

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Murton

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114276

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Lacey

Reporting inspector: Mrs. G. Crew
22837

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th October 2000

Inspection number: 224820

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Murton Seaham
Postcode:	SR7 9RD
Telephone number:	0191 5261795
Fax number:	0191 5261795
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr. Clohosey
Date of previous inspection:	14 th – 16 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs. G. Crew 22837	Registered inspector	Mathematics	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Design and technology	Teaching and learning
		Music	Leadership and management
		Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	Key Issues for action
		Equality of opportunity	
Mr. T. Heavey 19386	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Dr. T. Watts 19386	Team inspector	English	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Science	
		Art and design	
		Geography	
		History	
		Physical education	
		Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
		Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International

Upperton House
The Avenue
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 3YB

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	28
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The number of pupils on roll is 72, which is smaller than other primary schools. The school serves the local village and pupils come from a range of backgrounds. Attainment on entry to school is generally below the nationally expected levels. Children begin school in the September of the year in which they are five and leave in the year they are 11. Nine children were under five at the time of the inspection. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 15 per cent, which is below the national average. The number on the register of special educational need is 15 per cent, which is broadly in line with the national average. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need and one pupil for whom English is an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher is new to the post. She has demonstrated very good leadership and management skills and has a very clear vision for the way forward. The school governors are a newly convened body and have not, as yet, had the opportunity to be involved in managing the school. The role of other key managers is under-developed, however there is a shared commitment to improve. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This results in effective learning and pupils make good progress. In Key Stage 2, teaching and learning is satisfactory and pupils are working at, or near, their capacity. The trend in standards is broadly in line with the national trend. The school makes satisfactory use of the resources available, the learning environment is effective and most recent development planning links resources to school priorities. Principles of best value are now being carefully applied by the headteacher. Value for money is satisfactory.

What the school does well

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They behave well, are very enthusiastic and have good involvement and interest in activities.
- The parents' views of the school are very good. They give support to the school in many ways, particularly in raising funds.
- The provision for moral and social development is good. Pupils work together well and are kind and helpful to each other.

What could be improved

- The school's aims and mission statement, so the school community can share a common purpose putting pupils and their achievements first.
- The role of the deputy headteacher, to contribute effectively to the management of the school.
- The role of the co-ordinator.
- Procedures for identifying appropriate school priorities and targets that are linked to good financial planning and reflect the school's aims.
- Procedures for assessing pupils in all aspects of their work and personal development.
- Monitoring pupils' achievement to identify how well they are making progress and set targets for improvement. The use of information gathered to produce consistent records, to report to parents and to guide planning.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, particularly the quality of teaching and its impact.
- Standards in geography and history by the end of Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1997, the school staff have spent time implementing national initiatives, such as literacy and numeracy, and reviewing provision for information and communication technology to be taught. The focus the school has placed on developing reading skills has improved pupils' attainment, but overall standards are not significantly different in English and mathematics than those reported in the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology are currently in line with those expected for pupils at the end of each key stage, whereas they were reported to be above expectations in the previous inspection. There has been improvement in pupils' attainment in science and in design and technology, but a decline in geography and history. The progress of higher attaining pupils is now comparable to other ability groups. There is no evidence that an action plan was implemented following the last inspection. Key issues relating to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and developing the role of the co-ordinator have not been addressed at all. Many minor issues identified in the previous inspection continue to be issues. For example, assessment, which is now a key issue. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory overall.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

By the time they are five, the majority of pupils achieve standards in all areas of learning that are generally average for their age. In the Year 2000 tests and assessments pupils in Key Stage 1 attained well above the national average, and the average for similar schools, in reading and mathematics. Attainment in writing was in line with the average for all schools and similar schools. In Key Stage 2, attainment was well above the national average, and average for similar schools, in English and mathematics. In science, attainment was above the average for all schools and similar schools. The trend in the school's results in recent years has been broadly in line with the national picture. Each year, the number of pupils taking the tests is small. As a result, the comparison of data is unreliable. Work seen during the inspection was consistent with the overall trend. The majority of pupils are on line to achieve the expected levels at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils have work set at appropriate levels. A small group of less able pupils in upper Key Stage 2 struggle with some work set for them as they receive insufficient support from the teacher to help them learn well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school and this makes a good contribution to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour throughout the school flows from the strong Catholic ethos that is evident.
Personal development and relationships	Sound relationships are characterised by respect and politeness. Pupils work well together and take responsibilities seriously.
Attendance	Attendance rates are unsatisfactory. Authorised absence is very high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Teaching was never less than satisfactory and good and better in 50 per cent of lessons across the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when unsatisfactory teaching was observed in 8 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching was good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. In 73 per cent of lessons teaching was good or better, which includes one very good lesson. The staff working in these stages have a good knowledge of how young children learn. An appropriate range of activities are planned for the different age groups in the class and this results in pupils improving their knowledge and understanding in a structured way. Teaching in Key Stage 2 was more variable. Thirty seven per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better, which includes one lesson that was very good. Sixty three per cent of lessons were satisfactory, but a number of these contained unsatisfactory elements of teaching. In several observations the lesson began very well, but the pace dropped off and pupils were insufficiently challenged by the overall quality of the lesson. In addition to this, less able pupils in upper Key Stage 2 were not given sufficient direct support from the teacher to help them achieve what was expected in the lesson. Teachers are competent at teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has given consistency to teaching in both areas, which is satisfactory overall in English and good in mathematics. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with appropriate programmes of work and they achieve as well as their peers as a result.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory. The balance across and within some subjects needs to be improved, especially in upper Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory. Work is matched to pupils' needs in class and specific additional support is given to individual pupils or small groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is satisfactory overall. Moral and social development is a strong aspect of the school's work. Pupils develop a good knowledge of their local culture, but they have little appreciation of the wider cultural diversity of the world in which they live. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff show a good level of care for the pupils. Procedures for monitoring and supporting their academic and personal development are unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is purposeful and focused on raising standards. The role of other key managers in shaping the direction of the school, including the deputy headteacher is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	As yet, the governors have not had the opportunity to share in the management of the school, but are very eager to become actively involved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of performance is unsatisfactory. There are no secure procedures in place for identifying strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The use of resources, including specific grants, is satisfactory. The school has begun to apply the principles of best value when considering resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • The school has high expectations of the pupils. • The Catholic ethos and sense of values this promotes. • Children behave well and they are helped to become mature and responsible. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some concern that children are not having enough homework. • The range of activities outside lessons. • Some concern was expressed that parents did not know how their children were getting on.

The inspectors uphold the positive views of the parents. However, the school aims are very long and are not clearly understood by all. Additionally, there is not a mission statement to give the school community a common goal to work towards, which would further improve the ethos of the school. Evidence collected during the inspection shows that parents concerns about homework and knowledge about how their children are getting on were related to the previous school year. Parents feel much happier about current arrangements. Inspectors found that the range of visits and visitors to support pupils' learning are good. The extra-activities related to sport are good, but there are fewer activities based on developing pupils' artistic or musical talents and this could be improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards of attainment for children on entry to the school are below expectation overall. Staff work hard to develop children's personal and social education so that they have a firm foundation on which to build as they settle into the school. Children are provided with appropriate activities and experiences that cover the six areas of learning required. They are frequently provided with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge across several areas simultaneously. For example, when using the water tray they fill up different containers, talk about which one holds the most and share the equipment. They are developing language, mathematics and their social skills all at the same time. All children have a full year in the reception class and this gives even the younger pupils the opportunity to have had sufficient experiences to prepare them for the Key Stage 1 curriculum. By the time they are at the end of the reception year, most of the pupils have made good progress and achieve the learning goals for this Foundation Stage.

2. Trends over time show pupils' performance in the end of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments to be close to the national average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics. The school has given priority to teaching reading in ability groups and this includes developing some writing skills. Improvement in standards has taken place as a result. In the Year 2000 tests, all pupils reached the expected level in reading, with 45 per cent achieving the higher level, level 3. In writing tests, a small number of pupils, 9 per cent, did not reach the expected level and no pupils achieved the higher level, level 3. In the mathematics tests, all pupils reached the expected level and 27 per cent achieved level 3. Overall, performance in the Year 2000 tests and assessments was well above the average for all schools and similar schools in reading and mathematics. In writing, performance was in line with the averages. The results in national tests and assessments have improved on those reported in the previous inspection.

3. In Key Stage 2, trends over time in the national tests and assessments show that the pupils' performance in English and science has been below the national average, but in line with the average in mathematics. In comparison with the national picture, the trend in the school's results in these core subject results has been broadly in line with the national trend. The school has given the same priority to teaching in ability groups as in Key Stage 1. In addition, the pupils are generally grouped by ability for teaching English, mathematics and science so that work can be levelled at their specific need. This has had an impact on the standards achieved and this is reflected in the Year 2000 tests and assessments. Results show an improvement from the previous years. All pupils achieved the expected level, level 4, in all core subjects. In comparison with all schools and similar schools, performance is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The results of the tests and assessments have improved on those reported in the previous inspection.

4. Each year the number of pupils taking the tests is small and this makes comparison of data unreliable. It is more important for the school to analyse the performance of each group pupils against their own previous performance and against previous data on the performance group in order to assess if pupils are making sufficient progress. At present, the school's procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do and for tracking their progress are insufficiently developed to provide sufficient data to do this. Little use is made of statistical data made available to the school through the nationally provided package that is customised for each school individually. Furthermore the school does not set challenging targets for each pupil individually so that their prior learning is built on systematically and they

make consistently good progress as they move through the school.

5. In work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainments in English are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. After a generally low standard on entry to the school pupils make good progress to reach this level by the end of Key Stage 1. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The higher ability pupils, reported as not reaching the standards of which they were capable in the previous inspection, are now attaining at a satisfactory level. The less able pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, however, are not achieving as well as they might, even though the lessons are well planned to give differently levelled work. This is because they do not receive sufficient attention from the teacher in many lessons and the pupils frequently struggle to complete their tasks without intervention to help them understand. This is evident in the majority of lessons observed.

6. In reading, all pupils achieve satisfactorily, largely because of the intensive support that they receive in well-targeted group lessons each week. In Key Stage 1, the less able pupils point to pictures in books and say what they are. They recognise their name based on the initial letter. Others read simple sentences and make up sentences about characters in their book. In Key Stage 2, more able pupils read quite fluently, but without confidence and expression. They have sufficient research skills to look up information using reference material. In Key Stage 1, pupils try hard to put their thoughts onto paper and read their efforts to the teacher afterwards. Their handwriting is not well formed and is frequently misplaced on the page. By the time pupils are in upper Key Stage 2, standards of handwriting are almost always below what is expected for pupils of this age. While some pupils can write neatly in specific handwriting lessons, they do not use the skills they have in their general work and words are frequently printed not joined. Pupils understand the purpose of writing in different styles for different effects. They have learned to write expressively in stories and in poetry, but this sometimes lacks imagination and flair in the use of language.

7. During the inspection work seen in mathematics in Key Stage 1 was in line with expectations. From a low level when they enter school, pupils build on their knowledge of number and apply this to help them to solve number sums and problems. They make good progress. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to count by rote. They recognise and name shapes and talk about the differences between them positively. They are confident to use the computer to help them in their work on shape. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment continues to be in line with the expected levels for pupils of this age. Progress through the key stage is satisfactory and pupils generally have work set that challenges them. Pupils are grouped by ability and work is pitched at a level that builds on what they have done before. Whilst this is an improvement since the last inspection for the more able pupils, pupils in the lowest ability group in upper Key Stage 2 are often left unsupported with their work and struggle to get it right. In Key Stage 2, pupils in the lower key stage work out problems using different denominations of money. They use several strategies of calculation to help them check their answers. In the upper key stage, pupils use their knowledge of tables to exchange fractions to percentages and vice versa. They use their knowledge to work out problems.

