

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S CE (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Keele, Staffordshire

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124254

Headteacher: Mrs J Price (Acting)

Reporting inspector: Mrs Heather Evans
21374

Dates of inspection: October 16-19 2000

Inspection number: 224666

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Quarry Bank Road Keele Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST5 5AF
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr F Edwards
Date of previous inspection:	21 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs H Evans 21374	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Information and communication technology	School's results and achievements
		Art and design	How well are pupils taught?
		Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
		English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs G Marsland 13705	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its' pupils
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr A Allison 31175	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	
		Religious education	
		Equal opportunities	

Mrs P Underwood 11419	Team inspector	English	
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	
		Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
		Special educational needs	

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Keele in Staffordshire, close to the University of Keele. Many of the pupils stay at the school for only three or four years before moving to other schools as their parents either study or lecture at the university. Since the last inspection the management team has been totally changed and the school is managed at present by an acting headteacher seconded from another school in the authority and an acting deputy head appointed from the staff of the school. There has been additional support from a supernumerary teacher, also from another school, for just one term.

This is a smaller than average school with 137 pupils on roll. The number of pupils changes most years, sometimes during the academic year. At the time of the inspection there were fewer pupils than at the last inspection and there are more boys than girls. There are 20 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is close to the national average and of these two already have statements and two others are in the process of being assessed. Most of these children have specific reading difficulties. Nineteen pupils learn English as an additional language, which, at 14 per cent is well above the national average however, almost all of these has one parent who speaks English very well. Pupils are drawn from a wide area to attend the school. Attainment on entry varies but from assessment procedures soon after entry it is apparent that on entry, attainment for most pupils is above that found in most schools nationally for children of the same age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Saint John's Primary School is an effective school where standards are now at the highest possible level in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and are at least in line with expectations in all other subjects. Pupils enjoy school, they behave very well and attendance is very good. Teaching is predominantly good and it is very good in one fifth of lessons. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. The school has developed a curriculum that matches the needs of pupils of a range of abilities. The entire staff are looking for ways to improve the quality of provision and teaching and make challenging demands of pupils. The arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are good and parents are well informed about what the school is doing at each stage. Since the last inspection the governing body has developed an increased awareness of the school's strengths and where improvement is required. Following a time of insecurity and lack of leadership the school is now led firmly and effectively and is clear about how it intends to develop areas where there is still room for improvement. The school welcomes pupils from a range of cultures and traditions and enables them to make good progress along with their classmates. Overall the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above national averages at the end of both key stages.
- Pupils' attitudes to work, their relationships with teachers and one another and their behaviour inside and outside classrooms are very good.
- Teachers develop pupils' abilities to be independent learners very well.
- The quality of teaching is predominantly good.
- The support staff in classes are used very well.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Links with the community and partnership with parents are very good.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.

What could be improved

- Provision of hardware and software for information and communication technology is in urgent need of improvement.
- The role of the governors, especially in monitoring work in curricular areas, needs to be strengthened.
- The role of the co-ordinators in subjects such as art, history and geography needs to be further developed.
- The marking policy, newly implemented this term, needs to be consistently applied in all classes and subjects.
- The accommodation needs to be reviewed in order to ensure equal opportunities of access for pupils and parents with mobility difficulties.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Following the previous inspection in 1996 some improvements were made and standards of attainment improved, but much of the identified work in the action plan was not carried out. Following the ill-health and long-term absence of the headteacher items in the action plan were addressed again in the autumn of 1999. The then deputy headteacher worked hard to put in place programmes for the revision of those subjects not covered by the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The heavy workload caused her health to fail although much planned work was completed with considerable but not total success. Following this an acting headteacher was put in place by the local education authority in May 2000 and since then improvement has been rapid. The school now has a well-organised set of aims that are reflected in all schemes of work. There is a good pattern of continuity from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. There is full curricular entitlement to the curriculum over each term for all pupils. The quality of teaching has been improved from a low level to one where nine lessons in ten are judged to be good and of those more than two in ten are very good. There are now good systems for lesson planning, evaluation, assessment and for monitoring work and standards for teachers and pupils. Further work is planned to improve knowledge and skills in those subjects where teachers have identified areas where their knowledge is no more than satisfactory in order to create a more unified approach. The documentation has been improved, including the preparation of the school development plan and its use to monitor the benefits of spending set against standards. The role of the governors and their understanding of their responsibilities, whilst greatly improved, still requires further strengthening. Subject co-ordinators now play a greater part in the management of the school but there is still a need for additional training.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	A	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	B	
Science	B	A	A	A	

Children under five learn well and almost all attain or exceed the required learning goals by the time they are five. The Statutory tests and assessments in 1999 show that standards are well above the nationally expected level in English and science at the end of both key stages and are well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. When compared with similar schools standards in English and science are well above and are above in mathematics. The results in the year 2000 show that pupils attained a similar percentage of expected and higher grades at both key stages than in 1999 but the comparative figures were unavailable at the time of the inspection. The school has maintained standards that are above or well above those found in schools nationally since 1996. Standards in information technology are above those found in most schools at the age of seven and in line with schools nationally at the age of eleven. This is because the computers are not good enough to support pupils' work in Key Stage 2. The school follows the local agreed syllabus for religious education and pupils knowledge at both key stages is like that in schools nationally. Standards in other subjects are in line with national expectations overall and are above the national average in Geography and physical education at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has set achievable targets for the future aimed at raising the standards that are already well above the average. The school does all that it can to maintain the standards that it achieves and all pupils work to the best of their abilities. Standards overall are improving and the school is well set to attain the best possible standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' relationships with one another and with all adults in the school and their development as mature people are very good.
Attendance	This too is very good and exceeds the national average. There is very little authorised or unauthorised absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is predominantly good and the teaching of English mathematics and science and the way in which teachers instil in all pupils the basic facts and skills in literacy and numeracy is also good. All of the teaching seen was at least satisfactory, 90 per cent was at least good, 26 per cent very good and two lessons were judged to be excellent. The best aspects of the successful teaching, which is a great improvement since the last inspection is the thorough planning and the opportunities for assessment that are built into every lesson. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour, presentation and the quantity and quality of work set for pupils. There were no significant weaknesses in teaching observed in the lessons seen during the inspection

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum, particularly the emphasis placed on first hand experience for pupils across the school, is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom and about school is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Those pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress. Provision to support their learning and to celebrate their different cultures and traditions is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development including all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very effectively and provides well for pupils of all ages and abilities.

Following a time when relationships with parents were described at the parents meeting as being at an all time low, relationships with parents are now positive and productive. There has been a time of reform and reflection and during the inspection all parents who expressed a view were pleased with the present position.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the acting headteacher is clear and positive. She is well supported by an additional advisory teacher, the acting deputy headteacher and all of the subject co-ordinators present in school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have accepted their responsibilities and are now working as a team in order to fulfil the recognised duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Since the difficulties early in 2000 the school has evaluated its performance very thoroughly. It recognises areas for further improvement and has the will and ability to meet all the identified challenges.
The strategic use of resources	All of the available resources are used in a very structured and purposeful way for the benefit of pupils.

There is a sufficient number of trained teachers and support staff with a range of experience and qualifications that match the needs of pupils. The temporary staff have skills and attributes that enhance those of the teachers who are part of the establishment. The accommodation has areas that need to be renovated and there is a timetable of work agreed for the priorities and the allocation of funds is matched to needs. Provision for the needs of any disabled pupils and parents is not listed. Whilst not generous, resources are at least adequate and the planned increase of computers will improve the overall provision. Now that the governing body has reviewed its role and addressed all its responsibilities, the weaknesses identified previously have been rectified. There are new governors appointed only this term who are still awaiting training but they are willing to meet all of their new responsibilities. Whilst in the hands of the present personnel, leadership is effective and imaginative. The school now successfully applies the principles of best value in all its work.

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 improved leadership since May 2000. • The well above average standards that their children attain. • The behaviour and good manners fostered by the school. • The approachability of the new acting headteacher and the class teachers. • The well-organised information that is now available about what is happening in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only very small minorities of parents identified any areas for improvement now that they trust the present leadership.

The inspection team agrees with the very positive views of the parents about the new management and leadership of the school and the other positive and important views they expressed. Parents were reluctant to express any criticism as the improvements they had experienced in just a few weeks caused them to want to give the acting headteacher due praise and support as they trusted her to continue the pattern of improvement that she had begun.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. There is no nursery and children start school in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. This is now called the Foundation Stage of education. Almost all of the children have had some experience in local nurseries or in pre-school play groups before starting at the school. Children under five in the reception class work in the six areas of learning recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. Children are now working towards the early learning goals as described by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). On entry there is a spread of attainment but tests show that the majority of children have above average attainment on entry. Teachers take care to provide a suitable range of experiences in all the areas of learning and almost all children are on course to attain the desirable learning objectives within the early learning goals before they are five. Almost all children have good linguistic and numeracy skills and most develop good personal and social skills as they play and work with their classmates. There are suitable activities provided for children to develop skills in creativity such as painting and listening to and creating music. Children develop well physically and enjoy making models with construction toys and demonstrate a range of skills on the computers.

2. At the end of Key Stage 1, when pupils are seven, standards in English, as shown in the national tests in 1999 were well above the national averages in reading and standards in writing were very high. The numbers of pupils attaining higher levels was well above the average nationally in reading and in writing. Standards in reading and writing were well above when compared with similar schools. The results in 2000 were similar to those in 1999 but at the time of the inspection the comparative tables were unavailable. Inspection evidence supports the good results in English. Standards in reading and in speaking and listening are above those found in most schools nationally and are good overall with the standard for many pupils being very good. The pupils are on course to attain very high standards again as they work during the entire year. The inspection evidence indicates that the structured work in matched ability groups is proving to be a positive and successful way forward. For the last four years, overall standards have varied slightly with the different groups, depending on the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The trend over time is that standards have remained well above the national average except in 1998 when the standard in writing slipped to being above the national average.

3. Pupils in classes at Key Stage 2 develop the skills established in the infant department. The results of the tests in 1999 indicate that standards overall in English are well above the average for pupils nationally and well above those for pupils in similar schools. The results in English in 2000 showed a higher percentage of pupils attaining higher levels. This was despite the fact that the class had been taught for part of the year by a supply teacher and that because of the high mobility of pupils only seven of the group tested in Year 6 had been pupils in the school at the end of Year 2. When pupils leave school, when they are eleven, most are already working comfortably at Level 4, the expected level, many at Level 5 a level above national expectations and a few are working towards Level 6 the level expected of pupils after

2 or 3 years in the secondary school. These results are well above expectations for eleven-year-old pupils. Strategies to encourage pupils to develop independence in learning, develop their own ideas, extend work undertaken with the class group and to accept the challenge to attain high standards are being promoted successfully as part of the school's aims. Work in this area is achieving the improvement planned for through the implementation of the school developmental plan. This need to challenge higher ability pupils was identified at the time of the last inspection and teachers' have responded well to this task.

4. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, in the tests in 1999, the numbers of pupils attaining the expected level, Level 2 was very high when compared with the national average. Standards in mathematics were well above those attained in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining above the expected level in the most recent tests in 2000 was similar to those in 1999. Inspection evidence gleaned by lesson observation, scrutiny of books and examination of the results of school based tests indicates that work undertaken in class is setting the great majority of pupils on course to attain levels well above those in most schools nationally although at the time of the inspection they were working above national expectations. Pupils know and can manipulate numbers up to and beyond 100. They can calculate mentally the change one needs from 50p or £1 when undertaking shopping tasks by using multiplication, addition and subtraction quickly and accurately and recording their work clearly and neatly. They understand which process to select and know that repeated addition will help them to check simple multiplication.
5. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of tests in 1999 indicated that standards in mathematics were well above those in most schools nationally and above those in similar schools. The staff were disappointed that the comparative grade had slipped but this reflected the results of one child in a small cohort who achieved a Level 4 when expected to gain a Level 5. The test results in 2000 showed that the percentages of pupils gaining the expected or higher levels were similar to 1999 but the benchmarked scores were not available at the time of the inspection. Nevertheless the standards maintained over the past three years have been well above the national average despite pupils leaving and joining the school as their parents have either completed degrees at the university or moved to new posts. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in classes throughout Key Stage 2 are working at an overall level well above that expected for pupils of the same age nationally. By the end of the key stage standards overall are well above national expectations and for about one quarter of the pupils they are very high.
6. The standards in English and mathematics were already high before the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, these have both been incorporated successfully into the work of the school. Individual pupils are working well towards meeting their own targets and at this stage in the academic year the school is well on course to meet the high targets agreed with the advisers from the local education authority. These targets are ambitious but the school is ready to accept the challenge in its aim for excellence.
7. Standards in science as indicated by teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 and 2000 are very high and are well above the national average expected at Level 2 and at Level 3. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers are concentrating on work to improve the pupils' experiences and that opportunities for experimentation and investigation in the classroom and in the environment are

proving to be beneficial in raising the already high standards still further. Pupils know about living things and life processes and they develop their skills in the school gardens where they conduct experiments about the environment. Work to investigate the properties of materials has been linked very successfully with studies in history and in designing and making of wind machines. Pupils question all things presented as facts and apply established knowledge to new learning in experiments. They set out questions and answer them in their written work in their books. All practical investigational activities observed during the inspection were thorough and stimulating.

