

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S R C SCHOOL

Curzon Street, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyne

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106254

Headteacher: Mrs B Hayes

Reporting inspector: Mr J Morris
23696

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th December 2000

Inspection number: 224079

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Curzon Street Mossley Ashton-under-Lyne Lancashire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father P Tierney
Date of previous inspection:	10 th – 13 th December 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J Morris 23696	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art Physical education Special educational needs Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	The school's results and pupil's achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs S Bullerwell 12536	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ms R Webber 20645	Team inspector	English Science Design and technology Geography History Music Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school in Mossley, Lancashire. The school is smaller than average and at the time of the inspection there were 119 pupils in five classes from Reception to Year 6. Numbers have fallen in recent years due to local population changes. Approximately 65 per cent of the pupils are boys. Ten per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is broadly average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased this year and is above average at 23 per cent. Nineteen children attend the nursery in the afternoon only. All classes except the nursery and the Year 6 class have pupils from two year groups. Attainment on entry is variable but it is broadly average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some strong features. Standards are high at eleven years of age because the teaching is consistently good. Young children are provided with a good start at school. Leadership and management are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science are above average or higher.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics is consistently good.
- The headteacher provides good leadership to the work of the school. All other teachers make a significant contribution to school management and there is a very strong sense of teamwork.
- There is a good atmosphere for learning. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. Staff know and care for the pupils well and there are good relationships throughout the school community.

What could be improved

- Standards are not high enough in information and communication technology (ICT). They are below expectations throughout the school.
- Pupils, particularly the more able, are not given enough responsibility for their own learning.
- The school grounds are in an unsatisfactory state of repair and do not enhance the pupils' experience at school. The play area and equipment available to the children in the nursery and Reception in particular is inadequate.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996 and provision was found to be very good overall. The school has successfully maintained the many identified strengths. Satisfactory progress has been made in terms of the two key issues relating to teachers' planning and the assessment procedures. The staff have a satisfactory understanding of what the school needs to do next, and a strong commitment to improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	C	A	A*
mathematics	C	C	A	A*
science	D	C	B	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The size of the school and numbers of pupils in each year group are such that statistical data should be treated with caution.

This table shows that, in the 2000 national tests, 11-year-olds achieved well above average results in English and mathematics and above average results in science. Standards were very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science when compared with similar schools (on the basis of the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals). The school's results have broadly followed the national trend of improvement at age 11 with significant improvement in 2000. Analysis of the results achieved by 11-year-olds in 2000 and seven-year-olds in 1996 shows that this group of pupils made very good progress over those four years. Inspection evidence is that standards in 2001 are likely to be above average in English, mathematics and science but not as high as they were in 2000 and this matches the school's analysis of this group of pupils' standards. The school's results in 1999 and 2000 were better than the school predicted in the targets agreed with the local education authority. Realistic targets have been set for 2001.

There has been considerable variation in the standards achieved by seven-year-olds since 1996. Generally they have followed the national trend of improvement and they have been above or in line with the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2000 the results were average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics when compared with national figures. They were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics when compared with similar schools. This is due to the particular group of pupils and the small numbers involved rather than any shortcomings in the school's provision.

Attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average and all of the children achieve the recommended early learning goals by five years of age. Standards in ICT are below national expectations throughout the school. This is because pupils are not having enough experience of computers and other devices and the experiences they do have are not broad enough. Standards in art are above expectations throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children in the nursery and reception quickly settle into school routines. Pupils are very happy at school, listen carefully to their teachers and want to learn. They are polite and friendly.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is very good in lessons and at other times. There is no inspection evidence of bullying or significant conflict between pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils willingly carry out responsibilities. There are good relationships throughout the school. By the time they are 11 years of age pupils are mature and prepared well for their transfer to secondary school.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are above average. Absences are not recorded accurately.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Thirty-three lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these lessons, one hundred per cent were satisfactory or better, seventy-six per cent were good or better and nine per cent were very good. This amounts to consistently good teaching with no significant differences between year groups and classes. The school has effectively implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. All of the lessons seen in English and mathematics were good. The school has successfully overcome the difficulties of mixed age classes in literacy, particularly through the headteacher taking one group three days a week. The teaching in the new Foundation Stage for children up to the age of six is good overall and includes all of the very good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs are taught and learn well. All pupils learn well because they are interested in their work and try very hard. Pupils remember what they have done before and clearly explain what they are doing now. The teaching of more able pupils is satisfactory but teachers are not providing enough challenge for these pupils or giving them enough opportunities to make choices and decisions in their learning. At times teachers talk too much in the whole class parts of lessons and do not allow pupils to say enough about what they know, understand and think. Teaching and learning in ICT are unsatisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities which are relevant to the pupils. The planning and delivery of literacy and numeracy are effective. Planning for children up to six years of age pays due regard to the nationally recommended early learning goals. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities with a wide range of sporting activities, creative activities and other clubs during the year. The provision for ICT is unsatisfactory but there are good plans to improve resources and teaching.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils having difficulties in their learning are identified quickly and effective action is taken in accordance with the national Code of Practice for these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision is very good for moral development, good for social development and satisfactory for spiritual and cultural development. The school's close links with the Roman Catholic church and the teachers' high expectations of behaviour reflect the strong emphasis on Christian values in the school aims.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The health, safety and general welfare of pupils is good and staff care about the pupils. There are satisfactory procedures to assess what the pupils know, understand and can do in English, mathematics and science. The lack of external lighting and the playground surface are potential hazards to pupils, parents, staff and visitors.
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The school has a good partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong leadership. She knows the school and the community it serves very well and has a significant teaching commitment. The deputy headteacher and other staff work well as a team and make a significant contribution to the management of curricular developments.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Most of the governors have only been appointed this year. They provide good support to the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses but they tend to be over-reliant on guidance from the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school analyses available data from the statutory and optional National Curriculum tests and the local authority's assessment on entry to the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Specific grants are used well in accordance with the stated purpose. Funds have been used, for example, to provide booster classes, provide additional literacy support and support pupils with special educational needs.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate overall. However, the school grounds do not make a sufficient contribution to the pupils' learning, particularly the children in the nursery and reception.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Most parents say that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school. • Their child makes good progress. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school has high expectations. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. 	<p>A few parents say that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would like more information about their child's progress. • Their child does not get enough homework.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. The school provides good information about individual children's progress. The provision of homework is good throughout the school and in Years 5 and 6 prepares pupils well for secondary education.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The size of this school and the number of pupils in some year groups in particular are such that statistical data should be treated with caution. However, standards achieved by eleven-year-olds have improved in line with the national trend of improvement since 1996. There was significant improvement between 1999 and 2000. Attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average and all of the children achieve the recommended early learning goals by five years of age. Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. This results in all pupils achieving well in relation to their own ability and needs.
2. Eleven-year-olds achieved results well above the national averages in English and mathematics and above average in science in the 2000 National Curriculum tests compared with all schools. These results are very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science when compared with those achieved by pupils in similar schools (on the basis of the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals). Comparison of the results achieved by the same group of pupils when they were seven years old in 1996 and eleven years old in 2000 reflect very well on the work of the school over these four years. They show that these pupils made extremely good progress in English, very good progress in mathematics and good progress in science. Nationally girls do better than boys at primary school but analysis of this school's results between 1998 and 2000 shows that boys do slightly better than girls do in English, mathematics and science.
3. The results achieved by seven-year-olds in 2000 were broadly average in reading but below average in writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools they were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. There is substantial evidence that these results are due to the particular cohort of pupils rather than any significant weaknesses in the school's provision at this stage. Results were broadly average over the three-year period 1996 to 1999. They were above average in reading and mathematics in 1997 and well above average in reading and above average in writing in 1998.
4. Inspection evidence is that standards are above average in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 6. Standards are above average in English and mathematics and average in science Year 2.
5. Standards are average in speaking and above average in listening throughout the school. From a very young age, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and answer questions clearly and sensibly. This has a positive effect on their learning in all subjects. Reading and writing are taught well and all pupils achieve well in these key skills. Teachers promote reading and writing well in the literacy hour and take every opportunity to use these skills in other subjects such as science, history and art.
6. Standards are below average in ICT throughout the school because pupils do not have sufficient learning opportunities using modern equipment. Standards in art, particularly drawing skills, are above average throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have improved since the last inspection and are now very good and a strength of the school. They make an important contribution to the school's good atmosphere for learning and to the standards that pupils achieve.
8. Pupils have very good attitudes and enjoy coming to school. They are very good at listening to their teachers and each other. They are keen to learn and answer questions sensibly. For example, during a science lesson reception children and Year 1 pupils were eager to be chosen to be part of the demonstration on how shadows are formed and enthusiastically named different sources of light including the sun and lightning. They are interested in their work and concentrate well during lessons. These very good attitudes are due to the good teaching and the very good relationships that exist between pupils and staff.
9. Pupils' behaviour is very good both in class and around school. Pupils of all ages play happily together in the playground even though it is small with uninspiring markings and very little play equipment is available to them. They respond well to teachers' praise and the consistent expectations of all staff. Any misbehaviour is dealt with immediately and effectively. There was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection. One parent reported that her child had been bullied and that she was not happy with how the school had dealt with this. Several other parents stated that several incidents of bullying had been dealt with immediately. There have been no exclusions in the last fifteen years.
10. Pupils' personal development and relationships are good throughout the school. These are based on mutual trust, respect for others' feelings and a growing awareness of other cultures. Children start to develop confidence at an early age and are responsible for tidying away after themselves. Older pupils with responsibility as door and litter monitors carry out their duties willingly and efficiently. They are good role models for younger pupils.
11. Pupils' attendance is good. Rates of attendance are above the national average and this has been maintained since the last inspection. The majority of pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. The reasons for absence are not recorded consistently and accurately and, therefore, authorised and unauthorised absence figures are not accurate.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. Thirty-three lessons were observed during the inspection. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and, therefore, teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in one hundred per cent of the lessons. Teaching and learning were good or better in seventy-six per cent of lessons and very good in nine per cent. There are no significant variations in the quality of teaching between classes and year groups in the school. The teaching of children up to the age of six in the nursery and reception year is good overall and includes all of the very good lessons seen. A key feature of the teaching with these young children is the high quality of the relationships and expectations that children should enjoy learning.
13. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in ICT. They were satisfactory and good respectively in the two lessons where discrete ICT were taught. However,

discussions with pupils and examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning show that pupils are not having enough learning experiences in any aspect of the subject other than word processing. This is primarily due to inadequate resources and there are good plans to rectify this deficiency. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in music but there is a weakness in the teachers' knowledge of this subject.

