

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Uxbridge

LEA area: Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102425

Headteacher: Mrs S Doherty

Reporting inspector: Tusha Chakraborti  
12603

Dates of inspection: 20 - 23 November 2000

Inspection number: 224420

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rockingham Close Uxbridge Middlesex
Postcode:	UB8 2UA
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs June Kernahan
Date of previous inspection:	01/07/96

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tusha Chakraborti 12603	Registered inspector	Science Geography History Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Judi Bedawi 19322	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Amanda Tapsfield 26514	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
John Collings 20752	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education	How well are pupils taught?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's RC Primary School is an average sized primary school, situated in the Uxbridge area of the London Borough of Hillingdon. It currently has 194 pupils on roll including 37 part-time children in the nursery. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average, whilst the percentage of statemented pupils is in line with the national average. Five pupils speak English as an additional language and one of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. The languages spoken amongst these pupils are Bulgarian, French, Hindi, Polish and Portuguese.

The level of attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is below the average expected of this age.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

St Mary's RC Primary School is a good school. It provides sound quality education, which meets the academic, social and emotional needs of its pupils well. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards and make good progress throughout the key stages. The quality of teaching is good. The school is led effectively by the headteacher and she is supported well by the staff and governors. The school has a strong commitment to equality of opportunities and promoting the well-being of its pupils. Its aims and values permeate through its caring ethos. It is an effective school and provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The school promotes its pupils' social development very effectively. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school is led and managed well by the headteacher, who is supported effectively by staff and governors.
- Teaching is good overall. It is very good in the nursery.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for children in Foundation Stage is good.
- The school's links with the community contribute very effectively to pupils' learning.
- The school has good links with parents. Parents make good contribution to children's learning at school and at home.
- The aims and values of the school are reflected well in all aspects of its life.
- The school is committed to improving the quality of education and standards.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in information technology in both key stages.
- Attendance.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in July 1996. The inspection report describes the school as a friendly and happy school which provides good quality education despite the poor standards of its accommodation. The report also identified some key issues in order to improve the standards and provision further. The current inspection concludes that the school has addressed the key issues successfully. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and reviewed regularly. Some improvements have been made to the accommodation and a new classroom, welfare suite and a food technology room have been

added to the school building. The school has received funding for major improvement of the accommodation and building work is due to start soon. Furthermore, the quality of teaching has improved, effective assessment procedures are being implemented consistently in literacy and numeracy and developing in other subject areas. The school's development plan is appropriately linked to financial planning. Effective teamwork involving the staff, headteacher and the governors, along with the new improvement in accommodation, indicates that the school's capacity to improve is good.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The national test results for the year 2000 show some decline in standards of attainment over the 1999 results. This is because of the very high pupil mobility the school experiences. For example, only 16 out of 26 Year 6 pupils taking the national test in summer 2000, attended the school from Key Stage 1. In 2000, the standards in the national tests for pupils aged 11 were in line with the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Compared to similar schools, the test results were below average in English and science and average in mathematics.

The inspection confirms that standards are in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science. The grades above do not take into account the high pupil mobility in the school. The standards attained by the 16 pupils, who attended the school from Key Stage 1, are in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science. A high proportion of pupils achieved higher standards (Level 5) in English. Overall, pupils achieve average standards and the school is successful in meeting its set targets for raising standards. The trend in the school's improvement over the years is in line with the national trend. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

The standards in information technology are judged to be below the expected level in both key stages. Pupils' skills of scientific investigations and evaluating evidence to support ideas or answer questions are insufficiently developed. Standards in physical education are above average in Key Stage 2, but average in Key Stage 1. Standards are in line with those expected of similar age pupils in all other subjects, except in geography. It was not possible to judge standards in geography in either of the key stages because of insufficient evidence available during the week of inspection.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good attitudes to learning. Pupils are generally keen to learn, and respond to class discussions and tasks responsibly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. There are opportunities for pupils to take on a range of responsibilities which they carry out willingly and successfully. The relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are good.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Relationships throughout the school have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 is good overall. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of the lessons observed, of which 40 per cent was good and 18 per cent was very good. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when 14 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory.

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan effectively to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are met. As a result, most pupils concentrate well and gain in knowledge and understanding in all subjects progressively. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well across the school. Teachers plan work in accordance with the targets set in the individual education plans. The learning support assistants support all pupils, especially the pupils with special educational needs, very effectively, ensuring that these pupils participate fully in all lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Generally broad and balanced curriculum, but the curriculum does not meet the requirements in information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and take a full part in lessons.



Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school promotes very good social development for its pupils. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good overall. It underpins the school's caring ethos and permeates through the curriculum effectively.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school promotes the welfare of its pupils well through an effective support system and effective links with external agencies. It has appropriate assessment procedures in place.

The school works very well in partnership with the parents who are very supportive of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed well. The headteacher has clear educational direction and is supported well by staff and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The strategic roles of the governors are developed appropriately. They have clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, governors' annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements fully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has an established system for evaluating its performance through the evaluation of the school development plan and the analysis of test results.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of all staff and accommodation. Grants and funding are used efficiently to address the educational priorities. Outdoor facilities are used very well to enhance pupils' learning in the Foundation Stage.

The school has an adequate number of staff and they are well trained. Accommodation is inadequate to deliver all areas of the curriculum effectively. However, the school has recently secured funding for the extension and improvement of the school building. Learning resources, except in information and communication technology and geography, are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value in all spending decisions and monitors its impact on financial planning closely.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li><li>• Children are making good progress.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve best.</li><li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school.</li><li>• The school promotes good behaviour.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some parents feel that they are not kept well enough informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• Some parents feel that their children do not receive sufficient homework.</li><li>• Some parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of extra-curricular activities.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. However, the team did not find any evidence to confirm the concerns about homework and information about pupils' progress. The inspectors also conclude that the school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities which enhances pupils' opportunities for learning and physical activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The attainment for children under five years of age, on entry to the nursery, is below that expected of children of this age. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress. As a result, by the end of the reception year, the majority of children attain standards that are in line with the expected levels of Early Learning Goals.
2. The results of the 2000 national tests show that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards that are above the national averages in reading and writing, and well above average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards are below average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. These results show significant improvement in mathematics over the previous year, where standards have risen from below average to well above average. Standards in reading and writing have also improved, with one pupil in reading and two pupils in writing receiving much higher grades (Level 4). At the end of Key Stage 2, standards attained in the 2000 national tests are average in English and mathematics, but below in science. In comparison to similar schools, the standards are average in mathematics, but below in English and science. The standards in the national test results over the last four years indicate variation in attainment from year to year, reflecting pupil mobility and number of pupils with special educational needs.
3. The current inspection finds that, by the end of both key stages, the standards of attainment for the seven year and 11 year old pupils are in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science. It is below the national expectations in information technology in both key stages. In physical education, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards that are above the level expected of this age, whilst attainment in Key Stage 1 is in line with the expected level. Attainment in both key stages in all other subjects, except in geography, is in line with what is expected of this age group. No judgement was made on geography because of lack of evidence in this area during the week of inspection. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1.
4. Pupils attain good standards in speaking and listening at the end of both key stages, due to the positive approach of teachers who encourage pupils to reflect upon their own and other people's feelings and responses from an early age. Pupils of all ages are articulate about their preferences in reading, and discuss enthusiastically the thoughts and feelings of the characters within texts they are sharing. Older pupils talk well about their reasons for choosing particular books and what they like about stories by their favourite authors.
5. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading at the end of both key stages. Pupils have a sound grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them. They read with improving fluency and accuracy and 11 year olds develop critical appreciation of a range of books and are able to talk about different authors. The oldest pupils are competent readers of fiction and poetry. However, the development of their ability to find information from different sources is severely hampered by the present lack of a school library.
6. Writing is sound in both key stages, signifying good achievement for the majority of pupils. Teachers lead discussions well to promote good use of language and

different style within pupils' written work. Pupils are given regular opportunities to undertake extended writing tasks with the result that pupils can write sustained stories with a good attention to characters and plots and make good use of interesting vocabulary. By the age of 11 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Additionally, the very good work planned for those with special educational needs means that nearly all pupils attain the standards in writing expected for 11 year olds by the time they leave the school. Standards of handwriting are good throughout the school.

7. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively and literacy is used well to support work in other subjects. The National Numeracy Strategy is also being applied effectively across the school.
8. In mathematics, by the age of seven, pupils have a secure understanding of tens and units. They measure in centimetres and find the difference in lengths of two objects and identify two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes from their properties. They collect and graph data about pupils' favourite fruits and then make simple deductions about the class's likes and dislikes. By aged 11 pupils are secure in using numbers to 10,000, order fractions with different denominators, calculate simple percentages and apply simple ratios. The more able pupils convert vulgar fractions and understand the difference between mean, mode and median.
9. In science, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils identify the use of electricity in daily life and construct circuits to make a bulb light up. They understand the functions of a 'break line'. Most use scientific terminology appropriately, such as wires, crocodile clips, break line, while explaining their work. They understand the difference between living and non-living things and study major parts of human body. In Key Stage 2 pupils are able to gather data to answer enquiry questions and know the importance of fair tests. Older pupils know about micro-organisms and understand the hygiene for handling and storing food in order to avoid illness.
10. In information technology, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 develop word processing skills satisfactorily. They do not use CD-ROM to find information or use, for example, a 'Roamer' to develop skills in simple programming. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have similar word processing skills. They are able to create graphs but do not use CD-ROM or e-mail. They import 'clip art' into a word-processed document well but are not able to import digital images from the Internet or a digital camera.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with the targets set within their individual education plans for literacy and numeracy. As a result, many of them attain the expected standards for their age in national tests at seven and 11. They make good progress within their class work.
12. There is some variation between the attainment of boys and girls. Boys are achieving higher than girls in all three core subjects. This is due to significantly higher proportion of boys in most classes. The school sets targets for its pupils and review the targets every year to ensure that these are sufficiently challenging.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Pupils have good attitudes to school and know that they are expected to learn. Relationships are good in this strongly supportive Catholic school. Personal development is good, particularly evident in the nursery and in the maturity of the oldest pupils. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory because it is below that of most primary schools in the country.

14. The youngest children in the school are happily settled into daily routines. They share well when playing games together and are co-operative at work and play. All children are proud of the work that they do and enjoy the activities provided. The children are friendly and are building positive relationships with each other. They show a good level of respect for their teacher and the other adults around them. Generally, they are well behaved. There is good practice of inclusion so that children with less developed social and personal skills are not treated any differently. The contribution they make is equally valued.
15. Pupils know that they are in school to learn and have positive attitudes to their lessons. They show a good level of interest and concentration when working, particularly when the content of the lesson provides challenge and involvement. They are able to offer clear and reasoned responses to questions. However, noise levels are sometimes high and not always associated with discussion about work. This means that pupils in these lessons do not gain in knowledge sufficiently. Opportunities for pupils to develop independent study skills are inhibited by the lack of a proper library and, significantly, by not using information and communication technology to encourage research skills and broaden pupils' educational horizons.
16. The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory. The majority of pupils show satisfactory behaviour in class and behaviour is generally managed well. However, in a minority of classes behaviour management is less secure. The behaviour of the very oldest pupils in the school is often good; they are sensible and mature when in class.
17. Since the last inspection, the school has focused on improving facilities for pupils at playtimes. There is a good range of small games equipment and soft footballs are used. Supervisors have learnt how to play with the children and this was seen with good effect when playing a traditional game with a large group of younger pupils. However, these improvements have not yet impacted on the boisterous behaviour of some pupils, who still dominate much of the available space with games or rough play that intrudes on the activities of quieter pupils. The pupils do not always treat the resources with a proper level of respect; a pack of playing cards was left on the wet playground floor and play equipment is left around the playground to be collected at the end of break time. As at the time of the last inspection, there have been no exclusions.
18. The quality of relationships remains good. Pupils relate well to their teachers and the other adults around them. They are usually polite, helpful and respectful. Individual pupils of all ages will often open a door and offer a friendly greeting. Pupils make firm friendships and pupils from minority groups are easily accepted. Adults set good examples for the pupils to follow. Pupils enjoy having their achievements recorded in the Headteacher's 'Golden Book' and are often delighted by the success of others when this is celebrated in the weekly assembly, breaking into spontaneous applause.
19. By the time pupils reach the last year at school, they have a good awareness of the importance of being responsible for their own actions and those of others in the school community. They take duties such as being a playground friend very seriously; for example, an older girl was helping a younger girl to sort out a problem. Individual pupils often show good initiative, for example, by picking up items accidentally dropped on the floor that have not been noticed. They understand their role as House Captains; pupils instigated the development of the school council so that pupils from every year can express the views and opinions of others in their class about school issues that affect them.

20. Attendance is unsatisfactory and has shown no significant improvement since the last inspection. A number of families take holidays throughout the school year. This is a significant factor in preventing attendance from improving. Parents wrongly assume that they have a right to two weeks holiday in term time; the decision to grant any holiday in term time is entirely at the headteacher's discretion; permission can be refused. There is more unauthorised absence than is recorded by the school. A significant number of pupils arrive to school late. Registers meet requirements but are still, as at the last inspection, kept in class rather than the school office. This does not ensure the safe keeping of registers. The pupils' absence and lateness have a negative impact on the progress that all pupils are able to make with their learning.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. Overall teaching is good. It is good in Key Stage 2 and the nursery and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 1, in over one third of the lessons, teaching is good or better. At Key Stage 2 well over half the lessons were good or better and nearly a quarter very good. This is a significant improvement over the last inspection when 14 per cent of teaching was less than satisfactory.
22. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science and are secure in all other subjects. They have high expectations of pupils and in the majority of lessons set challenging work. Good use is made of well-qualified and experienced support staff. Since the last inspection, planning has improved and is now sound in the majority of lessons. Pupil management is now satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2.
23. The core subjects of mathematics and English are planned and taught in accordance with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and with science, are planned clearly to teach the full range of the curriculum. Good use is made of other subjects to consolidate skills in literacy, for example, Year 6 history where pupils describe the use of masks in Greek theatres using a range of appropriate vocabulary. However, less attention is given to developing numeracy skills in other subjects, and there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support all subjects.
24. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science tasks are planned to take into account pupils' different abilities. However the lack of sound assessment procedures in the remaining subjects results in the work not being firmly based on pupils' prior achievement. Resources are used appropriately with some good instances in mathematics, for example, the use of a fractions board to emphasise equivalent fraction in Year 3 and use of the children to emphasise pairs and counting in twos in Year 2. Higher attaining pupils are given challenging work and encouraged to tackle problems in their own way.
25. In the significant majority of lessons teachers use their knowledge and understanding to question pupils skilfully. Pupils are told lesson objectives at the beginning of the lessons. This creates pace in lessons which maintains pupils' interest and assesses pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. In the best examples, plans are changed to modify work to meet pupils' needs. Pupils' contributions are valued and misconceptions or mistakes are used as teaching points to improve understanding and direct learning. However, plenary sessions are not used sufficiently to consolidate learning.

26. Teachers employ a range of different approaches to class organisation including effective use of whole-class teaching. Appropriate good emphasis was placed on collaborative work between pupils, for example, the sorting of quadrilaterals in Year 6 and joint dance performances in Year 3.
27. Overall pupils are managed well, with behaviour management better at Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. During the inspection there were a significant number of occasions where the amount of noise and inappropriate behaviour by a minority of pupils slowed the pace of lessons. However, the good relationships between all members of the school have a positive impact on the standards achieved.
28. Work is marked regularly and there are good examples where teachers provide constructive written feedback for pupils with clear suggestions for improvement. However, there are inconsistencies in practice and, on occasions, marking records completion rather than indicating how further progress might be made. Oral feedback is always constructive and helpful. Teachers' records in the core subjects are well maintained, informative and often used to plan appropriate learning programmes. However, the use made of assessment, especially in the foundation subjects, is limited and inconsistent. The good use of homework plays an important part in consolidating learning and extending understanding.
29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is always good and sometimes very good. Teachers plan work according to the abilities of their pupils and this addresses aspects identified in the individual education plans. The teaching by the special needs teacher is very good, with work tailored to the individual needs of the pupils concerned. All staff show a great deal of care for their pupils and know them and their difficulties well. The learning support assistants work very effectively with the pupils assigned to them, as well as with those close by, promoting the full involvement of pupils in group activities.

