

INSPECTION REPORT

OXFORD GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bolton

LEA area: Bolton

Unique reference number: 105160

Headteacher: Mr Paul Kelly

Reporting inspector: Mr David Carrington
15414

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th September 2001

Inspection number: 224158

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior with nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Shepherd Cross Street
Bolton

Postcode: BL1 3EJ

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs L Thomas

Date of previous inspection: 16th September 1996

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15414	Mr David Carrington	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning
9479	Mrs Christine Field	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values and personal development How the school cares for its pupils Partnership with parents and carers Leadership and management
20326	Mr Peter Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Aspects of education for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs	
30144	Mr Edgar Hastings	Team inspector	English Physical education English as an additional language	Quality of learning opportunities
22474	Mrs Jan Taylor	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography History Equal Opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oxford Grove Primary School is sited two miles north of Bolton town centre and has moved to brand new buildings since it was last inspected. In all other ways, the school is much the same as it was in 1996. In the main school there are 103 boys and 112 girls, with another 11 children who attend the nursery part time. Most of these pupils live in the area around the school. About a third of the pupils speak languages such as Punjabi, Urdu, Gujarati or Bengali at home, and about half of them are at an early stage of learning English. Both of these proportions are greater than found nationally but are not unusual for large urban areas. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that found in most primary schools, though the proportion with statements has risen over the last five years and is now well above average. When children start in the nursery, they have well below the expected level of skills and knowledge.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Oxford Grove Primary School provides an effective education for its pupils, regardless of their background. Standards are improving and most pupils make good progress. Pupils are well behaved, work hard and get on well with each other. There are very good levels of racial harmony. The quality of teaching is good overall, including for those with special educational needs or those who do not speak English at home. The school is very well led by the headteacher and school management is good. Work to improve the standards achieved by boys and higher attaining pupils is a key area for the school to develop following this inspection. Attendance and the spiritual development of pupils are additional issues for the school to pursue. The school gives sound, and improving, value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art and design, and design and technology, are better than usually found in primary schools.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils who speak other languages at home learn to speak, read and write English well.
- The school educates pupils to become caring, well behaved children who mix well and try hard.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting, particularly in the Foundation Stage.
- The quality of education provided in the nursery is a strength of the school.
- Teaching quality is good.
- Moral and social development are very good.
- The school is led very well by the headteacher and other staff carry out their management duties successfully.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, science and information and communication technology, and for boys and higher attaining pupils, are not yet high enough.
- Attendance levels are below those found in most primary schools.
- The spiritual development of pupils is not planned consistently across the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since 1996. There were five key issues in the previous inspection report:

1. Implement new curriculum policies to ensure systematic progress in learning
2. Ensure that all pupils, regardless of background, are set appropriate work to help them learn effectively
3. Improve the quality of teaching in junior classes
4. Check that boys and girls, particularly those from different ethnic backgrounds, do as well as they can
5. Ensure that assessment is used consistently to identify the next steps in pupils' work

Much progress has been made in each of these issues, though there are still things to complete. Good levels of morale and commitment amongst the staff have ensured improvement has been well paced. The school is likely to make continued good progress with improvement in the next few years.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	E	D	C	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D
mathematics	E	E	C	B	well below average E average E very low *
science	E	E	D	C	

Similar schools are those schools with between 20% and 35% of the pupils entitled to free school meals.

Results in the 2000 SATs showed that Year 6 pupils at Oxford Grove Primary School did as well as most eleven year olds in mathematics but not as well in English and science. When the same results are put beside those in schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards were above average in mathematics and were average in English and science.

In 2000, Year 2 pupils did not do as well in their SATs as pupils in similar primary schools, especially in reading and writing. It is not possible to compare the 2001 results in the same way because the government has not yet published all the necessary information. However, it is most probable that overall results in Year 2 and 6 will be similar to those in 2000. During the past four years, standards have risen at the same rate in school as they have done in all other primary schools.

Inspectors judge that this year, standards are just short of the expected level by the age of eleven. Attainment is better than found in most primary schools in art and design, and design and technology, but lags behind a little in writing, science and information and communication technology. In other subjects, standards are at the expected levels for eleven-year-old pupils.

In general, most pupils achieve respectable standards. This is the case for those with special educational needs and pupils who do not speak English at home. Boys do not always achieve as well as the girls and higher attaining pupils could do rather well than they do.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy their studies.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils show respect for one another; work and play together co-operatively. The two temporary exclusions made last year were fully justified.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Good relationships support pupils' personal development successfully. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to work independently.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance levels are just below the national average. A small number of pupils take holidays in term time and this disrupts their education. Most pupils arrive punctually for the start of the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved well since the school's previous inspection in 1996 and is now good overall. All but one of the 61 lessons seen by inspectors was of at least satisfactory teaching quality and there were many that were of good or very good quality. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, and this is the case in a number of other subjects too. Learning is at least satisfactory because most pupils are committed and interested learners who work hard. Because the starting point for most pupils is well below average, the building of skills and knowledge takes longer than for many pupils in other schools. However, progress is steady and pupils achieve at appropriate levels. One or two pupils can be disruptive, but teachers deal with this very well. Discipline is good, basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and teachers use time, resources and the accommodation well. The identification in planning of work to challenge the higher attainers could be improved. Teaching of pupils who have special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home is good. It is also a strength in the Foundation Stage. In all, pupils learn steadily in most classes and their knowledge and skills are built carefully.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well planned, interesting and contains all that it should. There is good focus on the systematic development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and the school has formed a very good partnership with the local community in the education of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are given work that matches their needs and are encouraged and expected to do well. They make good progress as a result.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The level of support for pupils who speak other languages at home is good. This enables them to speak, read and write English as well as the other pupils by the time they reach Year 6.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The moral and social development of pupils is at the heart of the school's work and it does these things very effectively. Pupils' own cultures are celebrated and pupils learn about authors, musicians and artists from Britain, Europe, Asia and other parts of the world. The spiritual development of pupils is not planned consistently in all subjects and this is a missed opportunity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff know their pupils very well and meet their individual needs positively. There are very good procedures for monitoring behaviour. There are good procedures in place for child protection and for ensuring pupils' health, welfare and safety. Good attention is paid to

	pupils' educational and social development, and assessment is used appropriately to target their next steps in learning.
The partnership with parents	Good. Parents hold positive views of the school and are kept well informed of their children's progress. Most parents are involved successfully in their children's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is central to the success of the school and leads it with determination. Other staff manage their responsibilities well. There is a strong sense of shared commitment to high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors' involvement with matters concerning the curriculum, teaching, learning and standards is growing. They are interested in the work of the school and provide good support for staff and pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Managers know individual pupils' achievements well and they provide good teaching for pupils. This ensures that progress in learning is steady in the main.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Money and other resources are put to good use to provide an effective education for the pupils. There are no shortages of books or other resources, and staffing levels are good. The new school buildings are of very good quality and are used well. The school gives sound and improving value for money.
How well the school applies the principles of best value	Satisfactory. The headteacher has very good understanding of the school's successes and challenges, and sets appropriate targets for improvement. Other staff and the governors are increasingly involved in assessing how well the school is performing; though there is room for continued improvement in this process.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • The quality of teaching is good. • Expectations are appropriate. • Their children behave well in school. • The school is well led and managed. • It is easy to approach staff when there are problems or concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of homework are not consistent. • The programme of activities outside lessons is rather restricted.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents and judge that levels of homework are appropriate. They also judge that the programme of activities outside lessons is satisfactory and note that school managers are committed to extending this to the younger pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

To build on

- Standards are improving at a broadly acceptable rate from a well below average starting point.
- Standards are good in art and design, design and technology, and elements of information and communication technology (ICT) and music.
- Standards are on an upward trend in mathematics.
- There is firm commitment to improvement amongst the headteacher and staff.
- Pupils with special educational needs are doing well in school.
- Those who speak other languages at home learn to speak, read and write English as well as the other pupils.

To improve

- Overall standards are not yet high enough in English, particularly writing, science and ICT at eleven years.
- Whilst progress is satisfactory overall, there are variations from year to year.
- There have been some staffing issues that have affected progress in recent years.
- Boys do not do as well as girls.
- Higher attaining pupils could perform better than they do.

1. There is good commitment to raising standards at Oxford Grove Primary School and this has been the number one priority of the school improvement plan for a number of years. There have been many successes in raising standards in school but there remain a number of issues that the school continues to tackle with good heart.
2. When SATs results are used to check standards in school, it is evident that the rate of improvement since the last inspection has been broadly similar to that found nationally. The school has made good progress towards the targets it sets for improvement each year. These targets are based on good understanding of the performance of pupils and are realistic. Although there has been some variation from year to year, standards achieved by eleven-year-old pupils have improved at a faster rate than those achieved by seven-year-olds. This pattern is in part due to the low base level of skills and knowledge when children start school. Good teaching in the nursery and reception class ensures that three, four and five-year-old children make good progress in their learning. Progress holds steady in Years 1 and 2, though there is a substantial boost to learning towards the end of the infant years. The standards achieved by seven-year-old pupils in 2000, as compared to the national picture and that in schools where there was a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals can be summarised:

Performance of Year 2 pupils in:	all schools	similar schools
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reading	well below average	well below average
writing	well below average	below average
mathematics	below average	average
science *	below average	average

* For science, performance is that measured by the teacher assessments; for the other subjects, the test results are used

- The above results for mathematics and science, as compared to the national picture, show good improvement on the starting point of these pupils when they joined the school up to three years earlier. They show very good improvement in the same subjects when set against results in similar schools. The rate of improvement was not, however, as marked in reading and writing. Overall, the standards achieved by these seven-year-old pupils showed gradual improvement since their starting point, but indicate that because many were at an early stage of learning English, much work remained for completion to ensure they become as capable readers and writers as pupils in most other schools.
- Older pupils in school tend to take variable steps forward in their learning. Whilst progress is good in some years (Years 4 and 5) it is not as rapid in others. This has been due to difficulties in staffing and the organisation of classes that the school is trying to resolve. In 2000, eleven-year-old pupils achieved the following standards:

Performance of Year 6 pupils in:	all schools	similar schools
English	below average	average
mathematics	average	above average
science	below average	average

- Again, comparison of the results in this table with those achieved when these pupils were seven show that standards improved at a steady rate overall to the age of eleven, though there was better improvement in mathematics than in the other two subjects. The comparison against similar schools shows that pupils do well in mathematics and hold their own in English and science. Particular weaknesses in 2000 were found in writing and in the practical application of basic scientific knowledge. The school quickly identified these shortcomings and modified the curriculum last year in order to improve standards.
- Not shown up by these tables was the fact that boys did not do as well as girls at either seven or eleven years of age. The headteacher makes scrupulous analysis of SATs results each year and this trend was pinpointed with speed. Following this evaluation, staff have begun to analyse resources, including the quality and content of library books, to ensure that they hold boys' interests as much as they do the girls'. From the scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations, it is evident that there are still differences in the interest and motivation of some boys as compared with the girls. The next task for the school in bringing the performance of boys and girls into better balance is to weigh the topics in subjects such as history to ensure that they are as attention grabbing for boys as they are for girls.
- The school has a sizeable proportion of pupils from homes where languages other than English are spoken. The work to support and extend the development of English for these pupils is well thought out and managed, and the quality of teaching provided is good. Thus, the pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress and by the age of eleven they speak, read and write English as well as the other pupils. Pupils with different language backgrounds are to be found in all ability groups and they attain well, given their starting point.

