

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. JOHN WITH ST. MICHAEL C.E. (A)
JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Shawforth, Rochdale

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119690

Headteacher: Mrs. B. Holmes

Reporting inspector: Mr. R. Gill
4074

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th December 2000

Inspection number: 224506

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Moss Side Street
Shawforth
Rochdale
Lancashire

Postcode: OL12 8EP

Telephone number: 01706 852614

Fax number: 01706 852614

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. Sharon Drummond

Date of previous inspection: 20th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. R. Gill 4074	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities, mathematics, science, art and design and music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs. J. Cross 8988	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Mr. J. Porteous 28011	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, design and technology and physical education	How good are the curricular opportunities?
Mr. M. Egerton 8839	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, information and communication technology, history and geography.	

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services
 15 The Birches
 Bramhope
 Leeds
 LS16 9DP

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6-11
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved?	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small sized primary school for boys and girls aged between three and eleven years old. It has 107 pupils on roll with 24 children in the nursery who attend part-time. At the time of the inspection there were 14 children on roll in the reception class. The majority of pupils are from the immediate locality. The school caters for a small number of children from travellers' families. Taken together, pupils' attainment on entry is similar to that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is close to the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is more than the number found in most schools of this size. All pupils are of British heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school's headteacher and deputy headteacher are both newly appointed. The headteacher has been in post for one year and the deputy headteacher for one term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. John with St. Michael's C.E. Primary School is a most effective school with a caring, family atmosphere that is well respected by parents and the local community. Standards often appear to be low when compared to national averages, but this is often the case when the results of a small number of pupils are turned into a percentage. Standards reached by eleven year olds are generally satisfactory. The good quality of teaching has a positive effect on pupils' learning throughout the school. The school is well led by the headteacher, staff and governors who have a strong commitment to the school. Expenditure for all pupils is high, as this is a small school. Nevertheless, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides strong leadership that concentrates on raising standards in English and mathematics.
- Analyses test results very well to find ways in which to improve reading, writing and mathematics.
- Gives children a very good start in the nursery class.
- Creates a very positive atmosphere in which pupils want to show very good attitudes and behaviour.
- Harnesses the enthusiasm of pupils, staff, parents, governors and the parish well together.

What could be improved

- Standards in art and music.
- The more active involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work.
- The presentation of pupils' work.

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 January 1997 and since then it has made good progress in dealing with the key issues identified in the previous report. Resources and facilities for teaching and learning are much improved in the nursery. There are now schemes of work for all subjects. The school is meeting successfully the needs of those pupils capable of higher attainment by providing extra challenges in class and by providing additional work, taught by the headteacher, to raise pupils' expectations and improve standards. The governors are more involved in producing the school's development plan. Any weaknesses in the provision for cultural development have been tackled well. The way that pupils present their work has not been developed so successfully and there is still more work to do in this respect. In addition to improvements in these key issues, the school has successfully implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and made significant advances in information and communication technology, particularly in the establishment of a small computer suite. Even further improvements have also been made in the school's good provision for moral and social development. The quality of teaching has improved. At the time of the last inspection 12 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. There are now no unsatisfactory lessons.

STANDARDS

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

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

<i>Key</i>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

This table shows that pupils' overall attainment, at eleven in 2000, was well below the national average in English and science and below it in mathematics. It was also well below average, when compared with pupils' results from schools with a similar free school meal figure. It was in the lowest five per cent nationally in science when compared to similar schools. There are often no more than 12 pupils in Year 6. Results from such small groups of eleven year olds must be treated with some caution, as one pupil can easily account for a large percentage of the whole. It is often the case that a typical number of pupils reach the expected level, but too few pupils attaining a higher level, and those not reaching the expected level, adversely affect results.

The current picture, with regard to standards, is much more typical of that found in most schools. It is quite different to the impression given by the low grades shown in the table above. The newly appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher are rigorous in their approach in ensuring that pupils reach an appropriate standard. The school's results, as expressed in percentages, change from year to year depending on the balance of pupils who are capable of higher attainment and those who find the work difficult. This year, for example, one in four pupils in Year 6 are capable of higher attainment and standards are more in line with national expectations. Overall, pupils' learning throughout the school is good, and they achieve well. Many children now do better than might be expected and the school is on course to meet this year's challenging targets for eleven year olds.

By the age of five, children generally reach expected levels in all areas of learning. This year children are on course to go beyond these expectations. Pupils in the infants and the juniors fall below expected levels in music and in the juniors also do not achieve expectations in art. This is because arrangements for teaching have been uneven and the time devoted to these subjects has been limited of late. In all other subjects most pupils achieve what is expected for their age.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils of all ages and abilities are well motivated and try hard to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons, around school and on educational visits.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate very well to each other and the staff. Their personal development is satisfactory. They enjoy helping with tasks around the school but could be more involved. Their involvement in personal study is broadly typical.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	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 and learning was satisfactory or better in all of the lessons observed: in 79 per cent of lessons teaching was good or better and in 18 per cent of all lessons it was very good. Lessons were excellent in seven per cent of cases. Teaching is good throughout the school and, as a result, learning is good. Teaching is particularly good in English, mathematics, history and very good for children aged three to five years old. Successful teaching ensures that pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and they concentrate hard on their lessons. The quality of teaching in the nursery class, in particular, is very good because the needs of individual children are so well met. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been satisfactorily implemented by staff and are well taught. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well and most of the needs of those pupils capable of higher attainment. However, these pupils are sometimes restricted by a lack of opportunity to complete independent research and low expectations about the way in which they present their work in most subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound. The curriculum consists of a satisfactory range of learning opportunities and is enriched by a number of additional activities, including a good range of out-of-school clubs and educational visits. Computers are well used, within the curriculum, in the computer suite but they are underused in the classrooms.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The high quality help they receive from learning support assistants ensures good achievement.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Good provision for cultural development. Improvements have been made in these areas since the last inspection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The staff care very effectively for pupils' personal needs and welfare and promote very high standards of behaviour. Pupils' academic progress is monitored and supported very well in English, mathematics and science and satisfactorily elsewhere. Pupils are not involved enough in the assessment of their own work.

The school's links with the parents are excellent. Parents are extremely supportive of the work the school does. They have a high regard for the newly appointed headteacher and the existing staff and the significant work they do.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The newly appointed headteacher is most effective, particularly in working to raise academic standards. The deputy headteacher has already made a good impact in the classroom. The school is very good at identifying what individual children need to do to improve in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The extra emphasis on additional work for those pupils capable of higher attainment, instigated by the headteacher, is designed to ensure that overall standards are raised.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are enthusiastic and involved in evaluating the school's performance, but they have not yet developed a systematic way in which to evaluate the school year by year. They fulfil their statutory requirements and take a keen interest in the pastoral work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school makes excellent use of national data and local statistics to evaluate its performance and the headteacher has evaluated teaching well. The school's development plan is evaluated soundly by staff and governors.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources.

There are enough teachers and a good number of support assistants. They are all well deployed and used. The accommodation is good in most areas and maintained to a high standard, but conditions in some

classrooms are cramped. The outside play area for nursery aged children is not well equipped for physical development. Resources for teaching and learning are often good and used well. The governors take an active interest in all aspects of school life. They seek information from all sources, including parents, and they work satisfactorily to find ways in which to run the school more efficiently and effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approachability of the staff. • The way children are expected to work hard. • The fact that their children like school. • That the school is so well led and managed. • The good teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information about children's progress. • The number of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with all that parents find positive about the school, but largely disagree with their ideas about what needs to be improved. Inspectors agree, in particular, with the parents who expressed the view that the school's new senior management is focused on raising pupils' expectations about their learning and to raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics. The quality of information for parents is generally outstanding apart from written reports on how the children are getting on in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. The range of extra-curricular activities is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The national test results in 2000 showed that eleven year olds were well below the national average in English and science and below it in mathematics. When these results are compared with those achieved by schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals; they are well below average. Science was very well below the average. This analysis needs to be treated with caution because the school has a small number of pupils taking the tests each year. For example, in 2000 one pupil accounted for eight per cent of the total group. It is often the case that the school achieves a satisfactory number of pupils at the expected level, but not enough at the higher level. In general, the average grades, each year, are affected largely by the number of pupils capable of higher attainment and whether they achieve it, and also by the proportion of pupils that find the work difficult and do not reach the required standard. These pupils may have done well compared to their own potential, but their low score can often alter the final picture. Also, in 2000, the number of pupils joining the school in Year 6 left too little time for staff to help them reach the required standard.
2. Despite these seemingly low results, in 2000, for pupils aged eleven, the trend since 1996 is for the school to achieve satisfactory numbers of pupils at the expected level. This is broadly in line with the national picture when English, mathematics and science are taken together. This analysis of the school's results over a period of five years is more reliable because it evens out the years in which pupils do well and those where results are not so good.
3. The school is back on track again this year with standards in English, mathematics and science being as one would expect for pupils of this age. This is because within the group of pupils in Year 6, who will take the National Curriculum tests in 2001, about a quarter are capable of reaching the higher level in all three subjects. The school has set some challenging targets, in English and mathematics for eleven year olds this year and is on course to meet them.
4. The results achieved by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the age of seven also need to be treated with caution because of the small groups taking the tests, the variations in attainment on entry to the school and the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. The results of the 2000 national tests for seven year olds in reading was average compared to other schools nationally, but writing and mathematics were below expected levels. This year the standards in reading, writing and mathematics are about average.
5. Initial assessments on entry to the reception class show that the majority of children are about average in literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. This is borne out by the findings of the inspection, but it will change from year to year depending on the individual achievements of such small groups of children. Pupils achieve well in the reception and the nursery classes owing to the very good teaching that they receive. Many children in the nursery class do not stay on at the school, but those that do make good progress by the end of their time in the reception class. This year, for example, children's achievements are at least good in all areas of learning and very good in creative development and personal, social and emotional development, owing to the rich and varied opportunities they have in these areas of learning.
6. In English, pupils, in Year 6 are reaching expected levels in reading and writing. Standards, this year, are better in reading than they are in writing, because general standards in handwriting and presentation have not improved quickly enough since the last inspection. Pupils' achievements in reading are fuelled by enthusiastic teaching that often inculcates a sense of excitement about stories and reading in the pupils. Parents also play a strong role in supporting the work accomplished in reading. Pupils' achievements in listening and talking about their ideas are often good. They are encouraged by all teachers to take part in lively discussions during the lessons. They are not so good

at explaining and drawing conclusions verbally about what they have done. This is noticeable in science, for example, where pupils find it hard to talk about why something has happened in an experiment or test.