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

30. The school does not provide a balanced curriculum in that it fails to meet the requirements for the teaching of information and communication technology. However, in all other subjects it provides a rich range of opportunities that excite pupils of all ages, interests and abilities, and encourages them to be involved in their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs are cared for well and their learning needs are addressed successfully.
31. A key issue at the time of the previous inspection concerned meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum in music, and developing fully policies and schemes of work across the curriculum and particularly in English and music. The school has made good progress. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects of the National Curriculum and the provision for music now meets requirements. Additionally, the school has plans for the creation of a new school library.
32. The school has adopted the nationally recommended strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and these have a positive influence on pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.
33. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities that enhance the quality of education for those who participate. These include a range of sporting activities such

as netball and football, as well as musical groups such as a choir. Arrangements for individual music tuition include opportunities for pupils to learn the violin and guitar. Chess and French clubs are also available for pupils who wish to participate and, although there is a small fee, every effort is made to ensure that this is not a bar to any pupil joining in. The school has performed well in inter-schools competitive sports and regularly undertakes musical performances for parents and the wider community. The prescribed curriculum is enhanced with regular trips to a range of localities that support pupils' learning, such as the Millennium Dome, theatre visits and to a nature study centre.

34. The school has a good equal opportunities policy to which it is firmly committed and it is reflected in the classroom as well as the school aims, admissions and curriculum policies. All the school activities are open to boys and girls, with girls having been in the school football team and boys playing netball. There is appropriate provision for disabled pupils.
35. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The work undertaken by the special educational needs teacher with pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need follows that detailed in their individual education plans. These focus on reading and spelling and sometimes include detailed maths targets as well. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs within their classes is tailored to promote their understanding of the work addressed.
36. The timetabling of withdrawal provision is sufficiently flexible not to compromise the full access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The special educational needs teacher often adapts her plans for these very good individual sessions to support and enhance work occurring in the classroom.
37. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education, including sex education and the consideration of the use and misuse of drugs. The scheme of work is balanced, addressing such issues as healthy living, relationships, nutrition, safety and citizenship. Pupils are given opportunities to learn the necessary knowledge and skills for making informed decisions about healthy living. For older pupils, their understanding of issues of safety are enhanced by their involvement in the Junior Citizen Project, when they explore a range of emergency situations under the guidance of the police.
38. Links with the community make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Locally based companies have donated items as diverse as computers and Kwik Cricket' equipment, furnishing fabrics and individual Pupil Records of Achievement. Others give generously of their time, undertaking such tasks as organising resources, working with pupils and preparing wet play resource boxes. One company has made and donated the contents of the new 'story sacks' which are used to promote the interest of younger pupils in reading. The West Area Family Education Resource has worked with both pupils and adults developing inter-personal skills and promoting an awareness of others. The school has worked with the local authority's adult education department to promote family learning programmes in literacy and numeracy such that parents may have a closer involvement in their children's homework and learning. Pupils contribute to the annual carol concert in the shopping centre and Year 6 pupils host a tea party for local elderly people. Despite the difficulties caused by the location of the church, the school has close links with their parish priest and the pupils' interest and involvement in a range of devotional activities are welcomed.



39. Links with partner schools are good overall. Links are satisfactory with the receiving secondary schools. Staff from these schools visit St Mary's during the term before pupils transfer and pupils then have a familiarisation day at their new school before the summer holidays. This extends staff links between the two schools and expertise is shared to the benefit of the pupils. The school has very good links with the Pield Heath special school. The two staffs share expertise and pupils visit each other's schools, developing in St Mary's pupils an awareness and appreciation of the valuable contribution made by these special school pupils. Older pupils from the special school undertake work experience at St Mary's, where they find a loving welcome that develops their confidence as they begin the move into the world beyond schooling.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and the provision for pupils' social development is very good. It is very evident that St Mary's is a happy school that promotes a caring ethos for all within its community.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The daily act of collective worship makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Class and whole-school assemblies encourage children to respect and be sensitive to the beliefs and feelings of others. During the celebration assembly pupils were observed sharing generously in the successes of their classmates. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their thoughts and feelings, for instance in reviewing their personal responses to particular books, and they listen appreciatively to each other's ideas. Pupils regularly write prayers, thanking God for His many gifts and older pupils reflect upon their own qualities and that they are made in God's image. Staff, too, are encouraged to celebrate their achievements and express generous appreciation of each other's contributions to the life of the school.
42. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school provides a strong moral code, and staff are good role models for pupils. Many aspects of life in the school give strong support to the teaching of the principles that distinguish right from wrong. For example, as part of the scheme for personal, social and health education the school encourages pupils to consider elements of citizenship, reviewing the roles of different professions and groups in society as well as the contributions they can make themselves. The school fosters moral values such as honesty, tolerance and respect for one another and there is a strong ethos permeating the school of caring for each other. Pupils show courtesy to all adults and talk politely with visitors. They are proud of their school and happy to talk about the activities they share.
43. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. At the last inspection a need was identified to improve the management of dominant pupils, particularly in the playground. Much thought has been put into improving the playground environment and lunchtime supervisors have been given training in promoting positive play. Playground equipment and seating with table games have been provided and a system of playground leaders and friends has been introduced. This is a very effective way of encouraging older pupils to develop an awareness of those younger than themselves and the pupils in Year 5 who undertake these roles express pride in the trust placed in them. Although playground provision is much improved it has yet to have a full impact upon behaviour in the playground, which is still boisterous at times.
44. The school has sound policies on how to deal with bullying, harassment and discipline and these give clear guidance to all staff on the principles and practice of the school's provision. They are applied well. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and staff encourage pupils to relate positively to each other. Pupils of all

ages contribute to the school community, taking responsibility for a range of jobs both within their classes and around the school. Year 6 pupils have set up and manage effectively a school council with representatives from each year group. The school has a regular charity support programme. Events throughout the year, such as the recent 'Crazy Hair Day', are planned to raise funds for a range of charities. At Harvest this year the school undertook an unusual offering, collecting toiletries and stationery to send to a school in Zambia.

45. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' understanding and appreciation of their own culture, studying a range of western artists within the art curriculum such as Paul Klee and considering the culture of such ancient civilisations as Greece and Egypt. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' own art and its contribution to their school community. In English pupils consider good quality children's texts and authors, and in music they learn about a range of musical styles and their associated cultures such as reggae, jazz and blues. Last year some pupils had the opportunity to see 'Il Travatore' performed by a group seeking to make opera accessible to school children. Working with a local sculptor in the shopping centre enhanced their understanding and appreciation of sculpture and pupils have relished seeing their own designs within new railings in the town. The annual residential trip for Year 6 pupils gives them good experience of being independent.
46. The school is also very effective in promoting pupils' understanding of other cultures. During the inspection, visitors from a Zambian school worked with pupils from the local special school to present the story of Creation in different cultures. Pupils listened to African songs accompanied on African musical instruments. Other pupils have also learned about Japanese culture and way of life from a group of Japanese visitors. Pupils had the opportunity to dress up as well as listen to Japanese music and calculate using a soroban (Japanese abacus). Pupils in Year 4 undertake a study comparing their own locality with one in India, and in Year 2 pupils consider Aboriginal culture as part of their study of Australia. The school is using the 'Learning for All' racial awareness programme to develop an understanding of Britain as a multicultural society and is keen to develop in all its pupils an appreciation of the good range of cultures represented within their own school community.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

47. The quality of personal guidance, attention and support for pupils in this caring school is good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring academic progress are good. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. The monitoring and promotion of behaviour and procedures for eliminating bullying are satisfactory.
48. The quality of assessment and procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress has improved since the last inspection and are now good. They are well established in mathematics and science, and satisfactory in English. However, in other subjects, clear assessment and monitoring procedures are at an early stage of development. There is no use of assessment or monitoring in information and communication technology. The school has no assessment co-ordinator.
49. Detailed, good quality baseline assessment is undertaken as children enter the school, linked to basic learning skills and the former desirable learning outcomes. Information gained from baseline assessment is included in the child's Early Years

Profile, together with updated records and contributions from parents, and passed on to the child's next teacher.