14. Teachers have good knowledge of the other subjects of the primary curriculum and present accurate facts and information in the whole class part of lessons. Good learning results because the pupils listen carefully to their teachers and work hard on set tasks. Throughout the school teachers expect pupils to behave well and work hard. Because the pupils enjoy school and respect their teachers, there is a good atmosphere for learning in all classes.
15. The school has successfully implemented the national primary initiatives in literacy and numeracy and all of the lessons seen in English and mathematics were good. The school initially experienced considerable difficulties implementing the literacy hour in most classes because they include two year groups of pupils. These have been largely overcome and a significant factor is that the headteacher makes a considerable commitment to the teaching of pupils up to seven years of age. Teachers plan well for the needs of different groups of pupils both by age and ability.
16. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well because teachers include them in all learning activities but often provide them with separate tasks which are well matched to their abilities and needs, particularly in English and mathematics. Support staff make a significant contribution to the progress that these pupils make. Good use is made of available funding to provide additional literacy support, particularly for a group of pupils in Year 3.
17. Within this consistently good teaching there are nevertheless some weaknesses. Teachers have a tendency to talk too much in the whole class part of lessons and they do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to show what they understand or to express their own opinions. When pupils are asked to answer questions in these sessions they do so well. They are interested in their work and demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of their own learning. During individual tasks, there is sometimes a lack of significant challenge for the more able pupils.
18. These two factors limit pupils' learning to some extent because they are not allowed to explore ideas for themselves, solve problems or carry out research. This is not always the case and, for instance, good examples of pupils learning well through making up and solving their own problems were seen in mathematics in Year 2. Although good examples of pupils completing investigative work were seen in mathematics and science, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to carry out investigative and research activities in science, ICT and design and technology.
19. There is good provision for homework throughout the school which is gradually increased and broadened in content as pupils get older. In Year 6, in particular, pupils are prepared well for their transfer to High School through frequent homework tasks in English and mathematics and occasional tasks in other subjects. For example, art homework was set during the inspection. The considerable range of after school clubs also make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning in many subjects including art, music, ICT and sporting activities.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and generally well balanced and meets the recommendations in the new Foundation Stage for children up to six years of age, the legal requirements of the National Curriculum and the diocesan agreed syllabus for religious education. However, some important aspects of ICT are not sufficiently covered. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The school has no formal personal, social or sex education policy or guidelines although important aspects of personal, social and health education are effectively covered through lessons in science and religious education. A drugs misuse policy is currently in the process of being implemented.
21. The school appropriately takes into account the age, gender and the different abilities of its pupils, all of whom have equal access to all of the learning opportunities offered by the school. The school effectively plans for the different groups of pupils by both age and ability in the mixed aged classes. For example, in classes for pupils up to the age of seven, the organisation of the literacy hour has been very carefully structured in order to cater for mixed age classes and this has effectively ensured that pupils are working at an appropriate rate and level. There is good equality of opportunity in physical education such as during the rugby lesson observed during the inspection.
22. The school uses the national guidelines well in most subjects to produce subject policies and planning guidelines. Subject and curriculum medium-term planning has developed well since the last inspection. Curriculum guidelines clearly identify what needs to be taught from one year to the next in most subjects. However, curriculum guidelines are unsatisfactory in ICT, design and technology and music. They do not provide enough information for teachers about what should be taught and when in the different aspects of these subjects.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils having difficulties are identified quickly and class teachers liaise well with the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school makes use of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for all pupils on its register of special educational needs. This is good practice and goes beyond that recommended in the national Code of Practice. Class teachers have the main responsibility for planning work to help pupils achieve the targets in their IEPs and very good use is made of competent support staff during lessons. The school is involved in the local education authority's inclusion activities and at the time of the inspection was making good provision for a small number of pupils with specific special educational needs who had previously attended special schools or been excluded from other primary schools.
24. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. School clubs have a positive impact on standards in many subjects such as physical education, music, art and ICT. Extra-curricular activities are well attended and pupils are able to take part in a range of activities such as the two choirs, and chess, art and computer clubs. During the school year there are sporting activities outside normal school hours in athletics, badminton, cricket, football and cross country.
25. The school has established sound links with the community in order to enhance and support the curriculum. For example, both a nurse and a postman have come into school in order to talk to younger pupils about their work in geography and Year 6 pupils sometimes visit the local public library. The school has established strong links

with the local Roman Catholic church and this effectively supports the pupils' religious education and spiritual development. Good links exist with the main receiving secondary school and there are effective arrangements to support the pupils' transition to the next stage of their education.

26. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development, good provision for their social development and satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. The pupils' spiritual development is promoted well through daily acts of worship, religious education and assemblies. The school places a strong emphasis on prayer throughout the school day. However, insufficient time is given for pupils to think about and reflect further on the theme of the day, particularly in assemblies. The school has developed a positive relationship with the local Roman Catholic church and the priest often leads acts of worship, including masses, both in school and at church. Through assemblies and religious education pupils gain a good understanding of Christian values and beliefs. There are some opportunities for spiritual development in other subjects such as science and ICT but planned provision in other National Curriculum subjects is limited.
27. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Adults throughout the school provide good role models for pupils and great care is taken to promote positive relationships within the school community. Class rules are prominently displayed in classrooms and all adults consistently and effectively promote the school's code of conduct. Pupils are taught and understand right from wrong. Staff also reward good work, effort and behaviour effectively.
28. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Care and consideration for others is promoted effectively by the school. Many pupils show care for each other and older pupils support and interact well with younger pupils. For example, older pupils are expected to look after younger pupils and a welcoming letter written by Year 6 pupils to new pupils attending the school supports the pupils' awareness of the feelings of others. Fundraising for a range of charities, including children in care and overseas aid organisations, provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to consider the needs of other people both in this country and abroad. Planned visits to various places of interest, including a residential visit to Boreatton Park for Years 5 and 6 pupils contribute significantly to the pupils' social development. Older pupils are given responsible jobs such as door and litter duty at playtimes and they willingly help their teacher with classroom organisation. However, there are not enough examples of pupils of all ages being encouraged to carry out such tasks. Overall there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning across the curriculum and engage in personal research and enquiry.
29. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through visits to historical places of interest, museums and the theatre and studies of the local area. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about other cultures in geography, history, art and religious education. For example, in art pupils create patterns based on traditional Hindu work as part of the school's celebration of the Hindu festival of Diwali. Although the school does recognise other cultures in its work, there are too few opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop an awareness of other world cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school pays good attention to the health, safety and general welfare of the pupils. Staff are dedicated to the care of all pupils and know them extremely well. There are good procedures for dealing with accidents and specialist medical issues. Child protection arrangements are effective. A governor informally monitors health and safety issues within school and risk assessments are carried out. However, the grounds have some unsafe features that need attention. The school does not make use of a visitors' book so it could not accurately account for everyone in school if evacuation of the premises were necessary.
31. The school has good procedures for promoting attendance and good behaviour and for deterring and dealing with bullying. Pupils help to write the class rules at the beginning of each school year and staff have clear and consistent expectations of good behaviour. Certificates are awarded weekly to members of each class to raise self-esteem, celebrate personal achievements and to motivate pupils to always do their best. Staff know pupils well and the personal support and guidance they give contribute to the good standards that pupils achieve.
32. Satisfactory progress has been made in the procedures for supporting pupils' academic progress, which was a key issue in the last inspection. Good policies for the marking of pupils' work by teachers and assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress are now in place. Informal assessment in the nursery, assessment on entry to the reception class (baseline assessment), national assessment tests at seven and eleven years of age and the optional standardised tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 are used to track pupils' progress. Assessment is at least satisfactory in English, mathematics and science but no formal assessment is carried out in the other subjects. Teachers have not collected examples of pupils' work to assist them when comparing and confirming the levels of work that pupils achieve. Teachers record what pupils have covered in the curriculum and use end of unit tests to show what they have understood, but these are not systematically used to help teachers determine what pupils need to do to improve. Good practice was seen in English in Years 1 and 2, where small step targets are set regularly and these are shared with pupils to help them make gains in their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. Overall, the school has a good partnership with parents and this has a positive impact on the pupils' education. Parents have very positive views of the school. What parents like most about the school is that their children are happy, are helped to be mature and responsible and make good progress. They say the school is well led and managed, teaching is good and they feel happy to approach the school with any concerns. Staff expect pupils to do their best and achieve a good standard of behaviour. Inspection findings confirm parents' positive views of the school.
34. A very small number of parents do not feel well informed about their child's progress, do not agree with the amount of homework children receive and would like the school to work more closely with them. Inspectors did not find evidence to support these views. Parents receive verbal reports on their child's progress each term and a written report at the end of the year outlining individual strengths and weaknesses. They receive a range of factual information including the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. Reading records are used as a link between parents and teachers and show parents give very good support with pupils' reading at

home. Some classes provide a newsletter at the beginning of the year with the topics to be taught. Homework is within the range found nationally and contributes to the good standards pupils achieve.