8. Pupils' attainments in science work seen are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils learn about a satisfactory range of topics in each key stage, and their progress in the long term is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment overall was below expectations. The school has given more time to teaching the subject and also developed guidelines to help teacher's plan more effectively. As a result, there are better opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and more opportunities for experimentation. Pupils build on their early knowledge and understanding and make good progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils know about pushing and pulling forces. They understand about their senses and about the human body. They know about the dangers of electricity and about mains and battery power. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have begun

to learn to conduct experiments and investigations, although they do not fully understand the need for a fair test in experiments. They have found ways of separating different materials from each other and have conducted simple investigations with magnets and electrical circuits. Pupils know about the human body, life and growth.

9. In information and communication technology, the standard of attainment is broadly in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. This is a decline in standards since the last inspection and is attributed to the lack of direct skills teaching and assessment procedures. Pupils in Key Stage 1 classes nearly always work in pairs on computers and many work confidently and co-operatively, helping each other, discussing their work and often showing appreciation of each other's efforts. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to use the computer regularly and by the end of Key Stage 2 they understand how to use the computer to support their learning in other subjects. Pupils understand the importance of the use of technology for communication. They make regular use of the Internet to find out information about a wide range of subjects and issues. All pupils have an electronic mail address, although they have not used this form of communicating with each other or the wider community yet. Pupils are making satisfactory progress and achievements are in line with their abilities.

10. In art and design, design and technology, music and physical education pupils are attaining in line with national expectations in both key stages. The standard of attainment has improved in design and technology since the last inspection when it was below age related expectations throughout the school. The adoption of a national scheme of work, which helps the teachers to plan work progressively, has impacted on standards. More able pupils have a good level of attainment in team games skills in Key Stage 2. In geography and history pupils attain in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1, but below expectations in Key Stage 2. This is due to a combination of factors such as the subjects only being taught in alternate terms, unsatisfactory resources and unsatisfactory assessment of pupils' progress to check how well pupils have progressed against the things they were expected to learn when the topics began.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, relative to their prior attainment. Focused teaching and support, related to individual needs, is given to pupils. The progress of more able pupils is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Acknowledgement is given to their needs across the school and they are set challenging tasks. Graded and extension work for more able pupils is usually provided at a level which challenges them. There is only one child in the school for whom English is a second language and the progress made by this pupil is in line with the peer group.

12. The school has put some systems in place that are contributing to raising standards. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils are taught the appropriate curriculum for their age and are also grouped by ability so that all tasks can be pitched at a level appropriate to their needs. They make good gains in their learning. Furthermore, either the teacher or support assistant teaches each different age-range of pupils as a small group at designated times during the week. This allows for intensive work to be presented and for pupils to be challenged to achieve their individual best. In Key Stage 2, pupils are ability grouped for most lessons so that work can be set that matches the needs of the group. This generally has a positive impact on standards. Additionally booster classes are provided at particular times in the year for pupils who are almost achieving the next level of attainment. The introduction of reading groups across the school, so that pupils can be taught at a level appropriate to their ability rather just by their age, has had a positive impact on standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils develop good attitudes to learning. In spite of the under-developed induction programme they readily settle into school routines. The high level of enthusiasm for school makes all pupils interested in learning and aids their concentration. At lunch with the inspectors they happily describe their love of school and their favourite subjects. Such positive attitudes, already identified in the previous inspection report, make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

14. The good behaviour throughout the school flows from the strong Catholic ethos that demands respect for those in authority and unquestioning obedience to regulations. There is no recent history of exclusion and no evidence of bullying or harassment. Children treat one another with friendly politeness, both in class and at play, and an atmosphere of calm pervades the school. Such good levels of behaviour, acknowledged by some 95 per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire, improves access to the curriculum by creating an atmosphere of learning. The sound relationships among the pupils and with adults are characterised by respect and politeness.

15. Pupils respond promptly to instructions from staff, as in the dining room when noise levels were judged to be excessive and a simple gesture from the midday supervisor was immediately effective. In the playground the children play happily together without being boisterous or aggressive. Pupils generally act responsibly showing satisfactory progress in their personal development. They speak confidently in class, work well together and take responsibilities seriously, as when older pupils were asked to set out tables following assembly. They also develop awareness and concern for the disadvantaged sections of society by supporting charity events, such as CAFOD, the local hospice and 'red nose day'. There was less evidence however of pupils exercising personal initiative or working independently to promote personal responsibility.

16. Attendance rates of 90.9 per cent during this inspection period are unsatisfactory, falling well below the national average, and showing a decline from the time of the previous inspection. The absence rates do have a negative impact on standards as the time available for pupils' learning is affected. For example, half the pupils missed from 10 per cent to 20 per cent of sessions, while several pupils missed 25 per cent. Absences were all authorised with the consent of parents. Some absences were for term-time holidays, but most were for one or two days at a time, pointing to a limited commitment by parents to the education of their children.

17. Deficiencies in marking the registers, noted at the previous inspection, have been made good, and computerisation of attendance records helps to analyse patterns of non-attendance for early follow-up.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and good and better in 50 per cent of lessons across the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when unsatisfactory teaching was observed in 8 per cent of lessons.

19. During this inspection the quality of teaching was good in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The teacher or the support assistant taught lessons and teaching was never less than satisfactory. In 73 per cent of lessons teaching was good or better, which includes one very good lesson. The staff working in this stage have a good knowledge of how young children learn. An appropriate range of activities are planned for the different age groups in the class and this results in pupils improving their knowledge and understanding in a structured way. When teaching was very good, the teacher had high expectations of pupils' achievement; pupils were helped to understand what was expected of them and the tasks set allowed them to use the skills they already had to promote very good learning.

20. Teaching in Key Stage 2 was more variable. Thirty seven per cent of lessons were judged to be good or better, which includes one lesson that was very good. Sixty three per cent of lessons were satisfactory, but a number of these contained unsatisfactory elements of teaching. In several observations the lesson began very well, but the pace dropped off and pupils were insufficiently challenged by the overall quality of the lesson. In addition to this, less able pupils in upper Key Stage 2 were not given sufficient direct support from the teacher to help them achieve what is was they were expected to learn in the lesson. In the very good lesson seen in Key Stage 2, subject knowledge of physical education contributed to motivating the pupils. The organisation of the lesson allowed pupils to be active and this promoted good exercise. They learnt new skills as well as practising more familiar ones and used both well in small team games.

21. The schools good strategy for teaching literacy is effective. Staff plan well to ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are built on as they move through the key stages. This results in clear, organised and logical lesson plans. Good planning leads to teaching that is well structured and tasks are set at an appropriate ability level rather than matched to the age of the pupils in the class. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make gains in their learning based on what they already knew and could do. The school has structured the teaching of literacy to include one lesson each week, which is focused on improving reading skills. Associated comprehension skills and some writing activities are also built into these sessions. The pupils make good gains in learning due to this intensive work that is set at their ability level. Another session in each class is based on spelling. Pupils learn word recognition and about the sounds letters make within words.

22. Teachers are competent at teaching basic numeracy skills. The organisation of lessons is satisfactory and the strategy implemented by the school allows the majority of pupils to keep up with the work and complete the tasks set. The lessons have a defined structure, which includes a mental mathematics session, the teaching or reinforcement of a skill and a group activity. During this time, teachers generally check pupils' understanding through focused questions and give them individual help if this is required. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, making satisfactory progress overall. At the end of the lesson, pupils are confident to answer questions and to give the answer to sums. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of this time to encourage pupils to talk about what they have learnt or about how well they think they have done.

23. The adoption of literacy and numeracy strategies has given consistency to the teaching of English and mathematics. Teachers encourage pupils to use the skills they have learnt in other subjects. For example, pupils use measuring skills in design and technology and writing skills to present what they know in history. However, pupils rarely use the handwriting skills they learn other than in their practise books. Teachers do not encourage pupils to join letters consistently or neatly and present work in way that would add to the overall quality. In upper Key Stage 2, the pupils do not have a good model to learn from, as the teacher's work is frequently untidy and disjointed. The use of information technology to promote standards in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. During the inspection, pupils were confident to use programs set up on the computer to word process or read information from the Internet, for example. However, no skill teaching was observed and this relates to a decline in standards from those reported in the last inspection.

24. The effectiveness of teachers' planning is good in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The long-term plans are translated into a good range of activities for each age range of pupils in the class. These are then further adapted for different ability groups. This results in suitable challenges being set for pupils and the pace of work and the productivity of learning is good. Pupils understand what is expected of them because the staff are clear what it is they want the pupils to learn and take care to explain this in precise and understandable language. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. In Key Stage 2, planning is satisfactory. Long term plans for subjects other than English and mathematics are an overview of what is to be learnt. Medium term planning is not broken down sufficiently to make it clear precisely what it is the teacher wants the pupils to learn as a result of the lesson. However, newly adopted short-term lesson plans make this clear as they detail the objective of the lesson, what it is the pupils should know, and how this is to be achieved. These plans help to give structure to each individual lesson and make it more clear what knowledge and skill teachers intend to teach. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately. The adoption of the short term lesson planning has improved the overall quality of planning.

25. Expectations of what the pupils can do are good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. There is a good emphasis placed on developing a positive climate for learning. This results in a good level of intellectual and creative learning. Pupils show good interest in their work, keep a good level of concentration on their tasks and even the youngest think for themselves. This contributes to the good progress they make. In Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils face the challenge of learning tasks positively and learning is satisfactory. However, while some lessons begin very well and demands are placed on pupils, teachers do not maintain the momentum of this pace following the introduction. As a result, the effort pupils put into tasks dwindles as the lesson progresses and learning opportunities are lost. In addition, insufficient opportunities for lower ability groups to benefit from direct teaching, at the level they require to help them get on well, occurs in some lessons in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils become bored or disenchanted and occasionally opt out altogether. Overall, pupils' learning, including the pace at which they work and how much they do in a lesson, is satisfactory. However, work is not consistently challenging across the school and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use personal research skills and initiative. The use of a special educational needs teacher and support assistant is satisfactory. They have a limited time available in school. The majority of their work is planned so that they can support as many pupils as possible, either in their classes or in small groups outside of the classroom, for more specific programmes of work.

26. In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the use of support staff and volunteers is very good and contributes most effectively to pupils' learning. Adults are well briefed and they work as a team encouraging, supporting and praising the pupils thus giving them consistent messages about how well they are doing. The way in which the staff have planned to teach the different age groups of pupils separately for different areas of learning or subjects is very good. It ensures that all pupils have the right curriculum presented to them, but also the opportunity to work in small groups which means work can be targeted to meet individual needs. There is evidence of support staff being used less effectively in upper Key Stage 2 when they are not given sufficient direction from the teacher. The time available in lessons is used well. This is particularly evident when two separate lessons are planned in a session. For example, in lower Key Stage 2 pupils cleared away quickly at the end of a numeracy lesson and grouped together quickly on the carpet for the beginning of a music lesson. No time was lost and continuity of learning was maintained. However, the time allocated to teaching physical education and music in upper Key Stage 2 does not correspond to the time the subjects are actually taught and this is unsatisfactory.

27. Opportunities for assessing what the pupils know and can do occur during lessons when teachers ask pupils questions to check their understanding. The final part of lessons is frequently used to review what has been covered in the session. However, these opportunities are not used effectively to help the children understand whether they have achieved what the teacher intended or to explain how they could further improve. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and insufficient use is made of the pupils' own work to help them understand their own learning. Teachers frequently ask pupils to redo work to help them understand, but there is very little evidence that this happens and pupils make the same mistakes again, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. This has not improved since the last inspection. Assessment and evaluation is built in to the new short term lesson plans, but it is too soon to see how this information is used to inform teachers' future plans or to set targets for pupils so that they know what they need to do to improve.