50. The school has worked hard in developing its assessment procedures using a range of optional and standardised testing to assess pupils' attainment against National Curriculum levels. There is particularly good practice in mathematics, where analysis of results and the tracking of pupil progress are used very well to ensure that work in the classrooms is carefully matched to meet pupils' needs. The staff assimilate a wealth of good quality information and data about the attainment and progress of pupils, but the good practice seen in the core subjects, and particularly mathematics, is not being used to develop and extend assessment and academic monitoring in all other subjects.
51. Generally work is marked appropriately and the school encourages pupils to become aware of their individual academic strengths and weaknesses. Good practice is noted in pupils' annual reports where pupils complete a half page written assessment of their progress over the year.
52. The staff analyse data carefully and predict targets for their pupils, based on their good quality records of prior attainment over time and tests, to give a very clear picture of pupils' probable attainment by the end of Year 6. However, this careful analysis has not been used when setting the whole school targets in consultation with the local authority. As a result, the targets currently set are very high and unrealistic in relation to the present group of pupils.
53. The support and care for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers use the general assessment procedures to identify pupils' learning needs. The information gained is used very effectively when planning individual education plans in partnership with learning support staff and the special needs teacher and co-ordinator. Effective use is made of external agencies to supplement the expertise of the school staff, and appropriate training is provided for both teaching and support staff.
54. The monitoring and promotion of behaviour is satisfactory. The school has appropriate policies in place. A behaviour incident book is kept and completed by staff and monitored weekly by the headteacher and the chair of governors. Letters are written to parents who are invited to discuss any ongoing concerns. The staff do not always act consistently when dealing with misbehaviour, for example, pupils are not always reminded that calling out is unacceptable and sometimes unacceptable behaviour goes unnoticed. There are recorded incidents of accidents caused by inappropriate behaviour in the playground. This remains an area where improvement is not yet established. The headteacher has a very positive view of behaviour and pupils enjoy having their name recorded in the 'Golden Book' for good work, attitudes or behaviour.
55. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. The educational welfare officer visits the school usually monthly and identifies pupils having difficulties. The school sends periodic requests for notes when there is an unexplained absence. Records are kept of pupils who arrive late and those who leave the school during the day, perhaps for medical appointments. The educational welfare officer checks registers twice a year and reminds staff about any errors in completing them. The school has not effectively addressed the issue of holidays taken during the school terms.
56. The monitoring of personal development is good. The school has high expectations about how pupils treat others, within a strong Christian context. This is reinforced in

assemblies and class discussions. The good staff/pupil relationships are used effectively to offer pupils informal guidance on personal development. All pupils are valued; the school identifies those with lower self-esteem and supports them through involvement in the 'Pyramid Club' to improve their confidence and sense of worth. Pupils often make comments about their personal development in their annual reports.

57. The arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The designated person has been trained, although not recently, and is conversant with current practice. Local authority guidance is followed. The confidential files of pupils on the 'at risk' register are securely kept. The school does not have on roll any pupils who are 'looked after'. Should the designated person need any informal guidance or advice it is available from the local authority child protection officer.
58. Daily procedures are well managed and organised. Visitors to the school sign in. There is a good number of qualified first aiders, sufficient for every class in the school. Some have received training for the treatment of specific medical conditions. There is a medical room and records are properly kept, with parents being informed of any concerns. All children eat packed lunch and there is an appropriate level of supervision at break times.
59. The school has a clear policy on health and safety. Regular tests and checks are carried out on fire fighting and other equipment. Fire drills are carried out each term but the evacuation time is not recorded, as is required. Risk assessment is undertaken for different areas of the school and any action noted. A few issues were noted during inspection; moss growing on the school roof and green algae in one of the drinking water fountains; badly cracked glass in the 'verandah' roof; smelly girls toilets and no soap; partial ramp near the office - a slip hazard and the nearby wobbly bookcase; several of the classrooms are too small for the number of older pupils that use them. The issues noted in the last report about the accommodation have been resolved.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

60. The school has a good partnership with its parents. They are very supportive and generally positive about the school's work. They value the strong Catholic 'family' feel of the school. The interest and involvement of parents are significant strengths of the school.
61. The school offers parents a very warm welcome. The headteacher and other staff are usually available to meet parents informally at the start or end of the day. The school has organised Parenting Classes that are held in the nearby church hall. These are appreciated and enjoyed by the parents who attend. The classes offer lots of fresh ideas and strategies in the difficult job of bringing up children.
62. Many parents are involved in the daily life of the school, helping in classes or on trips. There is a thriving and very active parents' association. Many activities are organised such as the Christmas Disco. Recent purchases include playground small games equipment and the provision of the activity trail, temporarily dismantled in readiness for imminent building work.
63. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. The prospectus meets requirements and contains useful information. However, there are some omissions from the annual governors' report which are: the governors' term of office and

arrangements for the next election of parent governors; the addresses of the Chair and Clerk; and details about staff training. Annual pupil reports do not meet requirements because information and communication technology is not reported separately as is required. However, the reports contain clear targets for improvement in mathematics and English, but these are less evident in other subjects. Pupils are able to provide a written self-assessment of their progress during the year. Parents attend formal meetings to discuss their children's progress. They have access to school documentation including the policies. They receive good quality information about the curriculum and their children's learning. Their views are sought through an annual questionnaire. The home school agreement is in place and all parents are provided with a copy of the homework policy. Homework is regularly set throughout the school and is of good quality. The involvement of parents in the review of individual education plans is good. These plans are shared with parents, who contribute to the review of targets and the setting of new ones.

64. Generally parents have positive views of the school. Parents have concerns about the homework and about the extra-curricular activities. Inspectors feel that the provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and disagree with the parents' negative comments about homework. The positive relationship with parents continues to thrive.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

65. The school is led and managed well by the headteacher who provides good leadership and gives a clear educational direction. She is well supported by the staff and the governors in her task to lead the school forward. In recent years the headteacher has successfully introduced and implemented the national initiatives as well as those specific to the school, such as securing funding for school improvement. She has ensured that the school is awarded Chartered Mark and Investor in People awards and established good financial management and effective teamwork. The school is committed to a educational provision which is of good quality and ensures equal opportunity for all. All staff with management responsibilities have clear understanding of their roles and most areas of the curriculum are led effectively. Good planning and appropriate assessment procedures have been devised and are being implemented successfully. However, assessment in foundation subjects is not fully developed yet. The school analyses the national and internal tests results effectively to track pupils' progress across the key stages and in terms of pupil mobility which is high.
66. Teaching is monitored well by the headteacher and the local authority adviser. The subject co-ordinators monitor planning and audit resources, but their roles in monitoring the quality of teaching in their subjects are underdeveloped. This is partly because nearly half the teachers are newly appointed.
67. The governing body has a clear structure with appropriate terms of reference. Regular meetings of the governing body and its committees have clear agendas and are well minuted. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher who reports to them termly, keeping them well informed about the work of the school. They visit the school regularly and have a clear strategic overview of the performance of the school. Governors take active part in shaping the direction of the school and meet most of the statutory duties. However, a few of the statutory requirements in the annual report to parents are not met.

68. The school has a very caring and positive ethos and its aims and values are reflected well in its practice. The school's development plan is an effective document for guiding school improvement. It is based upon a realistic evaluation of what needs to be done in order to take the school forward.
69. The school has a strong commitment to special educational needs and invests considerable time, energy and funding in providing a thorough and comprehensive approach. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for special educational needs. She manages the provision effectively, ensuring that the additional support that she and other staff provide is carefully targeted. The designated governor for special educational needs is well informed, fully involved and works in a productive partnership with the headteacher and staff. All statutory responsibilities for special educational needs are met.
70. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and classroom support staff match the demands of the curriculum. All teaching and support staff are conscientious and work effectively as a team. The classroom assistants are well qualified and experienced and make good contribution to progress made by pupils, especially the pupils with special educational needs. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are good and are linked effectively to whole-school needs identified in the school development plan. A policy for performance management has been introduced to the staff and further arrangements for its successful implementation are planned.
71. The induction programme is good and consistently applied. Newly qualified teachers and new members of staff receive good support. In addition to the local authority training, newly qualified teachers are well supported by the headteacher and their mentors. Teachers and classroom assistants have undergone training in literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for a systematic programme of training in information technology for all staff is due to take place soon.
72. The accommodation was identified as a key issue in the last inspection. Since then it has been improved, but is still inadequate. The school has now been able to secure government funding for complete renovation and extension of the building which is due to start very soon. This will enable the school to deliver the curriculum much more effectively. At present classrooms are cramped and acoustics in the classrooms affect adversely pupils' capacity to learn, as they are often disturbed by the noise from other classrooms. Resources for learning, except in information technology and geography, have been developed and improved across the curriculum in recent years and are now satisfactory.
73. The school has a thorough approach to financial planning. The governors have a strategic overview of budget management. The chair of the finance committee manages financial planning efficiently, in collaboration with the headteacher and her personal assistant. The school's underspent fund is a part of planned savings to ensure 15 per cent school contribution towards the proposed building cost. This means that the underspend is utilized efficiently for the long-term benefit of the pupils by improving the quality of education further.
74. School administration is efficient. The draft budget, carefully prepared by the headteacher in consultation with staff, is presented to the governing body for approval, with appropriate reference to the school's development plan. The specific funding for special educational needs is used wisely and supplemented by a large amount from the school's own budget. The governors apply the principles of best value in all spending decisions and monitor its impact on financial planning closely.