35. A few parents and friends are actively involved in helping in the school and give good support. For instance, one parent who is a nurse talks to children as part of the topic 'Ourselves'. Some parents and grandparents provide support in the classroom by preparing learning materials or supporting pupils with individual tasks. There is an active home-school association which organises events and raises funds to buy learning resources such as hymn books and computers. Parents value these events as social occasions for the whole of the school community, for example when parents, pupils and teachers completed a sponsored walk. The majority of parents give good support to their children at home and have a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve, even though less than twenty per cent of parents have signed the home-school agreement to work in partnership with the school to raise their child's achievement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36. Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff is good overall. The headteacher has over 30 years teaching experience and the deputy headteacher over 20 years teaching experience. They have been in their current roles for fifteen and eight years respectively. The school benefits from this wealth of experience at the senior level and particularly their knowledge of the local area and familiarity with pupils throughout the school. All teachers have at least one significant responsibility and carry these out responsibly and effectively. There is a strong sense of teamwork and co-operation within this small staff.
37. The school has a clear set of aims and there is substantial evidence that these are achieved very well. It is surprising that there is no statement relating to academic standards in these aims. The teachers are clearly committed to promoting the development of all aspects of each individual pupil and they are largely successful in achieving this aim including the pupils' academic development.
38. The school has an enthusiastic and supportive group of governors. Overall they fulfil their role satisfactorily but tend to be over-reliant on guidance from the headteacher. Taking into account the fact that many of them have been appointed this school year, the governors demonstrate considerable potential for being highly effective in the future. The governors have a good understanding of their accountability for the performance of the school. They already have a good understanding of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and individuals have attended training courses and become involved in literacy, numeracy and special educational needs provision.
39. An appropriate action plan was drawn up following the previous inspection and there has been satisfactory improvement in terms of the two main key issues related to teachers' planning and assessment procedures. The school has successfully maintained the many good features identified at the time of the last inspection and implemented the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. The school has a good improvement plan for 2000/01 and this includes extensive plans to improve provision and raise standards in ICT which are identified as weaknesses in this inspection. Targets are properly costed and individuals responsible for each target are identified.

40. The headteacher carries out careful, detailed analysis of the results of the National Curriculum tests of seven- and eleven-year-olds and optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. This information is used to set realistic targets and the school exceeded these in 1999 and 2000.
41. The arrangements for staff development are very good in terms of the availability and take up of courses. As in many primary schools these initiatives have focused on literacy and numeracy developments over the past two or three years. Nevertheless, members of staff have attended a considerable number of other short courses during the past two years. The teachers and support staff do know each other and the pupils well. They frequently discuss teaching and learning in each other's classes and their areas of responsibility. Co-ordinators examine their colleagues' planning and pupils' completed work. However, the numbers of teachers and organisation of classes means that there are very few opportunities for the headteacher to provide time for class teachers to carry out their subject and other responsibilities during the school day. Consequently, there are insufficient opportunities for subject co-ordinators to observe or work alongside colleagues in the classroom.
42. The management of the school's finances is satisfactory overall. The school uses specific grants well for the intended purpose. For example, available funds have been used to raise standards in literacy and numeracy through staff training, 'booster classes' in literacy and numeracy and additional literacy support. However, the current governing body inherited a considerable surplus in the school budget. The balance carried forward from 1999/00 into 2000/01 was 17 per cent and the projected figure for next year is 12 per cent. The headteacher and chair of governors recognise the first of these figures is far too high and, since a discussion at a governors' meeting in March 2000, significant sums have already been spent to benefit pupils currently attending the school. Day-to-day administration is good and ensures smooth running of the school. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.
43. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum but there are some considerable deficiencies. The school staff work effectively to overcome these difficulties and demonstrate considerable commitment in maintaining standards in the light of some of the working conditions. The staff room is very small for the number of staff, there is a lack of adequate storage space and there are no additional rooms beyond the school hall, classrooms and small library. Classrooms are adequate for the number of pupils and learning resources are generally adequate with some good resources available in English and mathematics including for pupils with special educational needs. Resources for ICT are inadequate. Although ICT is used well in classroom display, insufficient use is made of modern technology in many aspects of the school's work such as financial management and to support pupils' learning in different subjects.
44. The condition of the school grounds constitutes a deficiency in the accommodation and learning resources which does have a negative impact on learning. The area specifically allocated for use by the nursery is in a poor state of repair. Physical access to the available outside equipment for these particular children is extremely problematic for the staff. The playground surface and markings and the school grounds in general do not enhance the pupils' experience at school. The damage to some parts of the playground surface, lack of outside lighting and sloping nature of the path leading from the school to the playground and gates require urgent attention as they constitute a potential danger to pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. The staff and governors should now:

Raise standards in ICT by *

- increasing the number and quality of computers and programmes;
- providing many more opportunities for pupils to learn about the different uses of modern technology including the use of CD-Rom and the Internet for research;
- developing staff skills.
(Paragraphs 6, 13, 20, 22, 39, 43, 94–97)

Give pupils more responsibility for their own learning by:

- setting more tasks where pupils have to choose how to use what they know to solve problems and find out more about their work;
- providing separate tasks for the more able more often;
- Including more opportunities for pupils to develop investigation skills, particularly through group work in science and design and technology;
- allowing pupils to contribute more to whole-class discussions;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility.
(Paragraphs 17-18, 28, 53, 65, 66, 74, 78, 79, 90, 104)

Improve the school grounds by:

- as a matter of urgency, repairing the damaged areas of the playground and installing external lighting;
- re-surfacing all of the playground, especially the nursery area, as soon as possible;
- as time and finances allow, developing the school grounds as a learning resource.
(Paragraphs 9, 30, 44, 48)

