

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTLEIGH ST. PAUL C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leigh

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106481

Headteacher: Mr. Paul Melville

Reporting inspector: G. W. Cooper
23647

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd June 2000

Inspection number: 220321
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Street
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: The Reverend T. Hargreaves-Stead

Date of previous inspection: 1st December 1997

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Mr. G. W. Cooper	Registered inspector	Science	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		History	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Music	Leadership and management
		Physical education	Key Issues for action
		Special educational needs	
Mrs. K. Berry	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs. J. Fisher	Team inspector	Art	
		Design and technology	
		Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	
Mr. J. Hall	Team inspector	Mathematics	Teaching and learning
		Information technology	
		Geography	
Mrs. G. Lewis	Team inspector	English	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Equality of opportunity	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Westleigh St. Paul's is a Church of England voluntary aided primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11. With 206 pupils on roll it is average in size. Approximately equal number of boys and girls attend the school. All pupils are of white British ethnic background and no pupil is learning English as a new language. Sixteen percent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Five pupils have a statement of need. This is about average for primary schools in England. Twenty percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is broadly average. Attainment on entry to full time school varies a great deal but in general, pupils have acquired a level of skills and knowledge similar to that of pupils of the same age. The school is situated south of Wigan in Greater Manchester in an area of former mining and textile industries. The school is part of two initiatives: the regeneration project, Coalfield Challenge, and the Leigh Education Action Zone. Local government statistics indicate an area of relative deprivation, compared with other areas nationally and compared with districts within the borough.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school where overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Standards in English and mathematics are satisfactory when pupils leave for secondary education. There is a legacy of underachievement in science at this stage and in English, mathematics and science when pupils are seven. However, there is a trend of gradual improvement, which is reinforced by strong teaching in key areas of the school. Leadership and management were unsatisfactory at the time of previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Current management is characterised by good teamwork involving the headteacher, senior management team, teachers and governors and by purposeful developmental planning. Sensible use is made of school performance data to identify areas for development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of very good provision and management of special needs procedures.
- Teaching is consistently good for pupils in the reception class, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 5.
- The school makes good provision for personal development: pupils have positive attitudes towards school as a result.
- The 'Inspire' project is an example of good practice in the preparation of pupils starting school for the first time and for involving their parents; the school's curriculum and teaching provision for children under 5 is good.
- Very good standards in art are shown in the good quality of display across the curriculum.

What could be improved

- Attainment in science when pupils are seven and eleven years old and attainment in English and mathematics when pupils are seven.
- The monitoring and evaluation of curriculum provision, teaching and learning to ensure consistency throughout the school.
- The way tasks are designed to provide more challenge to the skill development of pupils of differing abilities.
- Systems to promote good attendance.
- Partnership with parents in keeping them informed about the life and work of the school and in encouraging them to play a greater part in the life of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected previously in December, 1997 at which time there were serious weaknesses. Satisfactory improvement has been made in the key issues of that inspection. Standards in design and technology and music are satisfactory. There is a well-focused school improvement plan. Policies and schemes of work are in place as required. The school has made sound progress in the development of systems for assessment. The role of governors has deepened: they are much more active in carrying out their responsibilities. The senior management team works well in identifying and working towards school priorities for development. The role of subject managers has widened, but there are still insufficient opportunities for staff with management responsibilities to monitor and evaluate work in their areas of responsibility. Other improvements made include very good standards in art and better provision for the spiritual and cultural development of pupils. Despite the improvements, there was a sudden decline in standards of attainment in 1997 and 1998, especially at the end of Key Stage 1. Attainment in science has been below or well below average at the end of Key Stage 2. In the past two years, standards have improved gradually although there is still room for more improvement to be made.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	C	D	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	D	C	D	
science	D	D	E	E	

National test results for eleven year olds in 1999 show average attainment in English and mathematics. Attainment in science was well below average. Compared with schools in similar contexts, attainment was average in 1999 in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. In English and mathematics, standards have been at or below the national average over the past four years. Attainment in science has been consistently below or well below average in recent years. The attainment of pupils aged seven has declined rapidly since 1997 and is only showing gradual improvement. Some underachievement can be attributed to staffing instability. However, the school is not achieving as well as it should compared to similar schools. There is now good teaching in key areas of the school. This is beginning to have an impact on standards achieved. The school has agreed relatively modest targets. These targets are consistent with the analysis of prior attainment. Pupils are on track to achieve the targets set. Where there have been changes of teaching staff, tasks planned for pupils have been worksheet driven, giving pupils insufficient intellectual challenge and making insufficient provision for different abilities. Analysis of pupils' most recent work indicates a much better style of task design encouraging better development of skills and thinking.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils arrive in school ready to learn. They are interested in their school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Behaviour in lessons is often good or very good, especially in literacy and numeracy. Occasionally there is some difficult behaviour in less structured lessons such as physical education.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are open, friendly and courteous towards each other and to adults. They enjoy each other's company.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance remains above 90% but has fallen in small steps year by year recently.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall, frequently good, and in mathematics occasionally very good. The teaching of basic skills in numeracy and literacy is satisfactory. Teaching in the reception class, in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 5 is consistently good. Three unsatisfactory lessons (nine per cent of teaching) were seen in different year groups across the school, two in physical education and one in geography. Within lessons teachers make good use of time, resources and support staff. This is a particular strength for pupils with special educational needs who make good progress in their learning and in art where older pupils achieve very good standards. The school makes good provision to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Ninety one percent of lessons seen were satisfactory or better, and fourteen percent of lessons were very good. In some classes insufficient provision is made to challenge pupils in the tasks prepared. There has been much use of worksheets in the past. These do not give pupils the opportunity to make the best of their skills and creativity. More recently, teachers have prepared demanding and creative tasks for pupils ensuring that more is expected of pupils, especially higher attaining pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress through their time in school, acquiring a suitable range of knowledge, skills and understanding. Some of the progress is good. There has been some unsatisfactory progress over time for younger pupils. Stronger teaching is making a better impact on learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Much improved since the previous inspection. Statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is now well supported by policy and schemes of work. Some lessons are very long, making it difficult for pupils and teachers to sustain effort. Better use could be made of the available curriculum time.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. A strength of the school. Individual plans for pupils' learning are clear and precise. Support assistants and teachers make good use of these plans to support learning. A particularly strong feature of the provision is support assistants' diaries that evaluate their own work and assess the progress pupils make.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. An improving area of school life. The school makes satisfactory provision for moral and social development through its policies and practices. Spiritual and cultural provision is good. Pupils have suitable opportunities for reflection and to appreciate their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Proper systems are in place to support the social and pastoral needs of pupils. Procedures to monitor academic progress through assessment have developed a great deal since the previous inspection.
How well the school works with parents	Satisfactory. Most parents hold positive views about the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. There has been significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is equitable delegation of responsibilities. The senior management team is effective in moving the school forward. Subject managers have a broader role but have insufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are much more involved in the life of the school than previously. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their statutory responsibilities are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school is beginning to make good use of performance data to identify strengths and weaknesses in its provision. The school is becoming more experienced in comparing its standards with others and in challenging itself through planned developments. Much improvement has been made through consultation outside the school. The process of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning is not yet sufficiently rigorous.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school is careful about the way in which it spends money on resources, ensuring that finances are well targeted on appropriate areas for development. The school is staffed by teachers and support assistants at a satisfactory level. Good use is made of support staff. The accommodation is satisfactory although at times inconvenient. Some areas are overdue refurbishment: this is to be done in the very near future. Learning resources are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the school has high expectations and helps pupils grow in maturity and responsibility • That teaching is good and pupils make good progress in their learning • That pupils like school • That behaviour is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities available out of school • The information available to parents through their working relationship with the school • A better structure to homework

Inspectors broadly agree with the positive comments of parents. Much teaching is good and unsatisfactory teaching is rare. Occasionally behaviour is not satisfactory but many pupils do behave very well. The school provides a narrow range of activities outside lessons, mostly in the area of games. Consideration should be given to ways in which this range of activities can provide a broader appeal to pupils. The information available to parents is satisfactory. However, more could be done to involve parents in the work and life of the school. Pupils receive homework, some of which is very supportive of the progress they need to make, and extends their learning. The amount and type of homework is not consistent across the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The assessment of pupils' attainments when they enter full time schooling indicates a broad spread of ability. On entry to school pupils have achieved a range of skills and knowledge typical of pupils of similar age. Children under five are on target to meet the outcomes identified for children of this age.

2. The results of standard tests for seven year olds in 1999 show attainment below that expected in writing and well below that expected in reading and mathematics. There was a sharp decline in standards of attainment in 1998. This has been arrested and results show a slight improvement. Standards are well below those of similar schools. In reading and in mathematics insufficient pupils achieve higher levels of attainment. Although there are differences in the levels of attainment of boys and girls from year to year, there is no significant trend over a four-year period. The results of standard tests for eleven year olds in 1999 show attainment in line with that expected in English and mathematics and well below that expected in science. English is in line with the standard achieved in similar schools, mathematics below that standard and science well below. Between 1996 and 1998 there have been gains and declines in standards in different subjects. The standards of the school have suffered from the impact of staffing instability. All subjects showed some improvement in 1999. There are differences in the attainment of boys and girls, subject to subject and year to year. However, there is no consistent trend of difference and aggregated over four years across English, mathematics and science the overall difference is very small. Indications are that there is continued improvement in all subjects tested both for seven and eleven year olds.