For example, several presentations by different contractors for building work were considered before a decision was reached.

75. The deployment of support staff is effective. Resources are used effectively to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding in most areas of the curriculum. Good use is also made of visitors and outside visits to enhance pupils' learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

76. In order to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:
- (1) meet the statutory requirements for information technology provision for all pupils by:
    - (a) providing an adequate number of computers; (paragraph 137)
    - (b) implementing the scheme of work and assessment fully; (paragraph 137)
    - (c) improving staff expertise by appropriate training; (paragraph 136)
    - (d) reporting on pupils' attainment and progress in this subject in the pupils' annual report; (paragraph 63)
  - (2) improve attendance by implementing the procedures for improving attendance more rigorously. (paragraph 20)

In addition to the points above a number of minor issues that the governors should consider in their action plan are identified in paragraphs 50 and 97.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	40	40	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	175
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	46

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	23	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (79)	86 (83)	86 (69)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	18
	Girls	6	7	10
	Total	23	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (83)	86 (69)	97 (86)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	10	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	7	7	9
	Total	19	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (82)	78 (82)	85 (82)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	17
	Girls	8	7	9
	Total	23	21	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (82)	78 (82)	96 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	13
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	38

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	452,812
Total expenditure	459,424
Expenditure per pupil	2,393
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,437
Balance carried forward to next year	22,825

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	231
Number of questionnaires returned	53

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	30	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	47	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	43	8	15	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	21	32	9	6
The teaching is good.	42	43	9	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	42	23	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	32	13	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	2	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	25	57	11	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	42	45	4	8	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	30	11	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	42	21	9	2

## **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**

77. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below average. As they move through the nursery and reception classes, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, make good progress in almost all areas of Early Learning Goals. They make particularly good progress in developing personal, social, speaking, listening and creative skills. Overall attainment, at the end of reception, is average in all the areas of learning but the work of higher attainers is appropriately above average.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

78. Nursery and reception children make good progress in the development of their personal, social and emotional skills. They are interested, eager to try new activities and well motivated. They listen attentively, sometimes in awe, when the story is gripping or when they are amazed by the construction of a boat. They patiently wait while others speak, and are usually keen to demonstrate what they can do when discussing their work together. The children behave well and are polite and caring towards each other. Nursery children are beginning to share and take turns, for example, with play costumes and popular toys, and to remember to say 'thank you' and 'please'. They play and learn happily alongside each other, offering advice and help when playing games or when discussing the best way to make tea in the role play area. They are learning to take responsibility as they put on their coats for themselves and help to clear up in the classroom. This they do with speed and efficiency.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

79. Children make good progress in this area and quickly develop the confidence to talk about their work and their experiences at home. They willingly offer their own ideas when making up a class story or when working in a small group with an adult. Children in the reception class can describe and explain their work with good use of appropriate vocabulary. All children learn nursery rhymes and chant them enthusiastically and enjoy sharing them in a group. The children also develop good listening skills. They listen carefully to instructions and quickly become absorbed in the stories they hear, eagerly participating in discussions about the characters and events. They listen to taped stories and some retell in detail and express their liking or disliking of certain characters.
80. Children attain the expected levels in reading and writing by the end of reception. Nursery children understand that print carries meaning and know the difference between words and pictures. They enjoy being read to and can interpret information from pictures and the book title. They enjoy looking at books and handle them carefully. Children in reception class have developed a satisfactory knowledge of sounds that they use to help them read and write an appropriate range of common words. Some nursery children can write their names and form some letters correctly. Most children know the difference between drawing and writing. All enjoy mark making with pencils, crayons and paint in guided activities and are gaining the confidence to experiment on their own. Activities such as manipulating dough, jigsaws and drawing help the children to develop the skills they need for writing.

## **Mathematical development**

81. By the end of reception, children attain the expected level of the Early Learning Goals for mathematics, particularly in number and shape work. Nursery children have a very good knowledge of simple geometric shapes such as squares, rectangles and triangles. Most can count reliably to five, but higher attaining pupils can count to at least 20 when they see how many children are present each day. Reception children apply their number knowledge to simple problems through practical activities involving 'more than' and 'less than'. Some can add number pairs mentally, count on or back from given numbers in simple patterns and correctly apply terms such as 'longer' and 'shorter' in their measuring.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

82. By the end of reception, children acquire a sound understanding and knowledge of the world. They make model buggies and buildings using different materials and construction kits, sometimes using pictures to guide them, and play imaginatively with toys such as garages, cars, trains and farms. Pupils in the nursery know how to use the mouse to control the computer while those in reception can type their names. Pupils' scientific understanding is developing well. Nursery children have an appropriate awareness of the natural world through their nature walks in the school grounds and have begun to develop a sense of time through their study of photographs of themselves as babies. They show in their imaginative play that they know animals need food and water to live. Reception children build steadily on these earlier skills, for example, they can describe the different properties of materials, such as play dough, using appropriate vocabularies like soft, smooth. Children make satisfactory progress in this area.

## **Physical development**

83. The physical development of children is satisfactory. They run, leap, jump and balance with appropriate control and awareness of space when they use the adventure equipment and large wheeled toys outside. Reception children show sound co-ordination when they travel under, over and through balancing equipment and throw and catch balls and bean bags. Pupils develop appropriate fine motor skills with satisfactory control of brushes, crayons and tools when making pictures and models and working with jigsaws, construction kits and musical instruments.

## **Creative development**

84. Children's creative development is good. Nursery children enjoy making pictures by painting, printing and sticking with different materials and objects. They use vibrant colours very effectively to paint self portraits, following the study of various portrait posters. Their 'fireworks' paintings are particularly imaginative. Children attain high standards in this aspect of creative development. Reception children experiment with pencils to make patterns and mix paints to create different colours. In music, pupils perform well. They thoroughly enjoy music making, using a variety of instruments with control and imagination, and singing songs and rhymes they know with great enthusiasm. Nursery children find out about the sounds made by different musical instruments when they pass them round and then make up songs about themselves and the instruments. For example, a group of children were inspired by the music sung in an assembly by the visiting African sisters from the local convent. Later on, they staged a musical event in their classroom using appropriate musical instruments and singing with great enthusiasm and confidence.

85. The teaching of children in the reception and nursery is good, often very good. The adult-child relationships are very strong and inspire confidence in the children. Daily routines are well established and there are high expectations of children's behaviour and work. As a result the nursery and reception classes provide calm, orderly and well managed learning environments. Teachers and support staff have a good understanding of how young children learn and of the Early Learning Goals. They work very effectively together as a team sharing roles and responsibilities. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives for learning which are usually explained simply to the children. There is an appropriate emphasis on learning through play and talk. Pupils' progress is carefully assessed against the learning objectives and good use made of the information when planning the next lessons. Some very skilled support, including systematic tracking of progress, is provided for pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that they are able to participate in the full range of learning opportunities. Higher attaining children are also taught effectively and make progress appropriate to their abilities. Adults interact well with the children and are very aware of the need to promote good language development.
86. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is suitably organised according to the maturity and age of the pupils. A very caring and positive atmosphere has been created. Children enjoy their learning and look forward to coming to school. The new curriculum, introduced in September 2000, has been implemented effectively. Curriculum planning is systematic and has an appropriate emphasis on personal, social and emotional development. Good links have been established with parents, some of whom help in the nursery. Admission and transfer arrangements are good, with adequate information provided to parents, meetings held and opportunities for children to make preliminary visits to their class.
87. The management of provision for the Foundation Stage is effective. The nursery and reception staff work well together to ensure progression and continuity from class to class and from term to term. The provision has been maintained effectively since the last inspection when it was judged to be good.

## **ENGLISH**

88. Standards in English have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to be typical for seven and 11 year olds. In the 2000 national tests pupils aged seven achieved standards close to the national averages in reading and above the national average for writing. These results are a slight improvement upon those in 1999. For 11 year olds the results show that standards were comparable with national averages, although when compared with schools where pupils attained similar scores at age seven they are below average. These results are not as good as those from last year. However, there was a high degree of turbulence amongst the year group, and only 16 out of the 28 pupils who took the tests in 2000 had been in the school throughout their primary schooling. These pupils made slightly above the expected progress between the ages of seven and 11. Inspection findings reflect test results, although for pupils aged seven, the high standard of handwriting distorts the overall judgement. The content of pupils' writing at age seven is typical for their age. The school has set itself ambitious targets for 2001 national tests for 11 year olds.
89. Over the last four years there have been marked differences between the performances of boys and girls in English national test results. However, these do not form any consistent pattern - in some years boys attain more highly and in other years girls do. During the inspection, despite considerable imbalances in the

numbers of boys and girls in the school, no evidence of significant differences in attainment were found.