** The school has a good subject action plan in place to address this issue*

Minor points

46. The staff and governors should now:

- Find ways of providing more time for subject co-ordinators to monitor classroom practice. (paragraph 41)
- Record the reasons for pupil absences accurately. (paragraph 11)
- Improve provision in music by developing staff knowledge. (paragraphs 13, 22, 100).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

33

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	67	24	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	9	119
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	27

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	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	12	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	15	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (80)	84 (87)	95 (93)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	11
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	15	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (80)	89 (100)	89 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	12
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	29	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (82)	93 (65)	90 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	11	12
	Girls	15	13	15
	Total	22	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (71)	80 (71)	90 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	23.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	9

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	285,597
Total expenditure	279,298
Expenditure per pupil	1,981
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,429
Balance carried forward to next year	50,728

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate = 37%

Number of questionnaires sent out	139
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	35	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	50	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	40	4	6	2
The teaching is good.	71	25	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	29	13	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	48	44	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	37	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	37	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	21	4	0	15

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

47. The school makes good provision for children in the new Foundation Stage. This includes the children who attend the nursery part-time (afternoons only) and the reception children in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is broadly average although there is considerable variation particularly in language and social skills. Children make satisfactory progress and achieve the early learning goals in all of the six areas of learning by the time they are five years old. The teaching and learning in these two classes is good overall and it was within the range from satisfactory to very good in eight lesson observations. Two qualified nursery nurses, who both work elsewhere in the school in the mornings, manage the nursery very well. Activities are planned well in accordance with the nationally recommended early learning goals in both classes. The promotion of the key skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing and number is evident in many different activities and these are developed very well. Less able children, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs, are supported well and make good progress.
48. There are good relationships between the staff and parents and parents are particularly welcome in the nursery at the start and end of each session. There is a satisfactory assessment of children on entry to the nursery and there are appropriate plans to develop the ongoing assessment procedures. These are in the form of a pictorial checklist which is completed when children achieve skills but they do not effectively record the children's progress at present because individual items are not dated or coded in some other way for this purpose. Good use is made of the local education authority's baseline assessment in the Reception year. Classroom resources are adequate in quantity and quality and the staff use them very well. However, the outside area of the playground used by the nursery children is poor and the available equipment for outside activities is barely adequate and it is difficult for the staff to access and move around.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. Teaching and learning are very good. The nursery staff are successful in enabling the children to settle quickly into school routines and developing positive attitudes to learning. The children enjoy school and behave well. All of the children follow adults' instructions quickly. They learn how to make choices and share toys and equipment. Most of the children stay on a chosen activity for a reasonable length of time. The nursery nurses know the few children who tend to flit from one activity to another and sensitively encourage them not to do so. Children show imagination in their play activities and, for example, there are very fast, loud fire fighters in the class! At the time of the inspection, the children were preparing for their Nativity Play and, during class activities, some children dressed up as the characters. One girl was very concerned about putting the right clothes on in the right order and right way when pretending to be Mary.
50. Personal development is consolidated in the Reception year and these children work well both on their own activities and alongside the older Year 1 pupils particularly in whole-class discussions. There are very good relationships between children and adults in both classes.

Communication, language and literacy

51. Teaching and learning are very good. By the age of five children listen very well and respond to the teacher's questions about books well. They know the different parts of a book, such as the cover, and turn the pages one a time. A few know what an author is. All children use pictures to help them understand the meaning of a story and are beginning to express their understanding and interpretations well, such as a character being warm because he has a short-sleeved vest on. Most children know the names and sounds of the letters of the alphabet, read simple words and sentences and know that names begin with a capital letter. The teacher uses questioning very well to develop their understanding and vocabulary.
52. Children in the nursery are making good progress in early reading and writing skills. More able children are writing their own name independently by the end of their first term at school and others are copying or writing over given words. They speak clearly in complete sentences such as 'tidying up is very hard'.

Mathematical development

53. Teaching and learning are good. Five-year-olds count well to twenty and beyond and are beginning to understand simple adding and taking away. In a lesson on shape and pattern, children were learning the names and properties of several different two-and three-dimensional shapes. Children were learning how to continue a given pattern and to make their own patterns using shapes and colours. All of the children participated in the six different activities provided and they were very involved and interested. Some children made considerable gains in learning that some three-dimensional shapes are made up from different two-dimensional shapes such as triangles and rectangles. However, the adults did not extend the understanding of the more able children by asking them to make a more complicated pattern.
54. Children in the nursery learn how to count to at least ten and begin to recognise some numbers. They know shapes such as circle, square and triangle and a range of colours. They know the days of the week and say them in order.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. Teaching and learning are good. By the age of five, children are prepared well for their National Curriculum work in subjects such as science and geography. For example, they know what a globe is and how the position of the sun affects the seasons of the year. Children name a good range of different sources of light and know that the sun is a sphere shape. They know that the sun can burn their skin and that 'it gets colder when the sun is behind a cloud'. Some children are very clear in stating that plants grow towards the light. During this lesson, children acquired good new knowledge and understanding about shadows. Children know the names of different fruit and vegetables.
56. Children recognise features of pictures from the Victorian era as being different to today and describe them as being 'from a long, long time ago'. They also know that Jesus was born many years ago and one suggests that this may be hundreds of years. Prayers are an important part of the classroom routines and children treat this seriously.

57. The children learn how to use the mouse and keyboard to carry out simple tasks on the computer such as drawing a picture or dressing a teddy. They build houses and towers and make cars and other vehicles using construction kits. In the nursery the children recognise it is too warm to snow and suggest they could make a snowman out of play-dough or cotton wool. The children explain what happens when they mix the ingredients in simple cooking activities.

Physical development

58. Teaching and learning are good. The Reception children demonstrate broadly average skills in simple games in the school hall. They really enjoy a wide range of activities on a theme of running and chasing and participate with great energy and enthusiasm without getting over-excited. The teacher provides frequent, high quality feedback to many individuals during the lesson and successfully involves all children in all the games by maintaining a good pace and frequently changing the activities.
59. The children in the nursery are developing basic physical skills such as running, jumping, hopping and balancing. This is achieved partly through their own curiosity and partly through the direction of the staff who provide a satisfactory range of outside activities in spite of the shortcomings in the accommodation and resources.

Creative development

60. Teaching and learning are good. Children in reception develop basic skills such as cutting, glueing and sticking, threading, drawing and painting. They use brushes, objects and their fingers to make patterns.
61. Children in the nursery are beginning to draw recognisable figures with the main body parts and some facial features. More able children include more detail such as eyebrows. They use paintbrushes and crayons to make pictures. All the children join in with group songs and action rhymes enthusiastically and they explore instruments to see what different sounds they can make. Individual children clap a rhythm pattern to their first name or both of their names and count the claps.