3. Although standards in some subjects are not yet high enough, the evidence of inspection week is that there is improvement in all areas of the curriculum. The school met its attainment targets for 1999. Targets for 2000 have been agreed with the local education authority. Although these targets are relatively modest in national terms, they have been carefully based on the prior attainment of individual pupils. The school is on track to achieve these targets.

4. The attainment of seven-year-olds is good in speaking and listening. Pupils are eager to discuss what they know and understand. They listen carefully and show understanding in their response. Attainment is in line with the standard expected in reading and in information technology. Pupils acquire a range of reading skills and most enjoy using their skills. The school has made strides in teaching and learning information technology since the previous inspection. Attainment remains below the standard expected in writing, mathematics and science. Pupils have not made enough progress through periods of unsettled staffing. Insufficient thought has been given to the preparation of tasks designed to challenge pupils across the ability range. Although teaching and learning have improved a great deal recently, this has not yet made sufficient impact on standards of attainment. Standards for seven year olds are broadly satisfactory in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. This marks an improvement in design and technology and music from the previous inspection. Although pupils have been expected frequently to fill in worksheets that do not challenge their thinking, they have had a breadth of experience across the curriculum.

5. The attainment of eleven-year-olds is good in speaking and listening. Pupils engage

in lively conversations with adults and other pupils. They enjoy explaining what they know and understand. Attainment is in line with the standard expected in reading, writing, mathematics and information technology. Pupils acquire a useful range of skills in numeracy and literacy that are put to good effect in other areas of the curriculum. In information technology, there is good coverage of the different aspects of the curriculum and pupils are challenged through the tasks they are set. Attainment in science is below the standard expected. Although this represents a measure of underachievement, it is an improvement on the level attained in previous years. The scheme of work is working its way through the school and it is clear that this is having a significant effect on attainment. Pupils achieve very good standards in art where the expertise of a learning support assistant makes a strong impact. Standards are satisfactory in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Considerable development has gone into design and technology and music that were considered to be unsatisfactory at the previous inspection. Policies and schemes of work are in place, which support a good range of experience across the curriculum. However, the design of some tasks is insufficient to fully challenge the different levels of prior attainment in some classes. Some pupils do the same task irrespective of their ability and these tasks frequently require the completion of worksheets.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is the result of very good provision made by the school and very good management of the administration of special needs. The work for special needs pupils, especially in English and mathematics and also in the development of social skills, is very well focused on the targets on individual education plans. No pupils are learning English as an additional language. Although progress in lessons is at least satisfactory, the progress of the younger pupils in the school has been unsatisfactory over time. As a result, their attainment is below the standard expected in key areas of the curriculum and in the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. It is also clear that very recently, progress has accelerated and these pupils are being well challenged in their learning. The progress made by older pupils is good. By the time they are ready to leave school, they have caught up on the progress they should have made in earlier years. Only in science has this not been the case. Pupils in the middle years of the school are on target to achieve the expected standard in science by the time they leave. Although the school is keeping a careful watch on differences in attainment between boys and girls, there is little evidence of any significant trends in this area. The school is aware of a relatively high proportion of transient pupils (that is pupils who join or leave the school at times other than the usual time for joining and leaving). The progress made by pupils new to the school is tracked. Some of these pupils have attended several different schools and as a result their achievements are fragmented.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Attitudes to school are good. This is the case in almost all lessons and in some lessons attitudes are very good. Younger pupils are very positive about school. They are eager and interested. They are quick to answer questions and become enthusiastic about their activities. The youngest pupils have settled to school routines very well, learning to work alongside each other in pairs and within groups. Older pupils are becoming confident and mature and for the most part sensible and positive in their response to lessons. They settle quickly to their activity, remain focused and achieve a satisfactory standard of work. Behaviour is satisfactory, although many pupils behave very well. Very rarely there are some less positive attitudes, usually when pupils lose interest and become disengaged from the lesson. This leads to restlessness and discontentment and disagreements can follow. For the most part though pupils work well together, share resources and help each other. Conduct around the school and in lessons is satisfactory. Small pockets of challenging behaviour are usually related to loss of interest in an activity. The behaviour of

small number of pupils can cause concern. These pupils do not to understand the impact poorer behaviour has on the concentration of the rest of the class. There were three incidences of exclusion in the last academic year.

8. Relationships and personal development are good. This confirms parents' views. Personal development is enhanced through trips and visits with an annual residential for older pupils. Good relationships are seen in the way pupils welcome visitors. Pupils are well mannered and polite to their teachers and each other. They enjoy being independent and taking responsibility when permitted to do so. Year 6 pupils have formed a help group designed to offer advice and support to those who are struggling with homework or who have relationship problems. They liaise with their teachers, keep careful records and are currently training year 5 pupils to carry on the work of the group.

9. Although it has declined marginally in the last few years, attendance is satisfactory. Pupils like coming to school and generally arrive on time and ready to start work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Ninety one percent of teaching was satisfactory or better. Fifty seven percent of teaching was good and fourteen percent was very good. Nine percent of teaching (three lessons) was unsatisfactory. The school has maintained a quality of teaching similar to that reported at the last inspection.

11. The quality of teaching for children under five is good, making a significant impact on learning and the progress made by these children. Lessons are lively and grip the children. Activities are sufficiently challenging meeting the different needs of the children. Teacher knowledge and pupil management is good ensuring a good level of concentration and effort.

12. The teaching of English is satisfactory. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers in Key Stage 1 plan well for their lessons. They gain pupils' attention and interest quickly through lively questions and discussions. This encourages pupils to think about and build on the knowledge and skills they have acquired previously. Planning for lessons is generally thorough in Key Stage 2. Teachers expect pupils to work hard. This ensures pupils work at a good pace and produce plenty of work. However, pupils make less progress when they are given work that does not stretch them and there is insufficient explanation of aims and achievements at the beginning and end of lessons.

13. The teaching of mathematics is good. Pupils make good progress in lessons. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well. Teachers at the beginning and end of Key Stage 1 are particularly effective in ensuring that pupils are interested in their work and sustain concentration by lively discussions and a variety of activities which are appropriate for their abilities. The work that pupils have done earlier in the current school year, however, indicates that teachers placed too much reliance on worksheets. These did not develop or increase pupils' understanding according to their abilities. This has changed very recently. Design of pupil tasks is much more appropriate. Good progress is made in Key Stage 2. Pupils develop their ability to think and learn for themselves through well-established class routines, carefully planned activities and the high expectations of teachers.

14. Teaching in science is good in both key stages. Very effective questioning, discussions and instructions typify some very good teaching. As a result pupils contribute enthusiastically and are structured in their learning. For example, pupils are encouraged through teachers' remarks such as 'I've just heard someone with a good idea', to make suggestions on the best conditions for growth of seeds such as 'in darkness in a lunch box' in a Year 2 lesson. The style and quality of teaching science in Year 2 has improved dramatically with recent staff changes.

15. No direct teaching of information technology was observed during inspection week. However, teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their skills in many other lessons. For example, pupils use spreadsheets and produce charts and graphs related to their work in geography and mathematics. Teachers' knowledge of the subject and planning is sound. Effective use of this ensures that pupils develop their knowledge appropriately. All pupils have proper opportunities to study all aspects of the National Curriculum.

16. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. More than half of lessons are good or very good. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in physical education. Low expectations of achievement and difficulties with class management causes loss of time and lack of physical effort from pupils. Pupils in lower Key Stage 1 are engaged well in their learning through interesting discussions, good questioning and effective use of resources. For example, pupils were fascinated by a variety of African artefacts in a geography lesson and a demonstration of the grace of movement caused by carrying loads on the head. At the end of this key stage pupils are enthusiastic in their learning responding very well to the teachers' questions and instructions. Lessons start briskly and the teacher engages pupils' attention through a positive, lively approach and very good discussions and questions. Pupils are encouraged to become independent in their learning through prompts such as 'What do you think?' and 'Try doing it yourself like this.'

17. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. More than half of lessons seen were good or very good. Two lessons, amounting to eleven percent, were unsatisfactory. Teachers make good use of time, support staff and resources. For example, in a Year 4 geography lesson, a variety of resources such as video, displays and a short role play, increased pupils' understanding of the effect of tourism on a rural area. Making maximum use of time available, pupils' attention and concentration was maintained throughout. The management of pupils is generally sound. Teachers know pupils well. Good working routines are established. As a result, pupils feel secure and behave well in most classes and subjects. Unsatisfactory teaching in physical education and geography is typified by the lack of a proper learning atmosphere. Pupils are restless and the pace of lessons is interrupted by having to repeatedly ask pupils for attention. Learning is unsatisfactory in these lessons and all pupils are not actively involved.