7. In mathematics, pupils are confident in arithmetic and are reasonably quick to solve simple problems. Many pupils, in Year 6, are reaching the required levels and a good number go beyond them. This is due to work which is well matched for different groups of pupils according to their levels of attainment. For example, eleven year old pupils, who are capable of higher attainment, showed a strong facility in using negative and positive numbers, quickly and accurately, in the course of their game of Battleships using all four sections of the graph paper.
8. In science, many pupils have acquired a satisfactory level of scientific knowledge. This knowledge is developed well by teaching that requires pupils to listen and discuss during scientific demonstrations, for example. However, they do not achieve so well in thinking about why things happened the way they did. The ability to explain, conclude and develop a supplementary test to try out their own hypothesis is not yet strong enough. Sometimes, pupils do not make expected achievements because their work is not well presented and they have not spent enough time over explaining their findings, well enough, in writing. As a result their written work is not good enough to help them revise for tests.
9. Beyond English, mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is typical for their age in all subjects except for art and design at the age of eleven and in music throughout the school. In both subjects standards are not high enough because teaching has not built up skills and knowledge, in a step-by-step fashion, that would help pupils to achieve expected levels by the age of eleven. The amount of time spent on these subjects is also a factor. The school has quite rightly been concentrating its efforts on English and mathematics in recent years, but this has been at the expense of some other subjects.
10. The school has a number of children from travelling families who are settled in the area at the moment. These children are well catered for and achieve standards that reflect their capabilities.
11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in lessons. They are well supported by teachers and support assistants who know them well. Adults take care to make sure that pupils understand what they must do and help them to work until tasks are completed. Individual education plans are written clearly and offer sensible guidance to teachers in helping them to give support to pupils. Teachers' good knowledge of pupils and their families supplements the school's formal system for the identification of pupils who may be experiencing difficulties. Pupils with individual education plans have problems that are medical as well as educational and the school is well supported by outside professional agencies in these matters. Pupils who are capable of much higher attainment are well catered for. For example, those capable of being entered for the most demanding tests in mathematics are encouraged and well supported at this level. The attainment of boys and girls is generally similar although the situation changes from year to year depending on the individual pupils involved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. In almost every regard these aspects have improved since the last inspection, the greatest improvement relating to attendance. Pupils' personal development is similar to four years ago chiefly because there are still too few opportunities for them to take responsibility for their own learning.
13. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes now have very positive attitudes towards school. They soon settle into new routines, establish friendships and enjoy their learning. They relate very well to their classmates, other children and staff, and are very well behaved. Particularly noteworthy during the inspection period was the manner in which children from these two classes got on together when they combined for afternoon sessions, a situation relatively new to them. The reception pupils thoroughly enjoyed exploring the nursery surroundings and learning from the interesting activities provided whilst the nursery children whole-heartedly accepted their presence and joined in with them.

14. Pupils' attitudes are equally positive as they get older. They like school, are very eager to learn and show a very high level of interest in their work. Pupils of all abilities concentrate hard and do their very best to please their teachers and the support staff. During literacy and numeracy lessons they are well motivated and engage fully in discussions and question and answer sessions. There is a clear culture of enjoyment of language and mathematical games. Pupils work purposefully for sustained periods on the tasks set for them. Sometimes, however, they do not present their hand written work neatly enough. This is largely because the expectations of the teachers regarding pupils' handwriting are too low and pupils are insufficiently encouraged to improve the presentation of their work.
15. Behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and on educational visits. This agrees with the views expressed by parents and is a major factor in creating the very good work ethic in lessons and in the absence of oppression in the playground. Minimal time is wasted in lessons through pupils' inattention or distraction which enables them to concentrate fully on their learning. During the inspection, for example, Year 3 and 4 pupils behaved very well on a visit to the local swimming baths. Their conduct on the bus journey, in the changing rooms and as they waited by the poolside was a credit both to themselves and to the school.
16. At playtime and at lunchtime pupils' behaviour in the playground is also very good. This is all the more remarkable since there is very little provided to occupy them. Not surprisingly some of the games that pupils initiate themselves involve much chasing around. Those who choose to engage in more gentle play activities such as writing or colouring usually manage to find a quiet corner, but without any seating. This is far from ideal for them. Parents have no concerns about bullying and no anti-social behaviour was seen during the inspection. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.
17. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils' personal development is fairly typical of the age group. They are friendly and polite and like chatting to others, including visitors. They socialise very well with pupils of different ages, for example, in the dining hall where the table settings encourage this. The pupils are reverent and respectful during collective worship. They like to be helpful and enjoy the opportunities given to them for minor duties around the school, such as preparing the hall for assembly, or fetching cartons of milk from the fridge for their classmates. However, they do not always sufficiently take it upon themselves to keep the school tidy. The junior cloakroom, for example, is sometimes strewn with discarded coats and lunch boxes. Pupils' capacity for personal study is about average for their ages, largely because they are still not given enough opportunities to increase this. For example, during lessons pupils undertake too little research by themselves in the library or computer suite.
18. Attendance is very good. Over the past two years the attendance level has been well above the national average and there have been no unauthorised absences. Children from travellers' families attend regularly throughout the year. Both aspects have greatly improved from the broadly typical situation four years ago. Almost all pupils arrive at school punctually each day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and this represents an improvement from the time of the last report when 12 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The school's adoption of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has done a lot to eliminate this unsatisfactory teaching. The school's system of monitoring teaching has identified aspects that need to be improved and staff have also studied pupils' work as a team to find out how their teaching could be improved. At the time of the last inspection five to seven year olds experienced too many lessons in which unchallenging tasks resulted in filling in undemanding worksheets. This is not the case now. Lessons, particularly in English and mathematics, proceed at a good pace and pupils generally receive carefully designed work to cater for their individual needs. Teaching in the infants was also unsatisfactory in physical education. This has been improved over the years and is now satisfactory.

20. The high quality teaching for children in the nursery and reception classes ensures that children make effective progress, from an early age. Teaching was judged to be good in the nursery class at the time of the last inspection. It is now very good, partly because the accommodation has been up-graded to include sinks and work surfaces at children's height so that they can be more independent and floor covering that allows children to play well in any area of the class. Owing to a temporary staff absence, the reception-aged children were being taught by the headteacher in the mornings during the inspection, and placed in the nursery in the afternoons. This was an entirely satisfactory arrangement since they received good teaching in literacy and numeracy in the morning and joined in with experiences like baking, aimed at their age and ability, during the afternoon.
21. The keynote to the school's successful teaching for children aged three to five is the way in which the teachers and support staff create confidence in the children from the very beginning of their schooling. This has a beneficial effect on children's learning. They are excited by stories and books and acquire the skills of reading from an early age. For example, children sat enthralled by the nativity poem entitled, 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'. They enjoyed the repetition contained in the verse and gazed in amazement at the crib scene that their teacher had brought to show them. It had a lantern that lit up the faces of the shepherds, Mary and Joseph. This was particularly magical when the classroom lights were dimmed. Mathematics is also taught using a lively approach consisting of many counting activities that helps to make learning fun. For example, children in the reception class enjoyed getting quicker at number recognition, adding and subtracting when using a large floor dice. Children in the nursery class, guided very well by the nursery nurse, learnt a great deal about numbers and counting by using farmyard animals and fencing them off into different fields. Other areas of learning are taught equally well.
22. Teachers of children in the nursery and reception classes are very well organised. The classroom support assistants are very experienced and know precisely how to help children with their learning. Resources in the classrooms are readily available for children which helps them develop skills of independence and their work is displayed in a way that makes learning exciting.
23. Teaching is now good for five to seven year olds. Teachers' planning has greatly improved. This means that pupils are given work suitably matched to their needs that does not entail filling in endless worksheets. As a result, pupils are very interested in their work and learn new skills at a quick pace. The implementation of National Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy has helped in providing more brisk teaching that concentrates on what pupils need to know and the speed at which they need to work. Group work is well organised for all pupils, which means that those capable of higher attainment are often suitably challenged. For example, during an effective mathematics lesson the teacher and the classroom support assistant both led mental arithmetic sessions, in parallel. This method, which is applied occasionally, succeeded in boosting confidence for all pupils and gave them a greater opportunity for speaking. Occasionally, tasks which do not challenge pupils enough, and a low expectation of how they might present their work, disadvantage pupils capable of higher attainment.
24. Teaching was good for seven to eleven year olds at the time of the last inspection and this standard has been successfully maintained even with a change of personnel. Teachers' ability to manage and organise successful work is a strength and one which has a strong influence on the standards achieved, particularly in Years 3 and 4 where a large number of pupils are, unavoidably, taught in quite a cramped classroom. Teaching remains lively and group tasks are undertaken with interest and dedication. At its best, teaching in the juniors is capable of helping pupils to achieve standards higher than those expected for their age. For example, nine year olds enjoyed a poetry lesson, with a Christmas flavour, that greatly benefited from enthusiastic teaching in a classroom culture where words and language in general are enjoyed regularly. As a result achievement in reading in particular is very good. Pupils read the poems with a good metrical beat and are not put off by unfamiliar words. Equally eleven year olds enjoy physical education lesson where stretching is guided well by the

teachers' knowledge of Yoga and pupils improve their performances in gymnastics as a result of very helpful comments from the teacher.