ENGLISH

62. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds and seven-year-olds have been maintained since the last inspection when they were found to be above average throughout the school. The current Year 6 pupils are above average. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 the results achieved were well above the national average and when compared with those achieved by pupils in similar schools they were very high. Over the three years 1998 to 2000, the performance of pupils in English was well above the national average for both boys and girls.
63. Standards achieved by the current Year 2 pupils are above average. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds in the 2000 National Curriculum tests were below the national average. The pupils' performance in reading was close to the national average and in writing it was below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the results in both the reading and writing tests were below average. Over the three years 1998 to 2000, the performance of boys in reading was in line with the national average and below the national average in writing. The performance of girls in these tests exceeded the national average in both reading and writing.

64. Throughout the school, standards in speaking are in line with national expectations. In all lessons, not just English, pupils are keen to answer questions and show that they can express their ideas and opinions clearly and precisely. During a whole school assembly, junior pupils showed confidence when speaking in front of a large audience. Attainment in listening is above the national average at both key stages. Pupils listen very attentively in many different situations and follow instructions accurately and this supports their learning effectively in many subjects across the curriculum.
65. All groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well in their reading throughout the school and by the age of eleven standards are above the national average. Teachers promote reading skills effectively during literacy lessons and in many other subjects across the curriculum. For example, in science and history lessons, Year 6 pupils were encouraged to read a range of different types of texts to support their learning. Home reading and the frequent use of home reading diaries by both parents and teachers also contribute significantly to the good progress pupils make. However, for some pupils in Years 1 and 3 the texts that they read are not always sufficiently challenging to enable them to make even better progress.
66. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in writing and standards of attainment are above the national average by the age of eleven. Year 6 pupils use a range of punctuation such as commas, apostrophes and speech marks confidently and accurately. Year 2 pupils write simple stories using sensible complete sentences which are usually appropriately demarcated with capital letters and full stops. In handwriting, letters are usually correctly formed and consistent in size by the age of seven. By the age of eleven pupils' handwriting is joined, clear and fluent. Teachers ensure that pupils make good progress in spelling through regular spelling tests and spelling by most pupils is generally accurate. Overall, teachers effectively promote literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils wrote about their visit to a local Tudor House and Year 6 pupils wrote letters about the sinking of the Titanic. Although these good examples of writing for different purposes were seen in history, generally opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects are restricted. This is because teachers too often give pupils worksheets that require brief written responses such as one word or short phrased answers. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in poetic and descriptive writing and use a good range of vocabulary for interest and effect.
67. The quality of teaching is good. The school has very successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. In mixed age classes work is suitably planned to meet the needs of not only different age groups but also for pupils with different abilities. Lessons are well organised and structured and the headteacher takes three lessons a week to reduce the number of mixed age classes. Reading is taught well through a wide range of learning activities and making good use of different teaching methods, such as shared and guided reading. Teachers skilfully question pupils about the texts they are reading and this develops their knowledge and understanding well. Good resources are used effectively by teachers to support pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use demonstrations effectively to teach new skills and develop pupils' understanding of spelling rules. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Behaviour is very good because the pupils are keen to learn and the teachers have very clear expectations.
68. Co-ordination is satisfactory and planning is good. The school effectively analyses both statutory and non-statutory tests in order to monitor standards in the subject. The information gained from such assessments effectively supports future target

setting. Work in other subjects such as art and history effectively develops the pupils' reading and writing skills. In Years 1 and 2, teachers set small step learning targets for individual pupils and assess when these have been achieved. This successfully helps the pupils to understand what they need to learn next to make good progress in literacy. Resources for the subject are good but the school library is insufficiently used to promote research skills.

MATHEMATICS

69. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 were well above the national average and very high when compared with those of similar schools. Ninety-four per cent of the pupils achieved the expected level (National Curriculum Level 4) or above and forty-seven per cent achieved the higher level (National Curriculum Level 5). Standards have improved broadly in line with the national trend in mathematics since 1996 and there was a significant jump between 1999 and 2000. When the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in 2000 are compared with those achieved by seven-year-olds in 1996, it is very clear that this group of pupils have made significant progress over those four years.
70. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 were below the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. These results were due to the particular group of pupils and did not arise as a result of any significant weaknesses in the school's provision. Over the four years 1996-1999 standards were broadly in line with national averages.
71. Inspection evidence is that standards are currently above average at both age seven and age eleven. This is because teaching and learning are good throughout the school and the school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. For these reasons and also because these are different groups of pupils it is likely that the results in the 2001 tests will not be so good at eleven years of age as they were in 2000 but that they will be much improved at seven years of age.
72. All pupils in Year 6 have very well organised numeracy folders with a very good amount of completed work including substantial homework in mathematics. Nearly all pupils are in line to achieve the expected level in the National Curriculum tests, as they did last year, but it is unlikely that fifty per cent will achieve the higher level again this year. Pupils are confident in number tasks using large numbers and write these correctly as words. All pupils successfully complete long multiplication problems and add and subtract decimal numbers accurately. Pupils understand what equivalent fractions are and explain what numerator and denominator mean with considerable clarity.
73. Pupils in Year 2 are achieving well in number and shape work and about a third of the group are working at the level above that expected of seven-year-olds (National Curriculum Level 3) which only a tenth achieved in 2000. Pupils know how to solve the same problem in different ways, for example, when making a given amount of money with different coins. All pupils add and subtract simple numbers and are beginning to understand simple division. More able pupils measure in centimetres very accurately and add and subtract using tens and units. Average and lower attaining pupils have made substantial gains because they have completed a lot of work and the teacher has provided written comments to help them understand what they need to do next. Although they are using smaller numbers than the more able pupils, they demonstrate good understanding of their own learning through making up

and solving their own sums and discovering patterns such as even numbers on a number grid.