18. A marking policy gives guidance to teachers. The aims and objectives of marking are clearly identified. The policy reinforces the school's principles and advises methods for marking all work. It defines the need to mark work regularly and promptly with comments on both strengths and areas for improvement. In the work analysed for the inspection, however, there did not appear to be consistency in following the guidance. There were individual examples of good practice. Marking was supportive, thorough and designed to help pupils avoid future errors. There was evidence of reward for good, well-presented work, reinforcing pride in work. However, not all members of staff use the school policy. There were some examples of books being infrequently marked with few comments and repeated errors going uncorrected.

19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Learning support assistants are involved well in planning with relevant teachers and good support is given in lessons. There is a very clear focus on the targets on pupils' individual learning plans. Teachers make good use of learning support assistants. This is particularly the case where high quality expertise in art is used to promote very good learning in art for pupils in Key Stage 2. There are no pupils learning English as a new language.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the school is satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and sufficiently balanced. The school meets statutory requirements through the teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There are policy documents for all subject areas. Long, medium and short-term curriculum plans and schemes of work support the work in the classroom. Plans include learning objectives, details of resources, provision for special educational needs and support staff and a brief evaluation of each week's lessons. A process of regular review of policies is in place. The curriculum is an area of significant improvement since the previous inspection

21. At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory. There are some examples of good practice in providing suitable tasks to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. However, the provision for higher attaining pupils is inconsistent. In the analysis of the pupils' work, especially at Key Stage 1, in the past, there has been an over dependence on worksheets that were not sufficiently well designed for pupils of differing attainment levels. There is evidence of good practice in provision of suitably challenging work in Key Stage 2 and an improving practice in Key Stage 1.

22. There is enrichment to the curriculum through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. There is provision for extra curricular activity in sport. The school has, in the last two years, won the local schools netball and rugby competitions respectively. A school choir meets to prepare for special occasions, although it was not meeting during the week of the inspection. There is little extra-curricular activity beyond sport. A variety of experiences are provided for pupils through day and residential visits. In alternate years there is residential week on the Isle of Man. Visits are made to local places of interest. Pupils recently visited the Millennium Dome. The Education Business Partnership provided a variety of experiences in local work places. All of these events are carefully documented and photographed. Many are used as stimulus for pupils' writing and art work. The school has taken advantage of the local education authority 'artists in residence' scheme. The pupils have been involved in a performance of their musical composition, a version of the 'Planets Suite', at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester after working with a composer in residence. Proper policy provision is made for aspects of the curriculum such as equal opportunities, personal development, health and sex education. Awareness of drugs and safe use of medicine is part of the science curriculum.

23. Community involvement underpins many aspects of school life. The school is part of the local Education Action Zone, the Education and Business Partnership and the Coalfield Challenge. The school supports 'Parents as Educators' and provides an induction programme, 'Inspire', for parents and children under five. Almost all parents of these children are involved in the six-week induction. There are close connections with the neighbouring high school. This involves exchange of information technology software and

other equipment and visits to use the high school's facilities. The school uses the church for festivals and the end of the school year.

24. The provision for pupils on the Special Needs register is good. There is very good use of teaching support with some evidence of clear co-operation between teachers and learning support assistants. The involvement of learning support staff is included in the class teacher's planning.

25. Provision for spiritual development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Music and science, in particular, provide opportunities for pupils to experience 'awe and wonder' and reflection. In a Key Stage 1 class in science pupils were introduced to the topic of the day by the gradual revelation of a number of artefacts which increased their wonder at what was to happen next. Achievement assemblies give pupils the opportunity to reflect on what the school values. There is considerable enhancement to self-esteem and to self-knowledge. Music plays a key part in preparing pupils for a time of reflection in assembly. Prayer is always associated with an opportunity for pupils to think quietly about how the theme for assembly affects themselves and others. There is a school tradition of prayer at midday and the end of school. Acknowledgement of a supreme being is made through saying the familiar school prayer.

26. The provision for moral development is satisfactory. School expectations of good behaviour are reinforced through the mission statement, its associated aims and through school policies. There is systematic reinforcement of an understanding of right and wrong through assemblies and during lessons. The school is trialling a system of rewards and will be participating in a scheme organised by the Comino Foundation, which works with teachers to develop strategies for behaviour management.

27. The provision for social development is satisfactory. There is a good working atmosphere of positive relationships. This begins with the good role modelling of teachers. There are regular opportunities for pupils to work together in teams, groups and pairs. They learn to co-operate. Indeed the theme of the achievement assembly was deeply rooted in the principles of working together. Pupils in all classes are encouraged to be mature and sensible in their work. Many acquire good independence skills. Older pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility. A good example of this is the support given by older pupils to pupils in the reception class through helping prepare resources.

28. Cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The work done in various subjects provides a number of opportunities for cultural development. For example, in geography in Key Stage 2, pupils are currently working on a project on Eritrea. A previous project was on Singapore. The choice of literacy texts at both key stages offers opportunities to discuss other cultures. Pupils have opportunities to consider the situation in Yugoslavia, prior to the recent war, through diary entries of children living in Serbia and Bosnia. History and the some of the educational visits offer opportunities to explore different aspects of their own culture. In music, pupils learn to appreciate classical western music but also explore themes in African music. Links between a Year 6 history project and the Greeks has generated pupils' interest in having their own mini Olympics.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Welfare is monitored closely according to child protection guidelines. This area of the school's provision has been maintained since the last report. Although there is no individual or formal recording of pastoral or personal development, teachers know their pupils well and provide suitable support and guidance where necessary. The level of care and concern shown by all adults working in and around the school is heart-warming and much appreciated by the pupils and their parents. The school is trying different approaches to promoting good behaviour before embarking on a whole school discipline policy. The current procedures are sufficient to ensure a positive effect on learning within an atmosphere free from intimidation and harassment.

30. Levels of attendance are falling slightly. Although attendance is satisfactory, more could be done to encourage good attendance. Patterns of non-attendance are picked up quickly and monitored by the educational welfare service. The school provides pupils with a safe environment in which to learn.

31. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall and improved since the previous inspection. There is an Assessment and Recording Policy. The assessment procedures for both literacy and numeracy are in place and are used effectively at Key Stage 2 to inform future teaching and learning. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have an awareness of what is needed to achieve the different levels of the curriculum. In literacy, for example, they use the level descriptors to guide their own self-assessment and future targets. Assessment at Key Stage 1 is developing, with the appointment of a new member of staff with responsibility for the key stage. Assessment in subjects other than literacy and numeracy is not as well developed. This is identified in the school improvement plan as an area for further improvement. The head teacher regularly monitors pupils' work and progress. Areas of concern are discussed at staff meetings and in discussion with individual teachers. Records of achievement and a data monitoring process being developed show pupils' progress over the years. The records of achievement include examples of work to illustrate pupils' ability and progress over time.

32. The assessment of pupils on the register of special educational needs is very good. There is clear documentation with detailed information and targets set. Support staff keep diaries of the work and progress. The diaries evaluate the work of the learning support assistants and indicate the progress made by special needs pupils against their targets. The diaries are a good link between the special needs co-ordinator and with class teachers. The progress made by pupils with special education needs is subject to a rigorous review process.

33. The school improvement plan clearly identifies the ways in which the school intends to make progress in using assessment to improve attainment. Some strategies are already in place. Additional tests are given to monitor progress between the national standard tests. School data from tests is collated, analysed and used to identify strengths and weakness. This is still in an early stage of development but it is apparent that it is being used effectively at the end of Key Stage 2 to set appropriate work and targets for pupils. The scrutiny of pupils' work is identified in the school improvement plan as a way of ensuring curriculum delivery as well as assessing ability for future targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. The school has maintained the support of parents and continued to build on the partnership between home and school. The small number of parents attending the pre-inspection meeting was very enthusiastic about what the school stands for. Analysis of response to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicates general support for the school. Parents believe that the school expects a great deal of their children and that teaching and behaviour are good. A minority of parents had some uncertainty about the range of activities beyond the National Curriculum and the structure for giving homework. Some indicated that they would appreciate more information about the life and work of the school. The school has tried to break down barriers by introducing the 'Inspire' project, which is an induction process for new pupils and their parents. This has been a continued success enabling the school to build up a good relationship with the families of the current Key Stage 1 pupils. The newly introduced 'Friends of the School' association is involved actively in promoting links with parents whilst organising fund raising activities and family social events. Parents willingly help on trips and visits but there few committed volunteers actively involved within the classroom. Although the school openly welcomes parents to visit there has not been a recent proactive attempt to recruit parents as helpers.