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

28. The curriculum has satisfactory breadth; all subjects are taught. The amount of time spent on each subject is broadly satisfactory overall, although there is some imbalance among the foundation subjects in Key Stage 2. For example, geography and history are taught in alternate terms and the actual time given to teaching physical education and music in the upper key stage does not reflect planned time allocated. All subjects now have a policy and a scheme of work in place. This is a satisfactory improvement on the situation at the time of the previous report. However, these have not been in place for long and teachers are still adapting national schemes to meet school needs. There are satisfactory long-term plans, in outline form, for what will be taught in all subjects. These are based on model schemes of work produced by the government. However, with the recent changes to the National Curriculum requirements, some subjects, such as geography and science are being redrafted, and information technology is being developed in more detail each term through the medium term planning. These long-term plans continue through the whole school, giving a clear guide to teachers as to what they should be teaching each term and each year. Information and communication technology needs to be planned in a more structured way in the long term to show how it will support learning in other subjects. At the moment, most of the planning is at the stage of planning each individual lesson, rather than being a long-term view as to how information and communication technology can be used to enhance each subject. Information technology was seen to be used in several subjects

during the inspection, such as geography and science. However, this is not often included in teachers' plans; it occurs more on a lesson by lesson basis.

29. The depth of study within each subject is satisfactory on the whole, although the balance within some still needs to be improved, such as the experimental approach to science, the practical approach to geography and the 3D aspect of art. Balance within English is good, with an appropriate emphasis being given to reading, although insufficient emphasis is given to handwriting and general presentation of work both within English lessons, and when writing in other subjects.

30. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers make good plans to ensure the work that is given to them is appropriate to the pupils' understanding, and additional support is provided in the form of a specialist support assistant and a specialist teacher for a brief period each week.

31. The school's approach to literacy has been good, with well-planned lessons aimed at different skills. Some lessons follow the literacy strategy guidelines very closely, and others are aimed more directly at specific areas such as reading on one day, and spelling and phonics on another day. The adaptations to the literacy strategy are good, and are well focused on the needs of the pupils as the school identifies them at the moment.

32. The approach to numeracy is satisfactory. It has been in place for a shorter time than the literacy strategy, but is beginning to show sound results. An appropriate emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mental mathematics and basic number skills. Less work using skills to solve problems was seen during the inspection.

33. Extra-curricular activities are well provided in some areas of the curriculum, with particularly good physical education in the form of taking part in many school teams such as football for girls as well as boys, rugby, cricket tournaments, athletics, basketball and hockey. There are fewer activities based on developing pupils' artistic or musical talents. Pupils go on visits to many places of interest, such as an industrial museum and a Life Exhibition Centre. Some of the visits out are well connected to specific lessons or topics of work, but there is a need to ensure that all visits out have a clear purpose in supporting the pupils' learning. Pupils have also taken part in residential weeks at a field studies centre and in a local cake competition. There have been visits into the school by an artist, storyteller, and a former local coal miner.

34. All pupils have equal access to the whole of the curriculum. Girls take part in the same physical education games as the boys, for example. Lessons are planned for the less able pupils so they can take a full part in them. Reading, for example, is approached particularly through ability groups. This provides good opportunities for all pupils to progress well. The youngest children, who are in a class with pupils in Key Stage 1, have a well-planned curriculum based on the areas of learning for children who are under five years old, aiming towards the Early Learning Goals for pupils of this age. All pupils in this class receive well-planned sessions taught by the very able nursery nurse in many lessons so that they can benefit from lessons planned separately for them.

35. Pupils' personal and social education is satisfactorily provided for. Sex education, for example, is taught through science lessons, with assistance from a visiting nurse for the girls. Drugs education is given added emphasis by the involvement of the local community police and drugs education officer during a two-week intensive period. Much of the pupils'

personal and social education also comes through the way teachers and other staff run their lessons, break times and dinner times, in informal ways.

36. There is little positive contact with the school's local community at present. Links are currently informal, and not generally well maintained with any specific purpose of supporting the pupils' education. This is barely satisfactory at the moment, but new school governors are keen to develop this.

37. The school's links with other institutions are unsatisfactory. Positive links are beginning to develop through a local 'Education Action Zone' initiative, and the co-ordinator for numeracy taken part in training with staff from other schools and has delivered some of this training herself for staff from other schools. Links with the nursery are, however, unsatisfactory. One visit by a teacher, and two afternoon sessions is not a good preparation for life in the school. Little attention is given to the reports, such as 'records of achievement', that come from the nursery with the children. Links with the secondary school to which most pupils go are insufficiently structured or managed to provide pupils with a good and secure introduction there.

38. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactorily provided for through assemblies, moments for reflection and prayer at the beginning and end of many sessions, and in the awe and wonder that some pupils experience in lessons, such as poetry or art. One pupil, for example, was observed to be reverently carrying a pair of sycamore seed 'helicopters', as though they were sacred objects; he believed them to be butterfly eggs.

39. Pupils are taught right from wrong in many ways, both formally through circle times, when all pupils in the class come together and explore many issues, or through the drugs and sex education lessons. This aspect of pupils' development is also promoted through on-going day to day ways in which staff relate to pupils, correcting their behaviour and their attitudes. This is a positive aspect of the school.

40. Another strong aspect of what the school does well is the encouragement of pupils to be sociable with each other. They work together well, in pairs or groups at, for instance the computers, or in science experiments, in role-play or reading groups, and in physical education games. They are encouraged to be kind and helpful to each other at break times and at dinner. They help each other if someone is hurt or upset in the playground.

41. What pupils learn about their own local culture is good. They discover and understand much of the heritage of the area past and present. There is, however, little attempt to awaken them to the fact that Britain as a whole is now a multi-cultural society, and that other cultures - not so far away - have different ways of dressing, speaking, celebrating festivals, painting and behaving. Much more could be done in this area of the pupils' education. This was also the situation at the time of the previous inspection, and nothing appears to have improved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school makes sound provision for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. The deficiencies noted at the previous inspection have been made good, with improvements in health and safety and child protection procedures and in the recording of absences.

43. Arrangements for the health and safety of pupils are now fully compliant, though more formal procedures for reporting and recording hazards are recommended. Improvements to part of the perimeter fence have enhanced the personal safety of the children, but the continued incursions of dogs through other gaps in the fence are a threat to the children's health. Failure to resolve the dispute that permits a neighbour to drive across the school playing field constitutes a further threat to health and safety, though a solution to this latter appears imminent at the time of writing this report.

44. Parents report that the school knows their children well and cares for them appropriately, particularly if they have special educational needs. 97 per cent of respondents to the questionnaire said that they would feel confident about approaching the school with any concerns about their children. Most pupils come to the school via a local nursery, and while there is some preparation for the transition to the school, the arrangements require further development to have a better impact on learning.

45. Despite the unsatisfactory attendance figures for the most recent reporting year, the school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are now much improved. Early and determined follow-up of absence and lateness forms part of a joint strategy agreed with the Education Welfare Officer. A computer software package that is used enables patterns of absence to be identified, while the monthly newsletter reminds parents of the responsibilities they agreed to in their contract with the school.

46. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils know what the school requires of them, and they are familiar with the awards and sanctions policy.

47. The procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development lack vigour and are unsatisfactory. There is little evidence of pupils working independently or engaging in personal research. Little use of computers to aid individual learning was seen during the inspection, and there are limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or to exercise initiative. Annual reports do not set clear targets for future development, and they do not include a facility for pupils to comment on their progress.

48. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are inadequate and unsatisfactory. The previous inspection highlighted deficiencies in assessment procedures and in the use of information available. While the school can present some evidence that improvements were made in the short term, the situation has not been monitored and the current situation closely reflects that previously reported. There continues to be insufficient linkage to National Curriculum levels of attainment in long term planning based on national test and assessment data. While teachers' assessments at the end of key stage now more closely match the test results, they do not have a clear view of what pupils' work should be like at each National Curriculum level across the two key stages. There are insufficient opportunities for staff to work together and agree what pupils work at each level is truly like.

49. The staff use an initial assessment of what the pupils know and can do when they first start school. The early year's co-ordinator and teacher put this information to good use for identifying individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses so that they can set appropriate work. However, there was no data available in school to show how this information is used to help to track pupils' progress over time. There is no consistent system for assessing pupils' attainment as pupils move through the school. For many subjects staff do not keep any on-going notes or information at the end of a topic to show what pupils have learned and how they have made progress over a period of time. Where there are systems, for example in English and mathematics, teachers are not using the information gathered to alter any aspects of the curriculum to help to improve standards of attainment. In addition, subject co-

ordinators are not involved in using assessment information to plan future developments in the curriculum or set targets for improvement in pupils' performance.

50. Pupils' personal development is not monitored in any consistent way across the school and this is unsatisfactory. On an informal basis, staff recognise pupils' needs effectively and usually respond to them in a satisfactory way. However, individual targets are not set for all pupils so they are clear what they need to do to improve and there are no records of pupils' achievements as they move through the school. There is only limited evidence of pupils being involved in self-assessment. When this does happen, it is usually on an ad hoc basis during lessons, rather than a carefully planned opportunity. In information and communication technology a form of self-assessment has been introduced at the end of particular modules of teaching. This provides a model that could be used in other subjects, as it has been successful in making pupils aware of their own skills. Pupils who are identified as having special educational needs have individual education plans, but the targets written as part of these plans are not sufficiently specific or measurable and are not consistently reviewed regularly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The parents' very positive views of the school are highlighted in the comments of the thirty-five parents who attended the meeting with the inspectors. They emphasised the strong Catholic ethos and the sense of values it promotes. Their views were echoed in the 36 responses to the parents' questionnaire. More than 90 per cent of them agreed that their children like school, that they behave well, and that the school helps the children to become mature and responsible. Inspectors uphold these positive views. Opinion was more divided on other matters, 29 per cent were concerned that their children might not be having the right amount of homework, and 44 per cent were unhappy about the range of activities outside lessons. Importantly, the highest percentage of parents agreed that the school has high expectations of their children, and that parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns about their children's progress. The evidence gathered during the inspection shows that parental concerns regarding these issues were related to the previous school year. The overall view of the parent and school partnership is that it provides a platform for joint work in raising standards.

52. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. The monthly bulletin provides useful information about school and parish events, but might be more useful if it offered more information about curriculum matters, such as what groups of pupils will be learning in the forthcoming period. The governor's annual report to parents has been much improved since the previous inspection report. It is recognised that the school prospectus requires updating and upgrading to meet the needs of parents and statutory requirements. Information about pupils' progress is satisfactory. Pupils' annual reports are not sufficiently informative and they vary considerably in quality. Parents are pleased that the reports tell them whether the children have enjoyed a subject, if they have been interested and if they need to 'try harder'. The reports give little information about what the pupils have learned, for example what skills they have developed, and what they need to do to improve. Consequently, the reports provide little information about pupils' progress. In addition, they do not provide the opportunity for parents and children to add their comments.

53. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at school both indirectly, through the successful fundraising activities of the very supportive Friends of St. Joseph's, and more directly through the committed classroom support of a few parents. The reading diaries and the homework diaries are used well. They enable parents to monitor their children's progress and to support them in their learning. The informal interaction between parents and teachers at the school gates provides an additional opportunity for parents to seek information and advice about their children's progress. The home and school agreement contracts parents to ensure their children's regular attendance. More vigorous enforcement of this would enable parents to have a greater impact on their children's learning by allowing pupils who have frequent absence greater access to the curriculum with more regular attendance at school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The headteacher is very new to the post, but has already shown that she has a very clear vision for the way forward for the school. She has demonstrated very good leadership and management skills thus far, for example in analysing current strengths and weaknesses and producing an interim school development plan to provide some direction. The contribution of the headteacher to the school to date has been purposeful and focused on raising standards.