74. Teaching and learning are good. They were good in all four lessons seen and these judgements were reinforced by the examination of pupils' work particularly in Years 2 and 6. The standards of marking are always at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. There is a very good balance in the range of work and mathematical methods in the pupils' exercise books and worksheets including investigative and practical mathematics activities. Lessons are planned well in accordance with the National Numeracy Strategy and teachers have very high expectations of behaviour. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use mathematical language accurately in whole-class activities. Work is frequently matched very well to the needs of the majority of the pupils in the class and appropriate separate tasks provided for less able pupils and those with particular special educational needs. However, teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging tasks for the more able pupils.
75. The deputy headteacher is an effective mathematics co-ordinator. Under his leadership, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and both learning resources for pupils and planning materials for teachers have been developed well.

SCIENCE

76. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils achieved results above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the target level for their age (Level 4) was close to the national average and the percentage of pupils achieving standards above expectations (Level 5) was well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools the performance of pupils was well above average. The results achieved by boys and girls have exceeded the national average over the three years 1998-2000. The 2000 teacher assessments of seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils achieving the target level for their age (Level 2) was close to the national average. However, the number of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) was well below the national average.
77. This inspection finds that the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are above the national average and the standards achieved by seven-year-olds are in line with the national average. All pupils make good progress as they move from class to class, including those pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers promote a good balance between different aspects of the subject and consequently pupils acquire a good knowledge and understanding of life and physical processes and materials and their properties. For example, Year 6 pupils show a good understanding about the functions of different organs of the human body and talk knowledgeably about the function of the heart. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 begin to understand that exercise increases the heart rate. Year 2 pupils successfully investigate how to make a simple circuit and know that the battery is the source of power and that the electricity it produces travels through wires. Year 1 pupils identify different light sources.
78. By the age of 11, pupils have a good understanding of the need to vary some factors and keep others fixed in order to devise and carry out a fair test. However, juniors make slower progress in developing investigation skills. This is because the teachers often give too much direction to pupils when asking them to carry out experiments and this limits and restricts the pupils' opportunities to devise and find out their own ways of conducting and recording their investigations scientifically.

79. The quality of teaching is good and the co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership to developments in science. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and promote the use of specific scientific vocabulary effectively in lessons. A good scheme of work gives helpful guidance to teachers and effectively supports their planning in the subject. This provides a good balance between all elements of learning. Teachers organise lessons effectively and manage pupils well. Resources are well prepared and used to support learning. Teachers pay good attention to safety in lessons and pupils are encouraged to handle equipment, substances and materials with care. Skilful questioning allows pupils of all abilities to contribute to discussions and teachers consolidate and build on previous learning effectively. In the best lessons, a brisk pace and appropriately challenging tasks result in pupils learning new facts and developing new skills. The teaching is less successful when planned experiments and investigations are too teacher directed and stage managed to allow sufficient opportunities for pupils to devise and develop their own scientific lines of enquiry.

ART

80. It was only possible to observe one lesson. The examination of pupils' work shows that standards are above average at both seven and eleven years of age. At the time of the previous inspection standards were found to be above average at age seven and broadly average at age eleven. The school has a new co-ordinator for art who is clearly an enthusiast for the subject and there are strong indications that standards will be maintained and possibly improved in the future. Sketchbooks are used well throughout the school. The after school art club makes a positive contribution to the development of pupils' skills and their appreciation of art. Some opportunities are being missed to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of art from around the world.
81. Pupils in Year 6 were learning well in an extended project on the use of perspective and scale in drawing. Teaching and learning were good in the one lesson seen and all pupils responded positively to tasks which many of them found much more challenging than they thought they were going to be. This resulted in good development of observational skills. A range of work was on display in classrooms, the hall and corridor. This showed good drawing and average painting skills in Years 3, 4 and 5. There were some good quality observational drawings using charcoal in Year 5.
82. Examination of the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed that they completed a good range and amount of work this school term. Their sketchbooks contain examples of the use of several different art media such as painting, pencil and chalk drawing and wax etching. The quality of their work in these books and on display is good. Some very pleasing pieces of work were seen which featured expressive drawing and good use of vivid colours. There are several examples of good use of writing in their sketchbooks either planning what they intend to do or describing their completed work. All of this work is marked and there are some very high quality written comments by the teacher.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. It was not possible to observe any design and technology lessons and, therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, evidence was obtained from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and through discussions with both pupils and teachers.
84. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject as they move through the school and, by the ages of seven and eleven, they achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. At the time of the last inspection standards were reported to be above expectations.
85. From an early age pupils learn design skills well. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils make mask and card designs and carefully compile a list of materials they intend to use. Design skills are effectively further developed between seven and eleven years of age. In Year 4 pupils bake a cake and make a plan of how it might be decorated as a face. They clearly list the materials that they intend to use, such as sweets and chocolate drops to depict the eyes and hair. Year 6 pupils make plans of bridges before constructing them. However, these plans lack some detail in terms of scale and measurement for the different component parts.
86. Pupils develop a range of techniques and skills through the use of a variety of materials such as wood, construction kits, card, junk materials and clay. For example, in Year 2 pupils fit together construction materials to make wheeled toys and they successfully mould and handle clay to make a candle holder. In Years 3 and 4 pupils effectively design and make picture frames out of strong card and use tissue paper in order to decorate and finish the product.
87. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. Resources for the subject are adequate and they are used effectively by teachers to support learning. Guidelines to support teachers' planning for the subject are underdeveloped and this results in planning that does not sufficiently identify what needs to be taught from one year to the next. The school is aware of this and intends to review the subject guidelines against national exemplar materials.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

88. It was only possible to observe one lesson in each of these subjects during the inspection. However, further evidence, from the examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils, indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the ages of seven and eleven, achieve standards in line with expectations in both subjects. At the time of the last inspection attainment was reported to be above national expectations in both subjects.
89. Throughout the school pupils develop a sound knowledge and understanding of important people and events in history through appropriate planned units of study and topics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils begin to acquire some factual knowledge and understanding of events and characters from the past through carefully chosen stories such as Guy Fawkes. Pupils also begin to make some comparisons with life in the past with the present day. For example, Year 2 pupils know schools were very different in Victorian times. In the juniors, pupils study different periods in history, such as the Tudors, in sufficient depth and adequately describe specific features and changes in time including cause and effect.