8. The test results in science in 1999 showed that standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above the national average, with the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 at 90 per cent and that 67 per cent attained the higher level, Level 5. Overall this was well above the national average. In the tests in the year 2000 90 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 and 50 per cent reached Level 5. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have good recall of work undertaken previously and are able to explain about solids, gases and liquids and explain how gases and liquids can change shape to fit any containers. They have good knowledge and understanding of how light bends when it passes through prisms and the effect of different coloured filters on light. Pupils create patterns using coloured acetates and experiment to discover the colours from which white light is made. They link their work in electricity with practical work in design and technology as when they make torches that are useful and practical.
9. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology are above those found in most schools nationally and are in line overall at the end of Key Stage 2 because the old machines do not support the work that the older pupils are required to do. However, because many pupils have access to personal computers at home, for these pupils attainment is invariably above the expected level. Despite the tendency of the old computers to crash pupils readily use their skills in information technology to support other subjects across the curriculum. Those pupils who are able to use personal computers at home are able to practise work done in school at other times. All pupils are able to access menus and load and retrieve their personal work from stored files or from work saved on disks. Pupils can access data stored from other enquiries, can manipulate spreadsheets and import pictures. The use of remote controlled robots around the classrooms and on the screen enables pupils to develop and display their understanding of control technology. All pupils at both key stages make good progress towards the agreed targets in their personal development files in a purposeful way.
10. Pupils' attainment in religious education at the end of both key stages is similar to that found in most schools nationally and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The work planned in religious education is thorough and well organised and supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development. It is planned to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and incorporates the suggestions within the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) recommendations. An effective programme of work for personal, social and health education complements this part of the curriculum very well.

11. The amount, quality and range of work in all other subjects are frequently better than that described at the time of the previous report. Attainment levels in history at Key Stage 1 and history, geography and physical education at Key Stage 2 are above those found in most schools nationally. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment overall in design and technology, art, music, physical education and geography is in line with national requirements as are attainment levels in design and technology, music and art at Key Stage 2. Attainments by some pupils in instrumental work in music are above the national average. In all subjects pupils benefit from the shared expertise of the teaching and support staff who maintain a full rounded curriculum alongside the new national initiatives in literacy and numeracy.
12. Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs, average, above average pupils and those learning English as an additional language learn very effectively. They are supported well and make good progress. In those lessons where the teaching is especially good or where earlier work has prepared pupils very well then, when new work is offered very good progress is made. During the inspection no difference was observed overall in the learning, attainment or progress of boys and girls.
13. Teachers place great demands on themselves and on all pupils. Since the changes in the organisation of classes the programmes of work have all been reviewed and learning in all classes is purposeful and relevant to the needs of groups and individuals. Despite the difficulties experienced by the school in the past year the needs of the pupils have been safeguarded by the staff and the standards and the will to provide effectively for learning and encourage progress have been maintained. Overall the standards of literacy and numeracy are well above the national average. In turn these standards are now having a positive impact on all the work of the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are strengths of the school. The pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic and interested in their lessons. During question and answer sessions they concentrate for long periods of time and are eager to contribute. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 gymnastics lesson where the pupils were eager to learn and clearly enjoyed their lesson. The pupils settle quickly to their tasks. During a Year 5/6 religious education lesson, where pupils were discussing the need for rules they began to work swiftly and made many relevant and interesting suggestions. The pupils clearly enjoy the extra-curricular activities on offer at the school such as the sporting opportunities, music, chess and gardening club, which many of the pupils attend.
15. Behaviour in the classrooms, in assemblies and around the school is very good. The school has clear behaviour guidelines, which are consistently applied by the staff and are successful in promoting positive behaviour. The anti-bullying policy has been renewed this year and the behaviour policy is at present under review. Good examples of positive behaviour were seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson and when pupils were accompanied on educational visits to a local supermarket and the swimming pool. At breaks and lunchtimes the pupils move around the school in a calm but cheerful manner and interact sociably with supervising staff and their

friends. During the last reporting year there have been no exclusions from the school and no bullying, racism or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. The pupils respect the behaviour guidelines and the impact their actions have on others. In the reception class children were seen working together in pairs and groups and demonstrating consideration for each other. All the pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and in all situations they act according to the agreed rules.

16. The personal development of the pupils and relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils listen to what others have to say and help each other. They work together well in pairs and groups, co-operate and share resources. The very good relationships between the pupils themselves and between the pupils and staff make a positive impact on the warm caring atmosphere for work where everyone's feelings are valued. Evidence of this was seen in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson discussing play scripts and a numeracy lesson at Key Stage 1 when pupils learned about two-dimensional shapes. The pupils respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5/6 religious education lesson where pupils discussed rules without fear or embarrassment. The pupils are trustworthy and eager to take responsibility. Pupils from Year 6 act as monitors at assembly, in cloakrooms and in the library. There is a buddy scheme in operation whereby pupils from Year 6 are introduced to a child in the reception class to encourage friendship and support the newcomer as they settle into the school routines. A new initiative at the school is the School Council. Pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 have been elected to the Council to put forward the views of the pupils and organise fund-raising events. During the inspection a meeting of the Council was attended and discussions were held regarding a pupil suggestion box and a recycling scheme. These responsibilities have a positive impact on the pupils' personal development.
17. Attendance throughout the school is very good which makes a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. For the last reporting year the attendance rate was 96 per cent, which is well above the national average. Unauthorised absence was broadly in line with national figures. However, not all pupils are punctual for school in the morning. Registration is undertaken efficiently and meets statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall picture of teaching is good. Teaching was observed in 42 lessons or parts of lessons during the inspection. In all of the lessons seen the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In the lessons observed 26 per cent were judged to be very good, 59 per cent were good and two lessons, (5 per cent) were judged to be excellent. Lessons at the Foundation Stage for children under five were predominantly good. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when 22 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in staffing. The headteacher was absent for many months with a long-term illness and has now retired and the deputy headteacher has moved to another post. At the present time there is a temporary acting headteacher, appointed by the local education authority in May 2000 until the situation with the permanent management staff could be resolved. Many of the teaching staff have joined the school since the previous inspection. During the inspection, one teacher, on a temporary contract, was replacing a member of staff who has been absent for several months. There is another

experienced teacher, working alongside the establishment staff, who has been seconded to the school for one term to support staff in curriculum planning pending the appointment of a new headteacher.

19. The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully and this has had a beneficial impact on the overall quality of teaching. The training in planning and evaluating work undertaken in the preparation for the new initiatives has had a positive impact on the planning and evaluation processes in other subjects, particularly in design and technology, the humanities and science. Very few weaknesses in teaching remain although there were a few instances where teachers were over directive and inhibited independent learning. This was seen in some classes on the first day of the inspection when the quality of teaching was then judged to be only satisfactory.
20. Teachers' secure subject knowledge forms the firm foundation for the successful impact of teaching on pupils' learning. All teachers have a good understanding of literacy and numeracy and as a result they are able to help pupils to develop these skills effectively. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well structured in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant national strategies. Following the introductory session, pupils are taught in ability groups to enable work to be matched to their individual needs. Teachers select suitable and varied methods to teach whole classes and groups in an interesting and challenging way. At both key stages basic skills are taught well. Teachers select resources that are well matched to the requirements of the planned work to support pupils' learning. This was seen to good effect in a lesson for pupils in Year 1 in design and technology, where the teacher used poems and pictures to inspire pupils to describe how the wind would lift their kites and spin the windmills that they were making. During this lesson the teacher enabled pupils to use imagery well to develop reflective ideas about the power and sounds of the wind. The resultant work and imaginative kites produced in this lesson was exciting as pupils discussed their work and tried to produce the best kite or windmill that they could in order to outdo their neighbours in both the style and quality of the finished product. The teacher paused in the planned lesson to permit pupils to describe a kite festival, held locally that many had attended and competed in with their parents. Some of the pupils had seen large impressive kites that had performed what one child described as 'aerial acrobatics'. This flexibility of approach enabled the teacher to extend pupils' vocabulary very successfully by listening to their ideas and building on their prior experiences.
21. Across the school, in the great majority of lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge, personal enthusiasm and increasingly high expectations are challenging pupils to learn well and develop their skills across a range of subjects especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school teachers are sure of the purpose of all planned activities and explain them well to their pupils. In all the lessons observed the teachers' knowledge, planning, control, organisation and management of pupils were good. Teachers' expectations were high in these lessons and work was suitably challenging for pupils of all abilities. In some lessons at the Foundation Stage, in design and technology and physical education at Key Stage 1, and in physical education, geography and science at Key Stage 2 the teachers have very high expectations. In these lessons pupils accept the challenge and attain standards that are at least in line with national expectations and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above the national average at this time in the term. Because of the good teaching pupils' are on course

to reach standards in these subjects that will be well above the national average by the end of this academic year.

22. Teachers in classes across the school make clear in lessons exactly what they expect pupils to learn. In a lesson in Year 4/5, for example, the objectives for the lesson were discussed with pupils and displayed on the board. During the lesson the teacher asked pupils to remember the objectives and together they read them again and at the end they checked whether they had all been accomplished. This focused pupils' thinking and attention on what they were doing and why. This process was seen in other classes at both key stages during the inspection. Pupils benefited from reflecting on the purpose of the lesson and enabled them to be sure of what they had learned and how it fitted into the pattern of their work in other lessons.
23. This planning for shared learning objectives is a part of the best lesson preparation for all teachers. Where colleagues plan together it is an important feature to make effective provision for equality of access for all pupils. The working together in preparation for teaching of new and familiar work is essential in the classes where there are mixed age groups and it is done well. Planning is particularly effective in English, mathematics and science but is also seen in all other subjects, where it is becoming increasingly thorough. The collaboration between teachers extends to good use of resources in lessons and they make good use of support staff and the environment. Teachers have developed and have begun to implement good procedures for assessing the gains in progress that pupils make. The information gathered is used on a day-to-day basis to help them to organise and develop the next stage of the learning programme. All written work is marked and the newly introduced scheme for marking is proving to be a useful way of monitoring work and assessing pupils' progress. Teachers are not always consistent in its use and some do not insist on corrections being completed. The school is alert to the need to evaluate its use and to apply the same procedures to marking all written work in all classes and in all subjects.
24. The lack of challenge for the most able was identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection. This weakness has been addressed very thoroughly and throughout the school, teachers provide pupils with suitably challenging work. This was observed in classes towards the end of Key Stage 1 where pupils capable of attaining levels above the expected Level 2 are given very taxing work and concentrated teacher attention and again in all classes at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 5, working alongside very capable pupils in Year 6 were provided with really challenging work in mathematics, which stretched pupils of all attainments. In mathematics and geography in Year 5/ 6 pupils working on a project linked with their residential visit to Wales the previous week were working at a level well beyond that expected for pupils at the age of 11. Teachers are successful in meeting the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers insist that pupils of all abilities work hard at tasks that extend their learning. Increasingly high expectations are having a strong impact on pupils' learning in lessons at both key stages. Teachers take care to plan work that challenges and enthuses both boys and girls and in the lessons seen there was no difference observed in their rates of progress overall.

25. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The majority of pupils on the special needs register have difficulties in literacy although one or two have difficulties in behaviour and the development of their social skills. Where pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups for literacy and numeracy the rate in which they learn the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding matches that of the rest of the class because they have additional adult support. Where the teacher plans activities that refer to specific pupils' difficulties and targets, as described in the individual education plans and takes into account the recommended programmes, the pupils make good progress. Sometimes the written targets in the individual education plans lack precision but in all cases the additional notes in the teachers' record books break the targets into achievable objectives and the work prepared matches the pupils' needs very well. The impact of support for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is positive. The support staff have good relationships with the pupils and use this to encourage and guide them. Although not part of the Code of Practice the school includes talented and gifted children its own register of special educational needs and provides carefully and sensitively for their academic and social needs.
26. Those pupils learning English as an additional language are supported well in class and through the additional help provided by the Ethnic Minorities support staff. The assessment of pupils' individual needs is well organised and the suggestions for alternative or additional work to extend pupils use of English is helpful and is used effectively. Although the number of such pupils is larger than that found in many small primary schools almost all of these pupils have at least one parent at home who speaks English confidently and they make progress at the same rate as their classmates. Many of the identified pupils are bilingual or multilingual and they learn well through the English language.
27. The pattern of setting homework has been revised over the past six months and is working well. Homework is set on each Wednesday and is recorded in pupils' homework diaries. It is expected to be completed by the following Monday. Work completed is marked if it is written work or else it is used in lessons at the start of the next week if it is a finding out task or a research activity. At the Foundation Stage and in classes at Key Stage 1 pupils also learn words and number bonds. Some of the homework is practical and might involve parents and siblings measuring footprints and counting hand spans. All pupils are encouraged to take home reading and library books and parents and teachers comment on the quality and quantity of reading covered. Pupils in classes 4/5 and 5/6 increasingly maintain their own reading diaries and comment on how they liked the book or which characters most appealed to them. Some parents and all teachers check these diaries each week. This new pattern of setting homework works well and the initiative is seen by parents and teachers to be a useful link between home and school.

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

28. The school provides a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum that promotes the progress of pupils of all ages and abilities well and all statutory regulations are being met. The school provides equal access to the curriculum for all pupils, with a minor exception in respect of instrumental music when, for some older pupils, National Curriculum music teaching in class overlaps orchestral rehearsal. This is

minimised by varying the timetable so that no pupil misses the work in class on a regular basis. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies to the benefit of all pupils. Circle time, when pupils sit quietly and listen to ideas from their friends about special times, themes or feelings, has also been introduced successfully. The provision for pupils under five is good and the curriculum provides experiences that are firmly based on the nationally identified Early Learning Goals. The school has successfully maintained all other curriculum subjects and religious education as high quality learning experiences. However, to provide fully for all pupils, activities are devised in other subjects to support learning in art and design and technology by effective cross-curricular links. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. There are some weaknesses as yet in the provision for information and communication technology. The school is waiting for the delivery and installation of new hardware and software to rectify this. Carefully chosen topics enable the school to teach the curriculum in a way that makes good use of the time available. Good use of assessment and record keeping by all teachers enables pupils to build on previous learning. Detailed subject documentation, using the latest national guidance, is being used, although, for some of the foundation subjects, this is still being adapted to best meet the needs of the pupils. Long- and medium-term planning is good and is successfully providing effectively for continuity and progression. Teachers' short-term planning draws on the more detailed documents and is reviewed daily as teachers evaluate the pupils' learning after every lesson on a day-to-day basis. This is a considerable improvement since the previous report when curricular provision was a key issue.