55. Since the last inspection, the school staff have spent time implementing national initiatives, such as literacy and numeracy, and reviewing provision for information and communication technology to be taught. The focus the school has placed on developing reading skills has improved pupils' attainment, but overall standards are not significantly different in English and mathematics than those reported in the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology are currently in line with those expected for pupils at the end of each key stage, whereas they were reported to be above expectations in the previous inspection. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory overall. There have been improvements in pupils' attainment in science and in design and technology. In addition to this, the progress of more able pupils is comparable to other ability groups. However, there is no evidence that the key issues relating to monitoring and evaluating and developing the role of the co-ordinator have been addressed at all. Many minor issues identified in the previous inspection continue to be issues to be addressed, for example assessment. However, there is a satisfactory commitment and capacity to improve.

56. The implementation of the school's aims and values is not securely reflected in the daily life of the school. The importance of pupils' personal development, including moral and social development, has an appropriate priority within the Catholic ethos of the school and parents appreciate this. However, the general school aims are very long and are not clearly understood by staff, communicated to the pupils or specific to St. Joseph's school. Consequently, it is difficult to tell how the aims impact on standards. Furthermore, the school does not have a 'mission statement' or shared vision towards which all members of the school community can strive.

57. The school governors are a newly convened body and they have not had the opportunity to successfully identify the school's strengths and weaknesses through regular meetings and formal visits as yet. Governors spoken with during the inspection are well informed about the school in general and about the responsibilities they have. The governors are enthusiastic to develop their role. However, they will require a good deal of support and training to prepare them for their role in shaping the direction of the school and in monitoring and evaluating its performance, including setting appropriate priorities for development. No evidence could be found during the inspection to show that issues raised in the previous inspection linked to the role of the governing body were addressed. However, the combination

of new governing body and headteacher places the school in a satisfactory position to build on the developments initiated by the headteacher. Currently, not all statutory requirements are met with regard to information contained in school documents, but this is under review now.

58. During the inspection, no information relating to action planning or school development planning following the last inspection was found. The deputy headteacher was able to discuss the process with inspectors, but no staff were able to show a copy of any previous plans. There was no evidence available for inspectors to show that the issues highlighted in the previous report linked to development planning were addressed. Furthermore, there was no evidence to show how the school has identified strengths and weaknesses since the last inspection or how initiatives that have taken place have had an impact on standards. The headteacher has undertaken an audit of the current position of the school. As a result, she has developed an interim plan to drive school improvement and has set priorities according to most recent developments and her perceived needs. She has already shown her ability to identify the direction in which the school needs to move to improve further. Whilst this is satisfactory in the short term, the process of planning for school development with appropriate priorities and agreed action linked to procedures for monitoring and evaluating performance and good financial planning needs urgent review to help the school move forward successfully.

59. The role of the deputy headteacher is under-developed and is unsatisfactory. He has had insufficient opportunity to develop many aspects of school management, including monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's performance to assess strengths and weaknesses. For example, work initiated on assessment has not been tracked or maintained. The deputy has insufficient knowledge of the action taken to address the issues raised in the previous inspection and lacks sound understanding of why particular areas have been priorities for development since then. There is an urgent need to develop the role of the deputy headteacher so that he has a clear understanding of responsibilities and can effectively support the headteacher in future developments. In addition, the deputy gives insufficient attention to his role as a co-ordinator. He relies too much on the fact that as a small staff team issues can be addressed 'informally', without consistent procedures for example.

60. There is no evidence available to show that the role of the co-ordinator was addressed following the last inspection and this is unsatisfactory. While the majority of staff are trying hard to lead the subjects they manage successfully, they have had very little training to help them to know how to do this effectively. The work the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have done to ensure successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, with no clear guidance as to what their role was, is commendable. This is especially the case in literacy as the co-ordinator was a part-time, newly qualified teacher when she took co-ordination of this core subject on board. Her work has had a clear impact on raising standards and this is reflected in current levels of attainment. Overall, the co-ordinators have insufficient knowledge of the planned curriculum, they do not have a role in monitoring or evaluating performance data or teaching and they are not involved effectively in planning future developments or setting targets for improvement in the subjects they manage.

61. The headteacher has worked hard in a short space of time to gain a good working knowledge of the school's budget. She has made good use of the services available through the local education authority and is now in a position to link expenditure to educational priorities based on an assessment of standards. However, there is no evidence to show whether the issues highlighted in the previous inspection that were linked to school development and finances were addressed prior to the work recently undertaken by the

headteacher. The governing body has not yet been in a position to be involved in financial planning or to monitor this in any way. However, they have established a committee to take on these responsibilities in the future.

62. It is not clear in school documentation how the school has applied the principles of seeking best value in its work since the time of the last inspection. In addition, there are no procedures for monitoring or evaluating expenditure and this is unsatisfactory. However, the headteacher has, in the short time since her appointment, demonstrated that she has a clear understanding of the need to apply these principles in the use of the school's resources. Since the beginning of the school year she has begun to compare standards and costs with other small schools locally and to review the value of contracted-out services, for example school meals. In liaison with the staff she has undertaken an audit of the use of curriculum time and staff have been asked to justify the balance of time spent in their classes on subjects other than English and mathematics. In addition, the headteacher has begun to challenge the use of resources to provide activities outside of the curriculum linked with the involvement in the 'Educational Action Zone Initiative'. The headteacher is in a good position to develop this work further with the new governing body.

63. The school is suitably staffed and the teacher pupil ratio overall is favourable. There are no staff new to the school at present, but the procedures applied for inducting new staff, and particularly for newly qualified staff, are unsatisfactory. The staff handbook is very out of date and not a relevant document for staff to use as a guide to the school. The mentoring system set up for new staff has not been applied by the deputy headteacher whose responsibility it is.

64. Recent major building works have improved the external appearance and safety of the building. However, the school does not have suitable access for disabled persons. The library is a under-developed and under-used resource and does not contribute to raising standards. It does not present a pleasant area for pupils to browse, thus gaining a love of books or conduct research to develop pupils' skills of independent learning. The youngest children do not have on-going access to a secure play area or sufficient large apparatus and toys for them to further develop their physical or creative skills. The 'friends of the school' are raising funds to enhance the out-side play area, but an unresolved issue concerning a boundary fence means that the pupils are put in constant danger from motor vehicles, and from dogs fouling on the play areas.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to improve standards the school should:

- (1) set the school's aims and values, including a 'mission statement' for the school community to work towards by:
 - consulting with staff, governors, parents and children to agree what the school stands for;
 - setting high, yet achievable, goals so that staff and pupils are committed to learning and have high expectations of success.

(Paragraphs: 55-62)

- (2) improve the role of the deputy headteacher by:
 - re-defining roles and responsibilities through the review of the job description so that there is good delegation;
 - making it clear how responsibilities will be monitored and their success measured;
 - providing opportunities for leadership by example, so that staff are

- motivated and inspired;
 - involving the deputy in managing change so as to improve the school;
 - ensuring appropriate training is available;
 (Paragraphs: 55, 58, 59, 61-63)

- (3) develop the role of the co-ordinator by:
 - providing appropriate management training;
 - developing clear guidelines for the role;
 - providing opportunities for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the subjects they manage and the standards achieved;
 - involving co-ordinators in planning future developments and setting targets for improvement.
 (Paragraphs: 55, 59, 60)

- (4) develop procedures for identifying appropriate school priorities and targets that are linked to good financial planning and reflect the school's aims by:
 - fully consulting with governors, staff, parents and pupils;
 - undertaking regular audits of the school's strengths and weaknesses;
 - linking educational priorities to financial planning and supporting developments
 - careful financial management;
 - setting targets for longer term improvement.
 (Paragraphs: 55-62)

- (5) developing procedures for assessing pupils in all aspects of their work and personal development by:
 - implementing effective arrangements for assessing what pupils know and can do;
 - maintaining consistent records of pupils' achievements.
 (Paragraphs: 4, 5, 9, 10, 27, 47-50, 55, 59)

- (6) monitoring pupils' achievement to identify how well they are making progress and set targets for improvement by:
 - using effective practices for monitoring how well pupils are doing and
 - diagnosing how they might improve;
 - providing effective support and advice for all pupils about their academic
 - progress and personal development using information gathered.
 (Paragraphs: 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 20, 25, 27, 47-50, 52, 60)

- (7) use information gathered to:
 - produce consistent records in the core curriculum;
 - monitor individual pupil progress, and the progress of groups of pupils, to provide individual action plans as appropriate and guide teaching;
 - report to parents so they are clear what it is their children can and can not do and what they need to do to improve;

- diagnose strengths and weaknesses in achievements and modify planning to support pupils' performance and development.
(Paragraphs: 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 20, 25, 27, 47-50, 52, 60)
- (8) monitor and evaluate the work of the school, particularly the quality of teaching and its impact by:
- developing and implementing procedures that can be clearly understood and implemented consistently by all school managers, including co-ordinators;
 - identifying appropriate priorities and targets and take the necessary action to overcome weaknesses;
 - reviewing the progress towards targets regularly so that there is effective follow-up to ensure tasks are completed well;
 - providing the opportunities for staff and governors to reflect critically on what they can do to improve learning and develop more effective ways of working;
 - ensuring opportunities for teachers to analyse and draw on the approaches that work best and build on this.
(Paragraphs: 20, 23, 25-27, 55, 57-62, 64)
- (9) raise standards in geography and history by the end of Key Stage 2 by:
- reviewing the organisation of curriculum time allocated to teaching each subject;
 - providing appropriate resources to support the scheme of work;
 - developing assessment procedures;
 - monitoring the implementation of the planned curriculum;
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge by providing appropriate training.
(Paragraphs: 10, 28, 29, 108, 110-112, 114-116)

In addition to the key issues above, the other issues outlined below should be considered in the school's action plan:

- improve levels of attendance so that all pupils have the maximum time possible available for learning; (Paragraphs: 16, 45)
- improve the curriculum balance of science, art and geography, and music and physical education in upper Key Stage 2;
(Paragraphs: 10, 26, 28, 29, 108, 111, 112, 116, 120, 125)
- improve standards of handwriting and presentation, particularly in upper Key Stage 2;
(Paragraphs: 6, 23, 29, 81, 82, 115)
- ensure that the appropriate authority resolves the dispute regarding the boundary fence as soon as possible; (Paragraphs: 43, 64)
- develop and implement induction procedures; (Paragraph: 63)
- develop links with the local community and partner institutions; (Paragraphs: 36, 37)
- ensure that statutory requirements are met in school documentation;
(Paragraphs: 52, 57)
- provide appropriate access to the school for disabled persons. (Paragraph: 64)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	43	50	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	72
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	90.9
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

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

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11		11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (83)	100 (83)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (83)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000			11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (50)	100 (67)	100 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (33)	91 (68)	91 (68)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Where number of boys or girls, or the total number, is lower than 10, the figures have been excluded from the report so that the information contained in this report is consistent with the publication of data in the governors' annual report to

parents.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	71
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)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	24

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	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	180 080
Total expenditure	179 055
Expenditure per pupil	2 434
Balance brought forward from previous year	2 358
Balance carried forward to next year	3 383

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	72
Number of questionnaires returned	36

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	33	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	31	3	0	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	39	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	44	17	3	6
The teaching is good.	64	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	36	3	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	25	0	0	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	50	33	11	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	58	28	0	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	33	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	25	25	19	11