90. Pupils attain good standards in speaking and listening at the end of both key stages. This is due to the positive approach of teachers who encourage pupils to reflect upon their own and other people's feelings and responses from an early age. Pupils of all ages are articulate about their preferences in reading, and discuss enthusiastically the thoughts and feelings of the characters within texts they are sharing. For example, pupils in Year 1 demonstrated an unusual sensitivity when acting out a story about being left out. Year 4 pupils discussed extensively potential events that sample newspaper headlines could refer to, later writing their own articles which demonstrated the depth and perception of their discussion. Older pupils talk well about their reasons for choosing particular books and what they like about stories by their favourite authors. They know how to explain their opinions and ideas about stories and extracts from books in interesting ways as when pupils discussed their ideas and responses to 'Harry Potter' with the inspector, detailing why they enjoyed these books. The pupils enjoyed the debate, listening to one another's ideas carefully and using these to inform their responses. Teachers use rich and wide vocabulary to promote the pupils' interest in new words and they encourage pupils to select descriptive words carefully. During the inspection Year 1 pupils enjoyed finding alliterative descriptions of animals within an animal dictionary and were able to create phrases of their own which reflected this form. Pupils in Year 5 discussed the types of language used in newspaper reports and how this varied from the more complex vocabulary of their reading books.
91. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading. Pupils have a sound grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle words that are unfamiliar to them. They read with improving fluency and accuracy and 11 year olds develop critical appreciation of a range of books and are able to talk with discernment about different authors. The oldest pupils are competent readers of fiction and poetry although the development of their ability to find information from different sources is severely hampered by the present lack of a school library. Teachers encourage pupils to 'read between the lines of stories' to help them to understand characters and their feelings. Work by pupils in Year 5 based on 'Stig of the Dump' demonstrated how pupils had considered how a sense of fear and dread might develop from a particular situation. The reading skills of most pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with most of the texts they need for other subjects.
92. In both key stages standards attained by the pupils are average. Writing is mainly sound, signifying good achievement for the majority of pupils. Teachers lead discussions well to promote good use of language within pupils' written work. For example, in accounts of their recent meningitis inoculation, pupils in Year 2 used good vocabulary to express the intensity of their feelings before and after. Older pupils wrote letters from Macbeth on his way home from a successful campaign, and these showed pupils' ability to consider how a man might address his wife having been away for a long time - 'My dearest love, I have missed you but now I will be home very soon'. Teachers give good opportunities for pupils to undertake extended writing tasks with the results that pupils can write sustained stories with a good attention to characterisation and plot and make good use of interesting vocabulary. Throughout the juniors pupils practise a range of forms of writing and are able to alter their style to suit the form. For instance when writing a newspaper report, pupils used short snappy sentences and reported speech vividly to express the totally opposing views of the same event and showed a clear awareness of the characteristics of newspaper reporting. When writing recipes they give thought to the

characteristics of instructional writing and the need for clarity and sequencing. By the age of 11 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Additionally, the very good work planned for those with special educational needs means that nearly all pupils attain the standards in writing expected for 11 year olds by the time they leave the school. Handwriting is good throughout the school. Pupils learn a joined script from Year 1 and presentation is of a high standard in nearly all pupils' books. Spelling is satisfactory overall and pupils' knowledge of letter sounds is secure. However, in some classes pupils' knowledge and use of spelling patterns are developed more thoroughly than in others. Older pupils maintain a spelling journal where they identify for themselves significant spellings they need to work on and younger pupils have regular lists of spelling to learn.

93. Teaching is good across the school although there are variations in teachers' skills. Two-thirds of the teaching seen was either good or very good. Only two per cent of lessons was unsatisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. In Year 6, teaching is particularly good, inspiring pupils who all want to read their work to the class. The success of this teaching is evident in the quality of the phrases used by these pupils, as for example when writing as Macbeth, pupils tried to use language in keeping with Shakespeare. Teachers make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn and how this links to what they have covered previously. The ends of the literacy sessions are used effectively to encourage pupils to recap upon what they have learned. However, it is rare for pupils to be asked to reflect upon their individual success towards a lesson's target. The quality of marking is varied. All teachers give praise and encouragement generously, but only a few make extensive suggestions as to how pupils can improve future assignments. Good use is made of homework with the younger pupils to extend upon their learning in class. Older pupils undertake regular written tasks at home as well as the usual reading and spelling revision. These have a positive impact on their learning.
94. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively introduced and literacy is used well to support work in other subjects. For example, younger pupils write reflectively in religious education about the ways in which they are special. Older pupils write thoughtfully, for example in diary accounts of a youth's inner debate about joining up during World War I.
95. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual action plans, which are followed carefully, resulting in good teaching that is well focused. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the very good contribution made by the learning support assistants who facilitate the involvement and contributions of those pupils with special educational needs and support them in their individual tasks. These staff work closely with teachers to promote the involvement of all pupils in class activities and discussions.
96. Management of English is good. The literacy co-ordinator is new to the school but is very knowledgeable and has begun to monitor teaching and learning in order to support less confident colleagues better. Resources for the learning of English are good. Class libraries, although some are limited in number, contain a good range of books of reasonable quality. Newly purchased big books are being used very effectively with the younger pupils who enjoy the related activities. For example, the split-page book about living things that they were studying during the inspection fascinated pupils in Year 3. Very good research work occurred as pupils began to appreciate the precision of the definitions and how closely they needed to examine pictures of animals in order to classify them correctly.



97. The school does not currently have a proper library for pupils to learn appropriate research skills. Although pupils can use dictionaries, contents and index pages, they cannot explain how to find a book about a given subject within a library and many pupils do not know the difference between the ways fiction and non-fiction books are arranged. This is a significant weakness. A new library is part of the plans for the building work about to commence, and its importance in developing pupils' research skills cannot be overemphasised.

## **MATHEMATICS**

98. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain the standards expected for their age in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling). The 2000 national test results show that pupils in Year 2 were above the national average and pupils in Year 6 were in line with the national average. The pattern is similar when the results are compared with similar schools. At Key Stage 1 standards have improved significantly over the last three years. Since 1996 the proportion of 11 year olds reaching the standards expected in national tests has improved in line with national averages.
99. There have been variations between the standards of boys and girls. However, this varies between key stages and year on year, and the school has a high pupil turnover of 43 per cent and a significantly higher proportion of boys. This makes any deductions from the data on the difference in performance of boys and girls unreliable. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, lessons seen and discussions with pupils, no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls were observed. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
100. By the age of seven, pupils have a secure understanding of tens and units, find the difference in lengths of two objects measured in centimetres and identify two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes from their properties. They collect and graph data about pupils' favourite fruits and then make simple deductions about the class's likes and dislikes. By aged 11 pupils are secure in using numbers to 10,000, order fractions with different denominators, calculate simple percentages and apply simple ratios. The more able pupils convert vulgar fractions and understand the differences between mean, mode and median.
101. Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. They concentrate well and work together in groups.
102. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. At Key Stage 1 teaching is usually satisfactory and occasionally good. At Key Stage 2 teaching varies from satisfactory to very good, with the majority of teaching good. In a very good lesson, good planning from prior assessment and the very good use of simple resources enables pupils to make very good progress in applying their knowledge and mathematical vocabulary to classifying quadrilaterals by their characteristics. In another successful lesson, good prior assessment enables the teacher to match work accurately to pupils' needs. This ensures pupils are challenged appropriately and develop a secure understanding of fractions and equivalent fractions. Areas for improvement in satisfactory lessons include increasing pace to maintain pupils' interest and concentration, and ensuring learning objectives are made explicit to pupils and are reviewed in plenary sessions.

103. Teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is firmly established and planning is satisfactory. However, the use of the plenary session to assess what pupils have understood is not emphasised sufficiently. Overall, planning is satisfactory with objectives for pupils' learning clearly identified and, in the most successful lessons, shared with pupils at the start. There is a strong emphasis on the use of mathematical vocabulary and this results in confident use by pupils who explain their work using the correct terminology. The oral and mental sessions are usually delivered appropriately and in the most successful lessons with pace and enthusiasm. The vast majority of pupils are fully involved and show a secure understanding of the mental strategies they use to make mental calculations. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills and in this part of the lesson teachers manage pupils and resources efficiently. In the most successful lessons good use is made of worksheets that are specifically chosen or created to challenge pupils. These are securely based on prior achievement.
104. Some use is made of information and communication technology to rehearse basic computational skills. However, pupils' ability to use information and communication technology, for example, to create graphs, sort data or use spreadsheets to explore mathematical patterns and outcomes, is poorly developed. This is due to lack of sufficient resources and the expertise of some staff to make use of appropriate opportunities to use information and communication technology. Some use is made of mathematics in, for example, science, but overall there is insufficient systematic application of mathematics in other subjects.
105. Teachers use formal and informal observations and regular classroom tests in, for example, mental tests to assess pupils' attainment and to modify teaching in subsequent lessons. Non-statutory tests are used to track pupils' progress from year to year, to identify individual targets and to group pupils in classes.
106. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection. The mathematics curriculum has been reviewed in the light of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the subject co-ordinator does not get sufficient opportunity to monitor the subject systematically. Overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in this inspection and pupils showed interest and involvement in all the lessons seen.

## **SCIENCE**

107. In 2000 the standards attained in the science tests by pupils at the end of Year 6 was average compared to those of other schools nationally, but the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was below average. However, the results indicate slight improvement over the 1999 results. In comparison to similar schools, standards are below average. In 2000 the teacher assessed standards at the end of Year 2 to be above average compared to schools nationally. The proportion attaining highly was also above the national average.
108. Inspection finds that standards currently in Year 6 and Year 2 are just about average, but with a very limited proportion of higher attainment. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding scientific principles, whilst progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior learning. However, pupils' progress in scientific enquiry, where they need to demonstrate how to plan,

obtain, present and evaluate evidence to support ideas or answer questions is insufficiently developed.

109. Pupils in Year 2 identify the use of electricity in daily life and construct circuits to make a bulb light up. They know what is a break line and explain how it prevents a circuit being completed and, as a result, 'lights do not come up'. Some pupils are starting to learn and apply new scientific terminology such as wires, crocodile clips, break line when explaining their work. They understand the difference between living and non-living things and record their findings under the headings of 'alive' and 'not-alive'. In Year 1, pupils start with a self-portrait and name and label their body parts, describing their functions.
110. In Key Stage 2 pupils learn to gather data to answer enquiry questions, for example when conducting a survey of the eating habits of the pupils in their class to inform their choice of a balanced and healthy diet. Older pupils know that micro-organisms cause common illness and food decay. They learn about hygiene for handling and storing food in order to avoid illness. They experiment to show the properties of solids, liquid and gas, record their findings using appropriate format and compare these with their predictions to reach conclusions. Pupils identify what causes friction and recognise the importance of fair tests.
111. Pupils enjoy science lessons and usually are attentive, well behaved and work co-operatively. In a minority of classes during the teacher's introductions and discussion there is some inattention and a reluctance to contribute information and ideas for discussion. These pupils' attitudes generally improve once they start the activity. There are many pupils who are articulate, well informed and anxious to share their ideas.
112. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1, but good in Key Stage 2. All teachers plan thoroughly and resources are usually well prepared to deliver the intended learning at a good pace. Most teachers share the intended learning with the pupils at the start of lesson. In the best lessons, they also refer to this throughout the session and in the plenary which ensures pupils are aware of the purpose of their activity and what it has told them in terms of new knowledge. Most teachers maintain a good balance between short, focussed teaching inputs and periods of pupil experimentation, data gathering or analysis. This provides clear instruction for the pupils and then allows them to put into practice what has been discussed or to explore new ideas.
113. In a minority of lessons there is insufficient emphasis given to developing recording skills, and activities are not planned to extend pupils' learning appropriately.
114. The school uses the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme, adopting some activities to meet its specific needs. Generally resources are satisfactory, but not sufficiently accessible because of the lack of storage facilities. The new co-ordinator has begun to monitor teachers' plans thoroughly to ensure that staff are covering the intended learning, but as yet does not monitor teaching. She has already introduced good assessment procedures which the teachers have started to use and identified the need to carry out whole school assessments of pupils' work, particularly scientific enquiry and to start reviewing the curriculum. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in this subject.

## ART AND DESIGN

115. It was only possible to observe two art lessons during the inspection, and so judgements are largely based on scrutiny of pupils' work in their sketchbooks and on display around the school, and on discussions with staff and pupils.
116. Standards in art have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to be typical for seven and 11 year olds. Where they are used, pupils' sketchbooks show a clear development in the levels of skills used. However, the use of sketchbooks as a permanent record of pupils' development is inconsistent across the school, and as such much of their value is lost.
117. The younger pupils in the school mix paint to vary shades and tints successfully. They experiment with a range of techniques such as wax-resist and washes, and use a variety of media such as chalk, pastels and watercolours. They study their own and each other's faces before creating self-portraits in paint or collage. They have worked with textiles, making leaf print fabric and flower designs using fabric crayons and have made tiles from clay, experimenting with mixing their media effectively by including mosaic work around the edge of these tiles.
118. Older pupils use a range of media, selecting that which is most appropriate to their subject and are beginning to develop an awareness that pictures do not have to represent something recognisable. For example, within studies in the style of Klee pupils used paint, pastels or a graphics program on the computer equally effectively, and throughout the lesson debated enthusiastically about what they perceived in each other's pictures. Three-dimensional work is extended very well when pupils contribute to community projects, such as working with a local sculptor to make giant sculptures for the Christmas displays in the shopping centre. Pupils in Year 3 have painted vibrant pictures of the gods of ancient Egypt, carefully using the poses typical of the time. Work in art supports topics in other subjects, such as within Year 6's history project on ancient Greece when pupils studied pictures of Greek urns and discussed their value as primary sources of evidence for history. They designed and painted their own records of the Sydney Games.
119. Pupils are very positive about their art and were keen to show and explain their work to the inspector. They concentrate closely throughout the lessons and pay good attention to teachers' instructions and to each other's suggestions. Conversation during art lessons is about the task in hand.
120. From the two lessons observed, teaching is good overall. Positive elements noted were that very good questioning extends pupils' observation, promoting their consideration of details within shape, colour and design, and developing their awareness of the composition of a picture. Younger pupils were encouraged to examine elements of texture and the ways movement is portrayed before drawing or painting pictures of tigers.
121. The co-ordinators have considerable enthusiasm for the subject and a good degree of expertise. However, they teach in the nursery and as such it is difficult for them to co-ordinate the provision in the main school effectively. They monitor standards in art through looking at displays and at children's' work, but there has been limited opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and to implement a training programme. However, they share an exciting vision for the development of the subject once the building work in the school is complete, with outline plans for an art and design studio. Because of the limitations of storage during the upheaval of building works, the resources for art are only just satisfactory. Currently the school has only the

minimum supplies of papers and tools, ordering more adventurous resources only rarely.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. No lessons of design and technology were timetabled during the inspection. Judgements on standards attained therefore are based on analysis of pupils' artefacts, their design notes and upon conversations with pupils. Pupils enjoy design and technology projects and talk with enthusiasm about their models and how they made them.
123. Provision for design and technology is satisfactory, with pupils attaining average standards across the school and making appropriate progress in acquiring the necessary skills. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language also attain satisfactory standards and make sound progress.
124. The standards in Key Stage 1 are the result of sound teaching which promotes and encourages pupils to design and reflect upon the successes of their designs. Pupils' proposals show clearly the methods and materials they plan to use, and they discuss aspects they find that are effective or otherwise within their design, such as their designs for finger and glove puppets. Pupils in Year 1 have experimented effectively with ways of making joints, such as in figures made with paper fastener joints for limbs. Pupils in Year 2 have also undertaken interesting research connected with the school's building projects. They have considered the functions of such elements as foundations, drains and insulation and have interviewed various workmen to ascertain their roles within the whole scheme.
125. In Key Stage 2 pupils use an increasing range of tools, materials and components including textiles and wood. They learn about joints, for example within a project making photograph frames, and make moving toys, correctly using terms such as body, chassis and axle. Food technology projects such as making banana lassi or gobi masaledar emphasise food hygiene and safe use of kitchen utensils as well as the functions of different foodstuffs, such as spices. Year 5's designs and models for Olympic stadia developed pupils' understanding of the advantages and limitations of group designs.
126. Design and technology projects include a good balance of investigative, designing and making tasks. Throughout the school these projects support topics in other subjects, for example, Year 4's work in food technology supports their geography project on a locality in India, and Year 2's work designing and making masks has arisen from one of the texts they have been studying in English.
127. Currently resources are limited by the lack of storage space whilst the school is waiting for general building work to commence. The co-ordinators have a vision for the development of the subject once this has been completed, elements of which are already in practice within the class they share. Circumstances limit the support they are able to give to colleagues, since they are located away from the main classrooms and they have different breaktimes to the rest of the school. However, outline plans for an art and design studio, alongside the monitoring of teaching and learning by these enthusiastic co-ordinators in order to support less confident colleagues, have been identified as useful routes to raising standards in design and technology across the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. The school has a rolling programme for delivering geography lessons which are mostly due to be delivered in the spring term. As a result, there was insufficient evidence available to give judgements about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, or about the extent to which standards have improved in geography since the previous inspection.
129. Curriculum planning suggests satisfactory coverage. The school has adopted QCA schemes of work in the subject. The management of the subject is insufficiently developed. The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware of the need to review the geography curriculum and of the steps that need to be taken to bring this about. There are some useful resources to support the study of locations such as India and Kenya but there are insufficient resources for delivering the new scheme of work.