8. Another key group in school includes the pupils with statements of special educational needs. The proportion of such pupils is well above that found nationally. In all, however, there is a broadly average proportion of pupils listed at lower stages on the school's register of special educational needs. The work for these pupils is carefully broken down into small steps and these are taught well. Support staff give particularly effective assistance for their pupils (as do those who work with pupils who speak English as an additional language) and this results in good progress in building skills and knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very respectable standards during their time in school and some are moved to lesser stages of the register, such are their successes.
9. In all, the provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs are strengths of the school. There are elements of the provision for these pupils that the school can use in its bid to promote high standards for the more able pupils. During the inspection, the team did not notice as much emphasis in planning on building specific skills, knowledge and understanding for higher attaining pupils as they did for the two other groups discussed here. This is a shortcoming that the school recognises. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in the SATs in all subjects, whether at age seven or eleven, has not been as high as in most schools over recent years. Some attention has been given to this matter, though there remain things to be done. The proportion of pupils at level 5 in science last school year, for example, was twice that of the year before. To hold this improvement, the identification of gifted or talented pupils and target setting, tracking and evaluation for higher attaining pupils require enhancement.
10. It is not yet possible to make secure comparisons of the SATs results for this year because the government has not yet issued the necessary guidelines. It is clear, however, that there is likely to have been a mix of improvement and retrenchment amongst both the seven and eleven-year-old pupils. In the absence of reliable comparisons, inspectors judge that current standards at different stages in school are as follows:

Age group of pupils	Standards achieved
Those starting school	well below average
Reception year	below average
Year 2	below average
Year 6	just below average

11. The trend in this table charts steady progress from early days in school to Year 6, though it does match the variation from year to year discussed in paragraphs 2 and 4, above. The summary judgements of attainment shown above are derived from the detailed judgements made for the eleven subjects taught in school and in the nursery and reception classes (the Foundation Stage) which are to be found in the final part of this report, starting on page 27. Strengths in design and technology, art and design, the communication element of information and communication technology (ICT) and singing within music are identified there, plus the good progress made in the Foundation Stage as pupils build their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills in particular. There are weaknesses in writing, science and the control and monitoring element of ICT and these are discussed in more detail in those pages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

To build on

- Pupils have good attitudes to work.
- Standards of behaviour are good.
- Relationships are very positive and the school is a racially harmonious community.

- Pupils take on roles of responsibility; for example as monitors, with confidence.

To improve

- Their personal development is hindered by the limited opportunities for them to manage appropriate aspects of their learning.
- Attendance in the school is currently unsatisfactory but improving.

12. Pupils' attitudes to work and standard of behaviour are generally good. These strengths have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. Most pupils are keen to do their best and are highly motivated by the positive reward of badges and certificates in recognition of their effort. In some junior classes a few pupils have difficulty in sustaining concentration in lessons in an afternoon, and were observed to become restless and disruptive, though the teachers kept this in check. All parents who responded to the questionnaire that inspector's sent out feel that the school helps their child become mature and responsible.
13. In the Nursery, the children's attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory and they grow in independence and maturity because of the good attention given to this important aspect of their development. By the end of the Foundation Stage the children are confident and have high self-esteem. They have developed good work habits and are ready for their next stage of education.
14. Pupils of all ages are positive about their learning, are enthusiastic in all their activities, and say that they like school. Their attitudes to school and work are good. Relationships between pupils are good, they are respectful and tolerant as shown in the positive way that newcomers to school are welcomed and helped to settle in. The school promotes opportunities for building effective and satisfying relationships, for example in circle time in Year 2, when pupils considered what was special about one another.
15. Pupils generally show a respect for the resources they use. They collect them in carefully at the end of each lesson, and act as monitors for registers, lunchboxes, and the overhead projector used in assemblies. They show a good level of responsibility in their willingness to act as monitors. Year 6 pupils present themselves as good role models to younger pupils: for example when they lead them in to and out of assembly. A weakness in provision for pupils' personal development lies in the lack of opportunity for older pupils to take initiative and manage appropriate aspects of their own learning.
16. Pupils respond well to the rules that are displayed in all classes. The school gives awards for positive behaviour or effort, and uses sanctions sparingly. There have been two fixed-term exclusions in the past year. The school regards exclusion as very much a last resort, and strives to minimise the exclusions as far as possible. When set against some of challenging behaviour that the school is helping pupils to manage well, its record on exclusions is reasonable. There is a noticeable absence of bullying in the school. Pupils say that it rarely occurs. Two Year 6 pupils are available as "Buddy Bullies" and will support any pupils who let them know when they have problems. This is a genuinely inclusive community where sexism and racism are not tolerated. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds mix well and there is a good level of racial harmony.

17. Pupils with special educational needs respond as well to the opportunities provided for them as the other pupils. Those whose concentration is short are helped to stay on task by appropriate sensitive guidance from support staff. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school, for example singing in the choir, and are accepted by other pupils. They enjoy their time in school and work hard.
18. Attendance in the school is currently unsatisfactory but improving. It is just below the national average. The attendance and poor punctuality of a handful of pupils causes concern as it affects their achievements. There are a few parents who give their child's attendance at school a low priority and the school is working hard to tackle this.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

To build on

- The overall quality of teaching is good and there is much more teaching that is very good than is found in most primary schools.
- Teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes and in junior years; it is satisfactory in the infants.
- The teaching of English and mathematics (including literacy and numeracy) is good.
- Progress is satisfactory from day one in school to the end of Year 6.
- Teachers manage difficult pupils well.
- Most pupils try hard and produce good amounts of work.

To improve

- There remains a little unsatisfactory teaching.
- The focus on planning of knowledge and skills to be taught to higher attaining pupils could be sharpened.
- The review of what has been learned at the end of lessons is sometimes rushed or not carried out.
- Teachers talk for too long or dictate every step in learning in some lessons in junior classes.
- Some boys do not concentrate as well as the girls.

19. It is evident that there has been a marked improvement in teaching quality from the statistics on lessons during the previous and current inspections. In 1996, nearly a fifth of the lessons seen were unsatisfactory. Today, there remains a little unsatisfactory teaching, but the proportion is very much reduced. The scrutiny of pupils' work confirms this improving trend, though there are a few areas where continued improvement is necessary. Nonetheless, a good proportion of the lessons observed showed teaching that was very good.
20. The improvement made to teaching has had a corresponding effect on the effectiveness of learning. In general, teachers have to work hard in order to help their pupils move forwards. In some lessons, the effort put into teaching results in rather less movement in learning than might be expected. This is due to a number of factors including the shorter concentration span of some junior boys when compared to that of the girls. The rate of learning is satisfactory overall, though it varies from class to class. Learning is best where teaching is polished, as in the middle years of the juniors. It is slowest where staffing

difficulties have meant a period of readjustment and retrenchment, as in Year 3. Such differences mean that pupils sometimes spurt ahead, but at other points their progress eases back.

21. The school has taken some effective steps to make progress tauter but knows that continued effort to overcome the variability is required. The current profile of teaching is good for children in the nursery and reception classes, satisfactory in the infant years and, despite some ups and downs, good in junior classes. The headteacher and senior managers are determined that every pupil should experience good teaching and learning, and prospects for this are positive.
22. Children in the Foundation Stage classes of the nursery and reception are taught well. Indeed, the quality of teaching in the nursery is a particular strength. These young children have low levels of skill and knowledge when they start school, but teachers and nursery nurses alike know their needs, and plan and provide activities that stimulate interest and broaden horizons. Across the six early learning goals¹, progress is good and children advance in knowledge and skills.
23. Infant pupils experience an almost 50:50 balance of satisfactory and good teaching. The balance to good teaching is not as strong as in the other stages of the school. A graph of teaching quality across the two years would show a boost to teaching quality, and hence learning, towards the end of the stage. In some respects the expectations that teachers have of their pupils are not as high here as elsewhere and some of the activities completed are at a relatively lower level than those set in other classes.
24. Staffing in Year 3 has changed markedly in recent months. As in Year 6, the pattern adopted at the start of this school year involves more than one Year 3 teacher working with the pupils. There are significant differences in the teaching style and methods of each member of staff in these years and this inconsistency does not always serve the pupils as well as it should. The headteacher is monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in Year 3 to ensure that it always meets the required standard and senior managers are aware of these issues already. There is, however, a considerable amount of good teaching in Years 3 and 6 to build upon.
25. In the middle years of the juniors, teaching is at its best in school. Expectations are high, pace of learning is slick and the management of pupils is firm but sensitive and fair. It is in this phase that some boys especially suffer from short attention span and do not do as well as the girls. The teachers deal with this very effectively and the learning of other pupils does not suffer because of the distractions of the few. Teachers in Years 4 and 5 know exactly when to stop talking and when to allow the pupils to manage their own learning. This holds attention, even amongst the difficult boys, and learning receives a boost. In other classes in the juniors, this technique of time balance is less perfected

¹ The six early learning goals for children in nursery and reception years are discussed in turn from page 27 of this report.

and some pupils become restless because they have to listen for over-long periods as everything they are to do is specified in detail.