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Context

66. Children begin school in the first class at the beginning of the autumn term in the year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children who were four or five. The majority of children have been to local nursery schools before coming to school. Information from the main feeder nursery and the results of initial assessments of what pupils can do early after they have settled into school indicate, and inspection evidence confirms, that children's attainment is generally below the expected level when they start school. Pupils who are in the Foundation Stage of education, those in the reception year, are taught in a class with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The curriculum for the reception-aged children is suitably adapted cover all the appropriate early learning goals for pupils of this age. Either the teacher or support assistant frequently teaches the children as an individual group. At other times, pupils work independently on structured tasks or play activities. The inspection took place very early in the school year, but scrutiny of past work shows that children make good progress in the first stage of their education and most attain the nationally expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage, the reception year. There are no children on the school's register for pupils with special educational needs. However, staff monitor children closely and identify those who may require additional support as they progress through the school. Homework is provided for children. At this stage it is reading and associated activities to develop reading skills. Staff working in the Foundation Stage understand that the pupil's need more frequent and relevant opportunities for promoting creative development in an outdoor environment, and this is a planned priority for them. There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

Personal social and emotional development

67. Children make good progress in personal and social development because the class provides a welcoming environment that helps young children to settle in quickly and feel part of the school. Children in the reception year who had only been in school for a matter of weeks were quick to respond to class routines. Those pupils who have just started in Year 1, just five, show confidence and relate to adults, with each other and older pupils they know well. They are confident to try new activities and initiate ideas. For example when working in the Doctor's surgery they are the 'receptionist' and answer the phone and take messages. By the time they are five, children have developed a good level of independence in choosing activities, in dressing themselves and in their personal hygiene. Children who have just started at school have taken on class responsibilities quickly and undertake jobs, such as tidying up, efficiently. The staff and adults who help in the first class sensitively encourage children to participate in activities when they are required to sit and listen to others. Children who have just started school are very eager to participate and are keener to contribute than listen. They are learning the 'rules' for classroom behaviour and the understanding that they need to take turns. However, older pupils demonstrate a good ability to listen attentively and share in turns to talk, for example at story time when they have the opportunity to express their feelings. Children attend acts of collective worship with the rest of the school and this helps them to get to know pupils in other classes as well as developing the understanding of the different needs of other people. A pupil who had just turned five demonstrated this when talking to inspectors about people in other countries who needed their help. Children have the opportunity to mix with their friends or brothers and sisters at break-times and in sessions when pupils of different ages read together. These opportunities help the children

to develop their social skills in a range of different situations and to consider the needs of others as well as their own.

68. Teaching in this area of learning is good. The teacher provides a broad range of activities that successfully promote children's development in a variety of settings throughout the day. For example, opportunities for children to work alone with construction resources to build a structure to represent their favourite building in the village, or in groups when they use similar resources to construct the roadways through the village. Opportunities for children to share news develops turn taking and the good level of interaction from the teacher encourages them to share their experiences. Children's self-esteem is developed as staff value each child's contribution. Activities, such as role-play in 'the surgery', sand and water, help the children to develop their imagination at the same time as encouraging them to 'play' together co-operatively. Staff set very good examples for children to follow. They work together very well as a team and children can see the value of co-operating with each other as a result. They have high expectations for good behaviour and this encourages the children to do so. All children are taught to be independent as they are given regular opportunities to select from a range of activities on offer. Some children are quite dependant and reliant on staff choosing for them initially, but they very soon understand that they are 'allowed' to make their own choice a certain times during the day and can change their activities when they are ready to. Good examples of this were seen during the inspection. For example, children who had only been in school for a few weeks moved from the 'Doctor's surgery' to the water area when they had 'been to their appointment with the doctor' and were ready to experience different activity on offer in that session.

Language and literacy

69. Children become competent in key literacy skills, gaining confidence in speaking and listening, reading simple texts and writing for a range of purposes and their achievement in this area of learning is good. Children contribute to discussions positively and share their ideas and experiences. They acquire new vocabulary from listening to their teachers and each other and their speech improves in fluency and expression. Their ability to use wider range vocabulary is demonstrated by their ability to describe their walk around their village as part of their geographical study using words which give a better description of the places they have seen. All children, including those of lower ability quickly learn to recognise and link individual letters by name and sound due to the good teaching of a 'fun' programme designed to promote learning in this area. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Before long children recognise their own names in written form. The more able children know their friend's names or can read familiar words around the room. At the end of the reception year, they listen with enjoyment to stories and poems and they retell familiar stories, for example 'The Jungle Book'. Children know that print carries meaning and understand about the importance of the beginning and end of stories, that events happen in a sequence and that information can be found in 'non-fiction' books. Early writing skills are promoted through the children learning to write their own names, labels and captions. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and the alphabet to write common words and begin to construct sentences, sometimes using full stops correctly. At the end of the Foundation Stage, children write for a range of purposes and in different ways. For example children in 'the surgery' made recognisable attempts to write quite complex words on their prescriptions while others wrote lists of sandwich ingredients linked to work associated with group reading activities.

70. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are linked to all structured learning tasks and play activities. Children are very enthusiastic to participate in discussion. The organisation of literacy lessons provides children opportunities to share in the whole class element of the session with their older peers. A good focus is given to word and sentence work and, as a result, children learn to connect the names and sounds of letters and to understand that these make

up words. Questions aimed at the younger children during these times encourage them to respond and give them confidence to participate. This results in good achievement. At other times, the youngest children are taught as a group so that they can share rhymes, stories and non-fiction books that help them to learn to use and read familiar words for themselves. Children have lots of opportunities for hearing stories that they have chosen themselves and staff use this time to promote an enjoyment of words and pictures and develop good reading habits. Children are encouraged by staff to 'write' for themselves from the time that they start school. Gradually, they learn to form letters and spell simple words correctly during specific time slots, which are allocated to teaching these skills each week. Children are subsequently provided with many and varied opportunities to practise the skills they have learned and they make good progress in communicating their ideas and knowledge through writing.

Mathematical development

71. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of number initially by learning about numbers around the classroom. By the end of the Foundation Stage, they count from 0 to 10 in order and recognise the numerals associated with the numbers. Early in the reception class, children match objects, for example when doing jigsaws, and as their skills develop they sort and match objects to reorder them depending on pattern, size or shape. Water and sand activities give children lots of opportunity to experiment with volume, when they fill and empty containers of different sizes, and weight, when they compare how heavy containers are when full or empty with sand. Children enjoy joining in number rhymes and these help them to talk about and recreate patterns and use mathematical language, such as 'more than' and 'less than', 'bigger' and 'smaller'. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children talk about 'sums', adding to and taking away, the characteristics of shapes and they solve simple problems. As a result of all the experiences the children encounter, they achieve levels of attainment appropriate for their age and progress from the time they start at school is good.

72. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. A range of mathematical experiences is provided through the structured play activities that are available on a daily basis and the chance children have to participate in the daily numeracy session. The management and organisation of lessons, or parts of lessons, is good and staff are used to the best effect to support children's learning. In a similar way to literacy, children are encouraged to participate in the whole class aspect of these lessons at an individual level appropriate to their abilities. Following this, the children take part in group activities that build on their previous experiences at an appropriate level so their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts is taught through practical activities, daily routines, speaking and listening activities and opportunities for structured play. When it is appropriate, children are taught to record their observations or findings in a range of ways, for example as 'sums' or in a graphical form. Examples of this can be seen when children present their findings of a science experiment in a table or graph. When it is appropriate, numeracy work is linked to other subjects and there are planned opportunities for children to explore, think and develop as mathematicians.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Children learn about how to make sense of the world around them and this lays a good foundation for later work in science, history, geography and technology in its various forms. Children are presented with appropriate activities and consequently progress in learning is good. Most of the activities that contribute to this area of learning are based on practical experiences, which encourage the children to develop skills, knowledge and understanding that is appropriate to their age and individual ability. Children were seen studying their village during the inspection. They could talk about the routes through the village, the buildings they saw and why they were significant. All children, regardless of ability, say why particular buildings were important to them and record their findings in some way.

The children's sense of the past is also promoted through this local study. By the end of the Foundation Stage, they can talk about features of the village that were important to their grandparents and give some indication as to why. Children find out about and use technology. For example, they use construction equipment to build models of buildings and design layouts to represent their village. During the year, they have the opportunities to use food ingredients to create and assemble edible products. Children are confident to use the computers, either as a choice activity or when opportunities are planned to enhance learning in other subject areas.

74. The quality of teaching is good. Within this area of learning, a full range of opportunities is made available, which are enjoyable for the children. For the most part, activities are based on first-hand experiences so that exploration, observation, problem solving and discussion are promoted. Children are given many opportunities to express their knowledge and understanding, for example in model making, drawing and by talking about what they know with their friends or staff. Whenever possible staff encourage children to use information and communication technology to help them practise skills or to use their knowledge of other areas of learning to solve problems that are associated with learning in that area. For example, children use the computer independently to practise matching skills that promote mathematical learning. Children are encouraged to think about their culture and beliefs, for example when hearing stories and in acts of worship.

Physical development

75. Within the classroom, children move around with confidence and safety as the room is organised well and there are distinct areas that are dedicated to promoting learning in particular areas of learning. Children are taught to handle pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors with control and safety. They have good control when manipulating these tools. Children are helped to understand the importance of exercise through lessons in the hall, for example music and movement, and at break-times during the afternoon when the teacher plays singing games with the children outside. There are limited opportunities for children to work on large apparatus. This is due to the unsatisfactory levels of resourcing for gymnastics throughout the school, and the unsatisfactory provision of large apparatus for the youngest children including wheeled and climbing apparatus that can be used out of doors.

76. The quality of teaching is good, particularly when taking into account the good use of afternoon break-times to actively involve children in learning traditional ring games. However, progress is satisfactory overall, as the resources available do not allow pupils to develop the skills necessary to work on large apparatus well. There are suitable daily opportunities for children to use and practise their fine motor skills and teachers intervene appropriately to enhance these. For example, many children hold their pencil incorrectly when they start school, but intervention by staff to teach them the correct way helps the quality of handwriting. Staff were seen to correct this during sessions focused on writing skills, but less attention was given to encouraging improvement was seen when children were working independently in chosen tasks.

Creative development

77. Evidence available indicates that children make at least satisfactory progress from the levels they attain on entry by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. The more able children, and some in the middle ability group, achieve levels appropriate for their age by the time they are five and this means that they have built appropriately on the standards achieved when they come into the school. Children have good opportunities to 'play' in the role-play area. This stimulates their ability to make believe and be creative. This enhances many other areas of learning, for example writing; "do you have an appointment?" and number; "how many children are waiting for an appointment?" Examples of children's painting show that they have been encouraged to consider style and presentation when doing

their own work following the study of a famous art-work. Creative development is also fostered through the music curriculum. Children learn about rhythm, through clapping and tapping, and by using percussion instruments. They participate in singing by joining in the words they are familiar with initially.

78. The quality of teaching is good overall. Art activities are matched well to children's interests and stage of development. Demonstration by staff is planned if it is required. This contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Following this, they are provided with more opportunities to consolidate learning, if this is required, and children have the chance to experiment. During the inspection, children were provided with many opportunities on a daily basis for pupils to 'act out' either make believe or real scenarios that contributed to their creative, and frequently social, development and this was due to good planning. Even when an activity may be a 'choice' by the children, a good level of interaction from staff is always provided if required to further promote learning and develop children's ideas.

ENGLISH

79. Following a generally low standard on entry to the school, pupils are on line to achieve the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages. This represents good progress in Key Stage 1 and is an achievement for the school. The higher ability pupils are now attaining at a satisfactory level, which is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last report. The less able pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, however, are not achieving as well as they might because they do not receive sufficient individual attention in many lessons, even though the lessons are well planned to give work appropriate for the lower ability pupils. In reading, all pupils achieve satisfactorily, largely because of the intensive support that they receive in well-targeted group lessons each week. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory.