29. The school's curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and supports the learning targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. These plans, although detailed and containing strategies for the tasks set, are not always sufficiently precise and do not clearly state the success criteria to be used. The manner in which teachers use the plans to provide matched work and break down the targets into achievable and measurable steps makes the work in class good. The nationally agreed Code of Practice is followed and parents are effectively involved in their children's learning. The school is aware of the need for equality of access of all pupils to the full curriculum. Good efforts are made to enable this, especially for pupils with special educational needs.
30. The school is also aware of the needs of pupils capable of higher attainment and is making considerable efforts to match work and to set more taxing and challenging work for them. As a result, included in a separate section in the register of special educational need are pupils who are very able speakers. The welfare assistants regularly liaise with the class teachers and their additional support enhances the learning of these pupils. The school provides a variety of resources to support these pupils including the Toe by Toe reading programme, which takes place on a daily basis for 10 minutes per day and is used by the parents. The school has a good range of interesting books specially selected to support pupils for whom English is an additional language.
31. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school bases teaching on the latest national guidance. Sex and drugs education is taught through the science and personal and social education provision in line with the agreed school policy. Healthy eating is promoted through the science curriculum. Work about sensible choices and healthy eating by pupils in Year 2 was prominently displayed above the kitchen hatch. Using a range of activities such as passing a

tambourine silently round a circle and miming activities for others to guess, children in the reception class learn to participate as part of a group, maintain concentration and begin to form positive relations with other pupils. Visits, particularly the Year 6 residential visit to a local authority centre in Wales, make a significant contribution to personal and social education. As a way of promoting this area of the curriculum, visitors with different gifts and experiences are welcomed into school to talk with pupils. Recently, for example, a blind person came to share with pupils the difficulties and challenges of being blind and of the modified equipment that helped them to cope in a sighted world.

32. Extra-curricular opportunities are very good and benefit pupils significantly. There is a rolling programme of activities. This half term there are recorder groups for pupils at both key stages and football, gardening and French clubs for pupils at Key Stage 2. The school also participates in sporting events with other schools. The school has, in the past eighteen months, won the football league for small schools, the football six-a-side competition and the small schools' swimming trophy. Equal opportunities are a strong feature of these efforts to extend the experiences of all pupils, and boys and girls are able to share in all of the clubs and activities. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn musical instruments. Lessons to develop pupils' skills in playing woodwind, brass and stringed instruments are available from peripatetic teachers. Parents are required to pay for these additional facilities in line with the local education authority policy. Pupils are eager to participate in performances in school and at music festivals. Learning opportunities are extended through the school's homework policy across all key stages.
33. The school very successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a range of activities that reflect the values expressed in the school's aims. This is a significant improvement since the previous report.
34. Collective worship was not inspected as part of this inspection. However, evidence from visits to assemblies, from lesson observations and from teachers' planning indicates that very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development. Art, literature and music make good contributions to pupils' spiritual development. Examples of awe and wonder were observed during a Year 5/Year 6 visit to a local supermarket bakery when the baker was explaining how all the machinery had to be stripped down and cleaned at the end of each day. In a lesson in Year 3 when the teacher was reading the 'Boy Who Sold His Shadow', pupils' reactions were of amazement and they expressed their ideas with great sensitivity. Some of the very well presented displays were both stimulating and reflective and caused pupils and visitors to stop and think.
35. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils know right from wrong. From their first days in school they learn to take turns and to be fair in their dealings with others. The school rules are clear and simple. Teachers reinforce good behaviour by praise and encouragement, stars for good behaviour in class and by awarding Special Awards Certificates in Assembly on Fridays. Stories in Assembly and discussion in Circle Time and Personal and Social Education promote moral development. There is also a School Behaviour Policy with detailed sanctions for poor behaviour and a Home-School Agreement that help to underpin the promotion of moral values.

36. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. It is very effectively promoted through regular opportunities to work alone and in small and larger groups. Pupils relate very well to one another and move purposefully around the school with good self-discipline. Social development is promoted through educational visits in connection with their topic work, for example, to various museums, Lichfield Cathedral and science workshops at a local college. Pupils have the opportunity to take responsibilities that promote social development. In all classes pupils have responsibilities allocated to them. Pupils in classes at Key Stage 2 are chosen to act as monitors for cloakrooms, the playground and for setting up the hall for collective worship. In addition pupils from Year 6 are linked to a designated child in the reception class as part of a 'Buddy' system to support the smaller children in their first weeks in school. Parents report that these friendships often last well beyond pupils' time at the primary school. There is a newly formed School Council for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. In Year 6, groups of pupils, supported by parents, use information and communication technology to produce a newspaper for parents and the rest of the school. Members of the Church and village communities are invited into school to work on shared initiatives, a recent example in the past year being a conservation issue in connection a very old yew tree in the centre of the village.
37. The positive promotion of pupils' awareness of other cultures is very good. The school welcomes pupils from several cultures. A 'Welcome' display in the entrance hall includes greetings in Cantonese, Arabic, Farsi, French and German set around a verse beginning 'Ev'ry religion, ev'ry race, We will welcome every face ...' Pupils are encouraged to talk about their own culture and to celebrate religious festivals. Pupils learn about the religious beliefs and traditions of other people. Members of different religions are invited to share in worship in assemblies. Parents help in cookery sessions where traditional food from other cultures is a popular part of learning. Curriculum areas such as literature, mathematics, music, art, history and geography promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures. Pupils have also participated in a Taiko Drumming Workshop.
38. The school has established good links with the local community that enhance the curricular opportunities. Mothers with babies and toddlers, an animal man, a blind person, the school nurse and a visiting theatre company are some of the recent visitors and there is to be an 'Invaders Workshop' later this term. Parents are actively involved in the 'Toe to Toe' reading programme. Visits to museums, Victorian exhibitions, a theatre, the university and a local college, 'Story Wonderland' and the seashore are among a range of opportunities provided for pupils to promote their learning. There are links with industry through the Staffordshire Business Partnership.
39. The school has strong links with Keele University and Newcastle College that include access to facilities and activities that enhance curricular provision. There are also good links with Manchester Metropolitan University and students following courses in initial teacher training undertake teaching practices in the school. The school also has strong links with the school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Key Stage 2. Liaison is very good. Advice is sought from teachers at the High School on how to provide suitable activities for the very able who may be capable of achieving Level 6 in core subjects by the end of Key Stage 2. The headteacher from the High School has taught Year 6 pupils as part of the familiarisation process for pupils before they

transfer at age eleven. Pupils also visit the High School several times during their final year and have the opportunity to participate in a summer school. Links such as these familiarise pupils with the staff and the school and prepare pupils for the next stage of learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS ?

40. The school's procedures for child protection and for providing for the pupils' welfare are good. This confirms the views of the parents, who are confident that the pupils are well cared for. The school has adopted the local education authority child protection policy and the acting headteacher is the named member of staff responsible. All members of staff are aware of procedures and annual training is held. The school has a satisfactory health and safety policy in place, which is consistently adhered to and is at present being reviewed. All health and safety issues from the previous inspection have been addressed but the school only has one staff toilet. The school carries out a termly fire drill and all fire precautions and equipment checks are in place. Electrical equipment is inspected annually and whole-school risk assessment has been carried out. The school continually reminds pupils of safety issues, as was seen in a Year 2 design and technology lesson where pupils used scissors carefully. The pupils are well supervised by ancillary staff and teachers at breaks and lunchtimes. The school crossing patrol assistant also provides good support by teaching the Reception children road safety procedures. There are two trained first aiders in school, who together provide effective support for dealing with illness and accidents. First aid boxes are well stocked and distributed centrally in the hall and library. The effective procedures for the care of pupils on school visits include teachers having well equipped first aid resources with them.
41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Attendance is monitored daily by class teachers and every fortnight by the acting headteacher. The secretary monitors pupils who are late for school. The school has recently been allocated the services of a home/school liaison officer who visits the school every half term and who can be contacted should problems arise. At present there are no formal initiatives in place to improve attendance as it has never been seen to be a problem.
42. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Effective behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place and a graduated scheme of sanctions is appropriately used. Positive behaviour is promoted with award assemblies, stars, stickers and special awards. A recent initiative this term is the award of house points. Should challenging or oppressive behaviour ever occur this is dealt with swiftly and fairly, is effectively recorded by the acting headteacher and parents are informed.
43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. These procedures are underpinned by the warm, caring ethos of the school and the use of circle time. The staff know their pupils well and pupils' files and homework diaries are frequently monitored. Links with outside agencies and the school nurse are maintained. The good personal, social and health education programme provides the pupils with good support and enhances the academic and personal development of the pupils.

44. Pupils of all abilities are assessed and monitored very well by the teachers to measure their attainment and record their progress. There is careful analysis of the results of assessment and individual records and the teachers and the management team make good use of them to plan future work and make any improvements to the curriculum that they find to be necessary. Records are comprehensive, including those of individuals and groups. The monitoring by gender and age is an important part of the process each half term. The annual report to parents is detailed and informative and makes provision for parents and pupils to add their comments.
45. Teaching in ability groups within year bands is organised to match the needs of individual pupils and matched ability groups so that all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Individual targets are regularly reviewed and accurate records are maintained. The school's policies on all aspects of behaviour, including bullying, are well balanced but rarely have to be applied due to the very good levels of behaviour seen both in and out of the classroom. Lunchtime supervision is good and the supervisors and other non-teaching staff are valued as an essential part of school life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS ?

46. The overall quality of the school's partnership with parents is very good and is a strength of the school. Parents have expressed confidence in the present management of the school and have stated that their children are eager and happy to come to school. Their earlier concerns when the leadership of the school was less positive have been totally allayed by the impact of the present acting headteacher. The parents of pupils in Year 6 appreciate the topic information and homework provided for their children. Parents have responded positively to the new initiatives from the school during the past six months to promote positive relationships and co-operation.
47. The school maintains very good links with parents. The parents' notice board in the reception area keeps parents well informed and reflects the multicultural aspect of the school's population. A welcome to parents is conveyed in Arabic, Cantonese, English and Farsi. The school has received no requests for documentation to be translated, as at least one parent of each child in school is bilingual. Over fifty per cent of the Home/School Agreements have been signed and returned by parents. The acting headteacher and all the staff are accessible to parents. Assemblies, parents' evenings and concerts are well attended and good use is made of the parents' suggestion box in the reception area. Each month the school holds an 'open house' and many parents use this opportunity to look around the school, talk to staff and view the work on display. Each class also has a parent representative to provide a valuable link with parents and the class teacher.
48. The impact of parental involvement within the school is very good. The Parent Teacher Association provides good support by organising fund-raising and social events. During the last year £1000 was raised to provide playground equipment and to pay for the cycling proficiency provision. A group of volunteers actively supports activities in the classrooms such as cooking and reading and parents and friends of the school assist on educational visits. During the inspection parents were observed supporting the work of a groups of children in classes throughout the school. Parents also supported pupils on visits to the toy museum and the supermarket bakery.

49. The quality of information for parents is very good. Frequent letters and termly newsletters are sent home to keep parents fully informed of school events and achievements. The newsletter also provides relevant curriculum information. The governors' report to parents and the school brochure provide interesting and informative details about the work of the school. The school is aware that the governors' report to parents lacks information regarding the provision for disabled pupils but has begun to implement the required changes for the next issue. The parents have the opportunity to consult staff formally each term to discuss their child's progress. The pupils' progress reports are satisfactory and contain all statutory information but pupils' targets for improvement need to be more specific. The school has acknowledged the need to improve targets and teachers are addressing the issue.
50. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is very good. The parent volunteers in school and on educational visits provide good support. At home, parents support research tasks, topic work and assist many of the pupils who choose to complete holiday diaries. All parents have been informed about homework guidelines and the school's expectation regarding homework and there has been a positive response from most parents. The homework diaries are a valuable link between school and home and most parents use these well to communicate with class teachers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership and management of the school are good. Although the acting headteacher has been in post for a very short time, she has already developed several aspects within the school, which have helped to improve standards of behaviour and raise the morale of teachers and pupils. For example, she has reviewed and developed the way the school analyses pupils' performance in tests in order to set targets for individual pupils. It is now possible to track each individual's progress to check that every child is achieving at the highest possible level of attainment across the curriculum. Teachers had been working to this end as individuals in isolation but the acting headteacher has formed them into a co-operative team so that shared ideas feed through and everyone's effort is developed to its full potential. In this initiative she has been well supported by the acting deputy headteacher and the additional supernumerary teacher appointed to the school for the autumn term. Together they have developed a new management structure where subject co-ordinators are enabled to be effective across the school in a practical and positive way. All staff meetings now have a clear purpose and result in action that can be seen to be having effect. In just over one term the acting headteacher has created an effective senior management team who, together with all the teaching and support staff and the governors, now gives clear direction to the work of the school. Some of this success has been built on the efforts of the previous deputy headteacher who began the process of review and renewal in 1999. The managers of the school are all committed to consolidating the changes that have created a sense of common purpose and order, restored a sense of community and have maintained the existing good standards. Given a period of stability the school and its leaders are now well placed to succeed.