25. The school has successfully implemented the national frameworks for teaching literacy and numeracy. The teachers' plans follow the national recommendations well and lessons often begin effectively with a good discussion about what is going to be learnt. There is not enough oral assessment at the end of lessons, which requires the pupils to explain what they have done, how well they have achieved and what they need to try harder in, or improve, next time. This weakness in lessons applies just as much to art, for example, as to mathematics. Assessment at the end of lessons or of a series of lessons is a strength in English and mathematics where teachers know what pupils can do and need extra help in. It is a weakness in other subjects where the assessment box on the planning sheet is rarely completed and standards in art and design and music, for example, suffer as a result. Teachers often discuss learning, with the pupils, in an informal way, but there are too few written notes to guide future plans.
26. Teaching in all subjects, except in art and design in the juniors and music throughout the school, helps the pupils achieve what is typical for their age. Teaching is particularly good in English, mathematics and history. There are weaknesses in the amount of time spent on teaching art and design and music and the way in which skills and knowledge are developed over time, but generally, in other subjects, teachers are effective in helping pupils to learn and achieve acceptable results. Pupils who are capable of achieving the higher level, in English and mathematics, are sometimes disadvantaged by not being set challenging enough activities, not being expected to present their work more carefully and having too few opportunities to talk about their own learning at the end of the lesson. These are relative weaknesses in otherwise good teaching.
27. The good teaching in lessons results in good learning where pupils concentrate well, and gain knowledge and understanding at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Teachers plan lessons and tasks which help them to succeed and pupils show pleasure when they complete tasks within the time set. Academic work is closely matched to pupils' needs and there is very good support from classroom assistants who have great patience and ingenuity. Teachers are careful to include pupils with special educational needs in all parts of lessons including discussions about moral and social issues. Pupils who experience extra challenges in their learning because of physical difficulties, for example, often make very good progress, which is directly due to the sensitive support they receive from support assistants in particular. The headteacher places special emphasis on the needs of higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics. Additional teaching is provided, designed to ensure that these pupils reach their potential.

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

28. The curriculum has a number of strengths and some weaknesses and is satisfactory overall. The school is successfully adopting and implementing the national guidelines for most subjects and this ensures that there is breadth and balance in these areas. There is a commercial scheme for physical education and local guidance for history is used along with the national guidelines. Thoughtful editing of the national guidance ensures that it meets the needs of pupils and that all essential elements of the curriculum are taught. Together the new guidelines and the school's amendments to its curriculum show an improvement since the last inspection. Music and art, however, are not yet as well developed as other subjects.
29. The school has an excellent policy for the education of children in the nursery and reception classes. Planning is thorough and meets national requirements. Children are provided with a wide range of stimulating experiences many of which are closely linked to their own lives and the world around them. Visits to such places as farms and the immediate environment enrich the curriculum.
30. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are firmly embedded in the school's routines. The difficulties faced by having pupils of two age groups in

each class, especially for English and mathematics, have largely been overcome by the skilful choice of teaching material and by setting tasks that are appropriate to pupils' needs and competence. The school knows that pupils' writing skills are not as well developed as their reading. Additional time is allocated to specific lessons in writing skills and competence, to improve standards. The school's two-year programme of work for subjects such as history, geography, design and technology and music is successful in making sure that pupils fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum in these areas. The allocation of time between subjects is sensible and gives teachers sufficient time to give pupils worthwhile experiences, but too little time is given to music and art. Governors have approved a new policy for sex education and this is being implemented in the current academic year. There is a policy of good quality for personal, health and social education of pupils and the school uses the expertise of both dental and health nurses appropriately. The school is involved successfully in a national project to teach drugs awareness.

31. At the time of the last inspection teachers' planning was described as thorough and detailed. Long-term and medium-term planning is still thorough and detailed. Problems associated with duplication of work that were evident at the time of the last inspection have been overcome. Planning throughout the school follows a similar format and this helps to provide consistency between classes and key stages. Teachers' weekly plans show clearly the work to be taught in each subject.
32. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and closely follows the Code of Practice. Pupils with special educational needs participate in all class activities. The provision for pupils with physical disabilities is especially effective in physical education lessons. Teachers implement individual education plans effectively and planning usually indicates the tasks to be undertaken by pupils. Sensitive and thoughtful provision from teachers contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The classroom support provided by additional adults plays an important part in the good attitudes of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. The self-esteem of pupils is very high and they feel that they are part of the school community.
33. Provision for out-of-school activities is good. There is a number of clubs for pupils at lunchtime and after school, which are well supported by both boys and girls. Opportunities exist for pupils to participate in art, computer, music and singing activities as well as a number of sports. A feature of the computer club is that parents attend with their children so that access to the Internet is closely monitored. The lack of major industry in the area makes it difficult for the school to make many links with the industrial community. However, links have been forged with the local tourist board and with a local shoe factory and the impact of these is good. Visits to museums, theatres and concert halls enhance the curriculum. Older pupils enjoy a residential visit to an outdoor education centre and this has a positive effect on physical and social development. Visitors to the school include local workpeople such as the crossing patrol, nurses and firepersons and children gain a great deal from these opportunities to learn about the world around them. There are productive links with the local high schools and other local primary schools. The school collaborates well with neighbouring primary schools to share teaching expertise and gain knowledge about other ways of working.
34. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is a strength. The very good provision is reflected in the caring, supportive ethos, which permeates every aspect of the life of the school. It has a very positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to school, to the work they do and how they care for one another.
35. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Throughout the school pupils are made to feel valued and staff use every opportunity to raise the pupils' self-esteem. In lessons throughout the school pupils gained confidence in making a contribution, because teachers assured them that whatever they said would be valued. Through this approach pupils develop respect, not only towards the adults in school but for each other's feelings, thoughts and ideas. Assemblies provide moments of quiet reflection when pupils can think about spiritual and moral issues. There is appropriate quietness and calm, and prayers, particularly the school's prayer, are responded to respectfully. Pupils have

produced some very sensitive pieces of work where they have reflected on the meaning of the words light, love, joy and peace. In lessons opportunities are taken to think about the emotions of other people, for example, during discussion on the evacuations in the Second World War.

36. The provision for moral development is very good. The school is a very caring community with clear values. These are noticeably reflected in its ethos and working practices. Staff provide very good role models and encourage pupils to understand right from wrong in relation to behaviour in school and beyond. Pupils have a clear understanding of the agreed code of conduct and adhere to it well. They are encouraged to play a full part in the development of the school by contributing their ideas about how the life of the school can be improved. There is an effective system of rewards that celebrates achievements in pupils' work and the pupils value this. The culture is one where good behaviour is positively reinforced and as a result pupils grow in self-confidence.
37. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils' good social skills are evident wherever you go in the school. Lunchtime is a most civilised occasion where the atmosphere is calm and orderly. Older pupils sit with the youngest pupils and help them and chat with them. When they leave from lunch they hold doors open for each other and are polite and friendly to adults. Throughout the school pupils are given appropriate responsibilities. From an early age they take registers to the office, organise their own activities and take care of their classrooms. Older pupils prepare the hall for assembly and tidy things away when it is over. They do this in a sensible manner taking their responsibilities seriously. The relationship between the pupils is a joy to see, and when participating in activities such as swimming they are a credit to the school.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Through subjects such as English, art and history pupils learn about other cultures. During World Book Day different classes in the school studied the differences in life style and cultures of a number of countries including Hawaii, Italy and the Caribbean Islands. Theatre visits and performances by visiting musicians widen pupils' artistic knowledge and understanding. Pupils have the opportunity to enjoy performing themselves in the concert at Whitworth Civic Hall. Visits to places of interest are a regular feature of the school year and serve to broaden the pupils' experience of life and give them a greater insight into their own culture. Visits are as diverse as a visit to Blackpool to visits to museums, farms and a shoe factory. The school uses assemblies effectively to link with other faiths and the festivals they celebrate.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school continues to support, assess and guide its pupils effectively, both academically and personally. Staff have very good ways of assessing pupils' attainment and progress, promoting pupils' welfare and achieving high standards of good behaviour. Significant improvements have been made to these aspects in particular since the last inspection.
40. The school has effective procedures to identify pupils who have special educational needs. There is good support from educational and medical professionals that helps pupils to work successfully in everything the school offers. Pupils with physical disabilities are cared for well. They take part successfully in physical education lessons, are active participants in playground games and chatter with their friends. Teachers and classroom support assistants are particularly effective in raising pupils' self-esteem when pupils become discouraged or disheartened by their own lack of progress.
41. Regular and punctual attendance is promoted well. It is made very clear to parents that they must give reasons for their child's absence, including written explanations if they deem it necessary to take holidays in term time. Parents are quite rightly contacted if their child fails to turn up, without any explanation, within the first hour of the school day. This is an extremely prompt and effective measure. Parents are very good at notifying the school about absence and this significantly helps to achieve the zero unauthorised absence rate. Perfect attendance over the year is suitably rewarded. There is inconsistent practice amongst class teachers in record keeping about attendance and absence. For example, one teacher keeps an excellent detailed log of reasons for absence in her class and of any

contact made with the families in this regard. Others have no permanent record of word-of-mouth explanations.

