parts. Year 1, they were able to catch and throw different sized balls and aim at moving opponents accurately. Their performance in dance rehearsals for the Christmas play was of a high standard. They moved gracefully and fluently and were able to hold positions well. Pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate good control of movement in games lessons. Their skills of throwing and catching are reasonably well developed and they can maintain balance. Older pupils show high levels of proficiency in their swimming. They use recognised arm and leg actions proficiently and economically both on their front and on their back. They compete against each other using all the recognised strokes and maintained style and efficiency throughout. Some pupils are members of swimming clubs and have progressed successfully to a high level of competition.
146. Pupils make very good progress in physical education. They gain skills and improve performance by evaluating their own work and that of others. In lessons, they rehearse and practise sequences of movements and, in time, introduce greater control and poise. Photographic evidence shows that older pupils take part in a range of outdoor and adventurous activities. Some pupils could recount their experiences and describe how they had solved problems.
147. Pupils enjoy physical activity and take great pride in being successful. They work well with partners and in teams, often encouraging their partners to improve. From the earliest stage, they learn to take turns and respond to instructions. They are aware of safety issues and are careful to avoid collisions. Most come to school properly prepared for lessons and with appropriate clothing.
148. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned carefully and are structured over time to ensure balance and progression. Teachers present good role models, often using demonstration to show pupils what is expected of them. Questions are used effectively and there is an appropriate level of challenge that ensures that pupils strive to perform better. Discipline is maintained well and this ensures that activities are carried out safely and efficiently. Teachers give pupils positive encouragement and praise good performance. They are sensitive towards those pupils who are struggling to improve their performance.
149. Temporary arrangements are in place for the co-ordination of the subject, but the policy and guidance ensures that there is a clear sense of purpose and direction. The teaching programme is well balanced and ensures very good coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Resources are good and stored appropriately. Indoor and outdoor facilities are adequate and the school makes good use of local facilities such as the swimming pool and an outdoor pursuits centre.
150. Extra-curricular activities add significantly to the overall provision for physical education and pupils have experienced considerable success in local competitions such as football, hockey, netball and swimming.