35. There is regular information given in the form of general letters, a newsletter, school prospectus and the annual Governor's Report to parents. Although useful, they do not do enough to highlight what the school does well to help raise its profile in the community. Opportunities are provided for parents to discuss their children's progress twice a year. The annual report is informative and is now introducing areas for development and targets. Parents support their children's learning through homework, ensuring regular attendance and co-operating with the school's policy on uniform for example. There is a home-school agreement in place and parents are involved at an early stage where there are problems or concerns. Although the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory there is room for improvement by building on the good practice already in evidence.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory and an area of significant improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior staff make an effective team who work well together in managing the school. Good relationships are enjoyed with the governing body. Their role has been considerably enhanced. Although there are below average standards of attainment in some areas, the decline in standards has been arrested and there is substantial evidence of improving standards, although that improvement is relatively slow. Improvements can be attributed to significant changes in systems for managing the school. For example, there is a useful improvement plan, clearly focused on the most important things the school needs to do. The plan is very clear in where responsibilities lie, when tasks need to be completed, how tasks are to be funded and how the school will recognise success when tasks are completed. Curriculum planning is secure with schemes of work which support teachers in their day to day work in the classroom. There are valuable systems emerging in the assessment of the progress pupils are making. Some purposeful analysis of assessment data is supporting the identification of learning targets. Among improvements made is the strengthening of teaching staff through key appointments.

37. The school is clear in its aims, which stem from the mission statement agreed among staff and governors. Parents agree that the school has high expectations of their children and that it promotes positive values. The one area of weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection where significant improvement has not been secured is the

monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. The school has taken its first steps in this direction. Numeracy and literacy lessons have been monitored by the headteacher. This process now needs to be expanded so that more subject managers have a better overview of the standards of the school. This insight is necessary to enable them to be much more specific about development targets in their subject areas. The governing body is very committed to the school. Governors are regular visitors to the school and have a good idea of its strengths and weaknesses. Care has been taken to seek and take advice from outside bodies to support governors in shaping the direction of the school. They fulfil their statutory requirements. There is appropriate involvement in the financial procedures of the school. They have set performance targets for the school in English and mathematics and performance targets for the headteacher. Staff and governors together are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all.

38. A strong feature of the school is the way special educational needs is managed to make best use of designated funding, the staffing this affords and in establishing procedures to support these pupils and the work they need to do. Systems are very efficient and effective. There is good targeting of other finances given to the school for specific purposes. Financial procedures are secure. The school buys into the local authority bursar service and this is a good support to budgeting and budget monitoring. The school has been carrying over a large part of its funding. However, this money is designated for building refurbishment and other developments in the very near future. Both in the school office and in the classroom effective use is made of new technology. The school anticipates that this will improve even further when the new computer suite is ready.

39. The school has sufficient qualified and experienced members of staff. Recent years have seen significant changes in staffing through retirement, promotion, planned absence and absence through illness. This has had an impact on standards of attainment, particularly in Key Stage 1. Good use is made of learning support assistants, especially in support of pupils with special educational needs and in achieving high standards in art. Learning resources are not generous but are sufficient. The school benefits from its two library areas, one for younger pupils, and one for older pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory. Some classrooms are very spacious. Occasionally noise from one classroom makes quiet lessons difficult in another. Some areas are difficult, for example the interior dimensions of the hall do not make for good management of pupils and space. Access to some classrooms for younger pupils has to be through another classroom and this is not very convenient. The school is occasionally used as a provider of teaching experience for teachers in training from a local college. Preparations for this are satisfactory.

40. More formal use is beginning to be made of the school's own performance data in challenging its standards and provision. The school is careful in ensuring that money is spent wisely. Good consultation has taken place with outside bodies over development issues. Participation in the Coalfield Challenge regeneration project and membership of the Leigh Education Action Zone is part of this consultation. However, parents are not a high profile part of consultation about school developments although a home and school association has recently been reintroduced. There is satisfactory application of the principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition in the management of the school. Although standards are still not yet high enough in some subjects, the school has made important improvements since the previous inspection. Given its overall standards, provision and level of funding, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. In order to raise standards and achieve consistency of good practice through the

school, the headteacher, governing body and staff of the school should:

- (1) raise standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 1 by preparing challenging tasks for pupils of all abilities and by ensuring opportunities for subject managers to monitor, evaluate and prepare action plans for the improvement of attainment in their subjects;
(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 6, 12, 13, 21, 37, 40, 51, 52, 55, 57-59, 63)
- (2) raise standards of attainment in science throughout the school by capitalising on current improvements in teaching and learning, continuing the emphasis on practical and investigative work, enhancing teacher knowledge of this approach through the provision of professional development courses;
(Paragraphs: 2, 4-6, 14, 21, 40, 64-66, 68, 69)
- (3) monitor the work of the school more effectively to ensure that school policies are fully translated into practice;
(Paragraphs: 18, 57, 63, 69, 76, 82, 87, 91, 102, 106)

Additionally, the school should consider:

- the development of strategies to promote good attendance; (Paragraphs: 9, 30)
- ways in which partnership with parents can more successfully support the work of the school. (Paragraphs: 34, 35)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	43	34	9	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	206
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	45
Special educational needs	
	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33
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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.5	School data	0.8
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	16	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	7
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (72)	84 (75)	84 (69)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	7
	Girls	13	14	11
	Total	21	22	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (76)	88 (76)	72 (79)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	23	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	8
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	23	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (57)	65 (50)	71 (63)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	8
	Girls	15	16	13
	Total	23	23	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (57)	68 (57)	62 (63)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (68)

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	176
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)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.4
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	341 858
Total expenditure	329 644
Expenditure per pupil	1 563
Balance brought forward from previous year	23 231
Balance carried forward to next year	35 535

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	206
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	44	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	49	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	57	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	68	15	4	0
The teaching is good.	40	57	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	55	19	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	38	8	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	50	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	46	19	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	30	49	17	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	66	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	43	19	19	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Thirty children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five years old. As the school year begins in August in this area, the children born in that month are three when they enter the reception class. At the time of the inspection, there were thirty children attending full time in the reception class, ten of whom were below statutory school age. All the children have a full year in the class. Assessment tests and other information show that on entry to school children's attainment is average in comparison to others of a similar age. By the age of five almost all the children reach the expected level in all areas of learning. The inspection findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. They indicate that pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning and achieve standards that are typical for their age.

43. Good induction procedures are in place to support the children as they begin their education in school. Advice on the education of the children is outlined in a useful handbook. A well-attended pre-school course for parents and children prepares them well for school life and the early days in school. Children needing learning support are identified early, are given good support and as a consequence, make good progress towards the expectations for their age group. There is no official early years co-ordinator, but the class teacher has adopted the responsibility and works successfully and with commitment to provide an appropriate curriculum to raise the children's levels of achievement. A draft policy and a good scheme of work are in place. There is good and regular assessment of the children, with detailed records of individual children's progress. The classroom provision is good for the needs of children, but there is a lack of provision of large out-door equipment and designated space for the children under five. The height of some of the furniture is inappropriate and some of the desks and chairs are ill matched.

44. The personal and social education of children under five is good. By the age of five, most children are on course to exceed the standards expected for their age. All children make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. In literacy lessons all children are encouraged to contribute and gain confidence in a secure teaching environment. Teaching is good overall. Some teaching is very good. The teacher's gentle, firm and supportive manner results in a calm, purposeful atmosphere, which is conducive to learning. There are well-established classroom routines and appropriate resources suitably placed and easily available for use. All children have opportunities to be involved in all activities, discuss their mistakes and correct them in a positive atmosphere. Teaching has a positive effect on children's learning, their rate of progress, behaviour and self-esteem. Communication skills develop well. Children listen attentively, concentrate well, and co-operate with one another, as seen in a very good lesson when they worked collaboratively and produced a good musical composition, using percussion instruments. They take turns and have a clear sense of right and wrong. All children take responsibility for personal hygiene and dress and undress themselves for physical activities and games. They are given opportunities to reflect upon and express their feelings by the use of pictures of 'happy' and 'sad' faces.

45. By the age of five, the attainment of most children meets the goals for their age group in language and literacy. Children make satisfactory gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. Teaching is good. The teacher engages children, effectively, in both planned and spontaneous conversations, which helps them to listen and respond appropriately as they work. There

are good opportunities to extend their language, as seen when children discussed the variety of species of animals. Children are involved in activities such as sharing books and they are made aware of the links between the sound of letters and their symbols. Satisfactory opportunities are offered for children to develop and extend their writing skills through guided and independent writing experiences, but the opportunity to write and display their work in a writing corner or in role-play settings is unsatisfactory. The early assessment of children is effective and helps to identify those children with specific learning needs. Daily assessment is good and is used to help and encourage children. The well-recorded annual reports to parents reflect the comprehensive, informative and well-maintained records. Children listen attentively and with enjoyment to stories and use listening centres purposefully to hear stories such as 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. They recall the main events and characters in a story used to familiarise them with story, text and punctuation, and talk about them, satisfactorily. Children enjoy books, understand their purpose and handle them carefully. They begin to show awareness of the use of question and exclamation marks as they 'read' together with expression, from the book 'Handa's Surprise'. Many children recognise and know the letter sounds of the alphabet and with support read three letter words. All recognise some simple words in familiar books and by the time they are five most children read books of appropriate difficulty, with a few children reading more difficult books. They make good attempts at early writing such as over, under and copy writing and most write their first name legibly and show satisfactory pencil control. Early skills at descriptive writing are legible and accurate and develop satisfactorily. Children have daily opportunities to use computer programs to reinforce reading skills.