42. The school's detailed behaviour policy is very good and is summarised well for the whole school community so that everyone is clear about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Pupils, staff and parents are made familiar with the very good rewards and sanctions system that rightly emphasises the importance of praising, and appropriately rewarding, positive behaviour. These rewards are for individuals, classes or other groupings of pupils and can be awarded by any member of staff including the mid-day supervisors. On the rare occasions when behaviour is unacceptable the pupil concerned is given a suitable warning and ample chance to moderate their behaviour before they are penalised. Appropriate records are kept and parents involved when necessary. This system is very effectively implemented by all staff according to a set of suitable criteria for different levels of seriousness. Pupils are actively encouraged to think about the rules they have broken and what they could have done instead for more serious incidents. This suitably gets them to think about the impact of their actions upon others.
43. All staff are alert to the pupils' needs and sensitivities and respond to these very effectively. For example, there are pupils in school with potentially serious medical conditions such as epilepsy and diabetes that may require immediate and appropriate response. A specialised nurse has rightly made pupils, as well as the staff, aware of the early signs of these conditions. Through talks and videos they realise the importance of watching out for these symptoms and know how best to respond. Matters relating to child protection are also dealt with appropriately. Governors have suitably been involved in reviewing the school's policy and procedures on child protection and have discussed the possibility of further staff training in the near future. This is particularly important since several members of staff are new to the school. In general, health and safety issues receive a suitable emphasis but there are too few formal records kept about what takes place.
44. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is very good analysis of pupils' performance in national and other tests at the ages of seven and eleven, and of tests taken by other junior pupils. The analysis enables the school to look at areas of the curriculum where teaching or learning may need to be improved. It also enables sensible comparisons of the performance of individual pupils to be made from year to year. The school is able to detect very quickly where a pupil may need help or additional support. The very good knowledge which teachers have of pupils and their families helps them to keep parents well informed of potential problems. Teachers and governors set realistic targets for the future using the information from these analyses. The small size of some year groups makes comparisons difficult between year groups where the absence of one child from a test makes a difference of several percentage points. The school concentrates, therefore, on setting targets for individual pupils from an early age. The written targets are easily accessible by pupils and are regularly referred to and checked.
45. Assessment is very well used for pupils under six years of age. Assessment is used not only to plan future activities, but also to set targets for individual pupils. These targets can be related to any of the areas of learning and for children in the nursery they are sometimes related to personal, social and emotional development. For example, one child has the target; "I must wash my hands more carefully".
46. Good use is made of assessment to plan the curriculum or lessons especially in literacy and numeracy. Teachers plan work in outline for each week, but delay detailed planning of lessons in the later part of the week until they know how well pupils cope with work undertaken. In other subjects evaluations are often missing from the weekly planning sheets. When teachers do evaluate lessons it often has more to do with the quality of the pupils' response than it has with giving any indication of what pupils need to do next to improve their skills or extend their knowledge. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is conscientious and helpful. They make realistic suggestions, which help pupils to improve. Pupils sometimes act on the advice given, but teachers do not always insist that pupils take note of

what has been written. Teachers' comments about the poor quality of handwriting and presentation, for example, do not result in any noticeable improvement in the quality of pupils' work. There is no systematic format for keeping day-to-day academic records. Teachers keep full and helpful records, but the absence of a common format makes it difficult for an observer to be sure of the progress made by individuals or groups of pupils. Such information relies heavily on teachers' informal knowledge of pupils. Pupils are often not involved enough in the assessment of their own learning. There are not enough discussions at the end of lessons, that require the pupils to talk about their learning, how well they have achieved and what they need to try harder in, or improve, next time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Since the previous inspection the school has further developed its partnership with parents and now has excellent links with them. In return the parents are very supportive of the school and there is nothing of significance that concerns them about it. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning has also improved and is now very good.
48. A major factor in establishing the school's outstanding partnership with parents is the quality of information that is provided for them. Particularly noteworthy are the excellent packs of reader-friendly leaflets and letters that are issued to all parents each September and appropriately updated termly. These contain important information about the school's expectations regarding homework and behaviour and about the children's targets in literacy and numeracy. They also usefully include a brief overview of what is to be taught in each subject and suggestions as to how parents might help their children to learn at home. Parents are occasionally invited to meetings that focus on a particular aspect of the curriculum. Most recently these have included numeracy and drugs education. Such meetings are very well attended. Newsletters, issued at least weekly, keep parents very well informed about everyday school routines. The nursery staff provide very good quality information along similar lines and have their own monthly newsletter.
49. Formal consultations between parents and teachers about children's progress are held twice each year with a large choice of appointment times. These arrangements play a significant part in the high attendance rate by parents. The children's termly targets are successfully clarified at these meetings so that all parents are aware of the next steps needed for improvement. More informally, teachers make themselves available at the end of the school day or at other times by appointment. Parents appreciate this and find the staff very approachable. The annual written reports about how pupils are getting on are generally of good quality, particularly in relation to English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, however, they usually inform parents more about what has been taught and enjoyment levels than about attainment. Only in this one respect do inspection findings agree with the few parents who indicated in the questionnaire that they are dissatisfied with the information provided by the school.
50. Parents of pupils with special educational needs feel that they can talk to teachers and support assistants at any time about their child's needs or problems. Parents attend annual reviews and are generally supportive of the work of the school.
51. Parents are very actively encouraged to get involved in their children's learning by supporting them at home. A wealth of information received by the parents successfully helps them to do so. For example, they are given helpful advice about hearing their children read and are actively encouraged to make constructive comments about this and other homework. Through these comments effective dialogue is exchanged between home and school that informs teachers, amongst other things, about the level of support needed to complete the work. Suitable tasks and activities are suggested that improve pupils' basic skills. Mathematical games as well as books are taken home and shared with families. Pupils in the reception class have successfully taken part in a 'Dads and Lads' project aimed at increasing the literacy skills of boys. This has been so popular that it has been extended to include all pupils. Volunteers are welcomed into school and make an invaluable contribution to children's learning, which is greatly appreciated. The number volunteering has fallen recently, but a handful

offer regular assistance in lessons. Others accompany pupils to the swimming baths, coach extra-curricular football and netball, or successfully organise the many 'Friends' association functions.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school is led in a most effective way. The headteacher, staff and governors all work well together in the job of raising standards. The headteacher, in particular, is extremely effective in keeping a track on pupils' progress and making sure that they receive a curriculum designed to help them achieve their best. The governors are all committed to the school and the local community. The headteacher's successful leadership and the governors' regular involvement in the school ensure that they know the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, several governors on the finance committee regularly and effectively monitor the school's spending. The headteacher and staff are very good at making sure that the school's aims are fulfilled day by day. Relationships with parents are very productive and they are very pleased with the school and the way it is managed. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Planning is thorough and takes account of the most recent national guidance for the nursery and reception age range. This impacts positively on children's learning.
53. The school has many strengths and the newly appointed headteacher, the deputy headteacher and staff have done well to maintain the school's existing strengths and gain a more solid reputation within the school's community for having the highest expectations for every pupil. Many parents state that they admire the school for the aspirations it holds for their children. Nearly four years ago, when the school was last inspected, the nursery class was poorly equipped and the room was not well appointed for these young children. Now, the school has created a very effective nursery class in which the children learn through play and experience very good direct teaching from all the adults they work with. Teaching, for pupils between the ages of five and seven, has improved well, since 12 per cent of teaching in this area of the school was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Much of the improvement in teaching has resulted from the school's implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. In addition, the school did not have many schemes of work to guide the teaching in 1997. This is not the case now. The school has adopted the national guidance and every subject has a comprehensive scheme of work. In subjects such as music and art the schemes are too new to have had any impact on standards yet. Other improvements since the last inspection are the extra attention given to the needs of those pupils capable of higher attainment, the increased involvement of the governors in planning and evaluating the school's development, and better provision for pupils' cultural development. The quality of presentation in pupils' written work has not necessarily slipped back, but there is still more work to do in this respect and standards should be higher. Whilst the governors are more involved in the construction of the school's development plan and monitoring certain aspects of the school, they do not yet take part in a systematic self-evaluation of the school.
54. The school has an effective programme for monitoring teaching, which includes support from the local education authority. The governors for literacy and numeracy are also involved in monitoring the effects of teaching and of standards in general.
55. Management of the work related to special educational needs is good. Documents are all in place and the new co-ordinator makes sure that the school's success in providing for these pupils is maintained. The management of provision for travellers' children is good. The headteacher is particularly sensitive to the needs of these children and their parents. This small group of children is fully included in all activities and given the maximum opportunity to succeed.
56. There is an appropriate number of teaching staff who are deployed and trained effectively to form an enthusiastic and committed team. For example, the headteacher has made sure that the deputy headteacher has a very comprehensive programme of induction that is designed to address all the necessary roles of deputy headteacher and headteacher. This programme is already showing signs of success. There is also a well-trained and qualified group of classroom support assistants who work extremely well with teaching staff and have a good impact on pupils' learning. The accommodation

and resources for learning are generally satisfactory. The school possesses a well-appointed nursery and a spacious hall that is well equipped for physical education. Computers are well used in the open plan library, but other computers are underused in some classes, hence not allowing pupils maximum opportunities to extend their learning. The outside play area for nursery children is sparse and generally underdeveloped.

57. The school makes good use of available grants. These grants are largely designated for specific purposes and have been put to good use, for example for staff training. Funds available for information and communication technology have had a positive effect on standards. Funds for special educational needs are used effectively, mostly to employ staff. Governors and staff closely monitor the benefit from these monies.
58. The headteacher and governors manage the school's finances well. The school's development plan contains very good detail about what the school needs to do. The governors have been involved in its production and have linked its implementation well to the school's budget and financial management in general. The school's secretary works closely with the governors to make sure that the budget is closely monitored throughout the year. The governors and staff make sure that money is spent wisely by researching how to spend it and choosing the goods and services that represent the best value for the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The headteacher, staff and governors, with support from the diocese and the local education authority, should:

1. **Improve standards in art in the juniors. To do this they should (Paragraphs 9, 26, 53, 90, 93, 94) :**
 - provide additional training for staff;
 - capitalise on the lessons to be learnt from the artists' in residence scheme;
 - plan to regularly teach the required areas over a cycle of four years; and
 - improve the use of sketchbooks after seeing how artists use them.