52. Governors and staff have worked together to restore a shared commitment to the school's aims and values that were revised successfully after the previous inspection and now direct the work of the school effectively. These aims are based on providing a safe, happy and caring environment in which each child can develop to its full potential. The aims emphasise personal development such as independent learning, self-discipline, self-worth and independent thinking. The aims are reflected in all of the new schemes of work and are easily understood, relevant and achievable. Pupils now have a sense of shared responsibility for managing their own learning. All pupils are sensitively encouraged to reflect on these aims and set their own targets. A school council has been established in the last term, regular meetings are held where pupils make a contribution to the agenda. Council members enjoy the responsibility and opportunity to voice the views of their friends and classmates.
53. Some of the governors are experienced but have been pleased to welcome new members since the start of the autumn term. Both new and longer serving governors are committed to undertaking relevant training opportunities to enable them to give good service to the school. Greater involvement in school life and increased knowledge of the school curriculum is one target that governors have set for themselves since the spring term in 2000. Around that time it became apparent that all was not well in areas of management and help was sought from the local education authority. Problems arose through the absence caused by ill health of the then headteacher, and the stress and illness of other senior teachers.
54. The established governors have a very good understanding of the community within which the school is set. They use this understanding effectively to support the work of the school. The governors actively seek support from the neighbouring university, the community and from industry. This endeavour has been successful in fostering strong links and gaining support for areas of the curriculum.
55. Governors are now meeting their statutory requirements, including the provision of a daily act of worship. There are designated governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. The governors who are linked to numeracy and literacy have been appointed only in the last few weeks and are ready to undertake training within the whole governing body and to visit classrooms. There are committees for the curriculum and policies, staffing, finance and premises but until 1999 they were limited in their activities by the absence of key members of management staff. As a result of the most recent changes, and the appointment of a new chair of the governing body, all governors have been very active during the past six months. The governors receive regular reports from the headteacher whose professional advice informs their decision making. Immediately following the last inspection and since autumn 1999 they have monitored the work of the school to ensure that all of the key issues identified in the last inspection report have been addressed. Because of the work of the former deputy headteacher and the present acting headteacher all of the identified areas have now been addressed with considerable but not yet total success. Some of the new or revised schemes of work are at present being evaluated in classes and as yet not all of them have been ratified by the governors. The present governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and has had to redress identified weaknesses thoroughly and purposefully in the past year. They have accurately identified areas that still need to be developed and have a long-term strategic development plan in place in order to achieve their objectives. Governors and members of the senior management team construct the school development plan together. It is detailed, and set within a realistic time scale.

Monitoring and evaluation strategies of how the school plans to meet the established targets are included, and it is now clear how these will be managed assuming the present management structure remains the same. The acting headteacher has been formally appointed to the post since the inspection and the school is well prepared to continue to make good progress.

56. Every subject co-ordinator has clear action plans for their own curriculum area, which are included in the school development plan. Some subjects are being managed by the acting headteacher until the staffing position is more permanent but action plans are in place for every subject. The school is aware of the need to extend the role of co-ordinator more fully as and when new permanent staff are appointed.
57. All establishment teachers, except the newly qualified teacher, have responsibility for managing at least one curriculum area. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have worked hard with colleagues to implement successfully the literacy and numeracy strategies. They have provided effective leadership, bringing a consistent approach to teaching. With the acting headteacher and the supernumerary teacher they monitor the quality of teaching formally and give useful feedback to colleagues. They have demonstrated good teaching to colleagues, and arranged for teachers to be monitored and supported. As a result, standards have been maintained and continue to be raised and the teaching of literacy and numeracy has become even more effective. The management element of other co-ordinator roles is less well developed. As national initiatives have taken priority and through the long-term illness of colleagues and long periods where supply staff have required support they have had less time to monitor and evaluate their subjects across the school. As a small staff they have all had relevant training that equips them to extend the work done in English, mathematics and science to other subjects in line with priorities listed in the school development plan. The role of the governors in monitoring the provision for the full curriculum is now being developed. They have begun to visit classrooms, especially but not only to observe lessons in mathematics and literacy. The acting headteacher and all subject co-ordinators now report to governors about curriculum matters at formal meetings. All staff have welcomed opportunities to review their professional needs and share their expertise in interviews with the acting headteacher and training has been provided either in school or on courses to address areas that need to be strengthened. This has had a positive impact on the professional development, on the morale of teachers and on their effectiveness in their part of the management of the school. Governors have set new realistic targets and measure their success against criteria set out in the school development plan. Procedures are now in place for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school and the curriculum and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection and on where the school was just a year ago.
58. There are sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to deliver the National Curriculum and religious education. Effective systems are in place to support new members of staff with members of senior staff acting as mentor. Recent appointments have begun to redress the balance of mostly long serving staff to include younger members of the profession. At the time of the inspection one member of staff in Key Stage 2 was on long term sick leave. This absence created tremendous problems over the past year as a succession of supply teachers covered for the absence month by month. All members of staff now work well as a team. This was particularly evident at the end of each day when colleagues reviewed lessons

together and made plans for the next step in the intended work. The subject co-ordinators work well with teachers at both key stages. One co-ordinator said how pleased she was that she now had a clearly defined role and not just a title. The entire staff is committed to further training to extend their personal skills in order to maintain and raise standards for all pupils.

59. The number of well-trained support staff to work alongside teachers in the classroom is satisfactory. The support staff are used very effectively and they work well alongside the teachers to meet the needs of all pupils. The welfare assistant works effectively in the Foundation Stage, alongside the teacher, as a very effective support for pupils.
60. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. Clear procedures are in place to meet the identified training needs of staff. Staff evaluate courses attended and effectively share relevant information with colleagues. Findings from the last inspection indicated a lack of expertise in subject management. This has been addressed but needs additional training now that the composition of the staff and areas of responsibility have changed. Numeracy training has effectively addressed any limitations in mathematics through thorough training and good support from the co-ordinator and the local education authority's adviser.
61. The school site has some attractive features with adequate grounds for physical education. However, the hard-surface play area is very restrictive. It is very crowded when all of the children are playing together. There is no separate play area for the younger children. Large apparatus for climbing and balancing are not available except in the hall but parents readily lend larger wheeled vehicles for projects such as safety awareness about the Highway Code. There is an attractive plot that is used for gardening activities. The small hall has to be used for collective worship, physical education and dining. There are two temporary classrooms on the site and many sheds that are used to store equipment to support the curriculum, as storage space is not provided in classrooms in the main building. There is no access for wheelchairs to one of the temporary buildings and this detracts from equality of opportunity for parents or pupils with physical disabilities. The governors are seeking ways of improving the toilet facilities available for staff and visitors in order to meet modern building regulations. Work to renew the roof and to replace those windows that have rotting frames is in hand and when this is completed a painting programme is planned for the aspect of the school that visitors see first.
61. Resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory but many are far from new, and although they have been cared for well some will soon need to be upgraded to meet the demands of the Numeracy Strategy and to extend pupils' opportunities in information and communication technology. Some are already on order and, as part of the school development plans, resources in all curriculum areas now have funds allocated to enable replenishment in the near future. Additional computers, software for computers, bright new mathematics equipment and additional musical instruments from other than western traditions are all listed for renewal.
62. Financial planning is good. The governors retain the services of a local educational financial officer, and advice and support are readily available. The governors have worked diligently to turn a deficit budget into a small surplus and this is earmarked to maintain staffing in the face of falling rolls caused by the mobility of pupils whose parents attend or work at the university. All of the developments highlighted on the

school plan are carefully costed, and in turn these influence how the annual budget is set. Co-ordinators plan for their own subjects and they bid for additional funding from the school budget. All spending is monitored regularly by the efficient school administrator and information is regularly presented to the governors by the acting headteacher who now always relates the effect of agreed spending on the measured standards. The finance committee and the buildings committee review the services, which the school buys annually, such as grounds maintenance and cleaning services. They have reviewed the effect of all spending on personnel, resources and buildings and have made changes in the use and deployment of staff in order to secure the best value for money. Funding for special educational needs is used sensibly. It is spent on additional support staff and on special teaching and learning resources.

63. The day-to-day management of the school runs smoothly, thanks to the efficiency of the administration staff. The use of computerised accounts to monitor the budget and monthly budget information from the financial officer is carefully checked. All the recommendations in the latest auditor's report have been acted upon. School fund accounts are audited annually and are formally presented to the governing body.
64. The pupils' level of attainment on entry is above that found for children of the same age nationally. The teaching, training and progress at the Foundation Stage in the reception class are good. The standards attained at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2, where last year only seven pupils taking the tests had been in the school for their infant education, are either above or in most instances well above the national averages. All pupils have very good attitudes to work, above average attendance, very good behaviour and relationships with one another and with adults and the quality of teaching is predominantly good. Setting all these factors against the average unit costs per pupil, despite the difficulties faced in the past year the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to maintain and improve the existing standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- establish the planned provision for hardware and software for information and communication technology for pupils of all ages and abilities across the school as a matter of urgency;

Paragraph 9

- develop the role of the established and new governors by a shared process of structured training especially in support for all areas of the curriculum;

Paragraphs 49, 53, 55, 57

- extend the developing role of subject co-ordinator to cover all curriculum subjects by a programme of training and enable each one to monitor and support colleagues by working with them in their classrooms especially but not only in art, history and geography;

Paragraphs 56, 57, 58

- review the use of the new marking policy to ensure that it is used thoroughly and consistently in all classes and in all subjects.

Paragraphs 23, 94, 105, 114

Other minor weaknesses that the governors may wish to address are related to improvements in the accommodation.

The governors and headteacher should liaise with the relevant authorities to improve aspects of the accommodation in order to:

- a) fully meet health and safety regulations regarding toilet facilities;
- b) enable equality of access for pupils and parents with mobility difficulties.

Paragraphs 40, 61

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	26	59	10	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	139
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	19

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	16	11	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	16
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	25	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	100	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	16
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	25	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	100	100
	National	82	86	87

Unvalidated results for the year 2000 improve on the results for 1999

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	10	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90	90	90
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	7	8	7
	Total	17	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81	90	86
	National	68	69	75

Unvalidated percentage results for 2000 are broadly similar to the results in 1999 and are better in English and science

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	14
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	102
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	307,624
Total expenditure	299,451
Expenditure per pupil	1,920
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,320
Balance carried forward to next year	23,493

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	130
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	26	7	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	35	5	7	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	58	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	58	7	7	0
The teaching is good.	53	23	12	7	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	28	26	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	23	9	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	30	7	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	26	53	12	7	2
The school is well led and managed.	28	51	9	5	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	40	2	9	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	49	23	2	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

67. There is no nursery and children join the Foundation Stage in the reception class in the September of the year in which they will be five. The assessment procedures undertaken in the autumn term, soon after entry to the school indicate that overall attainment on entry is above that found for most children nationally. The school follows a programme of work that covers the six areas of learning recommended by the Department for Education and Employment and since the start of this term teachers are working within the new guidelines for early learning goals. At the time of the inspection only six pupils had already celebrated their fifth birthday. As children achieve the expected levels for pupils at the age of five, teachers begin to introduce elements of the National Curriculum into the work planned for the class in a gradual way as ability groups are identified.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

68. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development is above average by the age of five with the children mixing and socialising well. On entry, most of the children have already had some experiences in a local nursery so are able to work together, share resources and are beginning to learn and understand the need to take turns and listen to each other. A group of children were observed playing a dice game, taking turns, without adult intervention. They use the "café" as an area for role-play, as the customer, the waiter or the chef. They behave well in all situations, work well, and are able to concentrate and persevere with their learning during the majority of sessions. A lesson in personal, social and emotional education enabled pupils to learn how a group functions: the idea of waiting for others to finish speaking and listening to their views. The teacher and welfare assistant create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels they are special. There are high expectations of behaviour and the children want to please them.
69. Teaching in this area of work is good. The work planned is organised effectively and the teacher and her assistant arrange many opportunities for children to extend their experiences and develop ways of learning through play and building effective relationships with one another.

Communication Language and Literacy

70. The children's attainment in this area is above average on entry and by the age of five. They are confident, articulate talkers and respond well to the teacher's and welfare assistant's questions. Throughout all lessons they are encouraged to develop their vocabulary and listen carefully. For example, when talking about his work, one child said "Look at my hen, it's really delicate!" All children enjoy books, take great pleasure in handling them and in taking care of them. The youngest children are able to talk about the book they are reading and predict what might happen, other children are beginning to recognise initial phonic sounds and a few key words, whilst the oldest ones are reading fluently at an appropriate level. Most can talk about their books and retell their favourite stories. Many of the children can

write their name and some are beginning to write and spell some key words correctly. By the end of the year, having scrutinised the work of last year's Foundation Stage, some children are able to write short sentences, although punctuation is missing. The writing of most children is well formed and legible.

71. The quality of the teaching is good. An appropriate range of activities including speaking and listening is provided. The planning is clear and takes into account what the children know and can do. The enthusiasm of the teacher for books helps to foster positive attitudes towards literacy and ensures the children make good progress. The effective use of the welfare assistant ensures that all pupils receive additional support. Both the teacher and the welfare assistant use questioning effectively to help children extend their knowledge.