80. In Key Stage 1, the less able pupils can point to pictures in books and say what they are, perhaps who the people in the pictures are. They can recognise their name, based on the initial letter. Other pupils can read simple sentences in their reading books, or words on flash cards. They can copy individual words, and some sentences. Some can make up sentences about what they have been doing or what characters in their book have done, such as "Ben and Liz helped the man." Handwriting is not well formed, with very large letters, often spread over the page instead of being on or near the line, and often with some letters that are not recognisable. The less able pupils will attempt their own writing, trying hard to put their thoughts onto paper, and being able to read their efforts to the teacher afterwards. They listen to stories well; enjoy them, and can mainly recount who did what, and the more able pupils can give reasons why things might have happened in stories. They will discuss matters of immediate interest with each other, and with staff, and work alongside each other well.

81. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 2, overall. By the end of the key stage the more able pupils can read a range of texts quite fluently, but often without real confidence and expression or enthusiasm. They have sufficient research skills to look up information in library reference books, and on the computers, whether using the Internet or CDs. They understand the purpose of writing in different styles for different effects, such as comedy, dramatic effect, or information. They can make a good effort in such styles themselves. In one lesson, for instance, they understood that a story had been written in an unusual style because it was intended to be an Irish folk tale. Pupils have learned to write expressively, in stories and in poetry, but this sometimes lacks imagination and flair in the use of language. They have had opportunities to write for different purposes, such as writing out their favourite recipe, or a letter. In a history lesson, pupils pretended to be a Roman legionary writing home. In other lessons, pupils used their skills to write about a science experiment and a geography

trip. Pupils' progress in handwriting is satisfactory in specific lessons. Although some pupils can write neatly, few choose to do so in their general work and the standard is frequently unsatisfactory in general workbooks. This leads to most written work looking scrappy and worse than it actually might be in its content. Similarly, spelling mistakes are rarely corrected, and this also detracts from the general appearance of pupils' work. The more able pupils can write using sound Standard English grammar and punctuation, but the lower achievers struggle with aspects such as speech marks. Pupils listen to explanations and stories, and generally understand the point that is being made. They are mainly able to act upon instructions they have heard, whether in English lessons, science or art, for instance. Most pupils can recall the main points of a story or written text, and can recount what they understand to be the most important features by paraphrasing accurately. Many will speak aloud to an audience, whether from a prepared text or from the heart, about personal matters in circle times.

82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory through both key stages overall. The introduction of the literacy strategy since the time of the last inspection has been a good spur to teaching standards. Teaching is well organised and resourced, and teachers use the resources well, including information technology, to support learning in their lessons. In three days each week the literacy strategy is followed closely, in well-structured lessons that teachers teach with confidence. Another lesson each week is based on reading and associated comprehension skills, with some writing skills as well. Pupils are in ability groups for these sessions, and all staff take part, including support assistants, the headteacher and visiting special needs support staff. The intensive, well-focused work helps pupils to learn well, and all pupils were achieving at least at level 4, the expected level, on the standard tests at the end of last year. This is an achievement for the school, gained through these weekly sessions, and through silent reading, shared reading and general expectations in other subjects that pupils will read books or computer programs in order to gain information. Another weekly session is based on spelling, word recognition and phonics. Teachers tend not to insist on good presentation and neatness, and so pupils do not bother themselves and this is unsatisfactory. In addition, much of the handwriting modelled for pupils in upper Key Stage 2, is not at a level that guides pupils to achieve a satisfactory standard themselves.

83. An example of a good literacy lesson was well planned with clear aims and a good structure throughout. The teacher was prompting pupils to think by good use of questions for different levels of pupils' understanding. The story they were considering, 'A walk with Granny' was being analysed for the use of direct speech, and the difference between questions and statements. The use of a very large printout of a page from the book was good, especially as the teacher could write on the plastic overlay so that all pupils could see exactly what she meant. Her lively style encouraged the pupils to try harder, to put their hands up to answer questions, and to make sensible suggestions. The lesson later continued in groups and all pupils had related work to do, structured differently for each group so they were challenged well by the work. The teacher worked effectively with one group in particular, and also interacted with the other groups to help them with learning. The work that some pupils were doing on the computer, fitting exclamation marks into a passage of writing, proved to be very challenging for the pupils and the teacher. Although the lesson was good overall, it would have been better if pupils had not had to copy out the sentences that they thought were questions. They could have simply put the question marks in at the end, and then carried out an appropriate extension activity, such as re-writing the questions as statements, or making up answers to them. The teacher's review of what had been learned at the end of the lesson was good. It brought all the pupils together and reinforced the difference between questions and statements, with more examples, and a lively series of questions and answers with the pupils.

84. The leadership and management of English is good, even though the co-ordinator has

only just finished her first year of teaching, and she has two other subjects to manage. The literacy strategy has been implemented well and adapted to the school's individual circumstances, and there are good priorities for developing the subject further. The resources have been built up and are now good. There is a good policy in place and a system for assessing pupils' progress, but this is not carried out consistently through the school and is not helpful in writing end of year reports. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans, but not the standard of teaching or pupils' work through the rest of the school. As a result, she has not identified the weaknesses in handwriting or presentation. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last report, which did not mention teaching. The resources have been developed well, and the management of the subject is now good. The more able pupils in Key Stage 2 now achieve in line with their abilities, but the less able ones in upper Key Stage 2 are not sufficiently stretched and challenged in lessons, except in reading.

MATHEMATICS

85. Following a generally low standard on entry to the school, pupils are on line to achieve the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages. This represents good progress in Key Stage 1 and is an achievement for the school. The higher ability pupils are now attaining at a satisfactory level, which is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection. The less able pupils in upper Key Stage 2, however, are not achieving as well as they might even though the lessons are planned to give them tasks that are different from other ability groups. They do not receive sufficient individual attention from the teacher in lessons.

86. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and their achievements are in line with their abilities. In Key Stage 1, the younger, less able pupils can add numbers below 9 together and count to 24 by rote. They recognise and name shapes, such as cube, triangle, square, but show a little uncertainty. They are helped to recall the names through the use of a shape guessing game, which reinforces their learning. The less able pupils in Year 2 are sure about the names of 2D shapes, but are confused when trying to recall the names of cuboids and cylinders. The more able pupils are confident to name the shapes and talk about the differences between them. For example, they compare the characteristics saying how many sides or corners a shape may have. Pupils were confident to use a computer program to help them locate shapes within pictures.

87. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. In the lower key stage, approximately half the class quickly answer questions about the 2 times and 10 times tables. The less able pupils struggle and need time to think. When carrying out addition sums using different amounts of money, the more able pupils carry this out accurately while the less able are more confident only when working with lower numbers, for example when adding $10+9+1+1$. Pupils in Year 4 work out money problems, for example they count up to 9 coins of differing value to the £5.88p accurately. The pupils work at a level that is substantially better than the younger year group and this demonstrates that pupils make satisfactory progress over a year. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are using their knowledge of tables to exchange fractions to percentages and vice versa. The more able pupils do this quickly, for example they convert $\frac{4}{5}$ to 0.8 in a matter of seconds. The success of pupils in the middle ability group is more inconsistent and they require more practise to be familiar with the strategies they need to use. The lower ability group struggle to complete work that is quite challenging for them with little teacher interaction. As they are not supported they make mistakes that carry over into the rest of the sequence of numbers they are working with and they are unaware. This group of pupils is unclear of how to find a percentage at the end of the lesson. For example, they do not understand 8% from 80 or 25% from 100%. More able pupils however, can work out problems such as, 20% off 2 pairs of jeans at £4 each. They work with increasingly difficult problems by applying their knowledge, which is secure.

88. Teaching and learning are good through both key stages overall. The introduction of the numeracy strategy since the time of the last inspection has been a good spurt to teaching basic skills consistently and learning is good as a result. Teaching is well organised and teachers explain what the objective of the lesson is, what it is the children should know, before it begins. Lessons follow a good routine that starts with a mental mathematics session. Group work is generally planned to meet the needs of the pupils in the class and not merely levelled at a particular year group. As a result, learning for the majority of pupils in the class is good as they are building on what they know and can do successfully. However, in lessons seen in upper Key Stage 2, the less able pupils are not achieving as well as they might, as they do not receive sufficient individual attention from the teacher in lessons. The final part of each lesson is used to revise the main learning objective of the lesson. Teachers generally present the pupils with a good range of questions during this session and this helps the teacher to assess what the pupils know. However, they do not involve the pupils in self-evaluation of their work, for example by asking them what they know that they didn't before or whether they have achieved the learning objective, and this is a missed opportunity for promoting the pupils' understanding of their own learning. The consistency of teaching mathematics has given a better focus to work, although staff now need to assess whether they are giving pupils sufficient experience in each of the National Curriculum attainment targets in order to improve progress further.

89. An example of a very good numeracy lesson for pupils in Year 1 and 2 was very well planned in the short-term and had a good structure throughout the lesson. In the first part of the lesson, the teacher involved all the pupils through her focused questioning and this prompted them to think about what they already knew before they answered. The teacher gave a clear explanation of the strategies that the pupils could use, for example by 'adding and using your fingers' or by 'holding the numbers in your head', and pupils were actively doing this, sometimes half-aloud, while she spoke. The teacher was able to see that pupils were clearly picking up the right ideas and putting them into practise. The teachers' positive interactions with pupils were encouraging and pupils kept to the task well. Organisation during the group work element of the lesson was very good and allowed the older pupils to be taught separately. The support assistant concentrated on teaching these pupils about the characteristics of different shapes and this was done well. The level of interaction with the pupils was good and this reinforced pupils' learning and maintained their concentration. Meanwhile, the teacher was able to focus her attention on the younger pupils in the class and

all pupils had the benefit of a high level of adult support. This contributed to a very good pace being maintained and all pupils put a great deal of effort into their work. The lesson was a powerful learning experience for pupils because the activities were well matched to the aims of the lesson and for the differing abilities of the pupils. Good resources, including the computer, and very good use of staff ensured that all pupils kept to the task and learning was at a very good pace. The rate of learning was less good in lessons in upper Key Stage 2 when pupils of lower ability did not understand the task that was set. The teacher did not intervene to give them the appropriate help to move their learning forward and this aspect of the lesson was unsatisfactory. In addition, there was too little reference back to the learning objectives in the final part of the lessons and the pupils did not have the opportunity to show the depth of their knowledge and understanding.

90. The leadership and management of mathematics are good, even though the co-ordinator has had other subjects to co-ordinate alongside mathematics. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. The numeracy strategy has been implemented successfully, but is yet to be closely adapted to the school's needs. It has, however, helped to ensure progression of learning and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are good priorities for developing the subject further, which includes a review of the published material being used to support learning. Resources have been built up and there are sufficient resources available to allow pupils to have first-hand experiences when developing mathematical skills. A satisfactory system is in place for assessing pupils' progress, but this is not carried out consistently through the school or being used to inform future planning. This has not improved since the last inspection and the co-ordinator has not been given time to monitor and evaluate current procedures in order to help her to target areas for improvement. Information gathered from assessment is not helpful in writing end of year reports. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans, but has not had the opportunity to monitor the standard of teaching and learning through the rest of the school. However, she has a good knowledge of the levels pupils' achieve at the end of both key stages as she samples pupils' work. Procedures for tracking the progress of groups of pupils or setting targets for improvement in standards are yet to be introduced. The co-ordinator has noted some improvement in standards since the implementation of the numeracy strategy, particularly in provision of work for the pupils of differing abilities.