2. **Improve standards in music throughout the school. To do this they should (Paragraphs 9, 26, 53, 110, 111, 112, 113) :**
 - make sure that teaching provides a continuous build-up of knowledge and skills in singing, composition and performance;
 - ensure that pupils listen regularly to, and talk about, recorded and live music; and
 - plan to regularly teach the required areas over a cycle of four years.

3. **Involve pupils more in the assessment of their own work (Paragraphs 6,8,25, 26, 46, 70, 79, 86, 88) .**

4. **Make sure that pupils present their work to the best of their ability (Paragraphs 8, 46, 72, 86, 104).**

Other areas for improvement identified during the inspection are:

- the use of computers in classrooms to extend learning (Paragraphs 17, 56, 81, 89, 108, 109).
- the outside play area for nursery aged children (Paragraph 66).
- the amount of independent research carried out by older pupils, in particular (Paragraphs 17, 86, 87).
- governors' involvement in a systematic self-evaluation of the school (Paragraph 53).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	18	54	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	107
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	26

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	*	11	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (88)	82 (88)	88 (81)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (88)	82 (81)	88 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

- When there are fewer than 10 pupils in each group their number is omitted from the table.

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	*	*	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (71)	67 (64)	67 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (79)	75 (71)	92 (93)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

- When there are fewer than 10 pupils in each group their number is omitted from the table.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	101
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YN – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YN – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93.75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of FTE pupils per FTE adult	6
------------------------------------	---

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
----------------	-------

	£
Total income	257565
Total expenditure	260315
Expenditure per pupil	2966
Balance brought forward from previous year	24281
Balance carried forward to next year	21529

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	132
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	40	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	45	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	43	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	53	7	0	0
The teaching is good.	55	43	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	41	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	34	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	43	7	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	59	33	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	69	29	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	45	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	47	12	2	7

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

60. Children are admitted to the nursery at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. The governors operate a strict admission policy, which gives priority to children with special needs living within the Whitworth area. Admission to the reception class is not automatic, but if a place is allocated children enter in the term following their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 24 children attending part-time in the nursery and 24 children attending part-time in the reception class. However, due to a temporary staff absence, the reception-aged children were being taught in the nursery class in the afternoons during the inspection. Thus the majority of the teaching observed was of teaching in the nursery class. The school has an excellent policy for the education of children in the Foundation Stage; staff have a clear understanding of the requirements of the curriculum for these young children, which prepares children well for work in the early stages of the National Curriculum. The last inspection report judged that most pupils acquired satisfactory levels of skill in language and mathematics but did not make any clear judgements about attainment in the other areas of learning. Key points for action related to improving the learning environment in the nursery and improving resources in the reception class, all of which have been successfully tackled. The findings of this inspection point to a significant improvement in the levels of attainment and provision since the last report.
61. A strength is the quality of teaching both by the teachers and by the support staff. In the nursery the teaching is never less than very good and at times excellent and in the reception class it is good in all the areas of learning. The high quality relationships the teachers establish with all the children, plus the good quality of the activities and experiences they provide, produce good progress and attainment. Teachers plan work carefully, which has clear learning objectives, is challenging and meets the needs of individual children. The activities are then carefully assessed, notes are kept on individual children and then this information is used to plan future activities and to set individual targets for children. This positive help from all adults helps children to achieve success and gain in confidence and self-esteem. The children's very positive attitudes to their lessons show how successful the teaching has been in all areas of learning. Staff hold the highest expectations for their children and the management of children in lessons is excellent. Support for children with special educational needs is good in every area of learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

62. There is a strong emphasis placed on the personal, social and emotional development of the children. By the time they leave the reception class the majority of the children will have easily achieved the required goals, including those children with special educational needs. Many children are on course to exceed expectations. Teaching in this aspect of learning is excellent because the staff make very effective use of interesting and lively activities to motivate the children to want to learn and provide the kind of tasks where they will gain in independence. All the children settle quickly into the nursery and reception classes and come to school with confidence. In the area set aside for role-play, in both classes, the skilful intervention of the teachers encourages them to share, play happily together and feel confident with each other and with adults. Concerts for the senior citizens and making up parcels of presents for children in deprived situations make them aware of how they can help other people and gain enjoyment from these actions. They are confident when moving around the classrooms and organising their tasks. When engaged in whole-class discussions, children take turns, concentrate when others are speaking and know to put up their hands if they have a particular point to make. Children are encouraged to get changed with the minimal amount of assistance and when moving through the school they do so with confidence and in a sensible manner. They are polite and self-assured when talking and working with adults.

Communication, Language and Literacy

63. Children are well on course to clearly achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class due to the very good teaching that they receive. Many are likely to exceed the goals, particularly in speaking and listening. In the nursery the teachers are particularly good at extending children's spoken language through joining in their games and the planned activities. They take every opportunity to engage the children in conversations, asking them questions about what they are doing and getting them to expand their answers by giving reasons. During a baking activity, for example, the teacher introduced the word 'fragile' when talking about eggs and asked the children to describe what was happening to the egg as they stirred it vigorously. The children quickly responded with a good description of the mixture. They are happy to answer questions and enjoy joining in conversation with an adult. Children in the reception class learn how to read new words by matching them well and by using the initial letter sound to identify words such as 'postman' and 'van'. Higher attaining children, in the reception class, are able to write without help and form letters that are easily recognisable and quite neat while the lower attaining children are copying under letters, but are doing so with some confidence. In the nursery children quickly learn the enjoyment that can be gained from books. They are encouraged to bring their own books into school so that the teacher can read them to all the children. Every child in the nursery has a personal book of rhymes and as they learn them by heart they colour in the accompanying picture to show that they know it. This gives them a real feeling of success and a love of words and makes them begin to feel that they are reading the words. In the reception class the confidence they have in looking at the written word is built by developing an understanding of initial letter sounds and an introduction to their first reading book. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. A strong feature of the teaching both in the nursery and in the reception class is the good use that staff make of praise and encouragement. This lifts the self-esteem of the children and helps them to make good progress in reading, early writing and particularly in speaking and listening.

Mathematics

64. The teaching of mathematics is very good overall. A very carefully constructed programme of games and activities taught by the staff ensure that the children will go beyond the early learning goals by the end of their time in the reception class. In the nursery they learn how to count the petals on the number flowers and while they are building with the bricks the teachers engage them in conversation about which bricks are below one another and which bricks are above. During the making of shape pictures they learn how to identify common shapes such as triangle, circle and square and how to recognise them in other areas of the classroom. They talk about their favourite colours and, from the information they have gathered, they move on to learning how to put this information into the form of a graph. In the reception class a large dice is used very effectively to develop skills in mental arithmetic by adding or subtracting a number from the one shown on the dice. Coins are sorted according to size leading on to children being able to sort them in order of their value. The school Christmas postbox is used to help children sort out the letters according to the number placed on the letter and this helps them to quickly recognise numbers up to ten and how to put them in the correct sequence. Children make very good progress during all these activities and gain confidence in recognising numbers and their order. Children who have special educational needs receive good support and make good progress.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

65. There is very good teaching in the nursery class for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world and this is successfully built on in reception class. Children, by the time they reach the end of the reception year, are on course to exceed the required standard. In the nursery much of the work in this area of learning is connected to the immediate environment and visits to such places as Chamber House Farm give the children real learning experiences that they can easily remember. Using a magnifying glass they observe a large spider the teacher has brought in and then in plasticine model what they can see. Learning in this situation gives the children access to new

language, to mathematics through counting and also to the creative experience of making a model. Children are often encouraged to look very closely at the things they are handling and this good feature of the teaching leads them to be very observant and have a natural curiosity about the world around them. This approach is continued in the reception class where the children collect their display of autumn leaves, berries and nuts and study the features of that time of the year. In the reception class they begin to appreciate the passage of time and collect items such as toys and other artefacts that show how things were different in the past to how they are now. Through experiences with baking they learn about the properties of different materials and how things change. For example, what happens to the biscuits when they are put in the oven? A well-taught baking lesson in the nursery class drew the attention of the children to how the sugar and butter changed when they stirred it. Regular sessions using challenging games on the computer are developing children's control skills and confidence in using an increasing range of programs.

Physical Development

66. The teaching of physical development is good and children are on course to achieve beyond the early learning goals in this area of learning. Through carefully planned activities in art and technology the children learn successfully how to use tools and construction materials. Sitting with a group of children the teacher in the nursery showed them how to cut around the paper star, thus helping them to increase control and gain more skill in cutting. Exercise books in which children can practise their skills with a pencil help them to improve their hand and eye control. This sort of activity prepares them for reading and writing. The teachers place a strong emphasis on physical activities, which will help them to develop skills in reading and writing. They constantly give praise and encouragement and provide the children with the confidence to try new challenges. In physical education, children are learning how to move with confidence, using space and apparatus well and gaining an awareness of each other. In the nursery, the children have the use of the school and an outside play area. Unfortunately the outside play area is rather drab and uninviting. This does little to reinforce and extend the good work started in the classroom and in the school hall.