46. By the age of five, attainment in mathematical understanding is at the expected level. Children make satisfactory gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Lessons are well planned and a wide range of curriculum opportunities reinforces and consolidates mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills. Every opportunity is given to pupils to develop pupils' mathematical skills. Planning shows that children have opportunities to sort and match objects into large, medium and small, recognise and create repeated patterns using shape and colour and have a good knowledge of numbers to ten. The children acquire number skills through counting rhymes, songs, poems, and everyday experiences as well as through the more formal activities. Many children count successfully to 20 and beyond, in ones and order numbers to ten. Higher attaining children begin to add and subtract numbers to ten correctly, using equipment and adult support. They use language satisfactorily to describe the names of flat shapes, such as a circle and a square. Teaching is good.

47. By the age of five, attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is at the expected level. Children make satisfactory gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Teaching is good. The teacher plans effectively, through topic work, to ensure that the children are introduced to history, geography, science, and design technology and information and communication technology. Children show an appropriate interest in their environment and they have opportunities to interact with their environment. The local vicar is a regular visitor to the school and the children go to the local church to familiarise themselves with rituals and understanding of places of worship. Children gain an understanding of the passing of time through topics such as 'Toys' when they have opportunities to see a school governor's collection of dolls. They learn about their own locality and other countries such as Africa. Children know that different kinds of creatures such as fish, domestic and wild animals have different life styles and needs as do humans. Topics such as 'Ourselves' 'Noah's Ark' and 'Caring For Pets' are used well to increase children's understanding of the basic needs of living creatures. In one lesson there was an effective link with literacy as children used early research skills to find and write down the information they gathered. Planning shows that children have opportunities to make

biscuits and recognise how food changes when it is cooked. They select materials and apply cutting skills satisfactorily as they work with basic tools such as scissors, card and fabric to make pictures, seasonal cards, masks and models. Opportunities are given for the children to use technology such as the computer and listening centres.

48. Planning shows that children of all abilities have opportunities to practise appropriate physical education skills, develop their imagination and communicate their feelings through dance. Teaching is good. There is a satisfactory range of physical education equipment, but the school is aware that there is no large outdoor equipment, such as a range of wheeled toys, slides and climbing frames to develop and extend the children's gross motor skills. Acts of vandalism destroyed the storage facilities and most of the equipment. There is no designated outdoor space. The children use a range of creative material, and finer motor skills develop well. Most children hold pencils, felt pens and crayons correctly and use them with care and precision.

49. By the age of five, most children attain levels of understanding and skills in their creative development which are appropriate for their age. Teaching is good. Children make satisfactory gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Children are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings through art, craft, music, dance, story making and imaginative play. They have daily opportunities to explore colour through painting, collage and crayoning. They have opportunities to mix paint and produce some good finger paintings re-creating the Japanese artist, Hokusai's painting 'In the Well of the Great Wave of Kanogawa'. In a very good music lesson children used a wide range of untuned musical instruments correctly, and showed good technical skills, such as reading musical signs and symbols correctly. A high level of co-operation and collaboration was shown as they played their own musical composition with enjoyment and sensitivity. Good use is made of the experience of the support assistant.

50. The school provides a good curriculum for the under five children which takes full account of all the areas of learning set out for children of this age. It is broad, balanced and relevant and is planned to meet the needs of all the children, including those children with special educational needs. Efficient planning allows this curriculum to integrate successfully with the early stages of the National Curriculum. This gives children in the reception class the opportunity to further progress in their work, when they are ready to do so. The adult provision for the children is professional and supportive and the teacher is well supported by the classroom assistant. Assessment of children under five is good. Procedures for the children such as assessment on entry to school are used well. Useful assessment notes of all the children are kept and used to plan future work and also to set targets for the children's future learning. The headteacher monitors the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the medium term planning. There are good pre- school links with parents through useful booklets and the 'Inspire' project, which the parents appreciate. Areas of the classroom are designated for different activities with well-organised, appropriate resources.

ENGLISH

51. The results of standard tests in 1999 show that seven year olds achieved standards in reading which were well below the national average. Standards in writing were below the national average. These pupils achieved standards in English that were well below the average for similar schools. National tests for eleven-year-olds show the school to be in line with the national average and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Although the attainment of boys and girls varies from year to year, there are no significant trends in the attainment of boys and girls.

52. Current standards in English for seven-year-olds are below the standard expected nationally. Standards for eleven-year-olds are in line with national expectations. Standards at Key Stage 1 show some improvement since recent changes in teaching staff. The introduction of tasks well matched to different levels of prior attainment and less dependency on work sheets is beginning to have an impact on pupils' writing at the end of the key stage. Attainment in reading is satisfactory and writing unsatisfactory. Whilst pupils read quite competently, their independent writing skills are not well developed. In speaking and listening attainment is good. Pupils are confident in their conversation, listen carefully to instructions and participate sensibly and courteously in discussion. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress overall and attain standards that are broadly in line with the national standard. Since the previous inspection there has been a decline in standards of attainment. This decline has been arrested in recent years. There is a two year trend of gradual improvement in both key stages.

53. At the end of each key stage, attainment in speaking and listening is good. In Key Stage 1 pupils listen to their teachers attentively and participate in discussion with some maturity. They are confident in their responses. Year 1 pupils express their thinking clearly in both literacy and numeracy lessons, reasoning with the teacher when their answers go beyond what is expected. Year 2 pupils engage actively in oral tasks, displaying their knowledge clearly. They show their ability to grasp examples and to use them in different contexts. Key Stage 2 pupils present their learning to the whole of the key stage with confidence. Of particular note was a Year 6 pupil who explained succinctly a piece of mathematical work for which he was being rewarded. There is poise and confidence in the presentation and a good use of the specialist vocabulary. Pupils work co-operatively, sharing knowledge and information to solve problems. Discussion at the beginning of lessons and involvement in reporting sessions at the end of lessons shows their interest in the work being done. Pupils evaluate their own progress.

54. Standards in reading are satisfactory in both key stages. Satisfactory progress in reading is apparent across the years in each key stage. The pupils read confidently and by the end of Key Stage 2 do so with increasing fluency and expression. Two pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 read extracts from a text with a number of dialect words and one used a good accent in addition to expressing the mood and tone of the piece. Almost all pupils discuss their texts with understanding and some make predictions about the text showing understanding of the situation and the characters. Year 1 pupils interpret a chart with ease, using the information to answer questions. Year 5 pupils read a play without direct supervision; they discussed who should read which parts without disagreement and then proceeded in the task. Pupils at Key Stage 1 were unable to find non-fiction texts. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 do not know the classification system being used in the library. They were able to find specific non-fiction texts. Key Stage 2 pupils know the difference between an index and a contents page and how to use them. Some know what a glossary is. Pupils at Key Stage 1 do not always use the picture clues to assist their reading. Some develop the ability to use phonics when reading unfamiliar words. Some of the words in the texts chosen were of foreign origin and Key Stage 2 pupils made a reasonable effort to work out the pronunciation by applying their knowledge of phonics. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 write about what they have read as part of the literacy strategy. Year 5 pupils have a 'management book' in which they record each week what they been taught and what they have learned and set targets for the following week. These contain some references to reading.

55. Attainment in writing at Key Stage 1 is below the standard expected. Attainment in Key Stage 2 is in line with the standard expected. A high dependency on work sheets at Key Stage 1 has limited the opportunities for pupils to progress as well as they could in improving their writing skills. There was little evidence of independent writing in the books seen. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' writing is fluent, joined up and includes a range of punctuation to assist meaning. There are impressive examples of creative writing in a variety of forms in Year 5 and Year 6 work. Pupils make good use of correctly punctuated direct speech to create atmosphere. In their writing pupils identify similarities and differences in two texts and express their opinion about the quality of the writing in the original texts.

56. The standard of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. There are examples of very good and good teaching at both key stages, which present learning opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills. The involvement and deployment of support staff is good, with some evidence of well-planned and co-ordinated teaching of pupils with special educational needs. Planning for the literacy hour is thorough with learning outcomes generally clearly identified. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is well developed. Routines in classrooms are clearly established. Teachers' classroom management is effective in most classes with some good practice in both key stages. Pupils in all years were able to work without direct supervision. Groups are usually defined by ability with work being set that was generally appropriate. However, higher attaining pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging opportunities. The best teaching is characterised by thorough planning, the clear identification of learning objectives and differentiated tasks which offer challenge. Classroom management is good where pupils are in well assessed ability groups. Teachers take lessons at a brisk pace ensuring that pupils do not lose concentration and are well involved in the lessons. Information technology is used to a satisfactory extent to support the development of literacy skills. There is no systematic approach to recording the reading that is outside the reading scheme. Some classes do have a reading record which parents may also use for comment.

57. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator has drawn up a draft literacy policy, which is to be presented to Governors to replace the school's existing language policy. The school improvement plan identifies developments for the future of the literacy programme. The head teacher leads the monitoring and evaluation of literacy. This begins to identify where improvements need to be made. The subject leader has had no opportunity to oversee standards of teaching and learning. More involvement for the subject manager is a target of the school improvement plan. Resources for English are satisfactory. Two separate library areas are well stocked. Past overuse of worksheets has limited pupils' opportunities to use their emerging literacy skills. More recently there is much more emphasis on tasks across the curriculum which challenge pupils and place a greater expectation on their level of thinking. This is particularly true for pupils in Key Stage 1. The governing body has set targets for attainment in national tests based on pupils' prior attainment. In 1999 the school met its target. It is on track to meet its targets for 2000, although these targets are relatively modest.

MATHEMATICS

58. The 1999 national tests showed seven-year-olds achieved standards that were well below the national average and well below the standard for similar schools. By the time eleven year olds leave the school for secondary education attainment was broadly in line with the standards achieved nationally but below the standard achieved in similar schools. Since 1996 standards have declined steeply at the end of Key Stage 1. However, there is a two year trend of gradual improvement in 1998 and 1999 which is better than the national

rate of improvement. Targets for 1999, set by the governors and based upon prior attainment, were met exactly. The school has set the same target for 2000 and is on track to achieve this target.

59. Inspectors judge that the attainment of seven-year-olds is below the standard expected nationally. This is a decline in standards since the previous inspection but a rise in standards compared with the 1999 national tests. There has been a significant amount of staff instability in recent years, and this has been a factor in the steep decline in national test results. However, recent staff appointments coupled with the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy have contributed towards the rise in standards this year. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the standard expected. The school has maintained standards in mathematics identified in the previous report.

60. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 understand the sequence of days in the week and their order. They readily recognise numerals from 1 to 20 on cards and most pupils add, by counting, objects to 12. Most pupils count in 5s, 10s and 2s, recognising odd and even numbers. By the time they are seven, pupils mentally add and subtract numbers up to 10. A significant minority does not accomplish this yet. Most pupils recognise a sequence of numbers in 10s and 100s. They used counters and blocks to solve division problems. Nevertheless, higher attaining pupils are not yet confident in mental recall of multiplication of 2, 5 and 10.

61. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they build upon their skills and knowledge through Key Stage 2. Most pupils in year 3 understand the principle of subtraction when using simple fractions. For example, they take $\frac{1}{5}$ of a cake away knowing that there is $\frac{4}{5}$ left. Pupils in Year 4 use terms such as 'horizontal axis' when interpreting a graph showing how many people use a bus daily. They examine a bar chart, suggesting ways in which the bus timetable could be improved. Most pupils in Year 5 have a good understanding of the methods used in solving problems with numbers. They use a variety of methods to estimate, often working the answers out mentally, and checking answers with calculators. By the time they are eleven, most pupils demonstrate an understanding of the concept of ration and proportion in an exercise of the division of money between Cinderella and her sisters. Some pupils multiply decimals successfully to solve ratio problems.

62. Teaching is satisfactory. Much is good and there is some very good teaching in Year 2 and Year 4. Teachers generally have high expectations of the quantity of work that pupils produce. The pace of lessons encourages pupils to sustain effort. Where teaching is judged to be very good, there is an industrious working atmosphere in lessons and teachers get pupils' attention immediately with stimulating discussions and questions. Pupils increase their understanding well in these lessons through appropriate and interesting activities. This enables them to learn for themselves and understand what they are doing. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and they are well supported in lessons. Teachers' planning is sound. They make good use of their knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy. Mathematical concepts are reinforced well by the use teachers make of information technology. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1, in pairs or individually, use the computer to practice their skills by adding objects on the screen using the mouse to point, identify and click. Older pupils use a spreadsheet to enter data and produce a variety of charts on population density and land area, and temperature variations in Africa.

63. The management of the subject is sound. The subject manager has been effective in supporting the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Resources and

accommodation are adequate and used well to support pupils' learning. The subject policy is satisfactory and opportunities for assessment are built into schemes of work. However, there are insufficient opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning and how well the curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy are being implemented. This is particularly important in Key Stage 1 where staff instability over the previous three years has had an impact on standards achieved in mathematics. Recent developments in staffing should help to ensure more stability. There is evidence that too much dependency on worksheets in Key Stage 1 has hindered learning among all ability groups, but particularly higher attaining pupils. There has been a notable difference in presentation, method and structure of pupils' work between the key stages.

SCIENCE

64. Attainment in science is below the standard expected for pupils when they are seven and eleven. This is a lower standard than that attained at the time of previous inspection. However, the present standard of work seen is better than that reflected by the results of standard tests in 1999. Standard test results in 1999 were well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools.

65. Seven year olds attain standards that are below the standard expected for their age. Their attainment has been badly affected by two main factors: the number of different teachers they have had and the lack of impact on teaching style. Much of the work in science has been passive rather than active. Many tasks have involved completion of worksheets rather than the practical work needed in science that promotes the development of skills and challenges thinking. There has been a recent change in emphasis. Teaching is having a strong impact on learning, although this is insufficient to raise standards for the current group of pupils. In the science lesson seen with pupils of this age, they were intrigued by the way their practical work was set up. They made decisions as a whole class about the design of the investigation. They looked carefully at seeds, talked about their hypotheses – which conditions would bring about best growth and how quickly seeds would germinate. In their written work, although standards in writing were below those which might be expected, they began to develop a scientific process as they wrote down what they wanted to find out, what they expected to see and what they were going to do.

66. Eleven year olds attain standards that are below the standard expected for their age. However, there is strong evidence that pupils aged nine and ten work at a level that is at least appropriate for their age. The improvement identified is the result of strong teaching and the security given to progression through the school by a thorough scheme of work. The gaps identified in the progression of the oldest pupils are too great for good teaching and secure planning to overcome before they leave the school. Pupils in Year 4 explore what happens when different solids are added to water. A scientific method is carefully followed. Pupils discuss what they expect and make careful observations to find out how accurate their predictions are. These pupils have a good idea of what makes a fair test and discuss what should remain the same and what might be changed. Pupils in year 5 investigate how the pitch of a sound can be changed. They match the pitch of water in a bottle in a tuned instrument and identify how much more water is needed to achieve the next tone. Pupils record results carefully in a graph. Year 6 pupils interpret data from tables and relate this work to their own recorded observations. They create different types of graphs to represent their results, making decisions themselves about what sort of graph to use. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good level of attainment in creating their graphs. Lower attaining pupils need a great deal of support to achieve success. Oral responses of pupils in this class show a significant proportion of pupils have not fully understood what

they are doing.

67. The progress in learning made by pupils in the lessons seen is satisfactory overall and frequently good. Much is being done to stimulate interest and enthusiasm. Pupils are learning to make good use of the technical vocabulary of science. Analysis of work samples show that progress over time has not been satisfactory. However, there is a strong emphasis on pupil thinking and doing. This is having a significant effect on standards of attainment. The emphasis put on practical work makes pupils eager to learn. They are challenged by the activities and motivated in their learning. Although some lessons can get quite noisy, pupils work hard and show perseverance in their tasks. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Where worksheets were used in the past these were frequently too difficult for pupils with delayed literacy and numeracy skills. With tasks now better designed to probe pupil thinking, special needs pupils are enabled to be more creative in the work they do.

68. The teaching seen is good. Teachers plan well. Pupils were spellbound by the teacher who added a note of mystery to the use of planned resources: everyone was eager to see the materials for the investigation beneath the tablecloth. Teachers take lessons at a good pace. Some lessons are very long and it is difficult for teachers and pupils to maintain the stimulus. However, planning and teacher knowledge are sufficiently strong to keep pupils engaged in their learning. In the past, in some areas of the school, tasks have been restricted to worksheets and these restrict opportunities for pupils of differing ability to do their best. More recently there have been significant changes in the type of task used and there is much more challenge for pupils of all abilities. Teachers manage pupils well. There are positive relationships and this fosters healthy attitudes towards work. Practical work is characterised by calm and purposeful teacher support of groups and by a high level of co-operation between pupils in the groups.

69. The curriculum is well served by a sensible policy and carefully thought out scheme of work. There is some effective use of numeracy skills in data handling and interpretation. Good use is made of literacy skills for older pupils and this is becoming a growing influence for younger pupils. Resources are provided at a satisfactory level. The school has effective systems for half term assessments that are used to check progress and what needs to be planned next. Use is made of school performance data to identify trends and weaknesses in knowledge and understanding. The management of the subject is sound and limited only by a lack of opportunities for the subject manager to monitor the work in the classroom to identify how the subject needs to develop.