26. Teachers develop basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT well. More than in other subjects, planning identifies clearly the specific learning objectives for each group, though those for higher attainers could be clearer at times. Lessons are used profitably to develop pupils' skills and knowledge and progress is often brisk. There are strengths in the teaching of basic skills that staff can draw upon to aid the continuing improvement of teaching and learning across the school. Although parents expressed concern about levels of homework, inspectors judge that these are satisfactory.
27. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall and is very good where they are withdrawn for additional support. In English and mathematics, teachers generally meet the needs of pupils very well; they provide appropriate activities and good support. Classroom support assistants and supporting adults play an important and very successful part in ensuring pupils with special educational needs benefit from a range of appropriate activities and make good progress in their learning. In a few lessons observed, for example in geography, pupils with special educational needs completed the same work as other pupils rather than attempting an easier task on the same theme to promote better understanding and learning. Work in such lessons is planned without sufficient reference to individual targets in education plans and this slows progress. The school recognises that this is an aspect of planning to be improved, along with the identification of clearer learning outcomes for higher attaining pupils.
28. The good progress that pupils who speak languages other than English at home make is due to the good quality teaching they receive from the teaching staff and the support staff. In particular, there is effective support for the younger pupils in the nursery from the bi-lingual staff. For the older pupils, their language levels are assessed at regular intervals to measure their progress and to set targets for their further attainment. This is shared with the class teacher so that appropriate language skills can be built into lesson planning. The co-ordinator allocates blocks of time for concentrated support across the school for these pupils to ensure their needs are fully met. Most reach a level of language competency that allows them to work independently in the classroom.
29. There remain for further development some aspects of marking, particularly the use of comments to indicate ways to improve. Pupils' own knowledge of their learning is inconsistent because the ends of lessons are not used much for pupils' self-review of what advances they have made and what still has to be completed. However, it is evident that staff are committed to improvements in teaching and learning and the prospects for the future look good.

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

To build on

- The curriculum offers a good range of learning opportunities and is interesting and motivating.
- The curriculum offers good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home.
- Foundation Stage pupils have a very good curriculum.
- There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- The community contributes very effectively to pupils' learning.
- There are good links with other schools.

To improve

- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development.

30. The curriculum opportunities offered to pupils throughout the school are good overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when there

were shortcomings in curriculum planning. These have now been addressed and new curriculum policies have now implemented to ensure progression between classes, and a three-year rolling programme has been introduced for development, monitoring and review of all areas of the curriculum. The statutory requirement for a policy on the teaching of sex-education has now been met within the context of personal, social and health education that also includes drug and alcohol misuse, the dangers of smoking and stranger danger. Recently, the school has introduced circle time to allow pupils time to consider issues of importance to them.

31. The curriculum has been carefully planned to include all the relevant subjects to support the learning needs of all the pupils in school. Time is well used and ensures an appropriate balance between all subjects. It meets the requirements of Curriculum 2000, as well as the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Teachers' planning is supported through the use of national guidelines in most subjects. The literacy hour has been effectively implemented, and time has been set aside for the development of handwriting, spelling and extended writing. However, the opportunities for developing writing skills in other curriculum areas are limited. The development of numeracy skills has been afforded a priority, and the purpose-built computer suite is enabling the acquisition of skills in information and communication technology to take place effectively.
32. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is of very good quality and enables them to make good progress. The experiences provided in the nursery and reception classes are well matched to the children's needs and cover the six early learning goals well. There is a vibrancy in the nursery that stems from the very-well thought out curriculum for the youngest children in the school.
33. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities to extend and develop pupils' learning further, including a range of sporting activities (football, netball, rounders and cross-country running), a science club, a book club, a choir, and drama. Visitors to school during the year include the local clergy, the police, the school nurse, musicians and artists in residence, and soccer coaches from Bolton Wanderers Football Club. The work related curriculum has enabled the school to develop very good links with well-known local business to enhance the curriculum including a major bakery, whose staff came into school and helped the pupils to bake bread, and the local supermarket. Further links with the local community includes shared curricular activities, mainly science, with the local secondary to which most pupils will transfer. Visits to places of interest that link up with topics being taught provide valuable experiences when pupils are enabled to see places and objects first hand for themselves.
34. The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory but it not as effective as the other aspects of pupils' personal development. This is due to the lack of planned activities to promote spiritual development. There are occasions when pupils reflect on special or attractive features of what they are learning, but they tend to be incidental. The school does a very good job of promoting racial harmony and pupils gain good insights into the lives and

beliefs of other people. They learn to understand what they and others can learn from religion and how religious beliefs affect their lives. Pupils' moral, social and spiritual development is promoted well by such work. The moral and social development of pupils is very good. The school provides an ethos that encourages pupils to take care of each other, and this is evident in the good behaviour seen in the classroom and around the school. The quality of relationships seen between the pupils themselves, and between pupils and teachers, underlines their social development. There is good racial harmony too. Pupils understand the need to have rules and contribute to the establishment of some for their own class. Assemblies are used to celebrate and recognise pupils' academic achievements, which are displayed in the main hall for all to see. The school values all cultures and celebrates the richness of diversity through examining comparative religions, customs and ways of life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

To build on

- The school makes effective arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils.
- The pupils' progress is carefully tracked, and appropriate advice and guidance is given to support their personal development.
- The school has an effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures for first aid, fire, accidents and medicines.
- There are very good procedures in place for promoting good behaviour and taking swift action if bullying occurs.
- The school pays very good attention to social inclusion.

To improve

- The school has a comprehensive attendance and lateness policy; however it is not consistently implemented. In particular, there is a need for some teachers to improve the completion of registers.

35. The school makes effective arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. The staff know the pupils well and are responsive to individual needs. The pupils' progress is carefully tracked and appropriate advice and guidance is given to support their personal development. Parents are very pleased with the care their children receive. Pupils say they feel comfortable and confident when approaching their teacher or any other member of staff when they have a worry. Teachers set a good example in their behaviour towards each other and the pupils. The school follows the guidelines of the local area child protection committee and the deputy headteacher has received appropriate training as the designated person for child protection matters. Staff are vigilant and aware of the correct procedures to be followed if they have concerns. The good attention to health, welfare and safety, and the caring atmosphere created that were reported on by the 1996 inspection have all been sustained.
36. The school undertakes useful assessments when children first enter school. These help inform teaching groups, and enables early identification of any special needs. Class teachers complete on-going assessments of the pupils' progress that they use to help their lesson planning. Good attention is paid to tracking and targeting the needs of those pupils with special educational needs

and those who learn English as an additional language. Less effective is the use of assessment to set consistently challenging work for higher attaining pupils. The school has not yet identified those children with special gifts or talents. This is an area that managers recognise requires improvement as part of its assessment and monitoring activities.

37. The school has an effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures for first aid, fire, accidents and medicines. Risk assessments and safety audits are carried out by the headteacher. Pupils feel safe at school and well looked after. Bullying is discussed with pupils in circle-time lessons and in assemblies, and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they are concerned about bullying, racism or sexism. Pupils say that incidents of these things happening are rare, and that they feel confident that any member of staff would deal effectively with an occurrence of this nature. They say they like school, and feel confident in the security it offers.
38. There are very good procedures in place for promoting good behaviour that are supported by a clear and effective behaviour policy, which is based on promoting positive behaviours and is consistently implemented. This policy has clear rules of good conduct published in every classroom. Pupils know these rules, and negotiate class rules each year. Some pupils have challenging behaviour and have been taught good strategies for managing this. There are very clear strategies for encouraging good behaviour via the reward system that is applied consistently by all staff. Pupils with good or improved behaviour have the opportunity to gain certificates that are displayed on the wall of excellence. Pupils were observed to receive these awards with great pride.
39. The school pays very good attention to social inclusion. Pupils who do not speak English at home are given good educational support to help them work successfully in English and progress well. The local education authority teachers working with pupils who do not speak English at home give particularly effective support. A large proportion of pupils has special educational needs and they are well supported. The school gives good attention to identifying specific needs early and establishing well-focused individual education plans that are regularly reviewed. Learning assistants and specialist staff are effective in their roles and assist these pupils in making good progress in their studies.
40. The school has a comprehensive attendance and lateness policy; however it is not consistently implemented. The deputy has taken the lead in trying to bring about improvement but has met with limited success. Some parents are not giving the school the support it needs by ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive on time. Additionally, for much of last year the support available from the Education Welfare Service was at a reduced level due to staffing difficulties. The monitoring of attendance and absence is satisfactory overall but could be improved by tightening up on registration procedures and looking more closely at the impact that some pupils' lengthy absences have on their achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

To build on

- Most parents have positive views about the school
- Communication is of good quality and keeps parents well informed
- A growing number of parents are giving voluntary help in classes and the headteacher is trying hard to get even more involved
- Some parents have concerns about the homework policy but the inspection team can reassure them that the level of homework is suitable for the age range of pupils.

To improve

- Nothing of significance.

41. The school works hard to ensure that its partnership with parents continues to grow strong. Parents responding to the questionnaire that inspectors issued just before this inspection, felt that the school expects their child to work hard, and achieve his or her best, and they "find the school approachable" with good home/school links. The two areas that some parents would like to see improved are increasing the range of extra-curricular activities available to Year 3 and 4 pupils and making more clear the expectations for home work in each year group. The inspection team agrees that the range of activities available after school is not as large as in some schools and the headteacher is looking at this already. A homework timetable is in place for each year group and this has been sent home to parents. The team believes this to be appropriate
42. The school communicates effectively with parents. They receive a regular informative newsletter that gives details of school events. The prospectus is upbeat and contains useful information, and the governor's annual report keeps parents abreast of aspects of school improvement. The headteacher is readily available to talk to parents and is particularly noticeable on the playground before and after school. Parents are given useful information about the curriculum through a newsletter each term, so that they know what is to be covered. Parents receive an annual report in July, which they find useful as it reports on both effort and achievement, though the criteria on which the grades are made is not clear. The reports sent to parents of children in the Foundation Stage are of high quality. Parents have the opportunity to come into school three times each year to see their child's work and discuss it with their teacher. They can also come in to assembly on occasions such as Christmas and for drama productions. These events and open evenings are well attended.
43. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are shared with parents at regular planned intervals, and parents sign and retain copies. The school is aware that to develop good practice and encourage parents' active support, parents should receive a full copy of the individual education plan and recorded details of review meetings. Parents are promptly informed if their child is identified as having special educational needs. Most parents attend the annual reviews to discuss their child's progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are given good information and are invited to the regular review meetings.
44. A growing number of parents are involved with the daily life of the school and the headteacher is trying to attract more volunteer helpers. From time to time, parents and teachers work together to organise social and fundraising events to support the school. A successful fair was

held last summer that was very well supported by the whole community and contributed well to pupils' wider learning experiences.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

To build on

- The headteacher provides very good educational direction
- There is good involvement of key staff in school improvement processes
- Governors are effective in fulfilling their legal responsibilities and give good support.
- Specific funding, for example that provided to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is used efficiently.

- The school's aims are well reflected in its work and this results in a happy, caring environment in which all pupils are given equality of opportunity to succeed and be well prepared to take their place in an ethnically diverse and multi-cultural society.
- The school provides satisfactory value for money with the potential for this to become good in the future.
- The school has good capacity to continue its rapid rate of improvement

To improve

- Managers have yet to establish rigorous monitoring procedures that will assess the impact that increased staffing is having on pupils' progress.
- Governors have yet to become fully involved in the application of best value.
- Coordinators are not involved enough in the monitoring of standards, teaching and learning.
- Target setting and sharing procedures are at an early stage of development.

45. Oxford Grove Primary School is given very strong leadership by the headteacher who has been central to the good rate of improvement seen since the previous inspection. The deputy head provides effective support for the pastoral life of the school, whilst other staff are appropriately drawn into the school's good monitoring, evaluation and development processes either as members of the management team or as subject leaders. The work being done by the assessment co-ordinator in analysing data and using this information to set challenging academic targets is proving to be particularly beneficial in raising everyone's expectations of what different pupils can achieve. The school has clear insights into its strengths and weaknesses and knows that raising standards must continue to be its number one priority. The action plan in place to guide future improvement is well focused and usefully identifies the resources that will be required. Staff are united in their determination to make the school the best it can be and the school is well placed to continue the rapid rate of improvement.
46. The senior management team comprises the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assessment coordinator. It meets regularly to consider strategic matters though there are no written agendas or minutes kept that could prove useful to mapping progress and supporting performance management. From time to time co-ordinators, for example, the manager of the Foundation Stage, are

invited to join the senior management team, as a result they have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they play a good part in taking the school forward. All co-ordinators work very hard to make improvements to their subjects. The visitor to the school quickly detects that it is a place of productivity, purposefulness and teamwork. This approach affects learning, as pupils respond to the expectation and challenge provided in very positive ways and they work well to achieve good standards. In a bid to improve on things that are already done well, co-ordinators are ready to take on additional roles and responsibilities, such as extending monitoring in colleagues' lessons in order to identify and share the very best practice, strive for improvement and build on the school's many successes.

47. The provision for special educational needs is good because of the good management and leadership by a hard working and committed co-ordinator. In turn she is well supported by class teachers, as they are fully involved in the writing of individual education plans. All of these people are equally committed to giving pupils as much support as possible to help them do well at school. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that the individual education plans are comprehensively documented with accurate assessment of specific needs. The special support assistants, local authority teachers who work with pupils who do not speak English at home and voluntary helpers also give good support.
48. The school has very clear and detailed equal opportunities policy statements. The aims and values of the schools fully embrace social and educational inclusion. Every pupil's unique qualities are valued. There is a very strong commitment to providing all pupils with equal access to the school's activities. Through very effective practice and the efficient targeting of resources the school has been successful in enabling lower attaining pupils to achieve well. Managers are aware that the next step is to ensure consistently appropriate levels of challenge for higher attaining pupils so that they may reach their full potential. The special gifts and talents of some pupils though recognised informally have not been recorded specifically so that their progress can be checked and the curriculum extended as necessary. This too is an area for future improvement.
49. Governors are usefully drawn into the management of the school through a network of committees, most of which have agreed terms of reference. They have adopted the right priorities for the school at the right time. These centre on raising standards particularly in English, mathematics and science. They are provided with good information by the headteacher through regular reports and grasp the ever-growing demands made of them willingly. They are increasing their knowledge about standards and the quality of teaching and resulting progress, but have yet to make full use of the range of indicators available to measure whether the school stands good comparison to similar schools elsewhere. Governors have decided to deploy additional teachers to assist learning in Years 3 and 6 and this will require very close monitoring to evaluate whether the substantial financial investment gives a good return in terms of its impact on pupils' achievements. The deployment of resources to provide additional support for the targeted withdrawal of lower attaining pupils

in Year 3 to help combat assessed under-achievement is money well targeted and spent. Governors have sound insights into what the school does well and what could be improved; the linking of governors to different subjects is a positive feature.

50. Since the 1996 inspection, managers have improved the process of measuring the school's own performance and taking effective action to bring advancement. Comprehensive data is collected, particularly on standards, analysed thoroughly, and used to set increasingly precise targets for various groups and classes. These targets for achievement are challenging, tracked carefully and usually matched by the pupils, who achieved well in the 2000 SATs. Of more recent development are the individual targets set for all pupils. Few teachers use these targets to support their assessment of learning in lessons or in recorded work. The headteacher is aware that a more systematic approach to target setting at the lesson and pupils' level will support the tracking and review of whole-school targets with even better focus. Key managers have good working knowledge of the process of checking for improvement, and other staff are ready to be drawn more into this process in order to maximise results.
51. A shared strength of all staff is the commitment not just to high standards but also to a calm, friendly, supportive, yet purposeful school ethos. Staff and governors are as much concerned for the development of all pupils into responsible future citizens ready to take their place in an ethnically diverse and multi-cultural society. The exceptionally well-maintained and attractive environment that promotes a warm and friendly atmosphere immediately impresses the visitor to school.
52. Managers and staff use the available finances soundly. School improvement is targeted properly by the school development plan and this is used well to measure subsequent success. All funds, including those designated for particular use, such as supporting pupils with special educational needs or boosting standards of literacy, are used very well and such spending achieves its intention. The school spends more than most on educating its pupils, with a high allocation to staffing that is a conscious decision to keep the pupil-teacher ratio low. The decision to spend the year's income on current pupils has tended to result in a relatively low level of contingency left in the budget. During 2000-1, the contingency increased as staffing changes were made. The contingency of about £49 000 at the end of the last financial year was properly earmarked for staffing and other resource provision in relation to the school improvement priorities. Managers are aware of the recent fluctuations in contingency amounts and are monitoring finances with the help of a bursar bought in from the local education authority. The most recent financial audit implemented in 2000 reported that controls are securely in place. The school provides sound value for money currently with the potential for this to become good in the future.
53. It is evident that the school has moved well ahead since the 1996 inspection. Managers know there are a number of things that remain for improvement, such as continuing to raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT to make them the best they can be, to plan more consistently for

developing pupils' spiritual awareness and to continue to tackle attendance matters. The sense of shared approach to these challenges is good and the school can celebrate its many strengths as it moves successfully towards future improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. Oxford Grove Primary School can point to good levels of improvement over the last four years and a shared concern for good standards. The headteacher, staff and governors know that there remain a number of things for completion in order to achieve this. The inspection team identify three key issues for the school; these are already included in its school improvement plan:

1. Continue to raise standards, particularly in English, science and ICT

by

- ensuring that writing is promoted across the curriculum, especially in geography, history and RE,
- giving older pupils opportunities to write their observations of work in science in ways they choose themselves and not just in worksheets,
- emphasising practical science work as much as learning based on basic science facts,
- making sure that all the work for completion is not specified exactly by the teacher,
- continuing to audit resources, and starting a review of curriculum topics, to ensure that learning is as attractive to boys as it is to girls,
- identifying gifted and talented pupils,
- setting specific learning targets for higher attaining pupils in planning,
- being more consistent in the sharing and evaluation of learning targets with pupils in lessons.

See paragraphs: 6, 9, 20, 25-27, 36, 48, 50, 57, 70, 72, 75, 77, 79, 81, 84, 91, 93-5, 103, 112 and 130.

2. Work to improve levels of attendance

by:

- setting and sharing targets for attendance for individual pupils and whole classes,
- refining the rewards system to include attendance more prominently,
- sharing with parents the penalties for frequent or extended absence.

See paragraphs: 18, 40 and 53

3. Improve pupils' spiritual development

by:

- introducing a programme of staff development,
- planning opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum,
- ensuring this is promoted consistently in planning and delivery.

See paragraphs: 34, 53, 96 and 119.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	27	16	1	0	0
Percentage	0	25	46	27	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

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)	11	215
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		57

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	71

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	16	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	12
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	23	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (76)	82 (76)	96 (83)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	12
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	19	19	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (59)	68 (62)	86 (72)
	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 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	10	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	15	17
	Girls	8	6	8
	Total	21	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (59)	75 (62)	89 (72)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	13
	Girls	9	6	7
	Total	21	22	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (66)	79 (69)	71 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (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	17
Pakistani	29
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	138
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	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	30.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	106.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.0
Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	516 549
Total expenditure	507 202
Expenditure per pupil	2 096
Balance brought forward from previous year	39 262
Balance carried forward to next year	48 609

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	245
Number of questionnaires returned	147

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My Child likes school	60	37	1	0	3
My child is making good progress in school	49	42	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good	45	50	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	26	50	16	3	5
The teaching is good	50	46	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	43	41	10	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	59	33	5	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	61	37	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents	43	43	8	1	5
The school is well led and managed	61	35	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	54	40	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	29	39	13	3	16

Because of the effect of rounding, not all rows total 100%

The team judges that the school offers an appropriate programme of activities outside lessons and that amounts of homework are satisfactory. It also judges that parents are kept properly informed of their children's progress. The positive views of parents are supported by the findings of the inspection.

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

To build on

- Children have well below the expected level of knowledge and skill when they start school in the nursery.
- A growing proportion of children enter the nursery with little spoken English.
- Good progress and learning takes place in the Foundation Stage.
- The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching observed in the nursery.
- A caring environment provides for very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships amongst the children.
- The quality of relationships between the nursery staff and most parents is excellent.

To improve

- There is need to ensure that transition to Year 1 builds on the success of the Foundation Stage.

55. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall in both the nursery and reception class. The quality of education provided in the nursery is a strength of the school. At the time of the inspection there were nineteen part-time children in the nursery and thirty children in the reception class who, during the week of the inspection, commenced full time education. Very good induction procedures ensure a smooth start in the nursery and reception class. Prior to children starting in the nursery home visits are made to all families thus providing an excellent link between home and school. The very good knowledge gained from this of individual children's circumstances and needs is recorded. This helps in the initial settling in process when children start school and in providing appropriate support for those requiring additional help with English.
56. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of skills and experiences, however, on the whole, standards on entry are well below nationally expected levels. Standards are low in their language, literacy and communication skills and in personal and social development. As observed during the morning session in the nursery, many children are reluctant to join in activities and need a great deal of help to share and play fairly. The very good support the children receive from the teacher and nursery nurse, working together as a united team, enable most children to make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time children leave the nursery some children reach the standards expected although fewer do this in language, literacy and communication skills. The successful transition arrangements between the nursery and reception class enables children to transfer confidently, thus levels of learning are maintained.
57. The provision in the reception class builds successfully on the very good start made in the nursery. Nevertheless, the overall provision in the reception class

varies in the different areas of learning. It is good in personal, social, emotional, mathematical and most areas of language development. It is satisfactory in parts of physical and creative development. Careful assessment of what children know and can do is made but these are not always used well enough to target individuals or groups of children to particular activities necessary to develop specific knowledge, understanding and skills. Scrutiny of planning indicates that children are given too much freedom for example 'free play' therefore not benefiting sufficiently from planned learning.

58. The quality of teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching observed in the nursery is always good with a high proportion of very good teaching observed. By the end of the reception class, children make good progress in all areas of learning due to the effective intervention of adults. The bilingual support assistant, who visits the nursery and reception class for one day each week, successfully enables children in their first language to understand and participate in language-based activities. The team spirit is very good and everyone knows all the children very well. There is a very good understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum that young children need and it is well planned to make sure that all areas of learning are covered appropriately. Well-planned, regular observation, particularly in the nursery, whilst children work and play ensures that planned work successfully meets all children's developing needs, including the higher attaining children. The nursery staff keep very comprehensive detailed records of individual pupil's progress in all areas of learning, thus ensuring that planning reflects the needs of the children.
59. Children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language are identified on arrival in the nursery, are very well supported by sensitive teaching and make good progress similar to other pupils. The excellent relationships between the nursery and reception class including the interchanging of teaching staff, a joint planning approach and assessments of pupils' progress make a significant contribution to the quality of education provided in the Foundation Stage. The school is aware of the need to continue and share the best practice found in the nursery and reception class into Year 1, thus maintaining the good start achieved by most pupils.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. In most aspects of personal, social and emotional development most children start school with well below average skills. Initial activities focus appropriately on the development of these areas and on the development of English. Consequently, the children observed during their first days in the nursery are happy and fully involved in the very good range of activities provided. Relationships are forged quickly with the nursery teacher and adult support being excellent role models, always greeting parents in a relaxed, easy manner. Because the quality of teaching is very good, the children make very good progress and many of them are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area.

61. Many of the children are happy to talk to visitors after initial caution and ask questions or seek help with their work and play. All children are developing some independence in the nursery and are encouraged to take care of their own belongings when they enter the cloakroom area. In the nursery and reception class, children follow developing routines for hanging up their coats or the collection and return of an apron when painting. Behaviour is very good in the classroom due to the high expectations of adults and to the quiet, positive reminders in their first language if necessary of what is expected. Well structured activities provide children with many opportunities for sharing and taking turns, for example the preparation of a fresh fruit salad in the nursery, before the actual commencement of 'eating' in a controlled manner, reinforcing good manners. In the reception class, most children play alongside each other happily when engaged in a task, sharing equipment and taking turns. Expectations of very good behaviour are consistently enforced in an encouraging manner. Children respond to this positively and their behaviour on the whole is very good with some excellent behaviour noted during a bread baking demonstration by a local bakery. Teaching in this area of learning is very good in both the nursery and reception class. Most children make good progress through the stepping stones.²

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children enter school with low skills in communication, language and literacy and because many children are at the early stages of learning English, some children still have below average skills by the end of the Foundation Stage. Very good teaching ensures that children make very good progress in this area and this is evident in the number of children who talk to each other in English when playing with friends in the classroom.
63. Very strong emphasis is given to this area of development in the nursery. Very good opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking and listening skills and adults take every opportunity to question and talk to the children, for example, during the washing of dolls in the water tray so that they can extend their vocabulary and use of language. The role play areas in the nursery provide very well for this as children act out real life situations with adults playing with the children very effectively. On entry into the nursery most children answer questions by using one word but, on entry into the reception class, most are confident and like to tackle new words. The children listen very well to the class teacher during the lessons and this is a contributing factor in the very good progress that they make in their early gains in English vocabulary. The support given by additional adults who are able to speak to the children in their first language is very good and this ensures that any minor difficulties in the understanding of different words are ironed out.
64. In the reception class, children enjoy books and handle them with care and most know that print tells a story. Higher attaining children use pictures effectively to predict the plot in the story. They talk enthusiastically about the

² The stepping stones are the small stages that children in the Foundation Stage follow as they build knowledge and skills in the early learning goals.

illustrations on the book cover and what happens next in the story. Progress in the development of early writing tasks is good and through carefully focused teaching most children are starting to write letters independently. Children in the nursery recognise a photograph of themselves and then proceed to mark their name underneath. All the children in the reception class have memorised and sing a range of action songs and rhymes. By the end of the reception year many children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in literacy, but not in other aspects of English.

Mathematical development

65. Children enter school with low levels of skill in understanding and counting numbers. Early years teaching in mathematics is good overall with some very good features observed in the reception class. In the nursery children are given the opportunity to sort, match and compare a range of objects for example the relative size of model toys or the placing of cake decorations on top of an iced cake in readiness for someone's birthday. Children in the nursery learn a good range of action number rhymes, songs and counting games that reinforce good learning. During some lessons the supporting adults ensure that the children understand new learning by reinforcing the vocabulary in the children's first language. During a lesson in the reception class, very good teaching was observed during a shape recognition activity. The nursery nurse supported by a bilingual assistant, requested children to describe a shape in a 'feely' bag to the rest of the group as the bag was passed around. High quality, sensitive questioning enabled all children to participate successfully, reinforcing the vocabulary in the children's first language before describing the shape to the rest of the group in English. A very strong feature observed in the scrutiny of teachers' planning in the nursery is the development of independent activities, with access to a good range of mathematical equipment. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception class and a few reach the early learning goals basic numeracy by the end of the reception year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. On entry into the school children's understanding of the world in which they live is below average. Good teaching and well-matched activities enable most to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. The aspects taught in this area of the curriculum are particularly well organised and an excellent range of visits and visitors positively enhance children's awareness about the world in which they live. Classroom displays are clearly labelled with children's paintings and drawings of themselves among a range of posters and models. Children in the nursery understand the use of a variety of information sources: for example the digital camera that gives instant photographs and, with support, are developing good 'click' and 'drag' techniques when using the computer mouse. Children in the nursery and reception class learn that the passage of time affects everyone, the display in the nursery clearly showing the clothing worn as a baby, a toddler and the different changes as they grow. This was enhanced by the bathing of a real baby in the nursery by a parent. Great delight was evident

when the baby, only a few weeks old, was prepared for its bath, washed and dried before being dressed. During this activity the very good quality of teacher's questions required thoughtful answers with one word challenged by further questions. During the visit by a local bakery and the manufacture of bread by the children, they used the correct ingredients, aware that dough needs heat before it becomes a loaf to eat. Adult discussions with children during this well prepared activity continually stimulate ideas and positively enhance children's spoken English.

Physical development

67. Children start the nursery with well below average physical development skills. The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class. Nevertheless, some pupils are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning in their fine motor and control skills by the time they leave the reception class. While there is suitable space outside for the children to play outside and take part regularly in some kinds of physical activity, there are not enough planned activities in the reception class to support the development of individual skills in this aspect sufficiently well. Many children run around the playground safely, most of them successfully avoiding bumping in to each other. During an outside play period, children control their tricycles with increasing skill and kick balls directly aimed towards the goal with increasing accuracy. Many children use scissors correctly, for example in the reception class where they cut out shapes accurately. During the preparation of a fresh fruit salad in the nursery children use plastic knives confidently, cutting large portions of fruit into smaller sections for inclusion in the large bowls. In the reception class all children make a good try at writing their names and most hold a pencil with a suitable grip and form letters correctly.

Creative development

68. Through a wide range of activities children's creative ideas and skills are effectively promoted. Good teaching and planning including teachers role-playing in the nursery ensure that all make good and sometimes very good progress. In the nursery children have a range of good opportunities for painting and opportunities to make careful choices about colour and materials. In the reception class, during the manufacture of bread and the kneading of dough children confidently mould, roll and shape individual loaves. During the inspection one of the highlights was a visit by a professional musician. In a relaxed manner children in the nursery and reception class were given well-planned opportunities to explore the making of different sounds, listening to and the production of sounds using a wide range of musical instruments and finding out how sounds are produced and changed. The final impromptu performance by a band of children 'playing' a variety of instruments was a truly outstanding occasion. By the time children leave the reception class, many have attained the early learning goals in this area.

ENGLISH

2 To build on

- By the end of Year 6 pupils are making good progress.
- The National Literacy Strategy has been firmly established and is being taught well.
- The effective use of the school's analysis of data has clearly identified areas for development.
- The subject is effectively managed and there is a strong commitment to school improvement.

2 To improve

- Standards in all areas of English need to be improved further.
- The writing levels of boys need to be raised.
- The provision of greater opportunities for all pupils to develop poetry-writing skills.
- The performance of the higher attaining pupils needs to be raised.

69. Since the last inspection the results of the SATs have fluctuated but although standards have shown a rising trend they are still below the expected level for all pupils. Nevertheless, good progress has been made by the current Year 6 pupils when comparing their attainment levels on entry to school.
70. Throughout the school the girls are consistently outperforming the boys in both reading and writing. During the inspection, some boys, especially in older junior classes, were more easily distracted than the girls and their progress slowed as a result. Such disturbance to learning is managed better in some classes than others. These boys do not produce the same quality written work as other boys and the girls in the same class.
71. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented and due to the good quality of the teaching of literacy, most pupils are making at least steady progress. Those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress due to the well-planned and targeted support they receive. Both these groups of pupils are set work that is well matched to their needs and the support staff give very good encouragement and explanation to help their pupils succeed. They achieve the levels of attainment that are expected of them.
72. The school makes good use of assessment data. It is carefully analysed to identify and target weaknesses, for example, the level of boys' writing. This area has now become a whole school target, and time and resources are being allocated to assist in its improvement. Target setting is used for whole class attainment, as well as for groups and individuals. This is effective in improving standards though the review of targets with pupils at the end of lessons could be more consistent.
73. At the end of both infants and juniors, standards of attainment in speaking and listening skills are close to average. Pupils listen well to their teachers during the literacy hour and are keen to respond thoughtfully to the teacher's questions. In shared work and in the plenary session at the end of lessons teachers encourage discussion on a wide variety of topics with pupils able to express and develop their ideas and views. In Year 6, pupils are building their

skills in biographical writing, and they interview one of the Year 6 teachers. To this end, they explore how to make their writing interesting through the depth of their questioning. Further valuable experiences are gained through timetabled drama lessons and the use of improvisation and role-play. In Year 2, during circle time pupils are provided with opportunities to express their views and feelings. They join in these activities with a good measure of confidence including those pupils for whom English is not their first language.