Creative Development

67. There is very good teaching of creative development in the nursery and reception classes and children will easily attain, and many are on course to go beyond, the early learning goals by the end of reception. In the nursery the children's creative work is of a very high standard. Children learn a wide range of skills and techniques from observational painting and drawing to marbling and collage work. Through careful instruction the children learn gluing techniques using a brush to put sequins on their Christmas wreaths. They look closely at daffodils and then use the skills they have developed in mixing colours to produce beautiful paintings of the flowers. Praise and encouragement gives them plenty of confidence and they love using different materials. When carrying out their tasks they are sensible in handling tools and clear away without any fuss. Throughout the Foundation Stage they have many opportunities to explore the sounds that musical instruments make and accompany songs with triangles, drums, bells and cymbals. The teachers are enthusiastic about singing and this has given the children a love of songs and a confidence to sing them well. Two children insisted on singing the whole of the Christmas song, 'Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer' and they did this with tremendous vigour and enjoyment.

ENGLISH

68. The achievement of eleven year olds in English has been below the national average in recent years and in 2000 it was well below the average. The findings of the inspection are that standards are slightly higher than those found nationally this year and that there is an improvement in the number of pupils who exceed the average. Variations in standards from year to year are explained by the differences between groups of pupils. These differences are exaggerated when the numbers in each year group are small and the under-performance or absence of one child contributes to the considerable variation in figures from year to year. The achievement of seven year olds in reading in

the 2000 national tests is similar to that found in most schools but in writing achievements are below those found in most schools. Standards in both reading and writing have been higher than those nationally over recent years but have followed the national pattern of reading standards being higher than writing standards. The findings of the inspection are that pupils' achievements continue to be higher in reading than writing and standards in both are close to those found in most schools. The school is on course to meet its ambitious targets for English in 2001.

69. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported by their teachers and the adults who work with them. They participate fully in all written and spoken work and adults and their friends appreciate their contributions. Their achievements are similar to the expectations outlined in their individual education plans.
70. Pupils listen thoughtfully to their teachers. During literacy lessons teachers explain new ideas carefully and pupils respond sensibly to teachers' questions. Infant pupils demonstrate their knowledge of ways to introduce questions by giving their teacher six words beginning with 'wh'. They tell her that a play is something which is acted out, and that the narrator tells the story. Teachers challenge pupils to think carefully and to express their ideas thoughtfully. Infant pupils who were discussing a book entitled 'No Lion At All' were asked "How many lions?" to which one replied, "Only one, because it says lion not lions." Pupils contributed eagerly to an assembly about Christmas lists and created many opportunities to offer their suggestions about gifts they would like to receive. The close attention paid by pupils, as their friends spoke, was most noticeable. Younger junior pupils read poetry well. They read a number of carefully chosen Christmas poems with clarity, good timing and obvious enjoyment. They read unfamiliar words such as 'jaded' without losing the rhythm of the poem. Pupils are also able to explain the ideas contained in poems such as 'The Brown King' clearly and without embarrassment. A particularly effective example of speaking and listening was seen when older juniors read part of their diary while their partner took notes. The re-telling of the incident or idea by the note takers showed that they had listened well to their friends' clear descriptions. Opportunities to extend pupils' skills in speaking and listening are lost because teachers do not ask pupils to evaluate the level of their success at the end of lessons.
71. Older juniors enjoy reading. They choose their own reading material from class and school collections. They are confident and read with good inflection and good understanding. They recall stories accurately and make sensible predictions about what might happen next. Basic reading skills are used effectively to work out new words and they use the context of the passage to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words such as 'unnerved'. Pupils who excel at reading assume the voices of the characters in the story without embarrassment and gain great pleasure from the text. Younger juniors have good skills to help them to read unusual words. They understand what they read and they recall the main points of stories well. They understand the structure of storybooks and use what they know to predict the next part of the story. Their teacher encourages a sense of excitement and pleasure about reading and this produces positive attitudes to books and reading in the pupils. They have a particularly well-developed interest in poetry and have several class collections of poetry they like as well as poetry they have written. They are familiar with, and enjoy the work of, a wide range of authors including Dylan Thomas and T.S. Eliot. Infant pupils are enthusiastic readers. Pupils who excel in reading are fluent, accurate and read with great maturity. They have a wide range of skills, which enables them to read difficult texts with few problems. Other infant pupils acquire basic skills quickly. They know a number of words by sight and they are able to attempt unknown words using the skills they have learned. Teachers and other adults working in classes take great care to ensure that reading skills are taught and reinforced at every available opportunity. A feature of the reading is the good level of achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Parents and teachers make good use of the reading record booklet. Pupils use the school library system confidently and are able to find the books they need for their work in other subjects.
72. Pupils are not as confident or competent in their writing as they are with reading. They practise key skills in their handwriting books regularly and it is possible to see improvements in letter formation and a growing maturity of style over a period of time. This is especially true of the youngest pupils.

These skills and this growing maturity, however, are not seen in other books either in English lessons or in other subjects. Pupils are not expected to maintain their standards and teachers rarely comment on the fact that skills that have been taught in handwriting lessons are ignored in other work. Standards of presentation are marred by work which is crossed out, written over several times or just messy. This also affects standards of presentation in science and history, for example. In two of the three classes teachers demonstrate handwriting particularly well yet they do not insist on these high standards from the pupils. Pupils write interesting stories, sometimes at great length, good descriptions, clear factual accounts and their work is usually technically correct. They have good knowledge of grammatical conventions in their writing and they use them well. At the beginning of term pupils in Years 5 and 6 were often given identical exercises to complete. This did not help those pupils who find such work difficult nor sufficiently challenge the higher attainers. Towards the end of term there was a greater emphasis on work which is more closely matched to their needs. Younger juniors often write a first draft and then re-draft their work. They think carefully between these two stages and they often make sensible and interesting changes in their final drafts.

73. The teaching of English is never less than good and occasionally it is very good. Good teaching is seen when teachers plan lessons which help all pupils to improve their knowledge or skill. All teachers have good relationships with their class and this allows lessons to proceed at a good pace with almost no interruptions for misbehaviour or mischief. The good behaviour of the pupils was a hallmark of all the lessons seen. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, work with great concentration and at good speed even when an adult does not directly supervise them. Teachers and other adults support pupils well and this enables pupils to practise their skills during lessons. Good questioning by teachers helps pupils to think clearly and to demonstrate their knowledge of words, poems and grammatical devices. Very good teaching is seen when these skills are allied to the excellent choice of poetry and prose which makes pupils excited about language, and when pupils are presented with a high level of challenge which increases their ability to work independently. In all lessons seen teachers use praise well.
74. The subject is led by a committed and able co-ordinator and this is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Standards in reading have also improved. This has been helped by the acquisition of a wide range of good quality children's fiction to which pupils now have access. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded in the life of the school and teachers use it well. Information and communication technology is not well used to supplement the work in English.

MATHEMATICS

75. Pupils' attainment, in terms of the number achieving the expected level, has swung between the two extremes of well above and well below the national average since the time of the last report in 1997. At that time standards achieved by eleven year olds, in national tests, were well above those found in other schools. This is a common feature in small schools where a few pupils with low scores can alter the final figures quite dramatically. However, the underlying trend is one of progress, particularly for those pupils who have been at the school for a number of years. The gains that these pupils make are at least as good as those made by pupils in similar schools who started with comparable scores at the age of seven. The school's results in national tests in 2000 were low, but the staff predicted this as a result of a high number of pupils, in that year, who needed extra support in their learning.
76. Now the school is back on track again and most pupils are achieving what would be expected for their age. The inspection findings show that the school is on course to meet its target that 80 per cent of eleven year olds should reach the nationally expected level. The number of pupils who are working at the higher levels is good. This has often been a weakness in the school's results because there were just not enough pupils in the year group capable of this, more demanding, work.
77. The attainment of pupils by the time they are seven follows a similar pattern, depending on the size of the group and the number of pupils capable of reaching the required standard. In 1997 and 1998 pupils did as well as pupils in any other school, but in 1999 and 2000 the school's results were,

respectively, well below and below the levels found in most schools. This year, pupils are capable of achieving well compared to national expectations and several are working well enough to reach a higher level.

78. Teaching has a powerful impact on pupils' learning particularly after having successfully introduced the National Strategy for Numeracy. This applies to all groups of pupils, but particularly those capable of higher attainment and those in need of special help because they find learning difficult. The school has a small number of travellers' children. These children are very well integrated into school and achieve well as a result. Test results and teachers' assessments show that many Year 6 pupils have achieved well since they were seven owing to the teaching they have received in class or in special groups devoted to improving skills in particular aspects of learning. Classroom support assistants play a very valuable role in supporting pupils who find the work difficult. For example, in a Year 1 and Year 2 lesson the assistant conducted a very successful mental arithmetic session, making sure that the entire group understood what they were doing, while the teacher was busy with other groups.
79. Teachers and pupils enjoy interesting and lively mathematics lessons. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, for example, the teacher adapted the planned activity to use the stimulus provided by the previous day's visit to the pantomime. Pupils enjoyed plotting their graphs even more since they were based on the pantomime characters. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress as well as the higher achievers. At its best, teaching is very well organised and pupils make very good progress during the lessons. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils, who were plotting co-ordinates on conventional graph paper, all achieved good results when handling positive numbers while some pupils used all four quadrants of the paper and were confidently using negative and positive numbers together in their game of Battleships. This represented good learning brought about by thoroughly effective teaching. Even in otherwise good lessons teaching does not always make sure that pupils have enough opportunities to assess their own performance. For example, they lack chances to practise explaining how they achieved an answer. Moreover, since the aims of the lesson are not always clearly explained at the beginning of the lesson, and pupils are not expected to say how well they think they have done in relation to them, learning is not always as good as it could be.
80. Pupils are usually quick at arithmetic. Teaching provides well-paced mental arithmetic sessions, which help pupils to remember number facts and acquire agility when adding or subtracting. The subsequent group work tasks are generally well pitched for the needs of different groups. Occasionally, the tasks for those capable of higher attainment are not demanding enough, but in general these pupils fair well and this represents good progress since the time of the last inspection. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met, additionally, by withdrawal group designed to set even more demanding challenges.
81. The quality of teachers' planning is generally good and the wide range of activities chosen contributes positively to lively lessons. Computers are used well in some lessons, but there is no guarantee that they will be used in every class, or that the co-ordinator will be able to monitor their use, since they are not mentioned in the teachers' plans.
82. A particular strength of the good teaching is the very detailed and comprehensive analysis of test results carried out to see where their teaching could be sharper or more effective. This has led to a very good system of setting targets for pupils, which is clearly communicated to parents and reinforced by relevant homework. This has contributed well to pupils' achievements in that teachers have become very clear about what pupils need to do to reach, or exceed, expected levels. Teachers mark work very carefully in a way that is designed to boost pupils' self-esteem. There are some very good examples of teachers jotting comments on pupils' work about what they have achieved and what they need to do next. This system of marking is not consistently applied throughout the school.