90. In both subjects, pupils know how to select and combine information from a range of sources. For example, Year 4 and 5 pupils use photographs in order to find out about life in an Indian village. However, an occasional over-reliance on activities using fact sheets and worksheets by some teachers limits opportunities for pupils to use a variety of secondary sources to develop enquiry skills and write at length, particularly in history.
91. In geography, by the age of seven pupils make simple maps and plans with a key and make observations about the physical and human features within the local area. By the age of eleven pupils have acquired a good understanding of geographical vocabulary such as climate, temperature and population. Pupils know how to use an atlas and locate specific geographical features on a map. They acquire a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of other places and make comparisons between different localities in the United Kingdom and in other countries. Pupils skilfully understand co-ordinates and four-figure grid references.
92. An insufficient number of lessons was observed in both subjects to be able to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, in the small number of lessons observed resources were well prepared and used effectively by teachers to support pupils' learning. Through the effective use of questions, teachers extended pupils' thinking, knowledge and understanding and a brisk pace kept the pupils well focused. This resulted in pupils learning new facts and developing their study skills.
93. Leadership is satisfactory. Since the last inspection schemes of work for history and geography have been successfully developed and planning now clearly identifies what needs to be taught from one year to the next. Visits to various places of historical and geographical interest greatly enhance pupils' learning in both subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average throughout the school. At the time of the last inspection they were judged to be above average at seven years of age and average at eleven years of age. The school has not kept pace with the rapid pace of development in this subject in recent years. The school's ICT equipment is inadequate and is in urgent need of development. Some teachers have made good use of their own knowledge and the available equipment to develop pupils' skills and understanding of word processing satisfactorily both in lessons and through the after school computer club. Others have understandably found it difficult to use ICT effectively to promote pupils' learning and throughout the school there are insufficient learning opportunities in all other aspects of the subject. ICT is used effectively to enhance classroom display and at least two teachers stated that they had used their home computers to produce the high quality labels and text.
95. The deputy headteacher is the ICT co-ordinator and acknowledges the shortcomings in the school's provision. This situation has primarily been due to the school having an inadequate electrical wiring and this has only been resolved this term. Consequently, the staff decided it was not appropriate to apply for the available support for the development of learning resources and staff training (through the National Grid for Learning and New Opportunities Funding) until this academic year. The school is awaiting the results of its application for this funding and has detailed plans for considerable development in ICT in 2001. Benches to accommodate computers are already in place.

96. Overall standards are below average at both seven and eleven years of age and teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Pupils throughout the school are not achieving as well as they should be. There were a few examples of computers being used in a satisfactory or good way in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 were designing Christmas cards on the computer in an art lesson. In the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, the teacher effectively taught skills to the whole class for use in literacy and numeracy activities. But many opportunities were being missed at the time of the inspection.
97. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 and the few available examples of completed work show that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the keyboard and word processing programmes to complete simple writing tasks using a computer. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 know how to use words and graphic images together quite well. They know how to change text in several ways such as style, position, size and colour and there were some examples of these techniques being used well when pupils word-processed their poems and prayers. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use simple drawing programmes to develop their understanding of how the mouse does and that computers can be used for different purposes. However, pupils throughout the school are currently having far too few experiences of using modern technology in other ways. They have very limited knowledge and understanding of, for example, how computers can be used to record and analyse data and how CD-Rom and the Internet can be used to find out information and communicate with others. Year 6 pupils have poor insight into the wide range of uses of ICT in modern society and can not recall using programmable devices such as a Roamer. A few pupils who demonstrate standards in line with national expectations have computers at home and they use these regularly for a range of purposes including helping them with their English and mathematics homework, using informative CD-Rom such as Encarta and accessing the Internet.

MUSIC

98. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with national expectations by the age of eleven. Throughout the school pupils make particularly good progress in singing and their achievement in this aspect of the subject is good. Pupils sing in tune and show a good understanding of pitch, tempo, dynamics and rhythm. They hold notes well and their diction and phrasing is good.
99. Pupils learn to maintain a rhythm well in response to a range of different musical styles. For example, Year 5 pupils soon pick up the tempo and rhythm of a rap song and in choir practice pupils sing in the calypso style well. Some good work involving the use of simple graphics to depict high and low notes was seen in Year 5. However, pupils' understanding of musical notation and their experiences of composing and performing using tuned and non-tuned percussion instruments are limited.
100. There are no music specialists on the school staff. Teachers do their best to ensure the different Programmes of Study in the music curriculum are sufficiently covered. The limited teachers' subject knowledge and expertise does restrict the progress that pupils make, particularly older pupils in the composing and performing aspects of the subject. The guidelines for the subject do not sufficiently identify in a progressive way what needs to be taught from one year to the next. The school is aware of the weaknesses in music and is planning to review the scheme of work and arrange appropriate training in order to increase teachers' subject expertise. The co-ordinator is giving a satisfactory lead to these developments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101. It was only possible to observe three lessons in physical education. Evidence from these lessons, discussion with the subject co-ordinator and examination of the teachers' planning show that the school continues to give a high profile to the subject as reported at the time of the last inspection. It is not possible to make judgements about standards and teaching in all aspects of the subject. However, the available evidence indicates that standards are broadly average, teaching is at least satisfactory and the subject is co-ordinated well.
102. The school buys in the services of local authority coaches to develop the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' skills in sporting activities. This school year there have been or will be three sessions of six weeks each in rugby, basketball and athletics. All pupils swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave school. There are very good extra-curricular sporting activities during the course of the school year. For example, a good badminton session was observed during the inspection and photographs of the annual residential visit to a centre in Shropshire show a very high level of physical activities are included in this. The school enters many sporting competitions and achieved considerable success in a total of seven events in 1999 in football, swimming and cross-country running.
103. The standard of pupils' performance was broadly average in two games lessons. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other. A local authority coach took a rugby lesson with Year 6 pupils and the school subject co-ordinator took a volleyball lesson with Year 4 and Year 5 pupils. The lessons were planned and organised well and featured good teacher knowledge of the subject and good pace and energy was maintained throughout. Pupils enjoyed these activities, behaved well and were keen to develop their skills. There were good opportunities for both boys and girls to develop individual and team skills in volleyball and rugby.
104. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills were broadly average in the one lesson seen involving pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in this lesson. Pupils consolidated existing gymnastics skills and move in different ways on the floor and over different pieces of apparatus quite well. All pupils combine slipping and sliding, balancing and over and under movements into a sequence when asked to do so. No pupils have any particular difficulties with this activity and none demonstrate any significant talent although a small number demonstrate considerable perseverance and determination. The considerable emphasis placed on safety means that pupils are learning how to carry equipment carefully at an early age. The lesson was planned and organised well. Too much teacher talk and limited opportunities for pupils to express an opinion about their own and others' performance resulted in very little development of new skills.