Mathematics

72. By the age of five the children's attainment in this area is above average. Children recognise numbers to five and can sequence them correctly. They are also able to understand more or less than when counting to 10. They can confidently name two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square, rectangle and triangle and can explain why. These shapes are used successfully to create interesting pictures. Children are aware of how to continue patterns using sticks and by threading beads. Work scrutiny of last year's under fives shows that by the end of the year a few children are able to count in tens to 100, count in pairs, perform simple addition and subtraction sums up to 10. They have experience of using appropriate vocabulary such as taller, shorter, lighter, heavier. The children enjoy the tasks set and eagerly join in the class sessions. They work well sharing resources and helping each other. They are interested and make good progress.
73. The teaching is good and a series of appropriate activities catch the interest of the children and ensure a positive attitude towards mathematics. The impact of the good pace and well-planned activities all add to the children's good rate of progress.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

74. The children's attainment at the age of five in this area is above average. They enjoy a topic on autumn and making scenes of this time of year. They demonstrate some knowledge of the fruits and vegetables one might find at harvest time. Scientific knowledge about floating and sinking is gained by water play where the children took great delight in sinking the aluminium trays and other objects. Displays on the walls illustrate the fact that the children have been studying a science topic on taste, sight and touch. Children also enjoy playing in the sand. The range of activities available for the children gives them many opportunities. The children are interested in the activities that are prepared for them. They respond well to them and are able to share the resources. For example, in the water tray the children do not fight over who has what but take turns to use the containers. Children have an understanding of times past and what school was like when their grandparents were children. They know about how people live in other parts of the world as many have visited places in Europe and America and can identify other places on the globe. Children enjoy using the computer in the classroom to paint and to label their work as well as for games involving colours, words, shapes and numbers.

75. The quality of teaching is good and well-planned lessons show a clear understanding of the early learning goals. The range of activities and topics covered ensure the children have wide experiences and develop a good understanding of the world around them.

Physical Development

76. The children's attainment in this area is at least in line with that found in most classes for children at the end of the foundation stage. They are able to use a pair of scissors and many can cut carefully keeping to the lines. Many hold a pencil correctly and are beginning to have good control, being able to write their names. In outdoor play they are able to run around with care and find spaces without bumping into each other. When joining in a dance lesson in the hall children follow the music and work well alone as individuals dancing to their own imaginative thoughts and as a group following the teachers' directions.
77. The quality of teaching is good. The choice of music and the time allowed for activity followed by simple discussion and reflection enables the teacher to watch and offer encouragement and support. The teacher uses good movements and shapes demonstrated by some children to show others how they might extend their own performance.

Creative Development

78. By the end of the foundation stage the children's attainment in this area is above average. They rise to the challenge of making shakers for a music session, and, particularly enjoy demonstrating, rather noisily, how they work. They can use shapes to make a picture and carefully spread the glue on the paper. Children know the names of some of the percussion instruments and by the end of a session, how to play them, whether they are hit, scraped or shaken. They are beginning to appreciate the difference between loud and soft sounds and how to play the instruments. The children have experimented with bubbles to make some attractive pictures, which are displayed on the wall. The children enjoy the creative activities and are excited when the music trolley appears. They are enthusiastic about music and join in, knowing a range of nursery rhymes, which they say and sing quite well.
79. Teaching is effective because the teacher's planning and her understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn means that the choice of activities both for art, design and technology and music match their needs and abilities. Throughout the day a range of learning opportunities is made available to the children so that they grow in confidence to use paints and other media and to enjoy music of all types. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language who are all taught alongside their classmates make equally good progress.
80. The areas for development observed at the time of the previous inspection have been rectified. Since the previous inspection the facilities for outdoor play have been improved and the classroom is now organised to enable children to move about freely as required. The computer works well and children use it spontaneously. The school hall is still small but is now less cluttered and teachers manage children and resources carefully. This care and attention to detailed planning now prevents children wasting time in queues as was observed at the time of the previous inspection.

ENGLISH

81. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 1999, attainment was well above the national average and well above average in comparison to similar schools. More than one third of the pupils attained Level 5. Analysis of the results over the last four years shows that there was a slight fall in standards in 1998 but a significant rise in the standards achieved in 1999. The results in the 2000 tests show that they are similar to 1999, but as yet there is no national comparative data available. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils are on course to attain results in this academic year that are similar to those achieved in 2000, with a greater number attaining at Level 5 now that the staffing difficulties of the previous year have been resolved. At the time of the inspection, early in the autumn term attainment levels are already above the expected level with more than two terms in which pupils will learn before the next round of statutory testing.
82. A more detailed analysis of the test results show that over the past four years the performance of girls was above national average, whereas that of the boys was well above national average. However, during the inspection there was no obvious difference in the attainment levels of boys and girls.
83. In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 1999 attainment was well above the national average in reading with some 93per cent of pupils attaining the expected level or above. For writing, attainment was very high in comparison to the national average, with 100per cent of pupils attaining the expected level or above, and well above average in both aspects of English in comparison to similar schools. The results in the 2000 tests show that they are similar to 1999, but again the comparative data was unavailable at the time of the inspection. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils are well on course to do just as well in 2001 with a significant number of pupils ready to achieve well above the expected level.
84. A more detailed analysis of the results over the past four years shows a dip in attainment for reading in 1998, although the results were still above the national average, and a substantial dip in attainment for writing in 1998 followed by a rise. The performance of both boys and girls in reading was well above the national average and for writing the performance of boys was very high in comparison to the national average whereas for girls it was well above.
85. The effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the implementation of the Literacy Hour have been successful, with teachers having clear ideas of the most effective ways of teaching the various elements. There is an appropriate balance between guided reading and writing. The overall good quality teaching is helping to ensure good progress as reading and writing are further developed.
86. The standards of speaking and listening in both key stages are above average across the school. By the age of seven, pupils are becoming confident, articulate speakers. When given the opportunity they readily respond to questions and volunteer information about the chosen text in the Literacy Hour, discuss the feelings of Florence Nightingale on her arrival at Scutari, or consider the spoken text in the big book "Not Now Bernard". Pupils listen carefully to teachers giving instructions, which they are able to follow. Some pupils offer in-depth answers to teachers' questions and participate in both class and small group discussions. They are willing and keen to express their opinions and views.

87. By the age of eleven, all pupils are confident speakers, the more articulate, expressing their views in depth and using a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils are keen to answer teachers' questions and often offer very mature views on a particular subject. This was very well illustrated in a geography lesson when the Year 5/6 pupils were debating the pros and cons of a mythical hotel development on a headland of natural beautiful adjoining an unspoilt bay. The pupils' views and opinions were very sensitive to the issues of building a hotel where the wildlife would suffer. Another example is the questions this group of pupils asked on a visit to the bakery supplying a major supermarket chain: "What did you do in the petrol crisis?" And "Do you bake the same quantity of bread each day?" Pupils are given the opportunity to participate in both class and group discussions. Pupils are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary and to explore the use of language. Across the school, teachers value each pupil's contribution and try to ensure every pupil has an opportunity to respond to a question.
88. By the end of Key Stage 1 the evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that the standard of reading is set to be above average with a high percentage of the class achieving standards that are well above average. Books are handled with care and a variety of texts are read; some fluently and with understanding, others with less confidence. Pupils are developing ways of reading unfamiliar words, either by sounding out the word phonetically or by using other clues such as the pictures. Pupils recognise and understand punctuation such as question and exclamation marks. Many read expressively. They know how books are organised and understand terms such as author, title and illustrator. Many are able to talk about their favourite books and retell the stories, but do not always remember the author's name. Most pupils are beginning develop research skills in so far as they can use an index and a contents page.
89. By the end of Year 6 when pupils will be eleven, the standard of reading is well above average. At the time of the inspection, early in the autumn term, pupils are already reading at above the average level. All pupils are independent readers, enjoying a wide variety of stories, poetry and reference books. Many are fluent and accurate although some still read with little expression. Pupils are able to discuss the plots, characters and favourite part of the story, often offering very mature reasons for their choice. For example, one pupil stated that his favourite character was called "The Bandit". In response to the question why had he particularly liked this character he replied that you never knew what he might do next, he was so unpredictable. All the pupils try to predict where the story line of their book is going. Even those who have just started a book are willing to make some suggestions as to what might happen in the story. All pupils are beginning to develop research skills and can use a reference book as a research tool. However, few of the older pupils were familiar with skimming or scanning for information. Some research opportunities are given to the pupils for topic work in history and geography.
90. Writing is above average in the classes for pupils below the age of seven and by the end of the key stage it is well above average. The majority of pupils write interesting stories and most are able to use punctuation effectively, putting in full stops, capital letters and speech marks. Many of the pupils spell accurately although a small number struggle to spell all the high frequency words. All the pupils write in sentences, some of which are quite complex and show an imaginative use of vocabulary. For example: "Out of the March or May light with shadows and stars to see ..." and "I beamed at him ..." The pupils are given opportunities to write for different purposes, including retelling traditional stories, book reviews, poetry, letters

and imaginative stories. Teachers provide tasks to develop grammar, comprehension, punctuation, spelling and handwriting. All pupils are encouraged to use cursive script and by the end of the key stage the majority have developed well-formed neat handwriting. Each task has a date and title. Planning ensures positive links with other areas of the curriculum, particularly history and religious education.

91. By the end of Key Stage 2 the standard of attainment in writing overall is above average with a large proportion of pupils achieving well above average. Throughout the key stage the standard of writing is at least average with most pupils achieving close to or above the required level. A variety of writing tasks are set for the pupils. These include aspects of language such as comprehension, comparing two poems or two versions of the same story, personification, similes and other necessary literacy skills. The pupils write for an increasing number of purposes, in different styles and formats. A wide range of writing opportunities is offered to the pupils, including imaginative story telling, letter writing, instructions, diary, interviews, play scripts, reporting and persuasive writing: for example, why you should send your child to St. John's. Pupils' vocabulary is often adventurous and interesting, for example: "... I picked my way through a carpet of dead people ..." writing about the Battle of Balaclava, during the Crimean War. Another "The climax was starting to get heavy ..." Many pupils use appropriate spelling and punctuation. Handwriting is neat and work is dated and has a title. Work scrutiny shows that links with history are planned with examples of work relating to Florence Nightingale and the Victorians.
92. The pupils' learning across the two key stages is good. There are improvements in the quality and quantity of the writing and in the presentation. For example, when pupils first enter Year 1 their writing was large not well formed and often copied under the teacher's, but by the end of the year most pupils were writing in simple sentences. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils had progressed to writing stories that contained speech marks. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils' writing showed maturity in the use of language and vocabulary. It is possible to track the development of literacy skills through the pupils' work. Overall the standard of literacy at the end of both key stages is well above that found in most schools nationally.
93. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as the work is carefully matched to their needs and the effective support given by the welfare assistants enhances these pupils' achievements. Pupils learning English as an additional language also do well and make good progress. Although the school has a higher than average number of bilingual learners most pupils in this group have one parent who speaks English fluently at home and therefore their work in school is supported effectively at home and their progress matches that of their classmates.
94. Pupils enjoy their literacy sessions and are keen to participate. They listen well, with interest and excitement, to the text and respond with enthusiasm to the ensuing questions and discussion. An example of this was seen in Year 1 when pupils were talking about their big book "Not Now Bernard" and looking for the speech in the story line. Also in Year 5/6, when pupils were discussing the use of stage directions in play scripts. The majority of pupils are able to work independently with little or no adult supervision. They respond well to group work and share both ideas and resources. Examples of this were seen in a Year 2 history lesson when pupils were sequencing the life of Florence Nightingale from a series of photographs and in a Year 5/6 geography lesson when the pupils were pretending to be different personae

in a debate about a hotel development. Pupils remain on task, are motivated, sustain interest and are well behaved. Most pupils express an enjoyment and pleasure for reading, with many reading regularly at home.

95. The quality of teaching is at least good in all lessons at both key stages and was judged to be very good in a quarter of the lessons seen. In the majority of lessons the curriculum is delivered with enthusiasm and this in turn encourages the pupils to succeed and has a positive effect on their learning. The teachers use their skills and knowledge to ensure that the pupils respond and become involved in the discussions and tasks they set. Appropriate vocabulary is taught, as seen in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher talked about the author, title of the book and the illustrator. All teachers have a good relationship with their classes and expect a high standard of attainment, setting pupils challenging work. In all lessons, appropriate tasks are planned to match the needs of the pupils. Welfare support assistants are effectively deployed to enhance the learning of the lower attainers. The new marking system is proving to be a useful tool for the assessment of pupils' progress. It has been in place only since the start of term and needs to be evaluated after a period of consistent use in all classes.
96. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a year and her role still needs to be developed further so that she is able to monitor planning in greater depth and observe more lessons. All of the results of the statutory tests are analysed, including the optional tests for pupils in Years 3/4/5 to highlight weaknesses. Targets are set, particularly with a view to raising those expected to achieve at Level 2C to a higher level. There are plans to review the published reading scheme already in place and to add additional material.
97. Pupils use the facilities in information technology to write factual reports and imaginative stories accessing the World Wide Web as required in those classes where it is available. Across the school pupils readily use reference books to supplement and extend their knowledge as well as using the Internet. The school library has been reorganised in the past few months, since the arrival of the acting headteacher and though there is a good range of books, all of good quality, as yet only the pupils at Key Stage 2 are familiar with all of the new arrangements.
98. A reading record book is provided for each pupil and parents are encouraged to write in it. This is filled in regularly by parents of the younger pupils. However, in Years 5 and 6 the pupils themselves keep a note of books they have read, occasionally commenting on whether or not they enjoyed it and why. A world book day, where pupils dressed up as characters from their favourite books, a visit to the Hanley Theatre for a pantomime and visits from live theatre groups to the school enhances the pupils' English curriculum.
99. There have been significant changes in staff and in the approach to teaching English since the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved at the end of both key stages, the quality of teaching and the level of challenge has been increased and the level of improvement has been good.