SCIENCE

91. Pupils' attainments in science are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils learn about a satisfactory range of topics in each key stage, and their progress in the long term is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about pushing and pulling forces, the different senses that we have, the human body and what we eat. They understand that some foods are healthy for us, and some are not good for us. They have learned that some things around the home need mains electrical power, and others run off batteries, although this knowledge is not always secure. They learn about the dangers of electricity, and they can recognise and name the parts of the body and the parts of plants. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have begun to learn to conduct experiments and investigations, although they do not fully understand the need for a fair test in experiments. Pupils have found ways to separate different materials from each other, such as by filtering, or crystallising out of a solution. They have conducted simple investigations with magnets and electrical circuits. Pupils are developing an understanding of different habitats and the animals that have adapted to them. They have learned about the human body, life and growth and reproduction in humans as well as plants.

92. The teaching is satisfactory on the whole, and this leads to pupils learning satisfactorily during lessons. Lessons are managed well in the main, with clear aims for what the pupils will learn, and activities that match them well. Lessons in Key Stage 2 start well, with a clear explanation of the topic. As lessons progress, however, pupils' learning slows down. The pace slackens because teachers have not planned the investigations or practical work very well, and that their subject knowledge is not always good. In one lesson, for instance, pupils dipped pencils into water to see the apparent effect of light being refracted between the water and the air. What most pupils saw and drew was that the pencils or ruler became much fatter, because the water in a round container acted as a magnifying lens. At least one pupil said it was magnified, but the teacher did not expand on this aspect, and the opportunity for further learning was lost. The experiment had clearly not been tried out, in advance. Pupils should have seen that the pencil seemed to bend at the waterline, but the explanation of this was very brief and pupils did not learn a real reason for anything they had observed. Similar loss of learning opportunities through inappropriate use of resources, also occurred in other lessons, for instance, when pupils were considering why the moon waxes and wanes each month.

93. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. There is a policy in place, and the long-term scheme is being redrawn for the new National Curriculum requirements. More experimental work is being conducted than at the time of the previous inspection, although the balance of the experimental approach to science requires further consideration, and the teaching has improved to its current satisfactory level. The resources are satisfactory, and information technology is used appropriately in some lessons. However, the co-ordinator does not have a clear view of how the subject should develop; assessment of pupils' progress is not carried out satisfactorily, and assessment information is not used to help teachers' planning of what should be taught in the future, nor how it should be taught. End of year reports are mainly about pupils' enjoyment and interest, rather than being a statement of how well they are progressing, with examples of things they understand and can do. The monitoring of teachers' planning is not consistent through the school; and the quality of teaching is not monitored in any formal way.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. Pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Key Stage 2. This is lower than at the time of the last inspection. Despite the considerable sums of money that have been spent on resourcing information and communication technology, the benefit has not been reflected in standards. During the inspection no direct teaching was observed. While teachers plan and use technology to support learning across the curriculum, and as an ongoing activity, but the depth of knowledge and skills taught is limited. This is having an impact on standards.

95. In Key Stage 1 pupils explore the use of the computer, initially to play games that support learning. They become familiar with hardware and software; beginning to establish a sense of how they can develop their ideas and record their creative work using word processing and drawing programs. Pupils in Key Stage 1, can retrieve information that has been stored, they enter their own information with confidence, but were not seen storing the information by saving their work. When talking to pupils in Year 2, however, they did know that work could be saved in the computers 'memory' or on a disk. A more able pupil told the inspector "that you can get information from a ROM thingy", showing that they do understand that work can be retrieved from a range of sources. Pupils used a mapping program in geography to plan a village by moving different features around on the screen. More able pupils knew that you needed to rotate some of the roads to make bends or go around corners. They knew that they could review their ideas on the screen, so that they could see what they had done, and change their work if they didn't like it. In conversation with inspectors

pupils demonstrated their understanding of technology that could be used inside and outside of school. One pupil knew that there was a “machine in the office where letters came through”, but they did not know that it was called a fax machine. Another pupil said, “you can see videos of things that have been on telly before.” Other pupils knew that photographs are a way of giving other people information and related to this to the photographs the inspector had seen of the class walk around the village.

96. Pupils were seen using computers in the classroom to support their work in English, mathematics, geography and design and technology lessons. The pupils were confident in the programs available and in using the Internet to gather information. Activities that the pupils were engaged in during the inspection were not demanding. For example, in a design and technology lesson in the upper key stage class a more able pupil felt that the only purpose to doing his work on the computer was “you can save it and print it out if you want to”. When pupils were using computers they were not required to use high order skills, but there was some evidence available to show that they do have adequate experiences in all the required areas of the curriculum by the time they leave the school. Pupils, who were seen using the Internet knew that they could retrieve information, others told the inspectors that they knew they could “use the net to chat to people and find web sites.” However, these pupils were able to discuss this in greater detail because they had a computer at home. Evidence was seen to show that pupils have experience of desktop publishing by the end of the key stage, but not in presenting through multi-media. More able pupils know the purpose of spreadsheets and that you can change values on these. Information and communication is used in displays around the school in a variety of forms and the pupils have contributed to some of these. Pupils understand the use of information technology in school; they can talk about using the digital camera, and in the commercial world. All pupils are stated as having an electronic mail address, but there is no evidence that they have used this facility and although the co-ordinator states that there has been work done on a school web site, this is not available.

97. The management of the subject is satisfactory. A great deal of work has been devoted to putting submissions together for grants and this will benefit the school in the longer term, but other important issues have not improved. There is no monitoring of the quality of teaching in the subject. Assessment of pupils’ progress is unsatisfactory and there are no procedures for tracking pupils’ progress or for setting targets for improvement. There is no evidence that teacher’s’ knowledge about pupils’ attainment is used to change what they plan to teach in the future. End of year reports are mainly about pupils’ enjoyment and attitude rather than what they actually know, understand and can do. The resources are satisfactory in the main, and these are due to be improved very soon with the addition of more computers. The school has a large selection of CD-ROMs, but these are not all used.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Pupils’ attainments are in line with national expectations in both key stages. Pupils achieve satisfactorily for their abilities, and they progress soundly as they develop through the school.

99. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to use a range of tools such as brushes, glue spreaders, pencils and crayons. They learn to use a variety of materials and techniques, including printing, painting and drawing on paper and card, and they have used clay and play-doh to make 3D sculptures.

100. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have broadened their experiences satisfactorily and are able to use pen and ink, pastel colours and water colours, chalk and charcoal effectively in making their pictures and patterns. Some pupils can produce pictures to express a particular mood, and have developed a sense of tone, shading and colour. The more able pupils can draw pictures with a sense of perspective, although they have not practised this sufficiently to introduce perspective drawings into their work routinely. They have painted in the style of other artists such as Monet, Renoir and Van Gogh, but have not had sufficient art experience in the styles of other countries and cultures such as Chinese or Aboriginal painting. Also, pupils have not had sufficient depth of experience in 3D artwork: their experience is quite limited to clay or wire frame models.

101. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 1, and only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 2. This was a good lesson that was well planned and organised with good resources, and was well-linked to the topic on Romans. The pupils were focused on designing and making a Roman shield. Pupils planned their work well, choosing the materials and making sketches in their books. The teacher was enthusiastic, had a clear aim in mind, encouraged pupils to work at a good pace, and involved all of the pupils throughout the lesson. Pupils were learning well because the teaching was positive.

102. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The scheme of work is being updated as part of a curriculum review, and there is a policy in place. The resources are sound, and there are some attractive displays around the school. The co-ordinator has had some training in the role of a co-ordinator. There has, however, been no monitoring of teaching in art and design, or of other teachers' plans for what they will teach. Also, pupils are not effectively assessed for how much progress they are making over the course of a term. End of year reports are mainly about pupils' enjoyment, experiences and needing to work hard, rather than about which kind of art work they have done, and how well they can do it. The lack of assessment information also means that teachers cannot use this information to change what they intend to teach in the future, or how they intend to teach it more effectively. This subject has changed little since the last inspection, including the lack of systematic assessment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. In Key Stage 1, no teaching was observed. From a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and also from discussion with pupils, attainments are judged to be in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1. Pupils' work is based on their previous learning well, and they are motivated to think for themselves and to try hard in the range of projects that they undertake. Lessons are planned in using national guidance and this results in them learning to think creatively, be problem solvers and work both individually and as a team. Early in the key stage they build on their experiences of investigating familiar objects. The teachers' plans show that pupils have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding when they develop their ideas. They are given time to plan and make their products and to talk about what they like or dislike about finished work and how they would improve it. A pupil in Year 2 said "when I make something and it falls apart, I know to try stronger glue next time."

104. In Key Stage 2, two lessons were observed. The teaching and learning was satisfactory overall. Combined with other evidence from previous work, records and discussions with pupils and staff, it is clear that pupils make satisfactory progress through the key stage. Pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 and this is an improvement since the last inspection. This is attributed to lessons being planned with a specific design and technology focus, rather than trying to fit it into other subjects, and the adoption of a progressive scheme of work so the issue that pupils were not

developing their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically has been addressed.

105. In the satisfactory lesson observed in lower Key Stage 2, the teacher, who is also the subject co-ordinator, had appropriate subject knowledge. This helped her to emphasise the skills that the pupils would be using well in the lesson introduction and link these effectively to pupils' literacy and numeracy knowledge. The teacher made good reference to her expectations for all ability groups and the pupils were clear about what they were required to do. Pupils were provided with a design sheet, which helped them to develop their ideas clearly and plan what they needed to do. The pupils all understood that the product they were designing had a specific purpose, but the less able found it difficult to plan to the correct size. They did not have the mathematical concept of working to scale and some pupils required a lot of support from the teacher to get their drawings right. The teacher reminded pupils about the purpose of their product as they worked and they were reminded to consider the appropriate materials and techniques for making their purses. When planning, pupils gave good consideration of the aesthetic quality that they wanted the final product to have. They knew they could apply the embroidery skills they had learned previously to the purse and planned for this within their design. As the more able pupils finished their work they had the opportunity to use desktop drawing software to repeat their design. Whilst this gave them the opportunity to practise their computer skills and show they understood how to use the software, there was no challenge in the task and there was no clear purpose in it as pupils were not required to use intellectual effort or creativity.

106. The lesson observed in the upper key stage class was barely satisfactory and there were unsatisfactory elements in the lesson. Pupils were given the opportunity to use computer-aided design, but the problems they had getting the individual desktop computers to work properly frustrated them. The pupils said "they couldn't see the point of using the computer when you could do the work more quickly and better by hand" and the teacher did not give them sufficient help. This was unsatisfactory. During this lesson the majority of pupils were learning the right things about developing their plans into the product, a motorised buggy. They worked in small groups and were, for the most part co-operating with each other. One group of less able pupils had some difficulty working with the tools with enough accuracy and this caused a little friction. The teacher did not notice this as he was engrossed in helping the most able pupils and was not retaining an overview of the rest of the class. This was unsatisfactory, especially when one pupil opted out of the group completely and did not join in for the rest of the lesson. The more able pupils used control boxes and knew where to attach the motors to their structures to create movement. They talked about pulleys, cogs and gears confidently and showed their understanding of mechanisms and how they can be used in different ways to make things move. Less able pupils struggled with working accurately to attach corner braces and axles to the structures. They also had problems getting simple electrical circuits to work even though they understood the principles. The teacher stopped all the pupils working from time to time during the lesson to give general teaching points. Whilst the majority of pupils gained some benefit from this, the less were not given adequate help by the teacher and by the end of the lesson they floundered and learning for this particular group of pupils was unsatisfactory.

107. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator took over management of the subject last year and has insisted that staff use the national guidelines to plan design and technology and teachers' expectations have improved. She monitors planning regularly to make sure that the appropriate experiences are being planned as pupils move through the school. Resources have been built up to a satisfactory level and they are used appropriately, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is not monitored for quality and this is reflected in lessons seen during the inspection. Assessment of pupils' progress is not carried out in any formal way, such as at the end of a project, checking to see how well pupils have progressed against the list of things they were

expected to learn when the project began. Reports on pupils' progress are largely a statement of whether or not they enjoy the subject, with almost no indication of how well they have progressed or what they can do. There are no procedures for tracking pupils' progress or for setting targets for improvement.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1, but are below expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a decline in standards since the last inspection. A factor that could be related to this is the imbalance of teaching the subject in alternate terms.

109. In Key Stage 1, the teaching, and the learning in individual lessons, are satisfactory, and were good in one lesson that was observed. Pupils' work is based on their previous learning well, and they are well motivated to think for themselves and to try hard. Lessons are well planned and are carried with enthusiasm. For example, in one lesson, pupils were making models and drawing pictures of things they had observed on a walk into the village the previous week. They were able to discuss the things they like about the village, and things that were less wonderful to them. The teaching was enhanced by good use of a support assistant with the pupils in Year 1, and by displays that included an aerial photograph of the area, and a large-scale street map. By the end of the key stage pupils have learned about people who help us, their different jobs and the places where they work. They also have learned about people in other countries, especially in very hot places.

110. In Key Stage 2, only one lesson was observed, and the teaching and learning here were barely satisfactory, with unsatisfactory elements in the lesson. Combined with other evidence from previous work, records and discussions with pupils and staff, it is clear that pupils do not make satisfactory progress through the key stage. This lesson illustrates several problems. It was about drastic changes in the weather having many different effects on people. The lesson started very well with good use of photographs of recent floods in the locality, and pupils could discuss this well. The teacher then introduced a photograph of the Ethiopian drought, and the discussion continued well. The main activity, however, was then to look in atlases and find which were the driest or wettest countries of the world, and the original aim of the lesson was ignored. This was unsatisfactory. Pupils were unable to say what on the map was a country: they listed general areas such as the Amazon basin, continents, cities such as Sydney, and the Tropic of Capricorn, instead of countries. Even the most able pupils have a poor knowledge, of which continent was which, and what the equator was. The teacher's pitch of the lesson was too high: Pupils had too little knowledge of the basics of geography to be able to do the task with any real understanding of what they were doing. It became an almost mechanical task of writing a list down of anything to be particularly wet or dry on the map in the atlas. This also led to confusion about what 'dry' included, from deserts to the Siberian tundra, because the teacher and the atlas made no distinction between freezing places that were dry, such as Antarctica, and the Sahara Desert. Many pupils mis-spelled many words they had copied from the atlas, and their handwriting was not as good as they can manage in English lessons. The original purpose of the lesson, however, as written on the blackboard, was ignored after the first twenty minutes. This was unsatisfactory and did not contribute to effective learning. However, some pupils were learning satisfactory research skills with the atlases, and others were using the computers satisfactorily, with access to the Internet or to an encyclopaedia program.

111. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There has been little development since the last inspection. However, a new co-ordinator has been appointed very recently, and already has clear plans to develop the subject, beginning with the policy and scheme of work. At present, there is insufficient balance within the subject, particularly to

the practical approach to geography. The teaching of geography and history in alternate terms could well contribute to the slow progress that pupils make during Key Stage 2. This is something that the school needs to consider in its impending review of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has not yet had time to build up the resources to a satisfactory level, or to monitor teachers' plans for each termly topic, or for lessons. Teaching is not monitored for quality. Assessment of pupils' progress is not carried out in any formal way, such as at the end of a topic, checking to see how well pupils have progressed against the list of things they were expected to learn when the topic began. Reports on pupils' progress are largely a statement of whether or not they enjoy the subject, with almost no indication of how well they have progressed or what they can do.

HISTORY

112. Pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations in Key Stage 1, but are below expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a decline in standards since the last inspection. The unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 is attributable to a combination of factors such as history being taught only in alternate terms, teachers not teaching all of a set topic, having unsatisfactory resources and some teachers being a little uncertain of the subject at times.

113. In Key Stage 1 pupils begin to develop a sense of chronology through a well-sequenced day, and by learning about some old things such as toys, or ways of doing things, such as washing. They can talk about their own past, how they themselves have changed, and how some other things have changed. They have learned about some famous people, and the events they are associated with, and how they lived a long time ago. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 so it is not possible to comment on the teaching, and the learning in lessons.

114. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils do not have a secure knowledge of the main periods in Britain's past. They have learned satisfactorily about a few aspects, such as the Romans in Britain, or the Second World War. They have begun to learn to conduct research into past events and periods using books and computers, but the spread of their knowledge is limited. Several aspects of history have not been approached well, such as the Victorians, or the Tudors, or aspects of European and world history. Pupils understand that different time periods have their own characteristics, and reasons for being as they were, and the more able pupils can recall, or suggest, reasons why people acted as they did in the past.

115. In the single lesson that was seen in Key Stage 2, the teaching was satisfactory. It was well planned and well based on a visit to a Roman fort the previous week. All pupils were well motivated by the topic, and by the task of writing a letter home, as if they were a Roman legionary, describing their life, clothing and weapons. The drawback was the length of time it took to get started, which included twenty minutes of explanation. During this time many pupils were becoming impatient to start, and others were becoming bored with the reminders of what they had to do. Once settled, however, pupils wrote well in the main, with some good and imaginative pieces of writing. Others made a satisfactory effort to produce good work, although their writing was untidy and the spelling poor. The teacher facilitated their learning well, with reminders about what they might write, and what their mothers might like to hear about.

116. The management of the subject is satisfactory. This is largely because a new co-ordinator has been appointed quite recently, and has made good efforts to raise standards already, including writing a new policy and a scheme of work based on the new National Curriculum requirements. Assessment of pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Teachers' knowledge about pupils' progress is not used to change what they plan to teach in the future,

and it is not included in end of year reports. These are mainly about pupils' enjoyment and attitude rather than what they actually know, understand and can do. The resources are unsatisfactory in the main, although visits to local places of interest contribute well to learning. There is no monitoring of the quality of teaching in the subject.

MUSIC

117. Pupils are attaining in line with national expectations in both key stages. They make satisfactory progress due to the fact that the school follows a published scheme that builds on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the school.

118. The youngest pupils sing songs with confidence and particularly enjoy joining in the chorus and actions that accompany the songs. Pupils keep time and clap rhythm. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good awareness of pitch and how this changes in different songs. When given the first note they can find other notes that are either higher or lower. By the end of the key stage pupils play instruments with confidence. During the inspection they showed they knew the names of instruments, such as xylophone, chime bars and glockenspiel. Pupils knew how to play the instruments and made up compositions following some experimentation and practise. This was extended in work seen in Key Stage 2. Pupils used different musical elements to describe animal movements or the sounds animals make. Pupils gain knowledge of composition and develop this from representing sounds symbolically to using traditional notation.

119. Teaching is good overall as the teachers' plan well due to the scheme that they use to base lessons on. Long and medium term planning lacks detail of the learning objectives the teachers intend, but the newly introduced short-term plans are more specific in this area and this helps the teacher to give a good focus to the lessons. In a good lesson seen, clear clarification of what pupils had learned before helped to remind them of the skills they already had so that they knew what they were building on. The lesson was well organised and as a result all the pupils could see and hear the teacher and they all listened attentively. Good behaviour was expected, for example, when the teacher said, "when you're all sitting smartly" the pupils responded very quickly and were ready to take part in playing the instruments. The lesson contained a good balance of teaching new skills, time for pupils to 'have a go' and then for a performance that the class could listen to. As a result, the pupils gained confidence, developed their understanding and improved their creativity. Most importantly, the pupils enjoyed the lesson and are learning to love music.

120. The management of the subject is satisfactory. This is largely because there is a published scheme of work in place so the co-ordinator is sure that the subject is covered over the course of both key stages. There is no monitoring of the quality of teaching in the subject and, although the co-ordinator monitors planning, there is a discrepancy in the time allocated to the subject in Key Stage 2 and the actual time spent teaching music in upper Key Stage 2. This does have an impact on the progress made in the upper key stage. Assessment of pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and this has not improved since the last inspection. Although some staff take informal notes about what the pupils can do, this is not consistent and not enough to set targets for improvements in standards. Teachers' knowledge about pupils' progress is not used to change what they plan to teach in the future, this has not improved since the last inspection, and it is not included in end of year reports. These are mainly about pupils' enjoyment and attitude rather than what they actually know, understand and can do. The resources are adequate to support the implementation of the scheme of work, but require upgrading. This was identified some time ago and has not been actioned.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Pupils are attaining in line with national expectations in both key stages. The more able pupils have a good level of attainment in team games skills, but there is less good performance in other areas such as dance, where teachers lack confidence and expertise. In swimming, the lack of local swimming facilities makes this aspect difficult to undertake, and in gymnastics there is limited large apparatus on which to learn and practise skills.

122. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have begun to develop their skills in rolling on the mats, running, hopping and jumping, as well as finer skills in throwing and catching a ball, or handling a bat. They use small equipment such as beanbags and hoops well. They develop increasing confidence through the key stage, and derive much enjoyment from this subject. They learn to start and stop on command, and listen carefully to instructions.

123. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have developed their confidence and competence soundly, especially in team games, where they have learned to co-operate well with each other, are well organised, and understand ideas of team tactics and team spirit. They are appropriately competitive with each other in individual activities and games. Pupils have experience of athletics in the form of throwing, running events and the long jump. They also take part in orienteering activities on the school fields, finding their way from one marker to another with increasing confidence. Swimming has been undertaken at the local comprehensive school, but it is not known if this arrangement will continue. During the past year pupils have almost all managed to swim twenty metres, and can jump into deep water. Some can dive, a few can swim distances of well over a hundred metres, and they can float in different positions. Dancing is restricted to sessions using taped music as part of a local scheme, and gymnastics is restricted to floorwork such as moving in sequences, rolling and balancing, because of the limited apparatus.

124. No teaching was seen in Key Stage 1, but two lessons were seen in Key Stage 2. One was satisfactory in the teaching and the pupils' learning. It was, however, too closely focused on one skill: throwing a basketball to a partner, with a bounce. The lesson started with a good, energetic warm-up session, and a demonstration of the required bounce throw, but then almost all the rest of the lesson was practising this skill, with some later variation in two other ways of passing a ball. There were insufficient balls of the same size for one to each pair of pupils. Whilst the teacher clearly needed to keep a firm hand on the behaviour of a few pupils, it should have been possible to have an active game towards the end, something that was relevant to the skills, and was more fun and energetic than a whole lesson of practice of a limited range of skills. The other lesson was very good. It was well-organised practice of batting, bowling and fielding skills with pupils in three groups, using good resources, and with good games skills built in. There were opportunities for pupils to develop their skills individually and in teams. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and was able to intervene appropriately to demonstrate and explain to many individual pupils. The pace and challenge were very good, with a strong sense of drive and purpose to the whole lesson. Although there was a good warm-up activity to start the lesson, there was not a cool-down activity to end it.

125. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The scheme of work is based on local schemes, and has not been adapted yet to the new National Curriculum requirements, and there is not an up-to-date policy in place. There is a discrepancy in time allocated to teaching the subject in Key Stage 2 and the actual time spent teaching physical education in upper Key Stage 2. Whilst this is having a positive impact on standards in physical education, it is to the detriment of standards in music. The resources are unsatisfactory, and storage of equipment such as tables and chairs in the hall compromises pupils' safety in bare feet. The teaching of physical education is not monitored throughout the

school, and pupils' progress is not effectively assessed. It is not therefore possible to help the planning of what will be taught in future, and end of year reports are about what games pupils have taken part in, and how much they enjoyed them, not about how good they are in the different aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator has not undertaken any training related to being a co-ordinator in recent years. There has been little development in the resources and planning since the last inspection, and this is unsatisfactory.