83. The management of the subject is very good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and is most usefully accompanied by a rigorous system of tests and tracking designed to identify what pupils need to do to improve even further. This scrupulous monitoring of individual progress is applied by the co-ordinator who is a strong influence behind the quality of teaching and the progress of individual pupils. The monitoring of teaching, by the co-ordinator, has also provided information that the school has used well to maintain the quality of teaching and raise standards.

SCIENCE

84. Pupils' achievements have varied greatly over the years since the last report in 1997. These variations should be viewed with caution because of the small size of the groups concerned, in which one pupil can account for a large percentage of the total. It is a characteristic of this school that too few pupils reach the higher levels while some do not reach the expected level. Nevertheless, teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, and now a satisfactory number of pupils are reaching the expected levels at the ages of seven and eleven.
85. The quality of teaching is not quite as good, particularly for pupils aged from seven to eleven, when compared to that found in the last inspection. This is because the majority of time, recently, has been devoted to putting in place the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. This has consumed so much of teachers' energies that attention to some aspects of science has slipped. The weakness now lies in the low numbers of pupils that do better than average. Current teaching attempts to tackle this weakness and most pupils achieve satisfactorily, but some vital elements of lessons are not sharp enough. Pupils with special educational needs often make sound progress because classroom assistants, who work in tandem with the teacher to fulfil the aims of the lesson, support them so closely.
86. Teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are planned well across the year and designed to cover the required ground. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to conduct tests and record their results. Excitement is introduced into lessons that makes pupils want to discover for themselves. As a result pupils enjoy their science lessons and try very hard to understand the ideas being introduced. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 lesson pupils were captivated by their discoveries about light and reflection in a specially prepared darkened room. This helped them to learn about light sources and the reflective qualities of certain materials. Teachers regularly ask pupils to predict what might happen in tests and then to reflect on these predictions during the lesson. In general, teaching causes pupils to learn basic facts and practise basic scientific skills such as observing and predicting. However, the weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory lessons result in those capable of higher attainment not fulfilling their potential. Pupils, in all classes, get plenty of opportunity to make simple predictions and arrive at conclusions. They are good at this, but they are not expected to ask their own questions arising out of an investigation or suggest another test to do. This limits the achievements of those pupils capable of higher attainment. Sometimes pupils do not write their conclusions clearly enough in the form of an explanation rather than just a description of what happened. Often the pupils in both the infants and the juniors are not expected to present their work in the best possible way. This tends to lessen pupils' attention to detail and diminish their efforts to explain their results.
87. Lessons are often aimed too much at the average and all pupils are expected to tackle the same task. Pupils with special educational need are supported well, but average and higher attaining pupils often end up with similar work in their books. This is the reason why fewer pupils at the age of seven and eleven achieve the higher levels in National Curriculum assessments and tests.
88. Better teaching produces good learning amongst the pupils. They think more widely about the results that they obtain. For example, more emphasis is placed on explaining results in the lower juniors, and pupils, particularly those capable of higher attainment, rise to the challenge. Teaching is also good, in any class, when pupils receive helpful information from the teacher while conducting demonstrations based clearly on explicit objectives for learning. However, there are not enough opportunities for

pupils to discuss the results and come up with their own explanations in the oral part of the lesson. This lack of practice of verbal explanation is reflected in their written work.

89. The management of the subject has been effective in tackling many of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. The National Curriculum is now taught comprehensively across the years and teachers make good use of the suggested national scheme of work. This adherence to the expected curriculum is frequently checked and standards have been regularly discussed. As a result the school has identified the need to provide more challenging work for those capable of higher attainment and a good plan for improvement has been produced. Computers are not used enough in lessons to record data and present results. The staff have also identified this weakness.

ART AND DESIGN

90. Standards reached by seven year olds are typical for their age, but standards for eleven year olds are below that normally found in other schools. Teaching in the juniors is unsuccessful in ensuring the pupils achieve what is expected of them. The reason for this changed situation from the time of the last inspection, when standards were satisfactory throughout the school, is mainly due to the lack, for the last three years, of permanent staff at the end of the juniors. This has meant that pupils have had a series of useful, but disconnected, experiences that have not added up to a coherent development in the knowledge, skills and understanding of art required at this age. There is also the factor of time devoted to lessons in art. The school has, quite rightly, been devoting extra time to raising standards in English and mathematics, which has reduced the time available for art, for example. Despite these drawbacks in provision, pupils of all ages have enjoyed the art that they have done. They particularly enjoy the use of different materials and tools, for example, printing blocks made of polystyrene.
91. In the infants, where staffing has been stable over a number of years, standards are appropriate, if somewhat limited. Pupils have enjoyed producing Hopi Indian dolls and painting Hawaiian landscapes in connection with their multi-cultural work. The dolls and paintings reached satisfactory standards. The school has a useful email connection with travellers abroad who send details of artwork that can be used in the curriculum. These good developments are in direct response to a point raised in the last inspection report. Seven year old pupils can produce dramatic images when given the chance as in their very colourful paintings based on the theme of warm and cold colours. By the end of Year 2 pupils can explore ideas and use a range of materials to create artwork. However, there is often a lack of variety in what pupils produce because individual decision making is not highly developed in the school. Pupils in the infants have not learnt enough about printing, and sketching, despite having the resources in school to use in these areas, and as a result their skills are underdeveloped. Good teaching in the infants has sometimes resulted in some powerful work. For example, pupils have produced some successful clay tiles decorated with a motif in the style of Kandinsky. These are bold and colourful achievements.
92. Teachers have also helped pupils to produce some good work in the juniors. A history project in Years 3 and 4 resulted in some very effective Greek pots that were painted in just the right tone for clay work of that period. Their shape, form and colour caught the spirit of the age. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have planned in minute detail a collage figure of a pantomime character. The final results are satisfactory, but not quite of the standard expected of an eleven year old in terms of detail, use of textiles and careful finish. Sketchbooks were very well used for the pantomime characters and the draft version was often better, and more interesting, than the finished product, because the pupils had added notes about what they wanted to achieve.
93. However, these good examples of pupils' work do not form part of a coherent development in art. There is still no policy for the subject and this means that teachers cannot make sure that the school's purpose and direction in art is developed in their lessons. Consequently, art is often used as a tool for illustration in other subjects, such as history. There is also little reference to known artists around the school and while teachers plan to teach their class about a famous artist, there are few saved examples of any work having been produced. Sketchbooks, used in the juniors, contain little beyond quick

sketches and little that represents experimentation towards a wide range of sketching techniques, for example. Pupils are only just beginning to use computers to build up confidence in using a range of programs to produce images.

94. The school has made a sound start, this year, to tackle the weaknesses. Teachers' plans are now guided well by the national scheme of work for art, but it is too early to see the results of this new scheme. The assessment of pupils' work has not been tackled, but the co-ordinator has collected some pupils' work together for the staff to discuss. The co-ordinator has also arranged for some artists in residence. This scheme is designed both to raise pupils' expectations about what they can achieve and to provide training for teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards that are typical for their age. The school has effectively adopted the national guidelines for the subject. Topics are planned on a two-year cycle to take account of the two age groups of pupils in each class. This ensures that pupils have opportunities to use the full range of materials and tools required by the National Curriculum.
96. Younger pupils make houses and experiment with various methods of joining materials together. They make vehicles that move and they design a playground. Older pupils make a 'pop-up' Christmas card under the teacher's direction, where they demonstrate limited skills when using scissors and have too few opportunities to experiment with design, materials or fastenings. A feature of some topics carried out in the school is that pupils have opportunities to design or make their artefacts, but do not have opportunities to do both. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, however, draw several designs for their money containers and evaluate their completed work. One child wrote that the purse felt rough but it opened properly. Teachers demonstrate techniques well and are skilled in managing pupils so that proper regard is paid to safety issues in lessons. Teachers expect pupils to produce a good finished product and support individual and groups of pupils well during lessons. High expectations are promoted in teachers' good planning for individual lessons. Pupils' good behaviour in lessons contributes significantly to lessons in this subject. Pupils work sensibly together and help each other to overcome difficulties. They work with a good sense of purpose for an extended period.
97. Pupils enjoy design and technology lessons and remember techniques they have been taught. They also have clear ideas of the ways in which design and technology complements other curriculum areas. They understand, for example, that their attempts to re-create World War II helmets in history are part of their work in design and technology.
98. There is no formal assessment of pupils' work in design and technology. Teachers other than the class teacher often teach the subject. In such cases the lack of a formal assessment procedure makes it difficult for class teachers to know what pupils can do and how well they do it. Monitoring of the subject occurs when final products are evaluated. This means that knowledge of how well pupils' skills are developing in order to produce the final product is haphazard. There are sufficient resources for the subject to be taught effectively.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

99. Only one lesson was observed in geography and due to the current cycle of planning where geography does not feature on the timetable during this term, it was not possible to see any examples of pupils' work. It is therefore not possible to make any judgements about attainment or teaching in the subject. In the absence of the co-ordinator, discussions were held with the headteacher about the curriculum. The school plans a cycle of geography-based topics using national guidelines. Visits and an appropriate range of school resources support the work in these topics. Visits include the local reservoir and sewage works to support the topic about water and other visits are made to local farms, towns and places of interest in the locality. Comparisons are made with other areas and the pupils develop mapping skills and are able to use co-ordinates. The geography curriculum is satisfactory.