MATHEMATICS

100. The 1999 test and assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that overall the standard is well above that in schools nationally and is well above that in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the required standard, Level 2, is very high at 100 per cent and the percentage of those who attained the higher level, Level 3, was well above the national average. The results in the tests and assessments in 2000 show that the percentages of pupils attaining standards that were above the expected levels were even better although the national comparison statistics were not available at the time of the inspection. The attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is above that of in classes of pupils of the same age nationally and pupils are set to maintain the high standards of previous years. At the end of Key Stage 1, national results have been above or well above the national average for the past three years.
101. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds are well above the national average in mathematics and are above those of schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests is, at 43 per cent, well above the national average. The percentage attaining at or above the expected level in 2000 was similar to the results in 1999 with 41 per cent attaining higher levels. During the inspection, the level of attainment for the majority of pupils, currently in Year 6 was well above that found in schools nationally at this time in the academic year at the end of Key Stage 2. More than half of the pupils have already reached the required level in voluntary tests in Year 5. All of the pupils are working at a level that makes them well set to exceed expected levels, some by as much as two levels above that expected by the time they leave the school at eleven. About one third of the pupils who are attaining above the expected level are working well within Level 5 and it is expected that a few will attain a level above this. Over the last three years, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been maintained at a level well above the national average.
102. Pupils learn well and make good progress at both key stages. The rate of progress in lessons across the school has improved since the last inspection. For those pupils capable of higher attainment the increased challenge that has raised standards for all pupils has had a very marked impact and for those pupils, learning is very good and their progress is rapid. Since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy the teaching of skills for mental mathematics has improved. As teachers become more familiar with their new classes and the range of work within their capabilities, the challenge to increase the problem solving element of mental mathematics needs to be extended.
103. Across the school, pupils are making rapid gains in number manipulation and in their understanding and instant recall of number bonds and multiplication tables. They are increasing their knowledge of factors, inverse operations in arithmetic and the properties of both two and three-dimensional shapes. In group work, learning for pupils of all abilities is promoted by work being carefully matched to prior attainment and by pupils' developing skills of independent learning. The classroom support staff are used effectively to support groups and to minimise waiting time when tasks are completed as additional more difficult work is always planned and is available for differing ability groups.

104. Pupils' developing skills in numeracy are above average at both key stages. Pupils and teachers are making good use of all possible learning opportunities and as they become more familiar with the new routines in each class rapid gains are being made. Skills in numeracy are developed and used in other lessons across the curriculum such as when calculating distances in geography and when organising and measuring lengths of materials in design and technology. The number of pupils in Year 6 is not high and the difference in published results where boys are seen to do better than the girls do was not substantiated by observations during the inspection. In the lessons observed both boys and girls were seen to be working at levels well above national averages. The school is alert to the very high standards achieved by some boys in 1999 but the relatively small numbers do not make the sample statistically significant. The school's ambition is to raise the standards of all pupils to those of the very high achievers.
105. The provision to support the learning for those pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is good. Teachers involve them fully in introduction to new work in lessons and make sure that all work is matched to their individual targets and to their ability and prior attainment. These pupils take their turn in explaining their work and findings to the class in plenary sessions.
106. Pupils' are keen to share in class activities and contribute well to oral sessions. They are industrious and concentrate on the set activity and collaborate effectively in pairs or small groups. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Very occasionally, when waiting for the teacher one or two will share a joke and need reminding of the code of behaviour but one word or look from the teacher or a timely reminder is all that is ever needed to encourage them to get on with their work.
107. The quality of teaching at both key stages is predominantly good with more than half of all lessons seen being good or very good. Teachers are very confident about teaching mathematics. They are looking to purchase a new scheme of work and test all materials thoroughly against their individual skills and requirements. All teachers organise their classroom and pupils effectively and make good use of all available time. Resources are used well to support planned learning objectives and the support staff are fully involved in the planning stage and are used very well. Opportunities for assessment and evaluation are built into all lesson plans and the evaluation at the end of each lesson is used to inform planning for future work. Work in class and in books is almost always marked sensitively with appropriate constructive criticism and justifiable praise, and time is planned to ensure that all corrections are completed. The marking policy has been introduced only this term and is not yet consistent across all classes but the school has a planned review date to consider any changes that are required. The benefits of the good teaching to the standards achieved are that pupils are increasingly confident in the skills required to manage their own learning. The improvement in this aspect of pupils' work since the last inspection is producing an increased confidence in teachers and pupils.
108. The curriculum is balanced and relevant and is supported by the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and new commercial schemes that are intended to promote continuity and progression. The school has a well organised review programme in place to monitor the effectiveness of all tested materials before committing too much to one commercial scheme. The scheme that the school is working to improve incorporates work at progressive levels of difficulty, which supports the learning of pupils of all abilities and is intended to challenge those who

are most able. Teachers support one another very effectively and for those pupils who are capable of higher attainment there is close liaison with staff at the secondary school to which most pupils will transfer at the end of this academic year. The curriculum is well balanced and fully meets all statutory requirements. The school is now looking to increase elements of problem solving from a range of sources to encourage pupils to think of more than one solution to a task and to evaluate the best method through comparison and discussion with others.

109. Work is assessed regularly at the end of lessons. Following the completion of sections of work and the results of statutory and voluntary testing. The analysis of the results of this work form an important part of the next planning stage. The plotting of pupils' progress towards planned targets is having positive results in all classes. Teachers throughout both key stages are increasingly aware of the part that they play in enabling pupils to reach their personal targets at the end of their time in the primary phase. Teachers are working effectively together to promote a continuous path from the start of school to the day that a pupil moves to a new school.
110. The leadership offered by the co-ordinator is good. She is very knowledgeable and keen to share her vision and enthusiasm for mathematics with colleagues throughout the school. She shares in the planning of work in the long- and medium-term and shares with the acting headteacher the monitoring of planning files and samples of pupils' work. Opportunities to monitor the work of colleagues have been limited but the process is considered to be very worthwhile and more dates are planned.
111. Since the last inspection the school has improved on the standards observed at that time and has increased the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels. Pupils use their skills in information technology in many mathematics lessons for reviewing and displaying data and for extrapolating from results gathered what an expected outcome might be should some part of the data be changed. The use of information technology in the subject is limited by the shortage of good quality computers. Mathematics has a high profile in the school's future plans.

SCIENCE

112. The attainment of pupils shows a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when attainment was described as at least in line with national expectations and sometimes better. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 showed that all pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 2 or above. This is very high in comparison with the national average. Forty-four per cent of pupils achieved Level 3. This is well above the national average. These results are very high when compared with similar schools. Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 identified that 90 per cent of pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 4 or above. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 (67per cent) was very high when compared with the national average. These results are well above those for similar schools. Over the four years 1996-1999 the levels of achievement of boys were very high in comparison with the national average and the levels of achievement of girls were well above the national average. The assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show that all pupils attained the nationally expected Level 2 or above. Forty-eight per cent of pupils achieved Level 3. This is a slight improvement on 1999. The results at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2000 show that 90 per cent of pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 4 or above, of whom 50 per

cent achieved Level 5. The percentage of pupils who achieved Level 4 or above was the same as in 1999. The drop in the percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 is attributable to the difference in the cohort and the fact that the class was taught by supply teachers for the greater part of the year. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils at the end of both key stages are, in the first term of the academic year, already achieving above national expectations and are well set to attain standards well above the national average by the end of the key stage.

113. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their knowledge and understanding and very good progress in their investigation skills. They are beginning to use appropriate scientific vocabulary. They know that light comes from many sources including the sun. They know the difference between living and non-living things. They sort materials by properties using everyday terms such as 'twisty', 'bendy' and 'squashy'. Through their experiments they are beginning to understand how to make a test fair, for example, when testing materials to find which are waterproof and which are not. In addition they make predictions. The Year 2 class predicted pupils' preferences when tasting different foods and drinks. They identify parts of flowering plants such as leaf, stem and root, labelling their drawings correctly. Pupils are also developing an understanding of electricity. They can identify household items that use electricity and know some of the dangers associated with it. Through their investigations they are able to construct a simple circuit to make a buzzer sound or light a bulb. Through their study of human beings they not only learn about different parts of the body, but also about medicinal drugs and why dangerous substances should be kept out of reach of children. Work is recorded in a variety of ways, including lists, simple charts and descriptive writing. Higher-attaining pupils present their work more neatly and their written work is more detailed. However the work of all pupils is legible and usually clearly presented.
114. Progress by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in Key Stage 2 is good. Pupil mobility is a key factor. A significant percentage of pupils leave or are admitted to the school during this Key Stage. However, progress in investigation skills is good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know more about the sources of light, light and shadows and day and night. They know from which direction light is travelling and why. Through investigations they find out which materials are transparent or opaque. They learn what is meant by translucent. They further develop their understanding of the concept of a fair test, for example, when investigating the insulating properties of different materials. Their study of habitats leads into work on food chains. They possess a very good understanding of life cycles. They know that micro-organisms can be helpful or harmful to human beings. When pupils revisit a topic their knowledge and understanding is deepened by the amount of detail incorporated in their studies. This is shown in the work on 'Green Plants as Organisms' where stamen, sepal, pistil and anther are used in the labelling of more accurately drawn diagrams. In their work on electricity they learn to use the appropriate symbols for switch, battery, motor, and bulb when drawing circuits. The study of the human body includes the respiratory system. Line graphs are drawn to record their investigations into pulse rates. Occasionally pupils have the opportunity to use information and communication technology to extend their knowledge and understanding. Year 3 pupils used information and communication technology to produce a block graph to record their investigation into floor covering in bedrooms. Year 6 pupils had used the program 'How to be a good scientist' to research how fungi reproduce. However, the use of information and communication technology to

support learning in science is insufficiently developed. The work of higher attainers is very well presented whilst that of average and below average attainers is never less than neat and legible.

115. Overall, pupils' attitudes are very good. In the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1 attitudes were good. All pupils responded well to the teacher. They persevered with the task, remedied mistakes and were developing ways of explaining their achievements to the teacher and others. Sometimes they offered assistance or solutions to others. In Key Stage 2 attitudes are very good. They are very interested, enthusiastic and respond very positively to the tasks set. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, listen very well to each other and value each others' opinions. There is a very high level of collaboration and co-operation in investigative work. On a visit to a local supermarket bakery, pupils listened very carefully to the staff of the bakery and were very keen to ask many pertinent questions that elicited further information to enhance their learning significantly. Behaviour is never less than good and is usually very good. Equipment and materials are handled very sensibly. The ethos for learning science throughout the school is very good.
116. Teaching is good overall. In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1 teaching was good. In Key Stage 2, 50per cent of the teaching is good and the other 50per cent is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous report in which teaching was identified as satisfactory, but varying from good to unsatisfactory. The foundations for the high standard of teaching lie in the good subject knowledge and understanding of the teachers. Planning, in which clear objectives are set, is good and the tasks lead to outcomes that can be assessed. This assessment influences subsequent teaching so that tasks are usually matched to pupils' prior attainment promoting good learning by the pupils. Teachers use praise to encourage and support pupils. Questioning, particularly that which is open-ended, is used well to promote and consolidate pupils' learning. Where teaching is very good the aims of the lesson are made clear to the pupils. Teachers use an imaginative approach to stimulate the interest of pupils. For example, in a Year 4/5 class in which pupils were investigating the thermal properties of materials, the teacher introduced the imaginative notion of 'ice-cube babies' to stimulate pupils' interest. Also resources, particularly support staff, are used very well. Organisation and management are very good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set challenging tasks based on their prior attainment. In a Year 3 lesson in which pupils were investigating which materials would let light through, teachers intervened with very good questions that promoted pupils' understanding of a fair test. In a lesson in Year 4/5 pupils created patterns using coloured acetates and experiment to discover the colours from which white light is made. Teachers make good use of visits to promote and consolidate learning. The visit to a local supermarket bakery by pupils from a Year 5/6 class reinforced learning about micro-organisms. Teachers take the opportunity in science to consolidate pupils' learning in areas of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy and personal and social education. In a Year 5/6 class pupils worked in mixed gender groups. Year 6 pupils were expected to use their prior knowledge to help the Year 5 pupils in developing an understanding of how to construct identification keys. All work is marked. However, work is not marked consistently in line with the new school policy on marking. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils who are asked to complete work do so. The spelling of words such as hypothesis, resource, method and habitat is not always corrected. The school recognises that insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.

117. The leadership of the co-ordinator is good. A particular strength is the monitoring of planning and teaching with constructive oral and written feedback that includes targets for the teachers. There is a science policy approved by the governing body in 1996, but this is scheduled for review. The previous inspection indicated that there was a need to develop a detailed scheme of work and to develop assessment and recording procedures. These issues have been addressed. The scheme of work, which is still being adapted to meet the needs of the school, is based on the latest national guidance. This ensures continuity and progression across both key stages. Assessment and recording procedures are now good. The school makes good use of teacher assessments in Key Stage 1. Teacher assessment, combined with optional standard attainment tests in Key Stage 2, enable teachers to track the progress of all pupils and to set appropriate and challenging targets for them as individuals and in groups. Resources, including books, are satisfactory for the delivery of the National Curriculum. The school is able to make good use of the grounds where, in addition to the grassed area, facilities include a wet area, hedgerows, trees and shrubs, and a chequer-board garden. A neighbouring churchyard is also used as a resource. The school also capitalises on its links with Keele University for pond dipping and Newcastle College for science workshops.