74. Inspection evidence judges attainment in reading at the end of the infants to be below average. However, most pupils read with some confidence, enjoyment and expression. They talk about the story and different characters with interest, and clearly describe the illustrations. They use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and many take their books home to read to a family member. By the time pupils reach the end of the juniors attainment in reading has improved and is close to the average. Most pupils clearly enjoy reading and do so with expression that conveys the full meaning of the text. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and books they have read. A number of pupils who use the new local library to supplement their reading have acquired a limited range of research skills, but in the main this is an area that requires improvement.
75. At the end of both the infants and the juniors, attainment in writing is below the national average. By the end of the infants, pupils are writing a variety of stories, sometimes retelling stories they have heard in class in their own words, using sentences with reasonably accurate spelling and paying due attention to punctuation. Handwriting is developing into the clearly shaped and accurately positioned style adopted by the school. The writing generally shows a limited use of an extended vocabulary. In the juniors pupils' experience of writing is extended to write for a range of different purposes and audiences including play scripts, mystery stories, and writing on a contentious issue using a balanced argument. They begin to use descriptive language well as, for example, a Year 3 pupil wrote, "As the policeman got nearer you could hear the grass crunching and crackling under his big black boots." Little evidence was seen of the pupils' own attempts at poetry writing, even though the use of poetic devices such as similes and metaphors are included in lessons. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 were developing their biography writing skills based upon their own research. They produced pieces that were neatly written in a style designed to engage the interest of the reader, and involving the use of appropriate connectives to make complex sentences. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum.
76. Pupils show a very positive attitude to developing their literacy skills throughout the school. They listen attentively during lessons and concentrate well whether working independently or under supervision. They enjoy good relationships with each other and with their teacher. They participate fully in lessons and respond to their teacher's questions keenly and enthusiastically. When required they can work co-operatively in groups engaged in sharing their ideas and tasks together.

77. The quality of teaching is good across the school. The school has made a strong commitment to the National Literacy Strategy and it is taught effectively. Lessons are well planned to meet the varying abilities of pupils, although the higher attaining pupils do need to be extended further. During lessons the learning objectives are shared with pupils so they are clear about the purpose and direction of their learning. Basic skills are taught well, and classroom assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and help them to make good progress. Effective strategies are employed to ensure pupils conform to an acceptable standard of behaviour. Time is used well with lessons being conducted at a good pace. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well supported by staff from the language support service. Work is regularly marked in accordance with the school's marking policy. Pupils are given clear information about how to progress and improve the quality of their work.
78. The English co-ordinator provides clear educational direction and leadership for the subject. National and school data is analysed carefully and used to set targets for each year group, and to monitor the progress of all pupils. As part of her management role she carries out regular classroom monitoring to assess the quality of learning, supports the development of subject planning and provides appropriate and good quality resources and materials. The excellent facilities of the community library adjoining the school are timetabled for exclusive school use on certain days to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to develop skills in library use and in researching information.

MATHEMATICS

To build on

- Standards in mathematics show an upward trend.
- They are average overall at the age of eleven and are better than those in similar schools.
- There is good teaching and learning in most lessons.
- Very good use is made of assessment to inform future planning.
- Very good leadership ensures a clear direction for the subject.
- Pupils show good attitudes and relationships in lessons with good behaviour.

To improve

- There is still a need to target the higher attaining pupils to raise standards higher.
- Use of teaching staff in Year 3 and Year 6 could be more effective.

79. Standards in mathematics reflect an improving picture in line with the national upward trend in standards for pupils aged eleven years. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in most year groups and scrutiny of pupils' work indicates standards close to national expectations in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 but below this level in the other classes. The attainment of higher attaining pupils is not always as good as it might be because planning does not always reflect their needs sufficiently and targets for learning are not set, shared or reviewed with the pupils enough.

80. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully and the overall good quality of teaching has a strong impact on improvements to standards. The very well informed and enthusiastic subject co-ordinator is determined that results in mathematics will be even better than at present. There is close monitoring of test results in order to identify where progress is less good and the subject enjoys a high profile throughout the school
81. Pupils start Year 1 with below average levels of understanding in number. Sound teaching in Year 1 results in steady progress and learning is accelerated in Year 2, bringing it close to national levels. In Year 3, progress is variable because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and work is not always well matched to pupils' existing levels of learning. There is an over-reliance on worksheets and many activities undertaken, as written exercises duplicate tasks that have already been covered successfully in mental warm-up activities. Progress accelerates in Year 4 and Year 5, enabling pupils to consolidate learning successfully. Pupils reach a plateau in Year 6 where learning remains steady with many missed opportunities to challenge higher attaining pupils through a range of self-motivated activities. Most work being teacher directed often displaying one method of working out the answer.
82. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Where there is a suitable balance of whole class teaching, individual and group work involving all pupils with the quick paced oral starter, the sharing of intended learning with pupils and a whole class session at the end of the lesson, the quality of learning is good.
83. In Year 2 pupils have a reasonable grasp of mathematics but there is a wide spread of ability. For instance, some pupils work comfortably with hundreds, tens and units while others struggle to handle two-digit numbers. Pupils are taught well and this helps to rapidly develop their numeracy skills and broaden their knowledge of shapes and graphs. Teaching is good and sometimes very good in Years 4 and 5 and this is where pupils gain the most from their learning. In these classes, teachers set very clear targets for pupils in each lesson and expect them to succeed. Both teachers use questions effectively and plan work that interests and motivates pupils of all abilities. For example, in Year 4 pupils confidently counted and clapped a range of number sequences starting at seven hundred and twenty-one, going backwards and forwards in steps of one hundred, fifty and ten. The added use of a hand puppet, held by the class teacher performing clapping rhythms clearly indicating counting in steps of one thousand, successfully maintains pupils' interest and motivation. In Year 5 pupils confidently use a range of rhymes to help remember multiplication facts, higher attaining pupils have expected levels of multiplication tables facts that enable them to operate successfully. The use of humour by the class teacher positively supports individual pupil's efforts and all pupils are made to feel involved. Pupils make good progress and also receive high levels of support from the classroom assistant.
84. At the start of each lesson well-planned opportunities are given for involvement in mental work. The brisk pace observed in most lessons and the range of challenging questions creates a sense of purpose and vigour. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 at present have insufficient opportunity to work independently

so their progress is not as rapid as it should be. Pupils with special educational needs find most difficulty in mental calculation at speed nevertheless most make good progress. Some have individual targets for numeracy and follow a structured programme that steadily develops mathematical skills. Higher attaining pupils do not always need to use practical methods to complete the same low-level task before moving to the planned extension work. This invariably slows progress. Those pupils with English as an additional language make progress at a similar rate to others in the class. No discernible difference was observed during the inspection regarding the attainment of boys and girls; nevertheless in mental sessions the girls often tended to answer with great enthusiasm, while some boys sat in rather a passive mood. National test results at the end of Year 6 indicate that girls are generally performing better than boys. The school is aware of this trend and plans to address this issue through a range of targeted activities.

85. Analysis of pupils' work reflects that too many tasks are closely directed by class teachers. At present there is no planned progression of opportunities for pupils to decide on their own methods or on how to improve their own ability to solve problems. There are too few planned opportunities for Year 6 pupils to develop their own investigational skills, as pupils are frequently required to record their answers formally rather than developing a more practical approach. Teachers miss opportunities to develop mathematical understanding when dealing with other subjects. In the science lesson observed in Year 4 good examples of pupils developing their measuring and weighing skills were observed, but such occurrences are rare. The use of ICT to underpin skills in mathematics, for example the interpretation of data, is at present unsatisfactory.
86. Most pupils enjoy mathematics, have good attitudes and respond well in lessons. This enhances the quality of learning even though in some lessons work lacks rigour and challenge. Pupils listen carefully to their class teachers' instructions and answer questions respectfully. Nevertheless, the opportunity for pupils to develop greater levels of independence is restricted in some lessons by staff positioning resources on the group tables before pupils commence the task. As a result pupils are not offered a choice in the selection of appropriate resources to investigate a given task. The quality of presentation of pupils' work is good, reflecting pride and care.
87. Overall, the co-ordination of mathematics is very good. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to assess the school's current position by carefully analysing test results, raising teachers' confidence and skills and developing a plan for further improvement. There are well-planned strategies, contained in a detailed subject action plan that reflect on the school's awareness to raise standards even higher. The school is aware of the need to clarify still further the effective use of additional teaching staff in Year 3 and Year 6 to meet the needs of all pupils. The present teaching arrangements are unsatisfactory with the roles of two teachers in the same class often blurred as pupils are unclear of who is actually in control.

88. Marking gives praise to individuals and the very best examples inform them how to improve their work, though this level of help is not always given. Taken as a whole, arrangements for assessment and monitoring pupils' progress are very good. The school has successfully developed the use of non-statutory tests to track pupils' progress from year to year. Careful assessments are carried out and these support future planning intentions very effectively in most cases.
89. The quality and range of resources available to support the teaching of mathematics are very good, reflecting good accessibility, range and quantity appropriate to all needs.

SCIENCE

To build on

- There is good analysis of standards and progress in science.
- The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in the SATs has increased well.
- Last year, over half of Year 6 moved up 3 levels in relation to their achievement in Year 2.
- Pupils' knowledge of basic science facts is good.
- The curriculum gives due attention to most aspects of science.
- Most pupils are interested and able to work sensibly on their own; they also try hard.
- Senior managers and the co-ordinator are committed to improvement and work continually for this.

To improve

- Teachers are inclined to tell pupils exactly what to do rather than allow them to develop the skills of investigation and evaluation themselves.
- Time could be better used in some lessons.
- Not enough emphasis is given to detailed writing up of the outcomes of investigation.
- Some older boys are easily distracted and this slows their learning.
- Higher attaining pupils are still not all doing as well as they might.