ART

70. Little teaching of art was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on the lesson seen in Key Stage 1, discussions with pupils and staff, photographs, displays and examples of pupils' work. The evidence indicates that pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory gains in their learning and achieve standards that are typical for the age of seven. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good gains in their learning and achieve standards well above those typical for the age of eleven. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection at Key Stage 1, and is an improvement at Key Stage 2.

71. Pupils have experience of a range of media in Key Stage 1. They apply colour in pastel, chalk, paint and crayon. Reception pupils are given opportunities to explore colour, shape and pattern. Pupils develop satisfactory observational skills and produce still-life drawings of what they see, remember and imagine. Sketches of daffodils show a developing eye for detail, and paintings of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh are lively

and colourful. Younger pupils paint boldly, using vibrant colours, reflecting their interest in animals and people. Large sized collages of topics undertaken, such as 'Noah's Ark', 'The Creation', 'Wild Things' and 'Leyland's Farm', reflect a variety of techniques and increasing use of media. They paint lively and colourful portraits of themselves. Throughout the key stage, pupils develop their skills satisfactorily. Through a study of famous artists pupil learn new techniques. Reception pupils experiment with colour mixing in shades of blue and use their fingers to produce paintings in the style of the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai.

72. At Key Stage 2, standards in drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, sculpture and textiles are very good. Pupils express their own ideas and interpretations with increasing confidence and sophistication as they move through the key stage. They continue to develop their understanding of the formal elements of line, tone, pattern shape, texture and colour. They make very good progress as they acquire increasingly accurate skills and techniques and encounter an increasing variety of media, both two and three- dimensional. Older pupils talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about their work, revealing a perceptive eye for detail. They have a very good knowledge of sketching and the different methods used by artists to take colour -notes prior to their final work. They talk about the use of perspective by Mantegna and apply this knowledge when sketching from different angles, such as observed in their drawings on 'A Room'. They discuss, precisely, observational drawings and the types of pencils used in still life drawings of plant and flower arrangements and sheep's skulls, to produce shading techniques such as 'hatching' 'stippling' and 'continuous shading'. 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 produce very good paintings using the brush style of Monet and Paul Cézanne. Modelling skills are well developed as seen in the attractive Mother's Day salt-dough wreaths, large-scale clay coil-pots and papier-mâché imaginative trees modelled from mod-roc. Clothes designed and made in the Tudor style reflect the refinement of techniques and skills such as pleating, overlapping and cutting skills, and embroidered purses, wallets and pincushions, highlight pupils' good gains in learning.

73. In the one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory. There was a satisfactory balance of discussion and activities and pupils were given suitable opportunities to work independently with paint and collage. Pupils mixed primary colours to achieve tints, showed satisfactory brush control, and cut out competently in a responsible manner. At times, at Key Stage 1, their enthusiasm out-stripped their painting and cutting skills and little attention was given to finer detail.

74. Discussions with pupils reveal their enjoyment of art. They have very positive attitudes, and talk knowledgeably about their work. They appreciate the displays, which celebrate their individual achievement. In the lesson seen their behaviour was good and they worked independently, with enthusiasm and eagerness.

75. Productive links are formed with other subjects of the curriculum, such as the Roman shields and mosaics reflecting the study of the Romans and the making of peg-dolls to enhance pupils' work on the Victorians.

76. Currently there is no permanent co-ordinator of art, but the school makes very good use of the learning support assistant's high level of expertise. The subject provision has improved since the last inspection. Art is used well as a support subject for the other areas of the curriculum. For example, geometric patterns are created that allow pupils to demonstrate their mathematical skills. A policy and a good 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. The co-ordinator monitors the medium-term plans. The art displays throughout the school are of a high standard and enrich the learning environment. Resources are adequate and have improved since the last inspection. The Local Authorities Project Loan Service supplements the school's art reference books as the need arises. The school makes good use of the facilities readily available at the neighbouring high school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77. Little teaching of design and technology was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on the lesson seen in Key Stage 2, discussions with pupils and staff, photographs, displays and examples of pupils' work. The evidence indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory gains in their learning and achieve standards that are typical for the ages of seven and eleven. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection at Key Stage 1 and is a significant improvement at Key Stage 2. Planning shows that the key elements of design and technology are taught and that the statutory requirements are now met.

78. In Key Stage 1, pupils have opportunities to communicate through simple design drawings and show satisfactory skills in cutting sheet card and materials to a planned shape, using an appropriate range of joining techniques such as adhesive tape and glue. They work in a range of materials such as card, clay, food and textiles and make seasonal greetings cards, plate-puppets, clay candleholders, biscuits and material place mats. They build up their techniques of cutting, joining and measuring materials when they make three-dimensional structures such as knight's helmets and castles. Pupils have opportunities to use commercial construction materials such as Lego to make model vehicles, houses and ships.

79. By the end of the Key Stage 2, pupils have opportunities to experience a relevant range of activities in their work and make satisfactory gains in their learning. They decide what materials they will need and critically assess their work to see how they can improve their designs. Projects begin with sketched design plans and there is an accurate correlation between these and the finished products, such as the boxes made from a cube net. Older pupils build on skills previously acquired. They design and make attractive books for young children, with pages, which incorporate moving parts. They design a flower to specifications, make photo frames and peg dolls using suitable fabrics. Pupils build upon their previous knowledge by designing and making rigid structures and know how to incorporate materials into a structure to strengthen it. They make Tudor houses from wooden doweling and join it by using card triangles. Pupils designed, made and tested the strength of a variety of bridges and discussed what made them strong. Displays of finished products include the design and instruction sheets that identify the construction process. Planning shows that pupils have opportunities to incorporate control systems and electrical circuitry into their models, for instance by making a moving vehicle of their own choice. Pupils work with a satisfactory range of tools and materials. This is an improvement from the last inspection.

80. Very little direct teaching was seen, therefore no judgement on the overall quality of teaching can be made. From the evidence of the pupils' artefacts, teachers' understanding of the needs of the subject and of their pupils is satisfactory. Year 1 and 4 pupils observed making castles and Tudor houses worked sensibly and carefully. They made good progress in the making process and in the development of the appropriate skills.

81. Design and technology makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' cultural awareness and social skills. Pupils make Egyptian reed boats and Aztec feather shields and planning shows that pupils have opportunities to make a traditional English meal of their own choice or one from another country. They are given the opportunity to work together, to make decisions and solve problems. Satisfactory opportunities also exist for using literacy and numeracy skills when evaluating their work and their products and in measuring components.

82. A review of design and technology has taken place and considerable input has been injected into the subject to raise standards. The improvement since the last inspection is the result of a structured scheme of work, which offers good support to teachers, supported by a range of appropriate resources. Teachers have increased knowledge and confidence in the subject. The co-ordinator monitors the medium term plans and has begun to look at the pupils' project books to evaluate standards in design technology. The monitoring of classroom practice is not in place. Assessment of pupils' achievements in relation to the National Curriculum standards has begun and pupils are involved in the assessment process. Resources are satisfactory. The design and technology area allows pupils to work in appropriate surrounding with resources easily at hand. These are used well and appropriate regard is given to the safe use of equipment.

GEOGRAPHY

83. Pupils' attainment is at the expected level for pupils aged seven and eleven. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school.

84. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a good understanding of cultural differences. For example, in a lesson on Africa, they know that living conditions are not the same and that dress is different. They begin to develop skills in finding information for themselves. By the time pupils are seven years of age, they explain why different clothes are needed for different climates. They understand the places are different and that this affects the surroundings that people live in. They understand that different places have different patterns of seasonal change.

85. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop a sound awareness of the environment in which they live. They understand that it differs from a rural location. When studying an area in the Lake District, pupils in Year 4 know that factors such as population size and leisure activities have an influence on the way people live. Increasingly they become aware that conduct in the countryside requires people to pay attention to fire risk and the protection of wildlife. When pupils reach eleven years of age, they talk confidently in class about the damage that people can do to rivers. They demonstrate their investigation skills by describing, with sketches, notes and annotation, the condition of the local river and suggest ways in which improvements can be made. Producing pamphlets to bring the public's attention to river pollution further enhances individual research and learning skills. Pupils of this age have a sound grasp of map skills including symbols and compass points.

86. The quality of teaching in individual lessons is generally satisfactory with some good teaching evident. However, some unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Planning is sound with clear details of what is to be studied and how resources are to be used. Where teaching is judged to be good, pupils are immediately engaged in the lesson through brisk and stimulating discussion. An interesting variety of resources are used in these lessons and teachers have high expectations of the pace at which pupils should work. Consequently, there is an industrious, enthusiastic working atmosphere and pupils develop skills and

understanding significantly. The management of pupils is sound overall and pupils respond positively to well structured working routines. However, where there is unsatisfactory teaching, there is no consistent or effective method by which the teacher engages pupils in the lesson. Behaviour becomes unsatisfactory, with many pupils not involved in the learning.