ART AND DESIGN

118. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. However, there was sufficient evidence to show that standards at both key stages have been improved since the previous inspection. The reason is because the schemes of work have been improved and teachers have a wider understanding of the subject than they had at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment levels are overall in line with those normally expected for pupils of this age. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are again average overall with some good quality work being produced by some pupils, particularly in classes 4/5 and 5/6. Throughout school, pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of skills and in their understanding of art as an expressive medium. This includes all pupils including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional subject. The work seen across the school shows good coverage of the range of two-dimensional media and techniques. During the inspection there was less evidence of three-dimensional work although this is represented adequately in teachers' planning.
119. During Key Stage 1, pupils have a wide variety of experiences in two and three dimensions. Observational drawings are begun in Year 1 and pupils are encouraged to look closely at themselves and the world around them. Pupils have opportunity to experiment with the effects made by pens, pencils and pastels on a range of papers. Pupils showed good control of drawing implements. The standard of the finished products was good. Pupils work is valued and is mounted carefully and displayed with pride. The work of well-known artists is used in all age groups as a starting point. Pupils in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes create their paintings using a painting program on the computer.
120. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their skills and extend their knowledge and understanding. In the class for pupils in Years 4 and 5 the class had experimented with painting in the style of George Seurat, Monet and Van Gogh and enjoyed discussing which method or technique they preferred. Those selecting the pointillism style of Seurat had enjoyed creating pictures with dots because, they said,

they found drawing difficult. Good standards of observational drawing were seen in the class for Year 5/6 pupils when pupils produced a detailed image or line representation of climbing and walking boots. They selected and used materials well to suggest, for example, textured or smooth leather. Pupils were able to reflect on and evaluate their own work, looking for ways to improve. The pupils' observational drawings of various objects showed good attention to detail and the confident use of pencil line and shading to represent accurately what they saw. Art from different countries and times is used to help pupils to understand their own and other cultures. Using the Internet, some pupils have begun to research well-known artists and write passages in appreciation of favourite artists and their paintings. Pupils observe lines, colour and detail such as "the light makes a pattern on the floor." They record their personal responses to artists' work.

121. The teaching observed in the few lessons seen was good. It was well planned with clear learning objectives and effective use was made of questioning to promote these. Techniques were well taught in both the practical lessons. In addition, the interest and confidence shown by all teachers encouraged pupils to perform well and they made good progress. Pupils were stretched as additional challenges to improve their drawing techniques were added at each review point and planned additional and more difficult work enabled more talented artists to increase the scope of the set tasks.
122. In lessons, pupils were always interested and involved in their work, showing good concentration. Pupils of all ages and abilities were keen to experiment and develop their own ideas. Their positive attitudes had a beneficial effect on the progress they made.
123. Art is co-ordinated efficiently and the scheme of work meets National Curriculum requirements and enables teachers to ensure that skills are developed. There are at present no formal assessment procedures. The subject leader monitors provision by evaluating teachers' half-termly planning and keeps a check on standards by examining pupils' finished work but has had few opportunities to monitor colleagues in their classrooms. However, the additional teacher, working as part of the management team this term, has monitored work in all classes and is working alongside teachers, encouraging pupils and staff to be more adventurous. The co-ordinator ensures that the staff has a suitable range of good quality tools, materials and objects to use as stimuli, and this makes a good contribution to pupils' attainment. Work from all year groups is presented in displays around the school. The school works hard to celebrate pupils' achievements as well as using work to create an attractive and stimulating environment for learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. Evidence from the present inspection – planning, displays and lesson observation - indicates that levels of attainment are in line with national expectations at both key stages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when levels of attainment were identified as being unsatisfactory at both key stages, though in a small number of lessons observed attainment at Key Stage 2 was satisfactory. There was no evidence that girls were disadvantaged in either key stage as indicated in the previous report. The issue has been successfully addressed. The well structured scheme of work, together with additional in-service training for teachers has enabled the subject to be lifted to a much better level than that found at the time of the last inspection.

125. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, understand that design and technology is about designing, making and evaluating the end product to consider how they could improve it. They use sketchbooks to design. They learn to select appropriate materials for making. In Year 1, pupils, for example, design and make a picture with moving parts for a book and make Chocolate Crispy Cakes that they sell for charity. Pupils in Year 2 design menus in conjunction with a topic on food and labels for medicine boxes in conjunction with work in science. Towards the end of the key stage they design and make simple air driven vehicles. All pupils make satisfactory progress.
126. Through Key Stage 2 all pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. During Year 3 they design and make picture frames with mitred joints using different woods. Pupils in Year 4 are challenged to design and make a torch with plastic batteries in conjunction with their study of electricity in science. In Years 5 and 6 they learn about and make different kinds of bread. They also utilise their knowledge of electrical circuits, with simple switches included, to design and make items such as a lighthouse with a flashing light and a roundabout that uses a motor to make it work. All pupils learn to use appropriate tools and equipment safely and competently.
127. Pupils have a good attitude to design and technology. Behaviour is never less than good, and sometimes very good. They show interest and persevere with challenging tasks. In a Year 1 class, average and above average attainers were given a particularly challenging task. With encouragement they were able to describe their problems, think of sensible solutions and implement them with success. Pupils listen well to the teacher and to their peers. They are keen to respond to questions. They work at a good pace and share ideas with each other, as in a Year 4/5 class when pupils were designing and making a torch. Pupils, having looked at a variety of torches provided by the teacher, were able to brainstorm properties they wanted for their own torch, then review the available resources before beginning the design stage of the task. At the present time little use is made of information technology except when writing final reports of the process of designing, making and reviewing the product. Once the new computers are in place the co-ordinator has plans to extend the design process by incorporating design programs on the new machines.
128. Teaching is good overall. Two lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, one of which was good and the other very good. Teaching in the one lesson observed in Key Stage 2 was good. Where teaching is very good the teacher's own knowledge and understanding is very secure. Also, planning, derived from the latest national guidance, is very detailed, the learning objectives are made very clear to pupils at the outset, resources are good, challenging tasks are matched to pupils' prior attainment and the plenary enables the teacher to assess learning. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher, in the introduction, skilfully used pupils' experience of medicines and their packaging and linked this to the science curriculum to promote a high level of interest. When the pupils were on task she moved around the groups to encourage pupils, sometimes publicly. For example: 'Thomas has had a great idea. Would you like to tell everybody?' Thomas' response was: 'I'm using capital letters to make it easier to read.' The teacher also demonstrated a high level of care for the pupils in relation to health and safety issues, for example, why pupils are not normally allowed to bring medicines to school. She also reminded pupils how to carry scissors safely in the classroom.

129. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who is also the co-ordinator for art, has been in post for two years. She is clear about her role. Her job specification is currently being re-written to bring it up-to-date. Since her appointment she has not had the opportunity to attend any in-service training course for design and technology, but reads the literature that comes into school. The previous co-ordinator fed back to staff after attending courses. The role of the co-ordinator is currently being developed. The policy document, recently revised and approved by the governing body, satisfactorily addresses the issues raised in the previous report. The school is using the latest national guidance as a scheme of work and is beginning to adapt this to meet the needs of the school. There is continuity and progression in the scheme of work. Assessment is not yet in place, but is being addressed. Monitoring of planning and teaching is another aspect that the school recognises needs to be developed. Currently only the planning of the newly qualified teacher is monitored. Resources are stored tidily and are of an appropriate quality to support delivery of the National Curriculum requirements. The school is also addressing the issue of time allocation for design and technology. The percentage of time allocated for the subject is insufficient to ensure full coverage of the curriculum. As a result, despite good teaching, pupils' attainment is only in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The school is attempting to redress the balance by providing increased opportunities for design and technology activities in other subject areas. The school recognises that this requires careful monitoring.

GEOGRAPHY

130. Throughout the inspection there was limited opportunity to observe geography in both key stages. Only two lessons were observed, both in Key Stage 2. Additional evidence came from work scrutiny and an interview with the co-ordinator. Work seen from last year's Key Stage 1 pupils suggests achievement is in line with expectations. However, for pupils in Key Stage 2, achievement is above that expected for their age.
131. In Key Stage 1, pupils look at maps of the local area, using simple co-ordinates and undertake a traffic survey using tallying as a method of recording. This work provides a good link with numeracy and mathematics. Pupils maintain a weather record and use information technology and the newspapers to obtain a record of weather across Great Britain. They compare locations and make a careful study of two local contrasting areas: Keele and Congleton. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language work in mixed groups with their classmates and are fully involved in all aspects of the work.
132. In Key Stage 2 there is an emphasis on practical activities and in one of the lesson observations pupils used the local area to develop their mapping skills. They were asked to record buildings and features on a blank map of the area immediately surrounding the school. This they did and by the end of the session were able to appreciate how the area was being developed, recognising new housing and the modernisation of existing properties and how to work out the direction in which they had travelled using the four compass points. The older pupils had recently spent a week on a residential visit and during this week had undertaken a coastal study. They were asked to use this information in their debate about building a new hotel complex on a headland of natural beauty by an unspoilt bay. Through this debate pupils are developing their understanding of how the environment can be changed, maybe not for the better, by building work and the need for conservation. Other

aspects of the curriculum involve a comparison between India and the local area. This particular topic has links with music, religious education and art. The pupils also look at climate, a river study and develop their map work to include using and devising an appropriate key.

133. All pupils in Key Stage 2 including those identified as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress, developing an understanding of map work, the importance of a key and in the need for conservation. They also appreciate the differences between two contrasting environments and locations: the coastal study and India.
134. Pupils enjoy geography, especially when they are given the opportunity to undertake fieldwork such as building up a map of the area around their school, including part of the village and the residential visit to Llandudno. They are interested and enthusiastic. This was very obvious by the excitement generated during the Year 5/6 lesson, debating the hotel development. In this particular lesson the pupils listened with respect to each other's views and responded, often in a mature and sensitive way, to some of the questions posed by their peers.
135. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 cannot be assessed as none was seen, but in Key Stage 2 the quality was good in most lessons and was excellent in one lesson. The teachers' interest and enthusiasm encourages the pupils to think and put forward valid viewpoints as to why/why not the hotel should be built. Their response depended on the personae they are representing: local traders, birdwatchers, developers, council or bed and breakfast owners. This kind of approach inspires the pupils to draw on their experiences of the visit to Llandudno and personal opinions about conservation. Careful planning and good introduction ensures that the younger Key Stage 2 pupils knew exactly what they had to do for their map work and were familiar with the points of the compass. Teachers have a good relationship with their classes, and use questioning to good effect.
136. The geography scheme was criticised in the last report because it did not ensure continuity or progression in the development of skills. In order to improve this the co-ordinator has introduced the documentation from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which gives clear guidance to teachers of the appropriate progression of skills. Pupils' geography curriculum is enhanced by visits to Congleton, for Key Stage 1 pupils, Nantwich, for a town study and Chasewater, a residential week including the Llandudno trip, for pupils at Key Stage 2. These hands-on experiences also include various local studies and for the youngest pupils, a study of the school grounds.

HISTORY

137. During the inspection there was limited opportunity to observe history in both key stages. Only two history lessons were observed, one in each key stage. Additional evidence came from work scrutiny and an interview with the co-ordinator. From the work seen and the lesson observations, pupils in both key stages are achieving above what would be expected for their age in history. At least in line with expectations and more than half of the pupils are attaining above the level normally found in primary schools at the end of each key stage.

138. Pupils are able to talk about the differences between the past and present. This was clear when pupils in Year 2 were talking about Florence Nightingale and why she travelled by sea and not air and the differences between the hospital she went to at Scutari and hospitals today. The pupils are able to sequence events in Florence's life and understand how to use a time line. They are beginning to develop an understanding of chronology. In the lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils were describing artefacts from the buried ship at Sutton Hoo and made good use of reference books to help them decide what they were and who they had belonged to. Pupils are aware that facts from different sources may vary depending on who is writing the information. They are able to talk about life in those early years and of the differences between life then and now. Other evidence, including the scrutiny of work, showed a range of topics covered in both key stages over time that included the Great Fire of London, Ancient Egypt, and a Victorian topic studied by both key stages.
139. The progress made by all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, is good, as they are developing the appropriate skills of historical research and an understanding of chronology. Pupils understand the difference between primary and secondary sources and know where to look for supporting evidence using the Internet and both the school library and the one in the town. They are also well aware of the differences between the past and the present.
140. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was never less than good and in one lesson it was very good. The teachers are interested in the topics and, particularly in the Key Stage 2 class, the teacher has an enthusiasm for the subject that communicated itself to the pupils. The lessons were well thought out and gave the pupils the opportunity to explore aspects of history for themselves using reference books or a time line. A positive aspect of the work seen was that there was no evidence of worksheets being used but that pupils experienced a good range of practical activities. This approach encourages the pupils to find out themselves and enhances their learning.
141. The acting history co-ordinator is interested and keen to develop the subject and in order to ensure the continuity and progression in the development of skills has introduced the QCA scheme. This is a new initiative that has not as yet been evaluated. The resources are being further added to so that as each topic is studied suitable and relevant materials and artefacts are available. The school has adopted a rolling programme to manage the teaching and learning of the humanities curriculum. At present a class studies either half a term of history, that is, two hours each week, followed by half a term of geography or an hour of history and an hour of geography each week.
142. Pupils study the local area in some depth, as it is full of history. They visit the local Toy Museum, High House, an Elizabethan manor house, to study the Tudors, and Shrugborough Hall when they are learning about the Victorians. These practical hands-on experiences enhance the pupils' history curriculum and deepen their understanding of life. Work is presented well and pupils often use computers to word-process their text and many import additional pictures to illustrate their work that they have found by using the Internet.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

143. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are above those expected by pupils at the age of seven and are broadly in line with those expected from pupils of eleven. There are pupils who have computers at home who display skills, understanding and knowledge well above the expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Across the strands of the programmes of study, the pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of the skills and knowledge as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make progress appropriate to their abilities. Pupils learning English as an additional language attain the same standards as their friends in all classes.
144. By the age of seven, the pupils are confident in the use of the mouse, clicking on appropriate icons to open programs and to select options. They can use simple word processing and create printed work of good quality. They can enter text and amend it using the return, backspace and cursor keys. They can follow instructions to open specific files and with some help can save their work to disk. Pupils in Year 1 learn how use a graph plot program to create simple pictograms to represent data from a class survey on the class's eye colours. By the age of seven, the pupils can enter data to a simple spreadsheet and present the information as bar charts. The majority are well prepared to continue and expand their work into the next phase of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 readily program the remote control vehicle to move around the room, park and then return to the sender or deliver a message to a friend.
145. Pupils in Year 3 develop their work on control mechanisms using Logo to enter a series of instructions to make geometric shapes and apply the 'build' facility to use the basic shape to create patterns. Throughout the key stage the pupils can use the computers for a wider range of purposes but work is sometimes delayed not enhanced by the slow response of the old machines to clear instructions. Most pupils enjoy using paint programs to recreate designs they have made in art lessons; using the copy and paste tools to create repeated patterns. They can word process simple documents, are becoming familiar with the range of presentational options available such as word art, different fonts, size of print and how colour can be used to give impact. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 work with parents to produce newsletters for parents and pupils combining text and pictures. By the age of eleven, pupils readily research specific topics by using encyclopaedia software and the Internet. They are able to use e-mail facilities to communicate with other schools and individuals but frequently choose to do this at home. Pupils can access data stored from other enquiries, can manipulate spreadsheets and import pictures. They develop their data-handling skills to present and analyse information obtained from surveys such as data from their work during a residential visit showing it as pie charts and bar graphs with the columns labelled appropriately and sectors coloured differently to increase the visual impact.
146. The pupils are enthusiastic when using the computers. They enjoy using the hardware although it is mostly old and prone to crashing. They concentrate well and persevere. They work well in pairs and threes sharing the equipment well. They give and accept advice and help from each other and by the end of Key Stage 2 are developing appropriate levels of independence to use the computers as a tool for other subjects. For example, those pupils with enhanced skills, who use the Internet

at home readily help their friends to find pictures for history or geography to import into text for their project work. The school is prepared to be in the next phase for upgrading hardware and software as part of the National Grid for learning.

147. The teaching of information and communications technology is good but the facilities for class teaching in terms of modern computers are unsatisfactory and work is undertaken with small groups in rotation. Some teachers have high levels of skills and understanding so they are able to plan and teach lessons in which the pupils make good progress in their learning. The teachers have worked hard to develop their own knowledge of the available programs and are confident with what is available and many are making further progress at home with personal computers. All teachers' approach to planning and teaching is thorough and well organised. Lessons have clear objectives and direction and all staff demonstrate good management and control so that the pupils are clear about what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and tasks. Teachers are well placed to raise the quality of the work further as the new machines are installed.
148. The last inspection found that standards were satisfactory. They are still satisfactory, but significant progress has been made in the other aspects of the provision that have not had sufficient time to have an impact upon the standards of attainment. The subject co-ordinator has given positive and very effective leadership to the subject in developing the facilities available to teachers and pupils so that they are now very good. The subject makes effective contributions to the development of both literacy and numeracy skills and it is used to support other subjects. For example, as a research tool for geography, art and literacy and as a way of presenting work in geography, art, English and history. The current scheme of work fulfils statutory requirements as the school has introduced a new scheme based on the QCA recommendations during the past six months. Until very recently there has been no structured assessment process in place although teachers have used a variety of methods for recording pupils' acquisition of skills and knowledge and of assessing how pupils have made progress. Pupils of all ages and abilities have equal access to the subject. The acting co-ordinator has begun to implement plans designed to develop a whole school assessment process linked to the new scheme of work.

MUSIC

149. At the end of both key stages, pupils are attaining in line with what is expected for pupils of seven and eleven nationally. During the inspection little music was timetabled so evidence is based on the observation of a single lesson in each key stage, interviewing the co-ordinator, attending a number of assemblies and listening to tapes and watching video recordings of the pupils performing together. The pupils' standard of singing in assembly is just in line with the expectations for both key stages. Singing is not always tuneful and words are sometimes lost. The use of the particular recorded music to accompany hymn singing does not help pupils to keep together, as the speed of the hymns tends to drag.
150. Whilst the pupils are entering the hall for assembly, instrumentalists are encouraged to play and it was a joy to listen to their music making. The standard of their playing: flutes, clarinets, recorders, violin and piano, is above that expected for pupils of their age. The pupils keep together, even when playing some complex rhythms, the violinist keeps in tune and the music sets the tone for the period of collective worship as all pupils enjoy listening to their friends playing.

151. In the lesson observation in Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils, by the end of the lesson, are able to keep the beat, fit actions to a song and express their feelings about a piece of music. This they do, offering some interesting suggestions.
152. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 2, the pupils are given many opportunities to explore and make suggestions themselves as to what rhythms or percussion instruments should be used to accompany their invaders song. They know the names of the instruments used and are able to keep a steady beat during the singing. The song is then developed into two parts with one group repeating a spoken phrase whilst the rest of the group sing the verses. This was done very effectively.
153. Pupils enjoy music and the majority participate during the singing in assembly. Within the classroom pupils are enthusiastic and interested especially when they are involved in practical activities such as when working on composition. They listen carefully to the music in assembly and in class. They are keen to respond to the teachers' questions and to express their feelings and thoughts.
154. There is an interested co-ordinator who has implemented a published scheme that helps to guide and support the less musical teachers on the staff. This scheme ensures that all aspects of music are taught during the year. The school does not have a pianist so tapes are used to accompany pupils' hymn singing. There are opportunities for instrumental tuition: strings, woodwind and recorders. However, the timing of the lessons occasionally means that pupils are sometimes withdrawn from other lessons. Lessons are rotated to ensure that all pupils' entitlement to the full curriculum is maintained. The school puts on performances at Christmas and pupils are invited to sing in the choir. Additional support from university students enhances the pupils' musical curriculum, as they organise a range of musical activities, which are very popular with the pupils.
155. There has been an improvement in the standard of music teaching since the last inspection, when it was judged that pupils needed the opportunity to develop their creative potential and stated that progress was unsatisfactory. In the two lessons observed during this inspection pupils were expected to contribute throughout and were encouraged to reflect on the work being undertaken and to offer suggestions of rhythm patterns and actions in order to improve it. The school now provides clear leadership and good teaching, therefore progress for all pupils is now at least satisfactory and for some with particular interest in music it is good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Standards achieved by pupils by the age of seven are in line with what is expected in most schools nationally and by the time they are eleven pupils' standards are above average and exceed those found in most schools. Standards in the infant department have improved since the previous inspection and the good standards found at that time in the classes in the junior department have been maintained.
157. For pupils in Years 1 and 2 the lessons observed included dance and gymnastics as well as team games. All pupils pay careful attention to safety issues. They know that physical activity promotes good health and they are aware of the need to change into suitable clothing. Pupils develop and practise a range of ways to achieve and hold a balance and explore ways in which to send and receive a ball. They improve their

skills very well and develop methods using opposing force to create symmetrical balances in pairs and with groups of friends. Pupils work confidently in pairs and show very good control as they balance their weight and hold the position whilst others use them as an archway or a bridge moving under and over.

158. In Key Stage 2 lessons were observed in outdoor games, swimming and in dance. Pupils continue to improve and develop their skills and become aware of the importance of warming up and cooling down. They sustain vigorous activity easily for an extended period of time. In Years 4 and 5 pupils improve and refine skills of controlling balls, finding spaces and passing accurately to partners and team mates. Throughout the key stage, as seen in lessons and after-school clubs, pupils have well-developed skill and accuracy in ball games when they dodge, aim, mark and weave. They learn skills of attack and defence and show a clear understanding of rules and conventions in games. Attainment in swimming was good and many pupils attain standards that are above those expected for pupils of the same age. In Years 3 and 4 all pupils learn to swim twenty-five metres. In dance, pupils in Year 3 respond very well to music showing great poise and maturity and express their ideas very well. They show a very well developed sense of timing and rhythm and perform for others in the class with an excellence rarely seen from such young performers. Pupils are enthusiastic about the project that links music and history with their presentation and show tremendous joy and pride in their achievements. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate good body control and have a good awareness of their space as they act out some of their experiences during a residential visit where they worked on their skills of archery, rock climbing and canoeing. Pupils throughout the school have a good sense of fair play and participate well in teams. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve successfully in physical education.
159. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and is at least good and is almost always very good at Key Stage 2. In one lesson the teaching was judged to be excellent and the attainment and enjoyment of the pupils increased to match this excellent work. Teachers in all classes manage pupils well and they have a good knowledge and understanding of physical education for the age and ability of the pupils they teach. They plan lessons carefully, making sure there is a good balance in explanation, demonstration and practical activity for trial and improvement. Teachers use demonstrations effectively to promote learning and they encourage pupils to compare quality in movement. Teachers group pupils well and make sure that they compete enthusiastically, display good sporting behaviour and follow safety procedures carefully. Lessons have a good pace and pupils are encouraged to work hard.
160. Throughout the year the school provides a good range of after school activities and clubs in support of physical education including football, rounders, cricket, cross-country running and dancing. The school is also well involved in local tournaments and has good links with nearby schools. The leadership and management of physical education are good. The co-ordinator has been absent for some time and his place has been taken temporarily by an advisory teacher. All of the teachers are well qualified and experienced in teaching this subject. The school currently uses an effective and well established commercial scheme of work and is using this for guidance and direction as they are revising their own scheme. Resources are adequate but some are old and whilst still safe will need to be replaced in the coming years. They are used to good effect in all lessons and teachers make sure pupils

handle and care for them well. The accommodation is satisfactory, although the hall is small for a full class of eleven year old pupils working at capacity. Teachers monitor pupils' performance and progress, although there is no formally recognised school approach to assessment and recording.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

161. In the previous inspection report attainment was described as being in line with national expectations at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Evidence from the present inspection including the observation of two lessons, an analysis of teachers' planning and looking at photographs of displays of work - indicates that attainments are in line with the requirements and expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The level of work observed at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for who English is an additional language, is satisfactory in both key stages.
162. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, through their study of topics including 'Festivals' and 'Precious Things', have learned about the Christian religion and other religions such as Islam. In Year 1, pupils learn about harvest festivals in conjunction with the topic on food. They visit the church. They draw pictures of their favourite foods on paper plates and on house shapes. Models of farmers and farm machinery are made using construction kits. Artefacts such as corn dollies are used to support learning. In Year 2, through a study of 'Precious Things', pupils learn about Islam and Christianity. They are shown a prayer mat and a copy of the Qu'ran and a Qu'ran stand and learn why these are precious to the followers of Islam. They design a prayer mat. They know that precious artefacts relating to Christianity include the cross, the chalice, the communion plate (paten), Bibles, icons, and vestments. Pupils show great respect for all artefacts.
163. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils, through their study of topics including 'Leaders', 'Stories with Meaning', 'Special Books', 'Journeys with a Purpose' and 'Rules for Living' have learned more about Christianity and other religions. In Year 3, pupils learn about Moses leading the Jews from Egypt. They encapsulate the story of the plagues by designing a poster with illustrations. Year 6 pupils know the Ten Commandments and how Jesus in the New Testament simplified these to two rules. They know the rules of Islam. They know the three debts and five duties of Hinduism. They use appropriate vocabulary, for example, 'reincarnation'. They write about the rules in a way that shows they understand how the rules influence the lives of the people. They apply this knowledge to devise rules for themselves.
164. Pupils have a positive attitude in lessons. They listen carefully to the teacher, to visitors and to each other. When given a task they usually concentrate well, particularly in Key Stage 1. They demonstrate reverence for the beliefs of others. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
165. It was only possible to observe teaching in two lessons. However, from the evidence of teaching observed, the long and medium term planning and from photographs of displays of work teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages. Teaching was good in the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in the one lesson seen in Key Stage 2. Planning is based on the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. Careful questioning enables teachers to elicit what pupils already know and build on that by exposition or by reading to the

pupils. From the tasks set, teachers are able to assess pupils' learning. Where teaching is good, as in a Year 2 lesson on precious things relating to the Christian religion, the learning objectives are made clear to the pupils of the beginning of the lesson. In this lesson resources were good, questioning was skilful, useful tasks supported learning in other areas of the curriculum and good use was made of the plenary to review and consolidate learning. In the Year 2 lesson plenary the teacher was able to assess that most pupils were able to name all the artefacts brought in by the curate. By linking the Christian Bible to the Qu'ran of Islam she reinforced previous learning.

166. The subject is effectively co-ordinated. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and knows how the subject needs to be developed further. She is clear about her role, but has no written job specification. She has reviewed the policy in the light of changes in the locally agreed syllabus. The new policy has been approved by the curriculum committees of the governing body and is awaiting ratification by the full governing body. She has attended a course for religious education co-ordinators and on the new locally agreed syllabus. Information about changes to the syllabus has been fed back to staff. The role of the co-ordinator is being developed. This term, teachers' planning has been monitored and verbal feedback has been given, but teaching has not been observed. The school recognises that assessment is an area for development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. Artefacts, posters, pictures, music, videos and books support the teaching. These are in good condition. Some of these resources are kept in topic folders that facilitate access and storage. The school is aware that the use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning is underdeveloped. The school makes good use of visits, for example, to the local church and to Lichfield Cathedral, and visitors to support the curriculum. Teaching is also supported by discussions at meetings of staff from other schools that feed into the local high school.