100. In history at the time of the last inspection there were no lessons being taught and therefore no judgements were made about attainment or teaching. By ages of seven and eleven the pupils now reach levels that are appropriate for their age. Throughout the school pupils are very enthusiastic about their history and this is due to the lively way in which the teachers present it.
101. In the infants, teaching builds successfully on the early experiences that pupils have had by relating much of the history teaching to the lives of the pupils' grandparents; there is an immediate interest and point of contact with their own lives. Skilful use of artefacts in the classroom brings to life how homes have changed over the years. Pupils can handle and use the flat iron, the posser and the scrubbing board and have a clear picture of how washing has changed in the short period since their grandparents were children. As well as studying changes within the home they look at how buildings have changed and here the local environment with its wealth of different buildings provides instant examples of changes in lifestyle. Pupils quickly begin to understand things that are in the past and those that belong to the present and something about the different characters from our history such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. The pupils talk with enthusiasm about their learning and can recall many facts that they have learnt.
102. In the lower juniors, pupils learn about Invaders and Settlers and once again lively teaching and interesting experiences bring to life the learning. For example, older pupils talked very enthusiastically about the visit of the Viking and his dress and weapons. Even though this had taken place some time ago they had retained a good deal of information and could go on to talk about the Celts and the Anglo-Saxons. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are learning about the Second World and once again artefacts and memorabilia bring the topic to life. During this study the teacher is making very good use of the book 'Goodnight Mister Tom' as a way of bringing to life the evacuation.
103. The pupils are engrossed in this aspect of the war and during discussions in the classroom their sensitive comments show that they have developed a real empathy with the characters and with the situation that children found themselves in. Many of the pupils are able to draw on conversations they have had with their grandparents who knew children who had been evacuated to the Whitworth valley during the war. The involvement of pupils in using artefacts, real experiences, books and visits is having a real impact on their learning.
104. Teaching is good in history. Lessons are planned so that they are interesting and capture the imagination of the pupils. Good questioning skills at the beginning of lessons help the pupils to remember previous knowledge and provide links in their learning. Although pupils produce interesting pieces of writing during their studies, presentation of this work is often poor in terms of both the quality of the handwriting and the illustrations. In order to raise standards in history this aspect of their work needs to be improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

105. Attainment is broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. The school has recently acquired a new computer suite equipped with the latest computers and linked to the Internet. A specialist support teacher works in this area with groups of pupils from each of the classes. This arrangement has a good impact on pupils' progress in the computer suite.
106. Pupils' skills are developing soundly in the infants. They have good attitudes towards their work and clearly enjoy using the computers, particularly in the library where computers are grouped together to form a suite of machines. The youngest pupils are given regular opportunities to gain confidence in using the mouse. These skills are built on effectively in Year 1 when pupils have a whole-class teaching session in the classroom, followed by group work in the computer suite. Very good teaching by the support teacher gives them the confidence to explore other facilities that the computer has in addition to the already familiar word processing and games. Pupils quickly learn how to use the

computer's art facility and progress to combining thin and thick lines and completing a continuous drawing. They have an increasing awareness of which keys to use, for example, backspace and space bar, to control the position of the cursor on the screen. As a result, pupils learn how to use the colour facility and understand the careful movements they need to make to achieve an accurate result.

107. Pupils in the juniors, including those with special educational needs, continue to make sound progress and enjoy their work on the computer. They use their word-processing skills to produce illuminated plaques with phrases on them that represent their thoughts about love, joy, light and peace. Pupils in Year 4 can enter data onto spreadsheets in order to produce a graph of cat owners and their cats' favourite food. In the process of doing this work the pupils learn how to change the size of their graph and how to control the cursor in order to move the finished product from one part of the screen to another.
108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is better in the computer suite and when teachers give demonstration lessons in the classroom with pupils grouped around one computer screen. Pupils do not use computers well in the classrooms for follow up work, for example for research in history. This is a current weakness in the quality of teaching. The use of demonstration lessons followed by group work in the computer suite is proving most effective. The support assistant gives one-to-one assistance to the pupils thereby challenging them at an appropriate level. This enabled them to gain confidence in handling the computer and achieve a feeling of success. A strong feature of the teaching in the computer suite is the careful assessments that are made of what each individual pupil has achieved. These are recorded and then passed on to the class teacher. These records are not fully utilised by class teachers, at the moment, because the software is not available for pupils to use computers enough in other subjects of the National Curriculum.
109. The subject is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has ordered additional software so that computers can be used more effectively in classrooms. Many pupils benefit from the opportunity to join the computer club where they are able to use a range of challenging games and also use the computer to gain access to the Internet. The computer club is supervised well by a number of parents who are on hand either to support the pupils or give practical help.

MUSIC

110. Standards achieved by pupils are below those which are typical for their age at seven and eleven. Standards could not be judged at the time of the last inspection because there was a lack of information available. Now, pupils have a positive approach to the subject, particularly in singing which is of a satisfactory standard when the pupils sing hymns, for example. However, the arrangements for teaching music are not developed enough to ensure that pupils reach the required standard overall. The school has rightly been concentrating its efforts on responding to the national effort to raise standards in English and mathematics. Therefore time for music has suffered. Lessons have often been no more than half an hour long. This has meant the work is rushed and essential elements are missed or not developed.
111. The low standards are not due to any lack of organisation relating to the curriculum. The programme of work is taken directly from the new national guidance and has been well tailored to suit a small school with mixed age classes. The school also uses a published scheme of work to give structure and direction to the lessons. However, most of these features are too new to have had any impact on standards. The underlying cause of the low standards is that pupils have not had the required experiences in enough depth and over a long enough period. Pupils in Year 6, for example, have had a series of different teachers for music since 1997. This has resulted in a lack of continuity and a slower build up of skills than would normally have been expected. They have listened to recorded music but not as part of a structured curriculum that has developed a broad knowledge of composers and types of music. They sing well enough in assemblies, but singing in lessons has not been developed consistently to make them proficient in rounds or part-singing, for example. Composition, using

percussion instruments, has been practised particularly when trying out different beat patterns, but there has been little composition using percussion and tuned instruments around a theme, for example where the pupils get a chance to record what they have done on tape and in written form. Pupils talk well about musical experiences that they have had, but learning has been disjointed and achievements sporadic.

112. The same kind of pattern exists for pupils aged five to seven. In Year 2, for example, pupils can compose and note down their ideas using symbols to represent the sounds, but this is not a regular feature of their work and these skills have not been developed and extended systematically. Lessons have been missed in favour of other subjects that have needed more time.
113. The teaching is carried out by a combination of the headteacher and two supply staff. The technical side of teaching is satisfactory. Staff have a reasonable knowledge of the subject and can plan lessons well enough. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently practising their part of the 'Piper's Threat' – a musical production for Christmas. They are working with enthusiasm and have achieved a satisfactory level of proficiency in clapping out, often quite complicated, beat patterns. Nevertheless, teaching, overall, is unsatisfactory because it is not consistent in ensuring a step-by-step acquisition of musical knowledge and skills. Lessons are often rushed and taught in cramped conditions, in the classroom, because the school hall is being used for other activities.
114. Singing in collective worship is lively and tuneful. Pupils particularly enjoy singing a range of well-chosen recently recorded hymns. The headteacher often accompanies the pupils using a flute, which adds an unusual, but effective, dimension to the singing. The resources for the subject are reasonable in supply, but there are too few tuned instruments for use in a class lesson.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Pupils achieve standards that match those found in other school for pupils their ages by the time they are seven and eleven years old. Standards in swimming are higher than those found in most schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Sometimes, as in the class with the oldest pupils, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as they work with a partner and their adult supporter.
116. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons begin with appropriate exercises to warm up muscles. In the Years 5 and 6 class the lesson began with very simple stretching exercises that were very well demonstrated by the teacher. A notable feature of lessons is the teachers' emphasis on issues relating to pupils' health and safety. For example, an older pupil was heard to complain during the warm-up and the teacher was quick to point out that if there was a need to complain the pupil was stretching too far for the early part of the lesson. Lessons in the hall were restricted by the presence of equipment and decorations relating to the school's Christmas celebrations. Teachers pointed out possible problems and pupils responded by taking great care to avoid the additional distractions and one another. Teachers plan their lessons to include all the required elements of the curriculum during each 12-month period. Planning is based on a very good commercial scheme that offers good advice and help for the non-specialist. Lessons are carefully planned to make the best use of the time available and to give pupils opportunities to practise and improve their skills in basic gymnastics. Good use of pupils to demonstrate best practice encourages their friends to work hard to improve performance. Pupils show their appreciation of their friends' efforts with spontaneous applause. Teachers give good encouragement to pupils, especially to those pupils who find physical activities difficult. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to lead pupils through the stages of gymnastic performance systematically.
117. The increasing ability of teachers to help pupils and their improved subject knowledge is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have undertaken training in basic physical education and in the Top Sport initiative. There is sufficient small and large apparatus for lessons to

be taught effectively but there are insufficient large mats for the oldest pupils to practise floor gymnastics efficiently.