90. Following the science SATs results in 2000, school managers looked closely at the topics that pupils found difficult. Targets for the pupils in Year 6 last year were also sharpened and their progress checked regularly. Preliminary results for the 2001 SATs in Year 6 show that, whilst overall results will probably be similar to those in 2000, twice as many pupils have achieved the higher level 5. It promises well for the future that about half the pupils in Year 6 last year had made good progress from their Year 2 SATs and gained three levels over the four-year period
91. The science curriculum in school is dominated by the acquisition of basic science facts. This is done successfully and so most pupils can retell necessary information by the age of eleven. They are not as good at the practical aspects of the subject, relying too much on their teachers to assist the setting up and conduct of investigations. This is largely due to the style of teaching in some junior lessons, particularly in the first and last year, where the teacher details the activities step-by-step. In addition, not all pupils can write effective descriptions or evaluations of their work as much follow-up writing takes the form of answers to questions on worksheets.
92. The pattern of progress that pupils make in science reflects these constraints. Children start school with low levels of knowledge of the world about them, including aspects of science. In infant classes, this knowledge is built on satisfactorily and pupils talk with interest and enthusiasm about the world of animals, plants, scientific materials and processes that they experience in

lessons. Progress speeds up in Year 2 but, by the age of seven, pupils still have some gaps in their knowledge and skills, such is the amount they have to make up, and standards are just below those found in most primary schools.

93. Pupils in junior classes sometimes spurt ahead and sometimes slow down in their progress. Whilst they can, for example, draw circuit diagrams that incorporate switches and complete worksheets to show the effect of adding extra batteries to the circuits, they are not always given the opportunity to turn their theoretical knowledge to advantage by using it to complete practical tasks. Thus, during the inspection, Year 6 spent a very long time listening as the teacher recounted facts on dissolving substances in water. When the pupils came to use their knowledge, time was short and afternoon break came before much discussion took place of what the pupils had learned or could explain. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the juniors, standards are just below average by the end of Year 6.
94. The curriculum for science includes all the necessary elements as prescribed by the National Curriculum and lesson planning reflects this clearly. The focus on what higher attainers are to do and learn in lessons could be sharper however. The teaching of science is satisfactory in infant and junior classes and in some lessons it is good. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, they manage their pupils very well and support staff give good assistance to pupils with special educational needs and those who speak other languages at home. There is growing use of ICT to improve and extend pupils' knowledge and skills in science. The school has recently bought a number of computer-controlled probes and sensors for use in science investigations, but as yet, these have seen little use. Plans are, however, in place for their increasing use with older juniors during the coming year.
95. Most pupils share a love of science, although some older boys are easily distracted and do not always make the same progress as the rest of the class. Where attitudes are best, pupils work hard, concentrate well and show that they can work sensibly when no adult is near. The key task for the school of ensuring that all pupils gradually take on more responsibility for their own work is therefore comparatively straightforward. The visitor to any science lesson will observe that it is a session of settled learning, good behaviour and positive relationships. Pupils, regardless of academic, social or ethnic background, mix well and want to learn science.
96. School managers have taken the subject forward. There is greater staff knowledge and confidence, and good awareness of the strengths and development points for the subject, including the need to promote pupils' spiritual development through planned opportunities in science. The co-ordinator works hard to ensure that science provision is improving. Attention to the points for improvement summarised at the head of this section will ensure that the subject advances well in the years to come.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

To build on

- Standards in the two subjects are better than usually found in primary schools.
- There is good emphasis on design and evaluation as well as creation in the curriculum.
- Growing use is made of ICT to advance pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Skills and knowledge are built well.
- Teaching and learning are both good, and pupils make rapid progress.
- The two subjects can confidently be used as models for improvement in other subjects.

To improve

- Nothing of significance.

97. The school has made good improvement to art and design and design and technology since the previous inspection and has built well on the strengths identified then. The two subjects are strengths of the school in many ways and serve as models for improvement in other subjects. The development of skills and knowledge is to the fore, and is rapid on the whole, and the quality of finished work is good. Indeed, some results are worthy of display in public galleries.
98. Standards in both subjects are above those found in most primary schools. Pupils are enthusiastic, take a pride in what they are completing and work very carefully. They are given opportunities to investigate a range of materials and styles in both two and three-dimensional art and technology. The curriculum is well planned for both subjects, with firm emphasis on the process of producing good quality images and products, and the development of key skills in planning, design and evaluation. These three strands are held in good balance and even pupils as young as six can talk infectiously about what they liked about their work and how they could possibly improve it.
99. The collection of artwork and models on display around school is presented in a way that does justice to its quality. Infant pupils produce work using paint, pastel, crayon, pencil and paper, card, fabric and natural materials. Junior pupils work with wood, plastic, metal and other materials and broaden their technical skills by adapting the work of craftspeople and famous artists into a style that is personal and expressive. Creativity is to the fore in all classes and the development of personal best is a constant theme in planning and practical experience.
100. Highlights of work seen include some excellent artwork in a restricted palette of colours by Year 5. This was based on the magnification of parts of pictures, photographs and designs and the results showed the fruits of careful observation, painstaking painting and very good presentation. Year 4 design and technology work to produce pop-up story books for younger children is another example of good quality work seen, as is Year 2's efforts to use twigs, branches and leaves in a very original way to make sculptures. The detailed evaluation of such work by the pupils is another indication of the good standards achieved.
101. Art and design and design and technology are taught well. Pupils respond by working hard and showing that they are mature and sensible learners. Behaviour is good in lessons in these subjects and so the right working conditions for practical work are established early in school. The subjects are managed well by two well-informed and successful co-ordinators who have the right priorities for their subjects. ICT is increasingly included in the experiences provided and pupils are using graphics and paint programs with some degree of sophistication. The quality of finished ICT based work is as good as that for more conventional products.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

To build on

- Pupils make satisfactory progress to the expected level of knowledge and understanding.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.
- Subject priorities have been pursued successfully by the committed co-ordinators.

To improve

- Skills of writing and recording in both subjects are not promoted systematically.

- ICT is under-used to develop skills and knowledge.
- Assessment requires enhancement.
- The two subjects have a lesser profile than other subjects in school.
- The provision of different work for the main ability groups in school requires refinement.

102. Whereas art and design and design and technology are strengths of the school, geography and history are not as prominent in the curriculum and have a number of areas for improvement. In general, the school's aims for geography and history are being met. Subject policies are in place and the school schemes of work, based on government guidance, have been written. Staff plan appropriate experiences for pupils in both the infants and the juniors, with more comprehensive coverage in history than geography. There is a generally positive lesson planning system in place with a clear choice of topics, and teaching and learning is supported by appropriate use of resources. Overall, the school has kept up with developments in the two subjects and is able to provide the necessary experiences to meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum.
103. Standards in the two subjects are broadly at the expected levels for seven and eleven-year-old pupils. The development of skills and knowledge is at an acceptable rate. Separately, however, there are differences in the progress made in different elements of the two subjects. Pupils make steady progress in knowledge and understanding of the geography and history topics they study. However, there is too little emphasis on writing. Much work is recorded on worksheets or in brief in books. The use of geography and history as a means of developing and improving pupils' writing skills has not been explored to any great degree and this is a missed opportunity.
104. Skills using ICT are also not developed as thoroughly in these two subjects as in some others. There is some good use of the Internet to support work in history, but in all, the use of computers as a research tool is insufficient. Thus, the development of enquiry skills and the ability to work independently are not supported as effectively as they might be.
105. The quality of teaching, as shown by direct observation and as seen in evidence from the work scrutiny, is satisfactory for both subjects in infant and junior classes. The only unsatisfactory lesson observed during the inspection was for geography and was graded so because the work was none too challenging and was the same for pupils of all abilities. In addition, the pupils grew restless because the teacher talked for too long and there was an absence of resources to support learning about weather patterns in different parts of the world. All other lessons were of satisfactory quality, though it was clear that some could have been good had the needs of different groups of pupils been more central to lesson planning and delivery.
106. The management of the two subjects, by separate co-ordinators, is satisfactory. They have clear understanding of the areas for improvement and, jointly with the headteacher, are determined to bring the quality of education and learning to the level of the best found in school. They acknowledge, for example, that assessment requires enhancement and have firm plans to bring this about.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

To build on

- Resources, especially hardware, and accommodation are very good.
- Standards in communication, word-processing and a number of other aspects of the subject are rising fast.
- Pupils enjoy their tasks and generally work hard.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence has improved; the management of pupils is very good.
- Support staff do a good job of helping their pupils.

To improve

- Resource use and ensuing standards in computer control and monitoring require a boost.
- The use of ICT in some subjects is not as good as in others.
- Some boys are less well motivated than other pupils, though staff deal very well with this.
- The work set for higher attaining pupils is not consistently demanding enough.

107. ICT is a much-improved subject since the previous inspection in 1996. Alongside the move to brand new buildings, the school equipped a well designed ICT suite and revamped the curriculum to capitalise on the new facilities and meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum. This has been reflected in the improving standards in the subject, and although there are still things to be completed, prospects for future improvement are good.
108. Whilst the quality and amount of hardware and software have improved dramatically, there have until recently been a number of shortages. Chief amongst these were resources to support the use of computers to control and monitor machines and physical processes. Infant pupils use a programmable toy to learn how to give instructions to move it around obstacles and junior pupils use a diagrammatic program to move the cursor around the screen. However, the oldest pupils have not yet had much experience to aid their understanding of how changes in temperature affect scientific investigations, for example, as the necessary resources have not been available. This year, the school has added to its stock of probes and sensors to monitor the weather, amongst other things, in order to provide the necessary opportunities for control and monitoring with computers. Year 6 pupils' knowledge and skills in this aspect of ICT are, therefore, not yet as well developed as in many primary schools.
109. Apart from this, the recent history of ICT has been very positive and today, the use of ICT for high speed and powerful communication is advanced. Attainment in the communications element of the subject is improving. Because of the recent nature of developments in this aspect, attainment in Years 5 and 6 is similar. The current Year 6 are likely to attain sound standards in communication but because they will have an additional year, standards for Year 5 should be better than usually found by the time they leave school. The use of the Internet is common in ICT lessons in nearly all years in school. Infant pupils make contact with approved websites to find more about things they are studying and this is extended in junior classes, so that by Year 5, pupils are developing refined search techniques to locate data on complex matters such as the awards written by the author Eric Carle.
110. Some attainment in word-processing, data handling and the use of spreadsheets is equally good. Pupils are confident users of such software and have good command of features that allow for interesting presentation of text, the manipulation of numerical data and the creation of output that approaches professional standards of presentation, such as the pop-up books created by Year 4 for younger pupils.
111. ICT has a growing profile across the curriculum. In this way, pupils learn more about the subject itself but it also contributes to their knowledge and skills in the other subjects studied. However, this is not consistent. In subjects such as music and history (as well as the challenge of doing so in PE), ICT has yet to have much of a presence. In others such as literacy, science and art and design, the rate of improvement has been speedy and some good work is now

done. Senior managers and the co-ordinator have firm intentions, as expressed in the school improvement plan, to broaden the use of ICT across the full curriculum.

112. Because pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and motivation are all good, learning is productive in ICT lessons. Even when large groups use the suite, pupils cooperate and collaborate in their learning and show politeness, with a minimum of fuss and bother. In general, pupils all work with success, though in a few lessons, some boys are less well motivated than other pupils. Higher attaining pupils could, on occasion, be set work to tax them more and this would keep their efforts sharply focused.
113. In general, teaching quality is good in both infant and junior classes. The subject knowledge and confidence of teachers and support staff has been boosted well and the management of pupils is a strength. The learning support assistants give very good assistance to the pupils they work with and so, those with special educational needs or those who do not speak English at home have very good chances of success.
114. The management of ICT is accomplished and successful. There are still some challenges to overcome, but the co-ordinator works hard for improvement and she is supported well by other staff. There are sensible priorities for the continuing development of the subject and ICT is now at the centre of the curriculum.

MUSIC

To build on

- The subject has good leadership and management.
- Standards in singing are above the expected levels.
- The music curriculum receives a high profile in the school.
- Pupils show good attitudes, behaviour and relationships in lessons.

To improve

- The emphasis on listening to, composing and appreciating music could be stronger.
- The use of musical instruments is not widespread in lessons.
- The use of ICT to support learning in music is minimal.

115. Standards in singing are above national age related expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement on the standards observed in the previous inspection. Pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. Nevertheless standards in composing, knowledge of musical notation and interpretation of different musical themes are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Taped evidence provided a satisfactory picture of the range of tasks and ingenuity of interpretation by pupils in Year 6. Music receives a high profile throughout the school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in music as a whole as they move through the school.
116. Pupils in Year 1 show awareness of different sounds, listen well and distinguish between short and long notes and confidently repeat short musical patterns clapping different rhythms. When listening to different types of music played in assembly pupils respond with enjoyment as well as responding to the different moods it creates. Nevertheless, opportunities are missed to discuss the life and works of famous composers further underpinning pupils' knowledge and experience of similar types of music arranged by the same composer.

117. Pupils in Year 5 confidently sing a range of rhythms. They sing confidently from memory, singing softly or loudly as appropriate, making good progress to enable them to sing in rounds with good harmony. Pupils have a developing awareness of the suitability of various instruments used to convey certain moods for example 'waves upon a sea shore'. Pupils sing with good expression and diction, singing a wide repertoire of songs with increasing expression. As observed in Year 5, pupils eagerly await the variety of activities devised to develop their skills in singing new songs. They delight in opportunities to accompany singing a range of multicultural songs. The choir is open to all pupils in the juniors and makes an excellent contribution to the quality of singing at assemblies and special public occasions. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and most listen attentively to instructions. Behaviour is good and even in a hard working, sometimes noisy, hands-on music lesson, pupils respond almost immediately to the teacher. In Year 5 pupils listen sensibly to each other's contributions and make constructive comments. Few musical instruments were seen in use by pupils. Nevertheless, when used good care is taken in their handling, collecting and returning them in a very responsible manner.
118. Overall teaching is good with some examples of very good teaching observed in upper juniors. Lessons are well planned to develop a range of musical skills. All pupils are offered the same opportunities and pupils of differing abilities make similar progress, for example special educational needs pupils play an important role in the school choir. Very good class management, relationships and a sense of enjoyment mean that rates of learning are good and that time is used effectively. At the start of the lesson teachers give clear instructions about the proposed lesson content and the expectations by the end of the lesson. In the very good lesson observed in Year 5 the sheer quality, pace and challenge promoted learning at a high level for all pupils, successfully engaging the interest and participation of all.
119. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development; however, missed opportunities exist to extend pupils' spiritual awareness by offering a period of tranquillity in which to reflect at the start and end of school assemblies.
120. The subject is well managed by an energetic, enthusiastic co-ordinator who has identified the weaknesses and developed a clear scheme based upon recent government guidelines. The subject co-ordinator is full of energy and presents her lessons with great skill and determination ensuring that all pupils enjoy singing and make good progress. At present there are not enough planned opportunities to support pupils' learning through the use ICT despite the quality of computers available. Overall the range of musical resources available is satisfactory and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop still further the range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

?To build on

- Standards are at the expected level for seven and eleven year olds.

- Strengths maintained from the last time the school was inspected.
- The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good.
- Pupils develop good physical and social skills by the age of eleven.

- The subject is effectively co-ordinated.

To improve

- The pace of lesson is sometimes too slow causing pupils to become distracted
- The use of ICT across the PE curriculum.

121. At the time of the last inspection standards in physical education (PE) were at the expected level for both seven and eleven year olds, and these sound standards have been sustained. There is no difference in the standards achieved between girls and boys, or pupils with special educational needs. The accommodation issue raised last time has been resolved as the school is now located in a new building of high quality. The facilities now provided include a purpose built hall that is equipped as a gymnasium complete with a well-equipped resource store, a level playground with games markings, and a playing field.
122. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection, and they were all games lessons. In an infant lesson, pupils work enthusiastically developing their throwing and catching skills. At the start of the lessons pupils engaged in a warm-up activity. They travelled about the hall in different direction, varying their speed and size of steps. They followed instructions and used the space well. Then they worked singly and in pairs and showed good co-operative skills when throwing the ball in the air to one another and catching it. The teacher provided them with a variety of different throwing and catching activities. Some pupils improved their skills as a result of the teacher's demonstration. Others did not because the teacher did not always ensure that they were paying attention during periods of instruction and demonstration. The effect was that pupils did not always develop to their full potential.
123. In the juniors teachers use a range of techniques and activities to develop pupils catching and throwing skills. Lessons are well-planned and appropriate resources used to provide opportunities to build on previous learning. A useful strategy is employed to engage a non-participating pupil (who was injured) to observe and comment upon certain target activities for the teacher. This has a positive effect upon the pupil's involvement in the lesson as well as the development of observational skills. Occasionally, tasks are undemanding and there is insufficient pace to the lesson to hold pupil's attention and keep them involved in developing their skill level. Pupils achieve well in games when they have been systematically taught both skills and techniques. This was well illustrated in a Year 5 games when they were playing small-sided football games. Teams were a mix of boys and girls and they demonstrated good skills in ball control and accurate passing using the inside of the foot. They also showed good co-operative play and an awareness of space. The teacher managed the lesson very effectively and enabled pupils to develop their skills considerably. The quality of teaching across the subject is generally sound but some examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection.

124. The school provides pupils in Year 6 with swimming tuition. They respond well to the instruction and develop confidence in the water. By the time the course has been completed most of the pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres unaided.
125. The co-ordinator is experienced. She is hard working and committed to her subject. She leads from the front and does some specialist teaching in both infant and junior classes to promote good teaching and to support colleagues. Periods of non-contact time are allocated to allow her to monitor lessons. She has recently rewritten the school policy on PE and based the scheme of work on a combination of the national guidelines and the Durham Scheme; this provides sound support for teachers' planning. There is an adequate supply of good quality resources. Assessment procedures are in place to monitor progress at the end of each unit of work. The programme of extra-curricular sporting activities, such as football, netball, rounders and cross-country running against other schools, enhances pupils' physical and social skills. Pupils are often commended for their sportsmanship by other schools.
126. The school is socially inclusive, ensuring quality, access and opportunity for all pupils in its planning. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully integrated into groups within the classroom for PE and are appropriately included in any additional activities provided by the school. A remaining challenge for the school is to ensure that ICT is used to advance pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in PE.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

To build on

- The curriculum meets the necessary requirements and covers Christianity and three main world religions successfully.
- Standards are at the expected level at the age of seven and eleven.
- Pupils make steady progress in RE
- There is firm commitment to improvement.
- Teaching and learning quality are both good.
- There is good contribution to pupils' moral, social and spiritual development and to the very good level of racial harmony in school.

To improve

- Writing is not developed as systematically in RE as it could be.
- The use of ICT is spasmodic.

127. Standards in religious education (RE) are satisfactory by the end of both the infant and junior years. This is broadly similar to the position at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils study the full range of the subject, as set down by the locally agreed syllabus, and by the time they leave school they have strong knowledge of both the beliefs, celebrations, artefacts and worship of Christians and the other main religions of the world.
128. Infant pupils learn about well-known stories and people from the Old and New Testaments. They also make simple comparisons with other religions. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils learned about the family celebration of Sukkot by those who follow Judaism. They could explain the significance of fruit, foliage and herbs in the celebration and relate the festival to the Exodus of Moses.
129. Junior pupils progress soundly from this knowledge base. They learn, for example, that people celebrate in different ways in some respects, but in similar ways in others. Muslim pilgrimage, Hindu moral tales and Christian baptism are compared and contrasted with other beliefs. More than this, pupils begin to understand what they and others can learn from religion and how religious beliefs shape their lives. Pupils' moral, social and spiritual development is promoted well by such work. By the age of eleven, pupils have progressed steadily in their RE.

130. Although pupils generally have good factual knowledge, the weakness in attainment concerns the writing about the things studied. RE is not yet used sufficiently to extend and improve the skill of writing for different audiences and in different styles. Much recorded work is in the form of worksheets. This sometimes reduces understanding of religions as the worksheet focuses learning on the acquisition of facts in particular ways. The headteacher is keen to rectify this shortcoming as part of the school's drive to boost standards of literacy and to raise standards in RE.
131. Both teaching and learning are of good quality in infant and junior classes. Lessons are conducted briskly, teaching methods are efficient and the management of pupils is a strength. In return, pupils work hard, enjoy the experiences and show sensible and mature behaviour. There could be more use made of ICT in the subject, especially in conjunction with work to improve the quality of written work. RE makes a strong contribution to the good quality of relationships in school and to the very good levels of racial harmony that impressed inspectors during their visit.
132. There is every reason to think that RE will improve even more in the forthcoming years. Although there is no co-ordinator, the headteacher has ensured that RE is taught regularly, effectively and with commitment. Standards are as expected. With due emphasis on the development of writing, they should advance further.