87. The shortcomings in resources at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and are now adequate for the delivery of the curriculum and used well in lessons. There are useful schemes of work, significantly improved since the last inspection. These give good support to planning for day to day lessons. However, although the co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and he discusses future developments with enthusiasm, his role is still not fully developed, as there are no opportunities for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning so that future developments can be sharply focused. This issue has not been fully addressed since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

88. Attainment in history is in line with the standard expected for pupils aged seven years and eleven years. This represents a decline for pupils in Key Stage 1 but a maintained standard for pupils in Key Stage 2 when compared with the previous inspection. Satisfactory progress is made in the acquisition of historical enquiry skills and in knowledge of historical fact.

89. No direct teaching of history was seen in Key Stage 1. A limited amount of work was seen. Much of this involved the completion of worksheets. Pupils in Year 1 have studied castles and wrote about the legend of St. George and the dragon. For most pupils there was little evidence of the development of key skills or an understanding of chronology. However, more recently, there is evidence of pupils using their literacy skills to write down their observations and the use of artefacts to develop historical skills. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have studied a wide range of topics: from ancient civilisations, through the history of Britain to studies of recent times. Again, much of the work seen shows the influence of worksheets. However, pupils in Year 6 discuss eagerly the use they make of historical enquiry skills, their use of artefacts, researching from books and computers for school projects and questioning those who experienced World War Two as children. Year 5 pupils study the history of their own area, producing booklets on 'Old Westleigh' which show the influence of using 'living artefacts', people who remember former times in the area. Year 6 pupils are currently intrigued by their study of Ancient Greece making good cross-curricular links through music and physical education.

90. Although much work seen was the completion of worksheets, pupils show an interest in the work they do. Tasks are completed carefully and there is a good volume of work that indicates a willingness to concentrate and persevere. Particularly in Year 5 tasks are challenging and interesting. Marking in this year group shows a great deal of support for pupils. Throughout the school few tasks are designed for pupils of different ability. Pupils of different abilities frequently register their attainment by completing more or less worksheets to a better or poorer standard. However, there is a recent change and some teachers are making their higher expectations clear through demanding tasks which give pupils of all abilities opportunities to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding. There is a good scheme of work that is progressive and used consistently through the school provides support for the continuous development of skills.

91. The subject is managed effectively within the limitations of school arrangements for

subject managers. There are no formal arrangements at present for the assessment of pupil progress, although samples of completed work are kept. There are no opportunities for the subject manager to monitor teaching and learning although planning is monitored on a regular basis.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

92. By the time pupils are seven and eleven they achieve standards in information technology which are in line with those expected nationally. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Satisfactory gains in skills and knowledge are made through the school.

93. No lessons of information technology were seen during the week of inspection. Evidence was gathered from discussion with pupils and staff, teachers' planning, an analysis of pupils' work and observations of pupils working independently on computers.

94. Younger pupils use a computer to increase their understanding mathematics through adding objects on screen. They develop their skill in using the mouse and keyboard by identifying, pointing and clicking to achieve the desired outcome. They investigate the rate of growth of sunflowers, enter the data confidently, produce and print out bar charts of the results. By the age of seven, pupils draw flowers with the mouse in a variety of colours on the screen and print out their results. They write using a word processing program, editing the text and saving their work.

95. Pupils in Year 4 enter information about the number of people using a bus stop daily, and produce a bar chart from a simple spreadsheet. They retrieve information from questions about inventors and inventions from a CD-ROM. Pupils in Year 5 build on their understanding of spreadsheets to explore population and land area, producing a variety of charts from their findings. They use their computer skills in geography to gather data about the rainfall in parts of Africa. They analyse the results in charts and graphs printed out from the computer. Pupils in this year group demonstrate in a school assembly how to control lights and buzzers on a model in a predetermined way. By the age of eleven, pupils combine text and graphics in a study on Greece to produce informative displays and print out their work on a river study in a newspaper format using pictures, columns and headlines. They enhance their knowledge of Shakespeare by reading a passage from Romeo and Juliet, and answering questions in a computer simulation game that requires them to make decisions and predictions. They talk confidently about their use of computers in science, mathematics and art, describing ways in which their knowledge and understanding develops through these subjects.

96. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is sound overall and sometimes good. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop their skills and understanding in both key stages and successfully use their knowledge in many subjects. Teachers' planning is sound. Opportunities for assessment are provided against medium term planning objectives and pupils are monitored well to ensure that they have all the appropriate opportunities to work from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

97. Pupils are enthusiastic in their approach to the subject and work well independently. They demonstrate care and respect for equipment. They talk confidently about the work they have done. They have a great deal of interest in the subject.

98. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the subject throughout the school and is aware of the strengths and weakness. She is

conscious of what is needed to develop the future needs of the subject and is pursuing these aims actively. Resources are currently satisfactory. The imminent introduction of a computer suite will further enhance the provision for pupils' learning.

MUSIC

99. Attainment in music is in line with the standard expected for pupils aged seven years and eleven years. This is an improvement on the standards found at the time of previous inspection. Since the last inspection the school has benefited from considerable in-service training to raise the level of teacher knowledge, implemented suitable planning strategies and enhanced the level of resources. As a result pupils make satisfactory progress.

100. Pupils throughout the school learn to sing a range of songs for assembly. Singing is tuneful and words are clear. The tone is mostly quiet and although pupils concentrate on their singing, it is not characterised by great enthusiasm. The youngest pupils in the school read simple musical signs and symbols and play instruments in response to directions. They develop skills in working together and in listening carefully. Pupils in Year 2 improvise musical patterns, selecting and creating sounds and organising them into simple structures. They follow instructions and make sensible choices. Pupils in Year 5 work well together in moving towards the work expected in music for their age. They invent some quite complex rhythmical patterns. The music they invent is closely related to the work in geography studying African culture. By the end of the lesson there are some very polished call and response compositions. Pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about the range of their musical experience. They are less assured about listening and appraising, although they do consciously listen to the range of music played in assembly. However, they have some knowledge of composers, instruments of the orchestra and the use of different instruments for effect. They relate in lively fashion how they have looked at the music of ancient Greece in their history study and have composed and invented the notation for their own Olympic Games music.

101. The limited teaching seen was good overall and some was very good. The standards achieved in both key stages imply all teaching is at least satisfactory. Lessons are well structured and managed. Teacher knowledge is secure. The work pupils are expected to do interests and motivates them. As a result they respond well to musical opportunities.

102. A suitable policy and scheme of work inform the curriculum in music. The scheme of work is progressive but some patches in the balance of pupil knowledge indicate that school planning needs additional monitoring to ensure coverage of the full curriculum. The subject is now managed effectively. Priorities for development identified after the previous inspection have received sufficient attention. As a result standards have improved. School has obtained additional resources and storage facilities to ensure that the criticism of the previous inspection has been addressed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. Standards of attainment in physical education are in line with the standard expected when pupils are seven and eleven. This is similar to the standard identified at the time of previous inspection.

104. Despite some unsatisfactory teaching in the lessons seen, pupils in both key stages are clearly addressing the objectives for attainment when pupils are seven and eleven. They make satisfactory gains in their learning. Pupils in Year 1 collaborate with each other in their activities. Most send and receive a ball or beanbag successfully. They play simple games in pairs and small groups using balls and hoops. Pupils work sufficiently hard to consolidate existing skills. Pupils in Year 6 confirm their running skills altering speed, direction and use the skills in relay games. Pupils discuss the tactics they intend using in the relay. These pupils discuss with some enthusiasm the experiences they have had over the year: in movement and in games, particularly. They have less experience in gymnastics to talk about. They discuss how they are using ideas from their study of Ancient Greece to develop their own 'Olympic Games' for end of term. Some have participated in extra-curricular sport and demonstrate good spirit and sportsmanship discussing matches they have won and lost against local schools.

105. Although two lessons seen were unsatisfactory, the performance of pupils and their enthusiasm in discussing the knowledge, skills and understanding in physical education indicates a quality of teaching and learning which is generally satisfactory. Pupils acquire a broad range of skills, have opportunities to practice and refine and remain interested and motivated towards physical activities. In the lessons seen control of pupils on the school field was difficult. As a result there were examples of unsatisfactory behaviour. Significant numbers of pupils were unprepared for the lessons. The time allocated to lessons is long and this makes it difficult to sustain concentration, especially for younger pupils. Some aspects of physical education lessons were paid insufficient attention, suggesting a lack of teacher knowledge. For example, use was not always made of a suitable period of warming up at the beginning of intense activity, health and safety requirements and expectations were not made clear to pupils and there was insufficient use of pupil example and demonstration to illustrate good practice.

106. A suitable policy and scheme of work for physical education gives sufficient support to planning for lessons. The co-ordinator for physical education recently left the school. In the light of unsatisfactory lessons, replacement of the subject manager is an urgent priority. There has been insufficient recent training on the implications of the school policy for physical education and more needs to be done to enhance teacher expectations of the content of lessons. There are sufficient resources to maintain the standards of the subject. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school benefits from the use of a spacious field. Swimming is taught to pupils during their time in Key Stage 2. Extra-curricular sport gives an additional dimension to the subject. The school is successful in competitions against other schools.