## **HISTORY**

130. By the end of both key stages the pupils reach the standards expected for their age.
131. By the age of seven pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the past, for example by considering the differences between old and new toys. They are developing a clear understanding of chronology through their study of famous people and events, such as Florence Nightingale and Remembrance Day. They recognise the features of seaside holidays in the past, especially the differences in clothing. The study of the Great Fire of London enables them to understand what it was like to live in London at the time of the Great Fire of London. Pupils continue this enjoyment of gaining historical facts and information into Key Stage 2 and many are keen to carry out further research, using sources from information text books. For example, while studying ancient Greece, pupils discuss the difference between primary and secondary sources. They find information from several sources to gather information about Greek Gods, art and Greek lifestyle. By the age of 11 pupils have sound knowledge of life in this country at the time around the Second World War and of the society that existed in ancient Egypt. They can explain the Egyptians' awe of the power of the gods and their views concerning life after death. In both Years 5 and 6 pupils are beginning to develop the skills of analysing evidence for clues about the past.
132. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils are well informed of the factual details of the period or events they study. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their ideas through discussion. Consolidation of the information gained during the lesson focuses pupils clearly on what they had learnt and how this added to the wider body of knowledge that they were acquiring about the period.
133. The QCA scheme of work is in place and the teachers follow the scheme generally effectively. The new co-ordinator monitors planning and has ensured that a good range of resources are available, but her monitoring role, especially in Key Stage 2, is insufficiently developed. Standards have deteriorated since the last inspection when standards were judged to be good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

134. Standards in information and communication technology are below average in both key stages. Too few opportunities are taken to involve pupils with the subject and

this has resulted in weak information and communication technology skills. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are underachieving. Older pupils particularly are not receiving the full National Curriculum and the subject does not meet statutory requirements at either key stage.

135. Pupils in Year 2 use a word processor to write poems and use the delete key, change letters from lower to upper case and can highlight text, and with support, change the font. They use a graphics program to draw simple pictures but the range of skills is very limited. These pupils do not use CD-ROM to find information or use, for example, a 'Roamer' to develop skills in simple programming. Year 6 pupils have similar word processing skills but because of greater literacy skills complete a wider range of work and do so with greater confidence. They import 'clip art' into a word-processed document but have not imported digital images from the Internet or a digital camera. In Year 5 pupils have used a computer to create graphs of class data on pupil characteristics but do not use CD-ROM to find information, monitor or control events using a computer, or use e-mail.
136. No direct teaching of information and communication technology was observed and consequently there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement. There are instances where information and communication technology is used within the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils create pictures in the style of Paul Klee to support art. However, overall teachers lack the necessary skills to identify the learning opportunities to enable the development of information and communication technology across the curriculum or where it can be used to support the development of skills in other subjects.
137. The school have identified many of the weaknesses and have created a very detailed development plan to address the issues. During the last academic year the school did not have a co-ordinator. However the new co-ordinator, appointed in September, is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has started to implement a new scheme of work supported by a published scheme to help in matching work appropriately to pupils' needs and abilities. All out of date computers have been replaced although the number of computers is still well below the national average. Money has been set aside to purchase more hardware when the extensive refurbishment of the school is completed. The development of teachers' skills has been identified and money from the National Opportunities Fund has been allocated to train staff. There is no means of recording pupils' progress. However, the school is developing a simple recording system based on the expectations in the scheme of work.
138. The school has made insufficient progress since the last inspection. It has updated its equipment but standards have fallen and not kept pace with the changes in the subject. However, the information and communication technology development plans and a new co-ordinator indicate the school is aware of the issues and in a position to make good progress.

## **MUSIC**

139. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and participate with evident enjoyment. Music is taught by class teachers, and a recently appointed visiting specialist and co-ordinator who is beginning to have a significant impact on raising standards.
140. Pupils in Year 2 sing enthusiastically, maintaining pulse and rhythm which, combined with satisfactory pitch, makes a full cohesive sound. They listen carefully and this

results in clearer diction when singing and increased accuracy in repeating and clapping simple rhythms. They recognise that different instruments can be used to make loud and soft sounds. Year 6 pupils identify a range of different musical styles and the vast majority are able to recognise examples of blues, calypso, reggae, heavy metal and jazz. They are able to use musical vocabulary such as timbre, rhythm and texture to describe what they hear.

141. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 an example of satisfactory and an example of good teaching was seen. The specialist, who is also the co-ordinator, through his greater knowledge and understanding is able to raise standards, particularly in the Year 6 class, through more focused questioning, greater use of musical vocabulary and higher expectations of pupils. Pupils' singing supports the speaking and listening aspect of literacy but the contribution of information and communication technology is very limited.
142. The impact of the co-ordinator is limited by only visiting weekly. However, since his appointment the school has addressed the key issues in the last inspection by adopting a scheme of work and commercial materials, for example, tapes and lesson planning that is supporting teachers in setting work that is sufficiently challenging. The co-ordinator has created a choir and is developing a small orchestra and recorder classes to support assemblies, mass and future school performances.
143. Resources are now broadly satisfactory although the range of instruments is limited and some are worn out. There is no system for recording pupils' progress although classroom notes of pupils' responses are taken to inform reporting. As the co-ordinator is only in school one day per week opportunities to monitor teaching and support other teachers in order to raise standards are limited.
144. Music was a key issue in the last inspection. Since then its priority has been raised with sufficient time on the timetable and specialist teaching. As a consequence pupils' achievement is now in line with national expectations. Training is still needed to support staff and to develop an assessment system based on the expectations in the scheme of work.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. Standards in physical education are average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection standards have declined at Key Stage 1 but been maintained at Key Stage 2.
146. Using simple apparatus pupils in Key Stage 1 link two or three simple movements, for example, slide, turn, jump or crawl and demonstrate these to other pupils. They put equipment away responsibly, listen to instructions and watch other pupils' demonstrations sensibly. Planning work, inappropriate to age and ability, inhibits the Year 2 pupils in making sufficient progress. Overall Key Stage 2 pupils' work is of a higher standard. For example, in Year 3, when interpreting a range of musical excerpts, they co-operate well, in pairs and threes, to create imaginative sequences that are very well co-ordinated, and use levels and space well. The standard of Year 6 pupils swimming is well above average. They swim up to 20 lengths of a 30 yard pool using a range of strokes, such as crawl, backstroke and butterfly. More able pupils change from crawl to backstroke on alternate strokes. All pupils are very confident and able to dive into the water. All swim significantly more than the



nationally required 25 metres by the time they leave the school. All pupils enjoy physical education and in the vast majority of lessons behave well.

147. Teaching is good overall. Where teaching is good, lessons are well planned and securely based on the scheme of work. Teachers give pupils appropriate support and encouragement while giving them sufficient opportunity to develop skills independently. Other examples of good practise are where teachers insist on good behaviour, involve pupils in discussion of each other's performances, and use good knowledge and understanding to ensure pupils are challenged. Teaching is not effective when unsatisfactory behaviour is not well managed and work is not clearly matched to pupils' age and stage of physical development.
148. The co-ordinator does not get sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching or to support teachers in interpreting the new scheme of work particularly in Key Stage 1 where aspects of the teaching need to be improved.
149. Since the last inspection the school has addressed the lack of dance opportunities and has adopted a new scheme of work in which this aspect is clearly identified. The range of clubs has been maintained but, although included in the new scheme of work, the cultural aspects of physical education are still under exploited. The outdoor facilities are still restricted, but the school makes good use of the facilities of another local junior school. The subject still lacks appropriate assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress.