

INSPECTION REPORT

St Margaret's Catholic Primary School

Glossop

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112911

Acting Headteacher: Claire Sierotko

Reporting inspector: Dr. Alan Jarvis (2711)

Dates of inspection: 3^d – 5th December 2001

Inspection number: 243203

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Glossop Road
Glossop
Derbyshire

Postcode: SK13 6JH

Telephone number: 01457 855818

Fax number: N/A

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Pendry

Date of previous inspection: 22nd September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2711	Dr. Alan Jarvis	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Science	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9086	Rosalie Watkins	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23300	Lily Evans	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
10144	Mary Marriott	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Margaret's Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average school with 96 pupils between the ages of five and 11. There is a nursery in which 18 pupils attend on a part-time basis. Numbers on roll have fallen considerably since the last inspection in 1997. Most pupils live in rented accommodation near to the school and come mainly from homes that, overall, are less socially and economically advantaged than average; unemployment in the area is very high. Most pupils are from Catholic families but around one quarter of pupils has a non-Catholic background. All pupils are white but three speak English as an additional language and are well integrated into the school. An above average proportion of pupils are on the register of special educational needs with most having moderate learning or behavioural difficulties; three pupils have statements of special educational need. Thirty one per cent of pupils receive free school meals, which is above average. Standards on entry are well below average. The acting headteacher is on a temporary contract pending the appointment of a permanent headteacher. The school has found it difficult to recruit staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils achieve better than expected overall by the end of Year 6 in comparison with their very low standards on entry, noticeably in mathematics and science. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1, 2 and 5. Pupils are included in all activities and learning is good. Staff give much encouragement to all pupils which leads to them working hard, behaving well and having good attitudes to school. The school is now being well led and managed with improvements evident this term. It is more effective than average and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good leadership is being provided by the acting headteacher who has quickened the pace of change and brought many, much needed improvements into play this term.
- Overall achievement in Year 6 is good compared with the very low standards on entry; pupils do much better than expected in mathematics, science, music and physical education.
- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 because of consistently good teaching, the positive learning environment and high quality care.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good throughout the school because teachers give them much encouragement and act as positive role models.
- Teachers are very sensitive to pupils' emotional and personal needs as a result all pupils are included in lessons and their personal development is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; this ensures that they develop a positive outlook on life and understand the lives and beliefs of other people.

What could be improved

- The work of the governing body and the impact it has on school life.
- The school's documentation and procedures which help pupils on the special educational needs register.
- The use of computers and related equipment in all subjects of the curriculum.
- Provision for geography in Years 3 to 6.
- Levels of attendance.
- The level and quality of resources, especially in science, geography and physical education.

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 September 1997 satisfactory progress has been made but more could have been done. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science and pupils' achievement has been consistently good. Results in the national tests have generally improved in line with the national trend but there was a marked rise last year. The quality of teaching is good now; much teaching in Years 4 and 5 was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. The strong and caring Catholic ethos has been maintained as has the pupils' good work ethic and the school's efficiency has improved. Satisfactory progress has been made on improving assessment and health and safety matters which were key issues identified in the previous report. However, too little work has been done on producing a better school improvement plan and monitoring teaching and learning, although effective action is now being taken. Attendance has fallen to below average. The full National Curriculum has not been taught in information and communication technology and geography. The school is now moving in the right direction and there is a satisfactory capacity to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E*	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	C	B
Science	D	C	D	C

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

Pupils enter the nursery with communication, personal and social skills which are well below average. By the start of Year 1 standards are likely to be just below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils' achievement is good.

Standards in the 2001 national tests for pupils in Year 2 were below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. Reading standards have been improving over recent years but remain below average. Writing standards have also been rising but at a much faster rate. Standards in mathematics and science were average. Standards seen in the inspection were also below average in reading but those in writing showed improvement and were average. Standards in science were also average but those in mathematics were above average and thus better than last year's national tests. Achievement in Year 2 is satisfactorily in English but good in mathematics and science. Standards in the other subjects of the curriculum are mostly satisfactory except in geography where they are unsatisfactory. No judgement could be made on standards in history.

In 2001 standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were average in mathematics, below average in science and well below average in English. Pupil absences adversely affected results in all three subjects. Standards seen in the inspection were higher; they were below average in English, average in science and above average in mathematics. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science and satisfactorily in English. Over recent years standards have risen in line with the national trend but improvement has been most marked in mathematics and science. The school is on course to meet the higher targets it has set for the national tests in 2002. Standards seen in other subjects were good in physical education and satisfactory elsewhere except for information and communication technology and geography where they are unsatisfactory. Overall standards by the end of Year 6 are mainly satisfactory and reflect good achievement from standards seen on entry.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils understand how they should behave and are usually sensible and orderly. A few find it hard to control themselves and behave badly at times. This led to a higher than average number of exclusions in the year before the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are nearly always pleasant and polite to each other and to adults. They show consideration for each other's feelings.
Attendance	Below average. A few parents sometimes keep their child at home without any acceptable reason. A few children also miss school because parents choose to take them away on family holidays. Some children have not taken the national tests because of this.

The school has a dedicated team of staff who give much encouragement to all pupils. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide very good role models for pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in the school. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection. All teaching is at least satisfactory; around two thirds is good or better. Pupils are given interesting work to do but do not have a well-developed sense how well they are doing. Teachers include all pupils in lessons but work could challenge individual pupils better, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The school is still experiencing difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified staff.

Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1, 2 and 5 and throughout the school in mathematics, science, music and physical education. The teaching of English is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory through Years 3 to 6; it is not as strong in later years because of the current reliance on supply teachers. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects. Literacy is taught satisfactorily but good strategies are used to teach numeracy. The teaching of pupils who have specific special educational needs is good in Years 1 and 2 because their work is well planned, monitored and evaluated. In Years 3 to 6, whilst it is satisfactory, the quality of planning is weaker and work is not always well matched to their specific learning needs across most subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. A broad and balanced curriculum is provided in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The full curriculum is not yet in place for information and communication technology. More teaching is needed for geography in Years 3 to 6. Most, but not all subject schemes of work are in place. Good extra curricular activities are provided.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. Improved systems for keeping records centrally, updating the register of special educational needs, and reviewing and setting targets within individual education plans (IEPs) are now needed. Parents and governors need to be more involved in their support of pupils on the register of special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Outside support is appropriately planned and where taking place is having a good impact.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school works very hard to ensure that pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good; their understanding of their own and other cultures is also good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes good care of pupils and has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal and academic progress, except for those on the special educational needs register.

A number of parents provide good support to the work of the school but overall participation is limited. The school is working hard to develop stronger links with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher is giving a good steer to the work of the school. Subject co-ordinators have focused on improving the curriculum and resources. Staff training now needs to further develop their roles in monitoring standards and teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. The governors still do not include all of the required information in their annual reports to parents and school prospectus. They have not yet ensured that the information and communication technology and geography curriculum are fully in place.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is making much better use of its assessment data on pupils' performance in tests.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory and improving. Resources are being satisfactorily deployed. A longer-term strategic plan is still needed.

The school has undergone some difficult times in recent years, having to cope with staffing difficulties, the financial implications of a reduction of numbers on roll and a large turnover of governors in the last two years. The school is currently short of one member of teaching staff, but staffing overall is adequate. The high number of lessons taken by supply teachers has acted against continuity in pupils' learning. There is ample accommodation, which has been enhanced to provide a language rich, stimulating learning environment. Generally there are adequate levels of resources for learning but some important shortages in the Foundation Stage, science, geography, music and physical education. There is a developing understanding of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The way in which the acting headteacher has improved the school in such as short time.• Their children are well cared for and enjoy coming to school.• The school expects all pupils to work hard and they are taught well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework that is set.

The findings of the inspection agree with the parents' positive views. The school is now working hard to improve homework and the support of parents is needed to help support the policy of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils achieve well overall by the end of Year 6 compared with their very low standards seen on entry to the school. By the time they leave Year 6 standards are above average in mathematics and physical education. They are average in science, art and design, design and technology, history and music and below average in English, information and communication technology and geography. Although achievement is good there is scope for both standards and achievement to be even higher. This is because pupils' weaker skills in English, especially reading, and in information and communication technology are limiting the progress they make in other areas.
2. Children make a strong start to the school. Overall, pupils' standards on entry to the school are well below those expected for their age. Many pupils have low esteem, very weak language and speaking and listening skills, and find difficulty initially in interacting with other children and adults they have not met before. Standards in mathematics are also very weak on entry. Consistently good teaching in the nursery and reception classes help the children achieve well through the Foundation Stage and standards rise from well below average to below average. By the end of the reception class the goals set for this age-range will not have been met overall, especially for the pupils on the special educational needs register and average attaining pupils. However, all of the higher attaining pupils will have met or exceeded the goals expected at this stage and are likely to be confidently working within level 1 of the National Curriculum.
3. Overall standards at age 11 are much better than on entry and have moved forward well in the past year or so. There are several reasons for this. The strong start made in the Foundation Stage continues through Years 1 and 2 because of the strong teaching. There is better teaching in the school in Years 3 to 6, with the unsatisfactory teaching seen at the last inspection no longer present. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced and are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. A number of other useful initiatives are helping to improve standards in English in Years 3 to 6. The focus on developing pupils' writing in Years 3 to 6 is bearing fruit and the good teaching and learning in mathematics and science results in pupils doing well in these subjects.
4. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because of good teaching and stimulating learning. The results of the national tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2001 show that their standards in reading were close to the national average but in writing they were well below average. This indicates that reading improves well but that many pupils continue to have difficulty with their writing. Standards in mathematics and science are stronger; they are in line with the national average which is better than the below average levels seen at the start of Year 1. When compared with schools with similar socio-economic circumstances, St. Margaret's Year 2 pupils have standards that are above average in reading but well below average in writing and above average in mathematics and science. More pupils reached the higher levels in mathematics and science than in similar schools.
5. Inspection findings for pupils in Years 1 and 2 show a slightly stronger picture. In English, standards seen are below average and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in mathematics are above average and so better than last year and achievement is good. In science, standards are similar to last year and average, but achievement is also good with the higher attaining pupils in particular showing very good gains in their scientific understanding and investigative skills.
6. Standards in the national tests in 2001 for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. When these results are compared with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances and schools that have pupils who perform similarly at the end of Year 2 the school's results in 2001 are below average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. These results, whilst variable, indicate at first glance that the pupils achieved satisfactorily in science, well in

mathematics but underachieved in English compared with their performance four years previously in Year 2. However the results are distorted by absence of one pupil, which in a small year group, has a big effect on the figures. Analysis of individual results indicates that pupils overall achieved satisfactorily in English rather than some underachieving; in the other two subjects a slightly stronger picture than those portrayed by the results becomes evident.

7. Inspection findings for pupils in Year 6 show standards are better than last year. Standards seen in English are below average and pupils showing good achievement. Pupils are achieving well in mathematics where standards are above average. Standards in science are also up and are average, with pupils achieving satisfactorily through Years 3 to 6. Pleasing numbers are likely to reach the higher level 5 with some moving up three levels since Year 2. Standards in English, whilst showing good improvement when compared with those on entry to the school, are held back by pupils' weak speaking and listening and writing skills and lower than normal teaching time given to the subject.
8. The results when compared against national averages do not adequately reflect the rise in standards in Year 6 in recent years. The percentage of pupils who have reached the expected level 4 or higher in English has increased from 54 per cent at the time of the last inspection in 1997 to 65 per cent in 2001. In mathematics the increase has been from 50 per cent in 1997 to 70 per cent in 2001 and in science from 57 per cent to 85 per cent. These represent real gains although care needs to be taken when comparing one year's results with another given the small size of each year group and the varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The performance in each subject could have been around 5 per cent higher in 2001 and 15 per cent higher in 2000 in each subject if all pupils had taken the national tests in those years rather than one or two being absent.
9. A more accurate measure of the rise in standards can be gained through a consideration of the points score for each subject, which takes into account the performance of pupils of differing abilities. Since the last inspection the trend in results as shown by the points scores has been in line with the national increase in attainment overall. However, in the past two years the rate of improvement in the school has been faster than the national trend in English, mathematics and science, but again this would have been strengthened if all pupils had taken the national tests. The school met its targets in all three subjects in 2001. Higher, but realisable, targets have been set for the next two years; inspectors have confidence that the steps put in place to realise these will ensure they are met.
10. Standards seen in the inspection confirm that pupils in Year 6 continue to close the gap between their standards and the national average standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Whilst those in English remain below average they are now much closer to the average than last year. The gap has been completely closed in mathematics and standards have now moved to be above average; the science gap has now been closed and standards seen were at the national average.
11. Pupils of all abilities are achieving at least satisfactorily in through 3 to 6 and sometimes it is better, particularly in the Year 5 class and where the Year 6 pupils receive specialist teaching such as in music and science. Through these years the normal expectation is that the average pupil will advance their skills, knowledge and understanding in each subject from level 2 to level 4. Progress overall is satisfactory in English and good in mathematics and science between Years 3 and 6. The higher attaining pupils are doing as well as expected overall between Years 3 to 6; their progress is stronger in mathematics and science than it is in English and in some cases they have moved three levels rather than 2. Last year, one gifted and talented pupil reached level 6 in mathematics. Most of the average and lower attaining pupils made satisfactory progress through Years 3 to 6 in all three subjects. Similarly pupils on the register of special educational needs are achieving satisfactorily in these years as does the pupil with English as an additional language. The two pupils with English as an additional language in the nursery are also achieving satisfactorily.

12. Over recent years the girls have done better than the boys in Years 1 and 2 but in Years 3 to 6 the boys' performance has been better than the girls. Over the past three years, girls in Year 2 have, on average, been about one term ahead of the boys in reading and writing and have been even further in front in mathematics. By the end of Year 6 the average performance was similar for boys and girls in English, but the boys did better than girls in mathematics and science, where they were about one term in advance of the girls. This is part reflects the changing make up of each year group but also the stronger strides the boys make in their reading and writing in Years 3 to 6. The findings of the inspection are that in the current Year 6 the performance of boys and girls is much closer in all three subjects.
13. Standards in speaking and listening are below the national average in both Years 2 and 6. However, as pupils move through the school the reticence in speaking and careful listening skills shown with younger pupils is much less evident. For example, pupils in Year 6 can talk confidently about the extra curricular activities they have undertaken and in science are starting to use small sequences of ideas when talking about investigations they have undertaken. Many pupils can discuss their favourite books and are learning to describe and explain new ideas well. Reading standards are not as high as they should be in all years because of the pupils' limited range of vocabulary and slow gains are made when using a range of strategies to decode new words. This limits their learning and standards in other subjects as some lack confidence when using texts or answering questions in the national tests. Parental support for reading also varies and, whilst some pupils have good exposure to literature at home and use the local library, many pupils lack daily stimulus in reading away from school. Writing standards are also below expectations in all years; there is a need to further improve pupils' spelling and extended writing skills. The acting headteacher is keen to improve the library stock and build on the existing initiatives on reading and writing which have been targeted at specific pupils, including booster classes, in order to quicken the rate at which they progress in their learning.
14. Pupils' performance in mathematics is strong. Standards - above the national average in both Years 2 and 6 - are weaker in using and applying mathematics especially in Years 1 and 2 but attainment in number and algebra is particularly strong in Years 3 to 6. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils are proficient in counting in twos, fives and tens and older pupils are proficient in their tables. By Year 6 they use mental strategies to multiply and divide.
15. Standards in science are a also a strength of the school when considering the standards reached at the end of Year 6 and the satisfactory and often better levels of achievement seen in recent years. Standards in science – at the national average at both key stages – benefit from work being well rooted in the National Curriculum, a stronger than normal emphasis on investigative work, good attention to scientific vocabulary and a focus on pupils predicting, gathering evidence and explaining their results well. Work in investigations is stronger than in the other attainment targets where pupils are sometimes confused about key ideas. Information and communication technology is under-represented in work, particularly when used to gather experimental data.
16. In the foundation subjects of design and technology, history, music and art and design standards of work seen are in line with the national expectation at both age seven and 11 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily through both key stages. Thus standards and achievement are similar to that reported at the last inspection. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations in Year 2 but above expectations in Year 6. Achievement by the end of Year 6 is good, and the higher standards seen represent an improvement since the last inspection.
17. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with expectations in Year 2 but below expectations in Year 6; achievement is satisfactorily by Year 2 but unsatisfactory by Year 6. Standards in Year 6 are therefore apparently below the standards reported at the last inspection. This is partly explained because the National Curriculum for the subject has been revised and more work is expected in the subject and across the school than in 1997. The school has only recently acquired sufficient computers to teach the subject and is still short of appropriate software to use in a number of subjects. More work also needs to be done to ensure

that computers and other information technology equipment are used to support work in all the subjects of the curriculum.

18. Standards in geography have declined since the last inspection. In work seen, standards are below expectations in both Years 2 and 6 with pupils achieving satisfactorily through Years 1 and 2 and but unsatisfactorily through Years 3 to 6. This is because pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not taught enough geography, their mapping skills are weak, the scheme of work has only just been put in place and there is too little use of computers in pupils' learning. Low levels of resources are available for the subject.
19. There are some constraints, which are holding back standards but of particular note are their weaker skills in English and information and communication technology. The unsatisfactory and sporadic attendance of a minority of pupils is also having a negative effect on their learning and progress. There have been several cases of parents choosing to take their children on holiday in recent years when the national tests are being done which has been to the detriment of the children because they would have done well in the tests and given them a sense of pride. This has also skewed the school's results downwards. Curriculum time is below that recommended and more teaching time and a better distribution between different subjects is needed to ensure that all the required work is done, especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6 continues to be impaired because they have had too many supply teachers. The longstanding reluctance of some parents to support their children with homework also means that they do not have the chances pupils have in other schools to consolidate their learning at home.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good, as at the previous inspection, and this contributes to their progress with learning. Pupils are for the most part pleasant and friendly, both to each other and towards staff. They are happy to come to school, though a few often arrive late because their parents do not bring them on time. There are instances when pupils show a good sense of responsibility but opportunities for this are limited. Parents mostly agree that behaviour is good, though they recognise that a few pupils misbehave at times.
21. Pupils are generally willing to please in lessons, because staff value their efforts to learn and try to help them. Good attitudes and behaviour are often evident, especially when good teaching really holds pupils' attention. For instance, children in the Foundation Stage are happy to come to school and enjoy very good relationships with their teachers. In Years 1 and 2 pupils settled down very quietly to be ready for circle time because they knew what the teacher expected. Most of them managed to behave very well, listening seriously as others shared their ideas about 'what makes me angry'. Some older pupils show really good attitudes on occasions, as when Year 5 pupils listened with great interest and did their best to answer questions, in a well taught history lesson about Viking raids. At times real pride in their own efforts is evident, for instance when pupils tried very hard in a handwriting lesson. Good relationships are evident in the way pupils work co-operatively together in groups when this is required. Where teaching is more mundane, concentration tends to be less good. Restlessness and unnecessary chatter may develop for instance if pupils are expected to sit still through an overlong explanation. A few pupils lapse into silly, distracting behaviour at times but because staff usually manage them well any interruption to the learning of others is slight. The impact of some classes being taught by supply staff can be seen in the way Year 6 pupils often settle less well to work than other groups.
22. Behaviour and attitudes to others are generally as good around the school as they are in lessons. For instance, at playtime pupils enjoy the skipping ropes and other equipment that the school provides for them, and share them amicably. They respect others' needs, for instance accepting that they may play with footballs in one part of the playground, and that the remainder is for other activities. Good care for others is apparent in the way some older girls are very quick to notice if any younger pupil becomes distressed, and to offer comfort and support. However over-rough play does occasionally develop. More short-term exclusions arise than usually

happens in primary schools, because despite the good efforts made to help the few pupils with particular behavioural difficulties to improve, incidents of really poor behaviour occasionally occur.

23. When given the opportunity, pupils show a good sense of responsibility. They willingly carry out small tasks, such as returning registers to the office. A few of the older pupils cope very well with the responsibility of organising the new weekly stationery shop. Further developments, such as the establishment of a school council and librarians are planned which will build on the useful improvements put in place this term.
24. Attendance is below average. It has decreased since the previous inspection and in the year preceding the inspection it was well below the average seen in primary schools. Unauthorised absence has increased, because parents do not always explain absences to the school. Even when a reason is given, it is not always good enough, for instance parents sometimes keep their child out of school on their birthday, or to go shopping. The school also has concerns that an increasing number of pupils are missing school because of family holidays. The interruptions to learning for these various reasons interrupt the progress of the pupils involved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

25. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and especially so in the Foundation Stage, in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 5. During the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen, unlike the previous inspection where too much unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Years 4 and 5. From the 33 lessons observed around one third were satisfactory, about one half were good and around one in six were very good or excellent. Teachers are very sensitive about the home circumstances of the pupils they teach and work very hard with the Educational Care Officers (ECOs) and other learning assistants to ensure that pupils' learning is also good overall.
26. There are a number of reasons for the improvement since the last inspection. Firstly some staff turnover has resulted in more effective teachers being employed and the firm action taken to address the weak teaching at the last inspection has been successful. Staff have had good training in literacy and numeracy and this has had a positive impact in these areas. The climate for learning has been considerably improved in recent months and builds upon the developing pattern of recent years.
27. The teaching of the pupils in the Foundation Stage is consistently good in both the nursery and reception class and shows an improvement from that reported at the last inspection. The quality of planning is sound and improving and ensures that a good range of learning experiences is included each week and over the course of the year. A careful balance has been struck between providing structured and unstructured learning and opportunities are provided that cover the curriculum set out for this age of children. However, the children could usefully spend more time in talking to and listening to adults in small groups to develop more quickly their social and speaking and listening skills. In several formally taught lessons in the reception class good, brisk, sustained and progressively more challenging learning was seen. For example, when pupils learnt new letters of the alphabet through a variety of bite-sized activities that were carefully chosen to generate interest and give variety to learning. Great pains are taken to include all pupils in learning and the teacher is very aware of the concentration spans of children and amends pupils' learning accordingly. Pupils of all abilities apply themselves well in lessons and show good levels of interest and concentration. Good relationships are evident in all classes. Good use is made of baseline assessment. The improved system of record keeping and continuous assessment that is being developed will help provide better teachers with even better information to help them plan their lessons. Pupils have a developing awareness of their own learning and attainment, which is helped by the reading and writing targets, which they take home with work to do in these areas.
28. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is also consistently good, in some cases very good and in one music lesson excellent. The good teaching is characterised by the teacher's strong subject knowledge, strong and effective behaviour management of the pupils, good range of methods used, brisk pace to learning and full use of time in lessons. For example, the well-chosen and challenging

activities selected to help pupils investigate the reflections in shiny surfaces and the opportunities for pupils to work independently, either individually or in small groups, on their stretching and moving activities in physical education were particularly effective. Whilst satisfactory, more use could be made of information teachers have gathered about how well their pupils are doing to help plan and inform each lesson. This weakness was also reported at the last inspection.

29. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 this term has been problematical. In September a full complement of full time teachers was employed but a resignation at half term has meant that three supply teachers have been engaged to deliver the curriculum to Year 6. The acting headteacher has actively managed these staff effectively to ensure that they have been deployed to their teaching strengths. Currently, both Years 5 and 6 are being taught by more than one teacher. These interim arrangements are expected to be in place for several months and the needs of the Year 6 pupils are being given priority as they approach their national tests. The teaching seen by the permanent member of staff seen during the inspection was good; that of the supply teachers mostly satisfactory. The weakness seen in Years 1 and 2 in the extent to which teachers use assessment information to inform the planning of their lessons is again evident. Overall, the quality of learning is not as strong as it is in Years 1 and 2 reflecting the instability in staffing.
30. An important weakness in all years is that pupils do not have a well-developed knowledge of how well they are doing in their learning. Pupils are not involved in assessing how well they are doing and are not set academic and personal targets. They show little awareness of the levels they have already reached in the National Curriculum and are given insufficient help in identifying what they need to do to improve to reach the next level in their learning.
31. The teaching and learning of English is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Lesson objectives are made clear and the three-part structure of the literacy hour is used effectively throughout the school. In Years 3 to 6 some teachers plan well for the needs of all the pupils in their classes and as a result learning is good. In other lessons planning was aimed well at the higher attaining pupils but not as well at the needs of the lower attaining pupils.
32. In mathematics the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in Years 1 and 2 and towards the end of Years 3 to 6; elsewhere it is satisfactory. Again, learning objectives are clearly emphasised at the start of each lesson. The best lessons were well planned and the pupils were given plenty of work at a challenging level that was carried out at a brisk pace. The use of assessment information to help plan lessons is a weakness in this subject.
33. The teaching and learning in science is good. Pupils' work shows that the subject has been taught over a period of time, pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about the investigations they have done and the science they have learnt. Pupils' learning in this subject is good because they are not afraid to experiment, talk about their work, make mistakes and think of alternative explanations. Their learning is less reliant on their writing skills and as a result their enthusiasm and enjoyment of the subject shines through.
34. The teaching and learning of music is also good. This is because the music co-ordinator has specialist skills and is a talented musician; the work is carefully chosen to stimulate the pupils and the pupils themselves respond very well to this practical and communal subject. An example of excellent teaching was seen in Year 1 and 2 where the teacher used a range of instruments extremely well to help pupils compose and sequence their own music. This lesson was a perfect illustration of how the best teachers in the school help pupils to develop their confidence and self esteem and build on their wider talents.
35. Teaching and learning seen in Years 1, 2 and 6 within physical education was good. Teaching is conducted at a brisk, but safe, pace with good opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their skills. Sometimes opportunities are not taken to discuss how well individual pupils have performed so that other may learn from this. Teaching and learning in art and design is satisfactory but no judgement can be made about design and technology.

36. The school are aware that staff need to further develop their skills in teaching information and communication technology. More training to help develop their confidence and bring their skills in the subject to an effective level and learning has been impaired until recently by a lack of computers and sufficient software. The school has the benefit of a new suite of computers and pupils are now spending much more time using the facilities learning new skills. They are starting to use computers to learn in other subjects but this needs to be more systematically planned into teaching. During the inspection no whole class teaching and no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching.
37. During the inspection it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in geography in any year but planning indicates that pupils spend too little time learning this subject.
38. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in learning in Years 1 and 2 because the planning is good; the teacher uses assessment well to identify pupils early in Year 1, sets work at an appropriate level and closely monitors learning. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning because of the close support they are given planning needs to be more detailed and targeted to meet the wide range of needs of pupils within the different classes. This weakness is apparent in most subjects of the curriculum. One pupil with English as an additional language is receiving additional help with literacy and this is having a positive effect on standards. However, more though also needs to be given to her specific learning needs within normal lessons. Additional literacy support has recently been acquired for the two pupils with English as an additional language within the nursery class; teaching is ensuring that they are fully included within lessons.
39. Educational Care Officers (ECOs) are allocated to pupils with statements, many of whom have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Their work is effective in enabling pupils to carry out the work of these pupils in individual lessons but their progress over time is limited because there is insufficient focus on monitoring and recording progress towards achievement of Individual Education Plan (IEP) targets. On occasions a small number of pupils showed quite disturbed, but understandable, behaviour, which was well managed by the teacher and ECOs before it could adversely affect the learning of others.
40. Homework has been strengthened this term and is satisfactory. It was of some concern at the last inspection as it was then inconsistently set and there was insufficient support from some parents. Now, as then, some parents would like to see more homework whilst others show indifference. The policy has been usefully reviewed and parents informed of the importance of this aspect of work. Pupils now have a homework diary in which to record the homework that is set. More homework is expected as pupils get older. Every week pupils are expected to complete work in literacy and numeracy and work in other subjects such as science and history. These include reading and spelling tasks. Some written work is expected but homework also includes some non-written tasks to do. Special attention has been given to ensure that homework for the Year 6 pupils adequately prepares them for the national tests and the levels of work they will encounter at secondary school. So far this term the improvements in homework are having a positive impact on standards. Provision is moving in the right direction but more support from parents is still needed as some pupils still come to school not having completed their work.

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

41. The curriculum is unsatisfactory. It is broad and balanced in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. However this is not so in Years 3 to 6 as there is inappropriate weighting of curriculum time given to English. The time allocated is below the national recommendation. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 it is unsatisfactory as information and communication technology is not yet fully in place.
42. Statutory requirements are not met information and communication technology. Some strands of the curriculum cannot be implemented as the school has not yet accessed the Internet and e-mail facilities. The use of computers in monitoring and controlling is also unsatisfactory and staff are not fully trained in the skills needed to teach this, more technical, aspect of work.
43. Too little time is also allocated to the teaching of geography and as a result the full National Curriculum is not also taught in this subject. There is confusion about the differences between art and design and design and technology. Schemes of work and policies are fully in place for all subjects although some need to be strengthened, for example design and technology, art and design and geography. The previous report recommended that the school should review the allocation of curriculum time for teaching. This has still not been done. The acting headteacher recognises the need, and is actively reviewing the time given to each subject.
44. Good attention has been given to improving the curriculum in mathematics and science and this has had a good impact on standards. In English initiatives are now in place to better target specific pupils and there are early signs that this, in time, will bear fruit in raising standards. Most of the weaknesses in the curriculum now lie with the remaining subjects of the curriculum, and if rectified could bring more evenness to the quality of learning across the curriculum and further raise standards in these subjects.
45. The school has successfully adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The impact of the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory and supports standards expected for pupils of this age. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced and developed and supports the improving standards in mathematics. The introduction of individual tracking procedures has also helped to raise standards in mathematics. The school does not set pupils for subjects and they are taught in mixed ability classes, some of which are across year groups. Teachers' planning is good in mathematics and English and science, but in other subjects is not sophisticated enough to cater to the wide range of abilities in the mixed age classes, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
46. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils. These provide pupils with a greater range of experiences and enrich the quality of the curriculum. Activities include French, football, craft, sewing, first aid, the recorder, cricket, rugby and tennis. Pupils were seen taking great care learn how to sew and make aprons and older girls and boys were keen to show the fruits of their necklace making, learnt after school at a craft centre in the town. Provision has been strengthened this term.
47. There are sound arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education. Sex education is approached sensitively mainly through religious education. The health and drugs education is mostly linked to science topics and covers areas such as healthy eating and exercise.
48. The school has good links with the local community and very close links with the church. For example, the choir entertains senior citizens at Christmas, and special festivals are celebrated within the school such as Advent leading to Christmas and Harvest, where pupils distribute gifts to the community. The school makes good use of visits and visitors. For example, the priest visits the school on a regular basis to say Mass, members of the Halle Orchestra visited the school and brought along a range of instruments for pupils to play music and to compose. Pupils sing in the local supermarket each year to raise money for a charity for homeless people.

Musicians regularly visit the school, bringing with them a range of tuned and un-tuned musical instruments which pupils have opportunities to try.

49. Satisfactory links with other schools in the area have been established. For example, the younger children have organised a music party and the older children have worked on 'Ocean World' music production. Children from some local schools, including those from St Margaret's have learnt songs and met at a central venue to perform and make music.
50. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is not well targeted to pupils' individual differing needs. The individual plans for pupils who learn more slowly than others in literacy and numeracy are not detailed and do not clearly identify what new skills or concepts should be introduced. There are individual plans to support those who, on occasions, have difficulty in controlling their own emotions and actions. Pupils do not have specific targets that make it easier for the supporting assistants to record and measure their progress.
51. Social inclusion is good. All staff make very good efforts to include pupils of all levels of attainment and backgrounds in every activity. There is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Staff make every effort to involve parents in the life of the school.
52. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness within the curriculum and through collective worship. Assemblies have a strong Christian content and are held on a variety of themes planned throughout the year. During the inspection the theme was Advent. Religious education lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. They celebrate Mass in the school and invite the community to attend. Pupils are given many opportunities to consider the natural world within their own school grounds. The very good attention to artistic display throughout the school contributes well to spiritual development.
53. The provision for pupils' moral development is good and reflected in pupils' conduct. This is an improvement on the last inspection. The school takes positive measures to promote moral development and there is a high priority placed on developing a clear moral code in the school. Pupils understand the school's code of conduct and this is displayed around the school. This helps to promote self-discipline and co-operation, but there are still a few pupils who show challenging behaviour. Staff deal with these pupils calmly and create positive attitudes through emphasising the good behaviour of others.
54. Provision for social development is good. Social skills are developed successfully during lessons, break and lunch times. Staff work hard to build up an awareness of the school as a community, where each member is valued. Pupils are expected to care for their surroundings and to take responsibility for classroom equipment. From an early age they are expected to help their teachers in the classrooms. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to show initiative in dealing with others. For example older ones help with younger ones at lunchtimes and gain a sense of responsibility and maturity from the experience.
55. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good and an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils are presented with many aspects of culture around the world through displays around the school. All are encouraged to celebrate their own culture through appreciating work of other artists and musicians and taking part in cultural events. The school provides a good range of cultural experiences through visits to places of interest. The school works hard to promote multi-cultural education. The programme for religious education includes the study of different faiths. At the time of the inspection pupils were studying the Jewish faith and a display in the library area supported pupils' learning. An appropriate selection of books in the library provides material about local and worldwide cultures.
56. The school meets statutory requirements with regard to pupils with statements of special educational need and their annual reviews. However in the recent past under different management, the register of special educational needs has not been regularly updated. There are good opportunities to enhance skills in English for pupils with special educational needs and

pupils with English as an Additional through the Additional Literacy Strategy (ALS), and Read On Write Away (ROWA) strategies. Pupils with statements of special educational needs have the correct allocated additional support to promote learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57. The good caring environment noted at the previous inspection is still very apparent. Other aspects of care remain satisfactory overall, though the management of behaviour has improved and is now good. Assessment of pupils' learning, a weakness at the previous inspection, has also recently improved and is now satisfactory as is the use made of assessment to help in planning for pupils' next stages in learning.
58. There is a shared concern for pupils' welfare and happiness. Staff know pupils well and give them ongoing personal support and encouragement, so that they are able to feel cared for and secure, even if, as happens for some individuals, they face unfavourable circumstances at home. Pupils are helped to behave well so that they enjoy their lessons and make progress with learning. There is good use of awards, such as house points, to recognise good efforts and good work in the classroom. In the same way, good attitudes and behaviour are promoted in the playground and dining hall. For instance, at lunchtime the award given each week for the best-behaved table contributes to the calm and orderly atmosphere. A good structured system of sanctions for responding to any misbehaviour is displayed in each classroom, and this is for the most part used to good effect when any misbehaviour occurs. Staff persevere with efforts to bring about improvements in behaviour, and receive good support in this from the local authority behaviour support service, but from time to time the school has to use short-term exclusion in response to incidents of really poor behaviour. The framework of care and consideration means there is little room for bullying to develop and staff deal effectively with any cases that come to their attention. However, as at the previous inspection, there is no anti-bullying policy to underpin their response. The discipline policy needs updating to include the good behaviour management strategies that are currently in use.
59. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Registration procedures are in order and satisfactory use is made of the new computerised registration system. In the past year, good attendance has been given a higher profile by the introduction of awards for pupils with 100 per cent attendance. Since the start of the current term the education welfare officer has helped resolve some of the absenteeism that was contributing to the unsatisfactory attendance levels. However more needs to be done to ensure that all parents recognise the importance of regular attendance. The governors' annual report includes attendance statistics but they are not in a readily understood form. The prospectus fails to include the required information about attendance and absence.
60. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The acting headteacher takes responsibility for such matters and has a good understanding of the home circumstances of some pupils. There is good liaison with social services through the school nurse, to ensure that there is good attention to any concerns that arise, in line with the area child protection committee procedures. Other staff are aware of child protection routines but there is no school specific policy to summarise matters for them. Other aspects of pupils' welfare and guidance receive good attention. Good arrangements are followed for looking after any pupils who become sick or injured. A health and safety policy, lacking at the previous inspection, has recently been developed and routines for risk assessment, in line with county procedures, are now also established. Procedures for emergency evacuation of the building are in place.
61. The use of assessment to guide pupils and plan for their learning is satisfactory. Some older pupils are currently being helped to understand how they are doing in terms of National Curriculum levels. They are introduced to the idea of self-assessment, for instance by contributing a comment to their own annual report. There is room however to give them greater responsibility for their own learning, by letting them know more about just how they are doing and what the targets are for their next stage in learning.

62. Teachers now have a much improved understanding of assessment. Baseline assessment is now in place in the reception class, and is well used in planning the curriculum to meet the children's needs. In addition to the statutory tests and assessments in Years 2 and 6, optional tests in mathematics and English are used to assess children's attainment in Years 3, 4 and 5. The results of both statutory and optional tests are analysed and good use is made of the information gained to identify gaps in the knowledge and understanding of particular groups of pupils. Teachers then give extra time and emphasis to the areas of weakness. For instance following an excellent analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in various elements of writing a scheme has been put in place to remedy the weaknesses that were identified. Assessment is also used to identify groups that will benefit from extra help from classroom support assistants, for instance through the additional literacy strategy. Similar application of assessment in the past has helped to improve English and mathematics results in statutory tests. Assessment in science however is still inadequate as the optional practical assessments, which are available for use in Years 3, 4 and 5 are not used to help gauge and track pupils' progress. In Years 3 to 6 there is no system for regularly assessing what pupils know, and tracking their progress. In other subjects assessment is patchy. There is satisfactory use of end of unit assessments for instance in music, while in information and communication technology assessment systems are in place but not used, and in several other areas including history and geography the use of assessment is under-developed and therefore not used effectively to help raise standards of attainment.
63. The ECOs who work with special educational needs pupils know them well, so they cater successfully for them in individual sessions. However the record keeping of the individual needs and achievements of these pupils is poorly organised, so that it does not sufficiently support their progress over time. For instance arrangements for ECOs to exchange information with teachers about pupils' progress, and to contribute to shared records, are informal and incomplete. A new co-ordinator for special educational needs had very recently been appointed at the time of the inspection.
64. The use of assessment to set targets for learning and behaviour support programmes is inconsistent. Targets set by teachers are not always specific enough or achievable and in the past insufficient attention has been given to reviewing and setting new targets. For example, staff have repeated targets which have been recorded as 'fully achieved'. The school has good links with the Local Education Authority professionals to support work with pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Outside professionals are appropriately involved in Annual Reviews and assessment of pupils at Stage 4 on the register of special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. The generally positive relationships with parents noted at the previous inspection have been maintained. Parents who express a view have a good view of most aspects of the school's work. They are happy that staff are welcoming and that they readily help with any queries or problems. Parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector expressed their full confidence in the acting headteacher and were pleased at the steps that have been taken this term to consult then more and encourage them to be part of the school. However, overall the school takes satisfactory steps to build partnership with parents, but finds that a number of them are reluctant to take an active interest in what their children do in school and as a result the links with parents are not as effective as they might be.
66. Communications with parents are satisfactory overall, but on a day-to-day basis they are good. Parents feel that there have been recent improvements. Friendly relationships are apparent at the start and end of the school day, for instance when parents with younger children bring them into their classroom in the morning. In addition the acting headteacher makes sure she is approachable over any queries or problems. Pupils have reading diaries, so that parents and teachers can see each other's comments about how pupils are getting on. As well as these ongoing opportunities for communicating with staff, each term a formal meeting with the class teacher is offered, so that parents can discuss their child's progress and see what has been

achieved. Attendance at some of these meetings is disappointingly low and the acting headteacher is keen to find ways of motivating more parents to come.

67. The annual reports sent home about pupils' progress are, overall, satisfactory in content. The section on personal development gives a good, recognisable picture of the child. Another worthwhile feature is the guidance about how the parent can help the child at home during the coming year. These reports give a good amount of information about how pupils are doing in English and mathematics, but in other subjects comments are in some instances too vague and general.
68. Until recently, there was little attempt to inform parents of children with special educational needs about their needs or to gain their support. Although they have been consulted about the annual reviews of statements of special educational needs parents have not been updated about their children's progress throughout the year. Parents who have children with a statement of special educational need are invited to annual reviews but they are not involved in a review of their individual education plans. Good links are being established with parents of pupils with English as an additional language.
69. There is a suitable flow of letters with information about school events. The prospectus and governors' annual report are informative to an extent but both miss out important information. For instance although the annual report does mention something of the school's response to the last diocesan inspection report, it gives no details of progress with the action plan from the previous OFSTED inspection and also omits the required financial statement. A few parents are unhappy about amounts of homework and suggest there should be more. A homework policy has recently been developed, and gives satisfactory guidance to teachers and parents about suitable amounts for the different year groups.
70. A number of parents help children's progress by their assistance in school with various activities and by helping with the fund-raising ventures that are often organised in partnership with the local parish. However a considerable minority lack the interest or confidence to help their children's progress with school work, for instance by regularly hearing their child read at home. A few actually undermine the school's efforts because they let their children stay away from school for inadequate reasons such as birthday celebrations or shopping trips. Three years ago, the school abandoned attempts to introduce a home/school contract because initial attempts resulted in animosity from some parents. The impact of parents' involvement is currently unsatisfactory therefore. The acting headteacher recognises the benefits to pupils' learning that are to be gained by building a more positive partnership with all parents and is pursuing ways of achieving this.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

71. The previous inspection found several important deficiencies in the leadership and management of the school, mainly related to the pace of change and educational direction provided by the previous headteacher and governing body. The success of the school was over reliant on the previous headteacher and the skills of other staff and governors were not sufficiently drawn upon. Some of the areas which were identified as being weak have remained so for much of the period since the last inspection but clear action is now being taken to address them.
72. The acting headteacher is ensuring good educational direction and giving a firm steer to the work of the school. Since September 2001 she has considerably quickened the pace of change and identified the key areas where she and other staff need to focus. She has an incisive awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' standards, is sensitive to teachers' needs and their aspirations for themselves and the children in their care. She works efficiently, thinking through the implications of her decisions before taking action. There is a noticeable change in culture which is commented upon by parents who talk encouragingly about how the school is calmer, more assured and improving as a direct result of her management. She has been particularly effective in shaping the work of subject co-ordinators, ensuring that teaching and non-teaching

staff work well as a team and provided a clear focus on further improving pupils' standards. As a consequence a good platform has been established to enable the school to move forward.

73. The existing aims of the school are met well as they were at the last inspection. The desire of the governors, acting headteacher and parish priest to meet pupils' pastoral needs and create a strong Christian ethos is clearly evident. However, the school aims have not been reviewed for a long time. The aims comprehensively reflect Christian values but there are few that relate to educational issues, the teaching of the National Curriculum or the governors' vision for the future.
74. Currently there is no deputy headteacher or senior management team with whom the acting headteacher can share discussions. Work has therefore focused on further developing the role of subject co-ordinators. Subject leadership is good and much improved this term. Co-ordinators now have time allocated to help plan for and develop their subject areas with clear indicators of success and costings. Realistic action plans have been drawn up which provide a clear agenda for change this year. Subject co-ordinators are much more aware of the resource deficiencies in their areas and the training needs of themselves and colleagues. The weaknesses identified in subject co-ordination at the last inspection have therefore only recently been tackled. Steps now need to be taken to ensure that co-ordinators have a clear view of teaching and the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' standards in their subjects and to take the necessary action to secure further improvement.
75. The overall management of special educational needs is unsatisfactory; it was sound at the last inspection. The acting headteacher and another teacher share the responsibility for this aspect and there is now clear direction for developing the necessary systems and procedures to support effective management. These include closer monitoring of progress of pupils with special educational needs, management of the review process for individual education plans, to improve target setting and involvement of parents. The governor with an oversight for special educational needs has in the past only had an informal knowledge of provision in school. This involvement now requires formalising and awareness needs to be raised of the governing body's statutory responsibilities. The draft policy needs to be formally reviewed to ensure it meets all criteria and work needs to be done in anticipation of the new national arrangements for special educational needs.
76. There is a supportive governing body in place now which work as a team. However, the school has not enjoyed stability within the governing body over the past two years. Work commitments and changes in jobs have meant that there has been a greater than normal turnover of governors. New governors have been difficult to find and there have been four changes in the chair of governors during this period. However, a new and informed chair of governors has very recently been appointed and the 'new blood' that has been brought in has considerably strengthened the expertise available within the governing body. The governing body is not yet quorate; two more governors are needed to bring it to the required number.
77. The governors' role in shaping the strategic direction of the school remains unsatisfactory but is steadily improving. At the last inspection they provided little strategic management and undertook too little monitoring of the school's performance. Up until this term insufficient information was made available to them to allow them to form a clear view of priorities; they now have a satisfactory understanding and are quickly developing their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because the acting headteacher has made all pertinent information available. The governors have reviewed their committee structure and are keen to develop the terms of reference to underpin their work.
78. Link governors have been attached to each area of the curriculum and plans are in hand to make supportive visits to subject co-ordinators to discuss their work. This and other information should be of considerable help in enabling the governors to plan and make available the resources to further improve provision and to formulate a sensible strategic plan in consultation with the acting headteacher.

79. The governors have still not ensured that all statutory requirements have been met although some important matters have been rectified. There is now a satisfactory health and safety policy but while the governors' annual report to parents is satisfactory it lacks some key information. The prospectus has not been updated for many years and whilst it is strong on Catholic aims it is less informative on educational matters. For example, insufficient detail is given on the curriculum that is taught and provision for special educational needs. The school aims and mission statement also reflect this imbalance. The governors have also not ensured that geography is taught for sufficient time and until recently provision for information and communication technology has been weak.
80. The previous inspection identified there was too much unsatisfactory teaching in Years 3 and 4. This important weakness has been properly addressed and no longer remains. The report also judged that there was too little monitoring of teaching which would identify what teachers did well and where they needed to improve. This also has improved through the use of external consultants to advise on the development of teaching in literacy and numeracy; in addition the acting headteacher has monitored all staff this term.
81. The acting headteacher and governors have very successfully ensured that they promote racial harmony and take the necessary steps to encourage all pupils within their care. All teachers, backed up admirably by the non-teaching staff, know all pupils extremely well and are sensitive to their emotional and personal needs. When required, direct intervention is made to support pupils who are going through a difficult period. Pupils new to the school are quickly made to feel welcome and steps are taken, particularly in the later years, to ensure that pupils do their best through targeted support.
82. Satisfactory arrangements, including a sound policy, are in place for performance management of teachers. This is a newly introduced system to review the performance of teachers on an annual basis through the identification and setting of targets for improvement. Evaluations of progress towards meeting the targets are made during the year. In the first cycle a longer review period has been established and within this all staff have been set appropriate objectives to work on. Staff and governors have received good training to enable them to work well within this new system and to date the new arrangements are proceeding satisfactorily.
83. The school's priorities for development do not fully match the weaknesses identified during the inspection and therefore need adjusting. The school improvement plan, which has been developed this term, however, has some good points. It is very strong on giving subject coordinators a clear brief to develop their subjects, with particular attention being paid to the development of information and communication technology. This was a good judgement for the acting headteacher to make. The subject action plans are appropriately costed and have clear success criteria, which can be used at the end of the year to help judge the extent to which the plans have been realised. Good attention has been paid to identifying staff development needs. However, few of the plans have direct statements which focus on improving particular standards within the subject or attempt to improve the quality of teaching. The overall plan includes no mention of developing the role of the governing body or overall management and development of the curriculum. There is thin evidence to support the view that a detailed analysis of the school's performance has been taken into account in formulating the plan.
84. The school takes good action in reviewing and setting its targets for pupils' performance in the national tests in Year 2 and 6. Because the ability profile, numbers being taught and proportion of pupils with special educational needs changes year on year, the school is tracking the abilities of pupils at regular intervals. As a result the acting headteacher has an extremely clear analysis of their standards on a year-by-year basis. This information is used well to identify targets for each year group. These have progressively got higher and the acting headteacher has set an appropriate path for the improvement of the school. A range of initiatives is being taken to ensure that the challenging targets have been met.
85. The governors' role in financial planning was weak at the last inspection and remains undeveloped although it is now quickly improving. During a period in which the number of pupils

has fallen dramatically, and thus also the income available, the budget has always been maintained in surplus. However, in recent years a prudent line has been taken with the money that has been available. Around 15 per cent of the available budget, which is a very high amount, was being kept back unnecessarily at a time when spending was needed on some important areas of the curriculum. This has impaired the development of some subjects and limited standards across most subjects. Action has been taken by the acting headteacher and by the end of this year the surplus is expected to be reduced to a more acceptable seven per cent which is still a little on the high side. New routines have been established to monitor spending and the school improvement plan has started to be costed. Both of these factors and the sharing of better financial information between the headteacher and governors should help project and target future expenditure much better.

86. The use of specific grants to support pupils with special educational needs is good and is effective in helping them make satisfactory progress through the school. Funding which has been earmarked to support the pupil with developing English skills and that earmarked for staff training has also been spent effectively. The governing body have a developing understanding of best value but have already ensured that they spend large sums of money well when purchasing costly equipment and in the award of contracts. They now need to consult more widely on spending decisions and compare the standards achieved and costs with other schools. Better evaluations of the impact that money spent on the school improvement plan has on pupils' standards and achievements would also be beneficial.
87. The school has recently acquired the capacity to use computers to help manage its finances, pupil records and attendance. This is being done meticulously and helping to provide the headteacher and governors with accurate and up to date information to assist them in their decision making. Assessment information and analysis of data on standards and pupils' progress is mainly undertaken manually and is done very well. However, the future use of computerised spreadsheets would help speed up the analysis and interrogation of the data.
88. The governors have concerns about much of the information that comes to them from the national and local bodies. There is too much information; often it is not written concisely and clearly enough for a lay audience. Its tone is sometimes daunting to them. Information is sometimes requested from different quarters in different forms with no apparent co-ordination between the authorities concerned. This results in time being wasted by the school.
89. At the time of the inspection there was one teacher short of a full complement. Over recent years the governors have had difficulty in recruiting staff. The shortlists for appointments often include very few names. Currently pupils are taught with well qualified staff with sufficient expertise and experience to teach the curriculum in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. A good appointment has also recently been made in Year 5. Year 6 is currently, being taught by three supply staff; this arrangement is not of the acting headteacher's desire but they are being deployed so as to maximise their teaching strengths to the benefit of pupils. Some classes have had too many supply teachers in the recent past and this has had an unsettling impact on their attitudes to work and standards. It is also taking a long time to appoint a permanent headteacher because of the low interest shown in the job – this has a knock on effect on the appointment of a permanent teacher into Year 6. The governors are aware of the uncertainty that this generates and are keen for future staffing to be as strong as possible and more stable.
90. The school is very well served by a range of administration, classroom assistants, ECOs and ancillary assistants. They demonstrate through their work and contributions to school life similar care of the pupils as the teachers and teamwork, which has a positive impact on the life and work of the school. A number of these staff have been loyal servants to the school for many years and their often unsung work does much to ensure the smooth running of the school and add to its caring ethos.
91. Resources for teaching are just adequate in most areas of the curriculum but there are weaknesses. More books and equipment are needed in science, maps and texts are needed in geography, more keyboards are required in music and there is a lack of suitable climbing

apparatus in physical education for children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. The accommodation is good. The decrease in numbers of pupils who are on roll means that there is a surplus of space, which can be used for new purposes and, for example, the conversion of a teaching room to an information and communication technology suite was readily facilitated. There are additional plans to convert another into a music suite. There is a large playground, which would benefit from more markings to encourage a wide range of play activities. The most positive feature about the accommodation is the very good way in which the teachers have created a language rich environment and use display well to provide a stimulus. This is particularly good in Years 1 and 2.

92. Taking into account the context of the school and the below average income per pupil, the decreasing surplus which is being well targeted, the good achievement of pupils, the good behaviour and relationships, the good leadership of the acting headteacher and the good teaching, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

93. In order to further raise standards and improve the quality of education offered, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

1. Further develop the work of the governing body and the impact it has on school life by:
 - clarifying the terms of reference for the work of governors, setting out a clear programme of work for each year;
 - improving the ways in which it monitors and evaluates the work of the school;
 - ensuring that the prospectus and governor's annual reports include all the information they should;
 - upgrading their knowledge of what is taught and ensuring that the curriculum meets statutory requirements through reviewing the curriculum policy statement, increasing the curriculum time allocated to the different subjects of the curriculum, gaining a clear overview of what is taught in each year;
 - formulating a clear strategic plan alongside a revised school improvement plan;
 - develop a better understanding of how the school compares with other schools, consults on major decisions and uses to best effect the resources it has at its disposal.

(See paragraphs 69, 73, 76-79, 85, 87 and 88.)

2. Improve the school's documentation and procedures which helps pupils on the special educational needs register by:
 - ensuring better information is included in the prospectus and governor's annual report to parents;
 - ensuring that the individual plans of pupils with special educational needs are more fully taken into account in lesson planning;
 - enhancing the work of the ECOs so that they make better records of pupils' progress;
 - consulting parents fully about their children's individual education plans;
 - ensuring that the governors are fully aware of their responsibilities about special educational needs and are knowledgeable about the new Code of Conduct which comes into operation in September 2002 and organising all records centrally.

(See paragraphs 38, 39, 50, 56, 63, 68 and 75.)

3. Develop the use of computers in all areas of the curriculum by:
 - ensuring that work is planned into each subject scheme of work;
 - continuing with the upgrading of equipment so that access to the Internet and e-mail is improved and there is sufficient equipment to allow work in monitoring and control to be completed.

(See paragraphs 17, 19, 36, 41, 42, 109, 120, 129, 135, 141, 145, 150, 155, 156-161, 175 and 169.)

4. Enhance provision in geography in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - Reviewing the time allocation for geography and the sequence of teaching in each year.

(See paragraphs 18, 19, 43 and 146-150.)

5. Improve levels of attendance by:
- monitoring attendance more closely and involving support agencies when appropriately;
 - revising the information on attendance in the school prospectus;
 - writing to parents on a regular basis to keep them informed of progress on this issue;
 - ensuring that parents are informed well in advance of the dates of the national tests.

(See paragraphs 6, 8, 19, 24 and 70.)

6. Improve the level and quality of resources in all subjects but especially in science, geography and physical education by:
- reviewing the level and quality of books, equipment and other resources available in each area of the curriculum and thus establishing a systematic programme to update and upgrade resources.

(See paragraphs 17, 18, 87, 91, 158 and 169.)

The following minor but still important areas should also be considered by the governors for improvement in the action plan:

- Improve the expectations to complete homework and set it more regularly. (See paragraphs 19, 40, 70 and 129.)
- Ensure that assessment data is better used to help teachers plan their lessons and set individual targets for pupils' learning. (See paragraphs 38, 61, 62, 128, 135 and 169.)

The school has already identified the need to improve information and communication technology, provision for special educational needs and homework as areas for improvement within its current school improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	16	12	0	0	0
Percentage	3	12	49	36	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	18	96
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
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 Years 1 and 2 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Years 1 and 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	4	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	9	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (93)	64 (80)	93 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (67)	93 (93)	93 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Years 3 to 6 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Years 3 to 6 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	8	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (40)	70 (60)	85 (80)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	15	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (67)	75 (73)	90 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	8	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	19.2

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	131

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial Year	2000/01
	£
Total income	326,306
Total expenditure	277,567
Expenditure per pupil	2,478
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	48,739

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	148
Number of questionnaires returned	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	36	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	27	13	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	45	19	0	0
The teaching is good.	69	31	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	73	22	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	9	0	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	12	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	60	40	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	29	0	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	18	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	28	0	0	7

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Although only six parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector their contribution was much appreciated. They expressed their strong support for the work of the acting headteacher and reflected the overall views found through the questionnaire that their children like school, are taught well, are able to approach the school and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Parents who responded have some concerns over the amount of homework that is set. A smaller number understand that some pupils have emotional difficulties that lead on occasions to behaviour deteriorating.

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

94. Children are admitted on an individual basis into the nursery after their third birthday and attend afternoon sessions; after their fourth birthday they attend the longer, morning sessions. Children then transfer or are admitted into the reception class in the September before they reach the age of five. At the time of the inspection there were 18 pupils in the nursery who attend part-time and seven children in the reception class who attend full time. Many parents have deliberately chosen this provision and make an effort to ensure their children attend on a regular basis.
95. Overall, pupils enter school with levels of attainment that are well below those found nationally in all areas of learning, although there is a wide range of ability. On entry many pupils have low self-esteem and lack confidence in communicating with other children and adults. Many have had little exposure to books or to a range of educational experiences that have stimulated their minds. In the first few weeks of the reception class assessments, known as baseline assessments, are undertaken to help the teacher map out future learning requirements. These indicate that the pupils have made good progress in the nursery but that their attainment overall is below average, particularly in their recognition of letters, phonetic awareness, speaking and listening skills and use of mathematical language.
96. The previous inspection report found that pupils were taught well and as a result made good progress in the nursery and reception class. The good teaching and provision remain and results in children making a good start to their education. There are particular strengths in:
- the care which is taken to assimilate new pupils into the classes;
 - strong teamwork between the reception and nursery nurse who have ensured that work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils;
 - the consistently good teaching which is provided;
 - the attention given to meeting pupils' emotional and personal needs.
97. However, although curriculum planning ensures that the curriculum is balanced and pitched appropriately, daily lesson planning would benefit from closer reference to learning goals for this age group which are known as 'stepping stones'. An attractive learning environment has been established; resources overall are adequate but more large play equipment, computer software and appropriate equipment for physical activity is needed. These deficiencies are limiting the standards that can be reached.
98. Since the last inspection the children's good performance in practical areas of learning such as music and art, designing and making activities and exploring the world around them remains strong. However, their weak speaking and listening, reading and writing skills also remain evident and affect other areas of learning and their later progress through the school.
99. Consistently good teaching is evident in all areas of learning in the reception class. As a result achievement is good across the curriculum for children of all abilities. Overall, the children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical, physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, this represents a major stride forward from the very low levels of attainment evident on entry. The higher attaining children are doing well and are on course to meet all of the early learning goals. Children with English as an additional language have settled in well, being included in all activities and achieving well. Good support for pupils with special educational needs is also evident and these pupils are also doing well compared with their prior levels of attainment.

Personal, social and emotional development

100. The children are making good progress in this aspect of their development because of the good teaching. Many children enter the school with a poorly developed range of skills; they are unsure of themselves, show little curiosity and are hesitant to work with other children. However, they respond well to the ethos of good behaviour and care of each other that the adults constantly promote. The relationships in both classes are very good and clear routines are established that help promote a secure learning environment. Many children in the reception class continually show good involvement in the activities and maintain concentration and interest. They sit quietly when required to, but there are too few opportunities for them to sit in a circle and discuss their feelings and concerns. Children have a good sense of right and wrong. The higher attaining pupils show good confidence in trying out new activities and taking risks within their learning environment but most pupils are show some limitations in interactive play. They have learnt to take turns and to maintain concentration such as seen when they were identifying the first letters of different objects. Children show an interest in cultural differences and have looked at life in China, the USA and India, which has helped them to improve their self-image and understanding of the lives of people who live differently.

Communication, language and literacy

101. The more advanced children in the reception class use language well, initiating conversations, taking account of what others say and using a range of different kinds of sentences in their work. However, others too often use simple statements and gestures to make their meaning clear to others and use limited talk during structured and free-play learning activities. They listen very attentively to a range of stories, which they enjoy, although some children do not understand all that is said and most are able to participate in repetitive sentences. For example, when hearing the stories of 'Mrs. Honey's Hat' and 'The Gingerbread Man' some pupils had difficulty in recognising new words recounting the characters or main parts of the stories.
102. The higher attaining pupils have started to recognise key words and enjoy books but others are at the level where they know that words and books carry meaning. Reading books are taken home and the children are systematically learning new vocabulary; encouragement is given to parents to help in this work at home but in some cases this is not always forthcoming. The better readers say they enjoy reading at home and have favourite books whilst some children are beginning to be aware of the way stories are constructed and show an interest in the illustrations in books and the displays in the classroom. The children are starting to recognise the letters of the alphabet and were seen working on the letters 'p' and 't'; the higher attaining pupils could do this quickly and confidently and are well ahead in this work whilst others show some confusion over letters which have some similarities in common.
103. Most pupils are starting to use writing as a means of recording information; most can recognise their names when written, often because they spot the first letter or shape of their names. The higher attaining children are starting to produce emergent writing and can complete sentences starting with "I am ..." in different ways; however most pupils are behind the stage they would normally be for their age and do not readily use their phonetic knowledge to help write new words and punctuation is rarely recognised. Pupils enjoy taking part in short drama activities and were seen acting out 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The teaching was good in that the teacher took great pains to ensure that everyone was included in the activity, in a way that was appropriate to their abilities, but there was little scope for them to show initiative or improvise, thus extending their language.
104. Teaching in this area is good but more attention now needs to be paid to improving the children's speaking and listening and writing skills.

Mathematical development

105. Teaching and learning in this area is also good because the teacher uses a variety of well chosen activities, progressively making them more challenging, to engage and motivate the children. Particular care is taken to encourage the weaker learners and challenge the higher attaining children. More use could be made of counting activities within daily routines.
106. Children count reliably from one to five but the higher attaining pupils have the confidence to count in sequence numbers up to 100. In an activity seen they were learning the pattern of counting and extending it to count from 30 to 40 and then 40 to 50 with the teacher helping them when required. They are starting to use terms such as 'one more' and 'one less' and can recognise groups with one, two or three objects, such as when the teacher held up different numbers of fingers and asked them to recognise the number shown; the higher attaining children could do this well but other pupils in the class showed through their hesitancy that they did not understand this idea well. Most recognise different shapes such as circles and squares and some understand that these may be the same or different sizes and through play are starting to explore the principles of capacity and volume. Children recognise simple mathematical language such as 'big' and 'little' but the lack of a working programmable toy is hindering work on describing the position of an object and there are few opportunities to learn about position.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

107. Teaching is also good overall in this area of learning. Although little work in this area was seen during the inspection, photographic evidence and work on display shows that children explore and investigate a variety of living thing such as frogspawn, bulbs, slugs, snails and 'Painted Lady' butterflies, learning how to care for these and developing a respect for the natural environment. This aspect of work is strong, and good teaching enables pupils to make a confident start on their National Curriculum science work in Year 1. Children in the reception class also design and make tall buildings out of boxes, bird cakes to hang from trees, pancakes on 'Shrove Tuesday', and curry when they learnt about people from India. They use construction kits to build simple models and a higher attaining pupil was constructing a dinosaur using simple everyday materials. Some opportunities are provided for children to use the computer where they demonstrate sound control of a mouse and know how to operate a computer and other simple electronic equipment safely. However, too little time is spent allocating children to computer tasks and a shortage of a good range of age related software is limiting pupils' progress in this area. Teaching in this area could helpfully be strengthened.

Physical development

108. Evidence from previous work and planning indicates that teaching overall is good in this area of learning. However, children's physical development is below expectations for their age partly because insufficient time is given to indoor activities in wider spaces such as the hall. Through the week they undertake throwing and catching activities, skipping and play on the obstacle course outside and there are opportunities within free choice to play on some large play equipment such as cars and scooters. However, if the weather is inclement these activities are restricted and more large play equipment needs to be purchased to provide enough for all children. Children were seen doing simple movements such as becoming as tall as a tree or as wide as a house which they did well but their catching skills were weak. Too little emphasis is given to using the hall to teach movement and help use equipment for climbing and swinging. This is partly explained because there is some lack of equipment to suit this younger age range of children. There is an adequate secure outdoor area for children to play and excellent plans to upgrade this; associated funding from the LEA and a local charity has recently been received. Children's fine motor skills are developing well and they hold paintbrushes and pencils firmly. They handle equipment and malleable materials safely and with good control.

Creative development

109. Teaching in this area of the curriculum is varied and good in quality. Most, but not all children, readily join in with singing and imaginative games. They enjoy singing simple songs from memory including well known nursery rhymes and other songs such as 'Shake your bean bag' and 'If you're happy and you know it' and do this with control and good pitch. In the activities seen more use could have been made of musical instruments. In some sessions the nursery and reception classes combine and the older children encourage and support the younger ones to join in and participate fully. Once a week they receive more specialist teaching in the hall where they sing to accompaniment and explore a range of musical sounds.
110. Work in art is stronger and the evidence from retained work shows that children shine in this area and work with creativity and imagination. Staff provide an interesting range of materials and activities for children to work on. For example, there is good work in leaf prints, collage, wax resist, textured paintings and pencil drawings through which children can express themselves and their feelings on themes such as 'Bonfire Night', 'We all have different coloured skins' and 'Balanced Diets'.

ENGLISH

111. Standards in Year 2 in last year's national tests and those seen in the inspection are below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. This is satisfactory achievement for pupils because they start Year 1 with standards that are also below those normally seen at that age. Standards remain similar to those reported at the last inspection. However, more pupils are now reaching level 2 which is the standard expected in Year 2, because of stronger teaching and improvements to the curriculum. Pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory progress but the girls' standards are higher than the boys in both reading and writing.
112. Standards in Year 6 in last year's national test were well below average but those seen in the inspection were below average. Thus they have improved. This is because the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and better targeting of individual pupils is now having a better impact on raising standards. This is especially true in writing where standards seen in writing have improved and are on course to be average. Standards in speaking and listening continue to be a weakness. Achievement of pupils of all abilities in Year 6 is satisfactory and there is little difference between the boys' and girls' standards.
113. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils are keen to talk in front of others, and to ask questions, make comments or express opinions, whilst some lower attaining pupils lack confidence and need encouragement. Higher attaining pupils remember the words which are used to give directions to make biscuits, such as 'first', 'next' and 'last'. When talking about party games, one average pupil described the game of ducking for apples succinctly, "You have to put 'em in water, and ye have to dip in to get apple". Pupils in Year 5 show understanding in discussion of the use of colloquial language and standard English. By Year 6 higher attaining pupils discuss their favourite chapter in 'The Iron Man' talking about how the words make a mind image, how the descriptions feel 'dark' and 'mysterious'.
114. Boys and girls make good progress in developing skills and strategies for reading by Year 2 and like to sit in the attractive book corner. Most read at home regularly to parents and family. In school, they listen well to each other and take turns to read in small groups or one to one. Lower attaining pupils sometimes 'read' with the ECO about Biff and Kipper on the computer and click on the mouse to turn the page. The majority of Year 2 pupils are developing good fluency and beginning to read with expression and recognise exclamation and speech marks. They identify author and illustrator, and talk about the main events of the story. Higher attaining pupils know how to use an index when they meet new words and use phonic strategies to decode them.
115. Through Years 3 to 6 the school recognises that progress in developing reading skills, particularly for boys, slows down considerably, and steps have been taken to keep their interest.

They now have an extended choice of texts, focused on the types of stories boys prefer, such as 'scary stories' or 'mystery stories'. Many pupils like to read books at home and some attend the local library. Across other subjects of the curriculum, lower and average attaining pupils often find difficulty in reading the text of work sheets. Often it is at too high a level, and when they do struggle through it, many of the words are unknown to them, making it difficult to have an understanding of the passage; an example is the work in Year 5 on the Vikings. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6, read with good expression and understanding of the text as it stands, but find difficulty in interpreting what it means.

116. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory by Year 2, and good by Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, they write diaries, directions and sequence instructions for bathing a dog. They enjoy writing poetry, for example about autumn:

*The leaves are falling off the trees,
The conkers are red and brown,
The hedgehogs are spikey,
The badgers are digging underground
It is autumn time.*

117. They write about 'The House of My Dreams' using descriptors 'cosy, nice and warm' and one pupil includes onomatopoeia 'slithering snake'. Their sentences are simple or joined by 'and' or 'because', and are sometimes punctuated. Spelling of the most frequently used words is accurate, and otherwise phonetically recognisable. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils build a sound knowledge of grammar and experience writing in a good range of forms, such as diary, play, retelling a story such as 'The Willow Pattern Plate' and redrafting by word processor. Year 5 pupils practise handwriting their spellings for homework and take pride in producing good neatly formed joined script. Lower attaining pupils have poor spelling skills and they have no consistently used strategies for improving. For example some pupils use word files and others do not. Dictionaries are underused. On the Christmas theme, a lower attaining pupil incorporates simile into his acrostic poem 'Cold as Ice'. They planned a trip writing bullet points, but also meet the challenge of writing the diary of a chimney sweep boy. Higher attaining pupils use accurately punctuated and spelt, complex sentences such as "As I put the key in the lock, a rush of excitement ran through me and made me shiver." Vocabulary is developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. The use of writing frames in science was seen to improve standards in pupils' writing of scientific investigations and this has been a useful initiative.
118. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and mostly satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 with good teaching seen in Year 5. Teachers' planning follows the National Literacy Strategy closely. The strength of the most successful teaching was in the planning to meet the needs of all pupils so that pupils who needed more active learning tasks such as labelling, pointing and finding were kept on task because their interest was held. Where teaching was less successful, planning of writing tasks was appropriate for the higher attaining pupils but not targeted to meet the wide range of abilities within the class, in particular the pupils with special educational needs. As a result pupils could not work without some support. ECOs gave good assistance to pupils with learning or behaviour needs to enable them to do the same work as everyone in the class, but when they had to take disruptive pupils out of class, they did not have planned work activities. The result was that pupils lost valuable learning time. Another feature of less successful teaching was the slow pace of the lesson which involved pupils sitting on the floor for 40 minutes. One of the planned activities was too lengthy and could have been more effectively carried out in small group session. Homework is set more regularly in some classes in Years 3 to 6 than in others, but a high proportion of the pupils do not return it completed. Good literacy support is being made for pupils with English as an additional language which has resulted in improved standards.
119. Teaching of literacy within other subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory. There are some good opportunities for pupils in Years 3 and 4 through the Additional Literacy Strategy (ALS), 'Read On Write Away' (ROWA) and 'Push on Writing' (POW) in Year 6 to have frequent turns in small groups. ECOs and teachers worked effectively with these groups so that pupils benefited from

the sessions and showed more confidence in small groups. There are some good opportunities for writing in history, mathematics and science and the use of information and communication technology is becoming more frequent. The adoption of these new strategies is having a positive impact on standards.

120. Subject leadership is good. The school analyses test and task results thoroughly and has set appropriate targets for the subject. However monitoring of teaching has just begun and the impact of this on developing consistency and sharing good practice has had little effect on learning so far. Good strategies are in place to identify pupils with special educational needs early in Year 1 is successful and as a result appropriate action is taken to address their learning needs. The procedures for assessing pupils are good, but the use of the information to guide curriculum planning is underdeveloped. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement. This is because weaknesses in teachers' planning and reading records have not been fully addressed. Progress in some areas remains patchy and strategies for developing spelling skills by Year 6 still need to be addressed. However, following the successful introduction of the Literacy Strategy there has been sustained catching up in points scores compared to the national trend. The breadth of experiences in the literacy curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

121. Standards in mathematics have improved considerably in all year groups since the last inspection. In Year 2 the results of the national test in 2001 were average compared to all schools, but above average compared to schools in a similar context. These were lower than in the previous three years, where they have been well above average, because of the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards seen during the inspection were above average and achievement was good reflecting the strong provision in this subject in Years 1 and 2.
122. Standards in Year 6 were average in last year's national tests which was an improvement on the previous three years where standards were well below average and there was some underachievement because of some weak teaching in Years 4 and 5. Standards seen in the inspection show further rises and are above average with pupils showing good achievement by Year 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, and is the result of much better teaching and clearer curriculum planning.
123. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 demonstrate well-developed skills in number work. The majority count on from any small number to 100 and rapidly recall doubles to $5 + 5$ and $10 + 10$. They count in twos, fives and tens confidently and recall number facts quickly. When working with coins pupils quickly work out how much money is needed to buy toys from the shop and confidently recorded this in their books. They showed a secure understanding of amounts of money and the value of coins. In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn that half of a given number is the same as dividing by two and that a quarter of a given number is the same as dividing by four. Pupils confidently developed their skills and understanding of simple fractions and worked hard on completing their tasks. In Year 5 pupils develop their skills in using the four number operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They solve simple word problems and use calculators to check their answers. In Year 6 pupils count positive and negative numbers as the teacher points to intervals on the counting stick. They develop their understanding of co-ordinates and plot them in all four quadrants. Some pupils were able to work out the area of the shape. Pupils use simple graphs and charts to good effect in science but mathematical skills are under-utilised in most other areas of the curriculum.
124. The overall progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 with particular good progress evident at the end of this key stage. This is because of the inconsistency in practice between the many teachers employed the school in Years 3 to 6 and the lack of specific targeted programmes of work for pupils with special educational needs.

125. The good progress results from the consistently good teaching in Years 1 and 2 and the good teaching seen in Year 6. However, teaching by supply teachers in Year 3 to 6 is generally satisfactory and not as developed as with the permanent members of staff and this is the main cause of inconsistency in the quality of mathematics teaching. The features that made the best lessons good were planning in detail using pupils' prior learning, plenty of work to stretch pupils, and high expectations. Learning objectives were clearly explained at the start of lessons and revisited at the end of lessons to see how much progress had been made. In these lessons introductions included quick-fire mental and oral questions which improved pupils' thinking skills. Appropriate timed targets were set and this led to a fast pace to the lesson. A weakness in teaching is that teachers do not use the available assessment information well enough to help them plan lessons which are best suited to what the pupils have already learnt. In additions, teachers do not put enough emphasis on problem solving and investigation work and this needs to be strengthened.
126. The response of pupils in lessons is good in both keys stages. Pupils are interested in their learning, concentrate hard and show enjoyment in their learning. Pupils' behaviour is good.
127. Assessment procedures in mathematics are satisfactory. Pupils have group targets but are not always aware of them. Pupils are unable to explain what they need to do to improve their learning and how to achieve the next target. Progress is regularly assessed and the acting headteacher keeps meticulous individual records to track individual pupils' progress. This however has not yet had an impact on teaching and learning. Marking is inconsistently applied.
128. The large amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 4 and 5 reported at the last inspection is no longer evident. The school has satisfactory levels of resources and by the end of the year resources will be very good as the co-ordinator has a planned programme for renewal and enhancement. They are efficiently used. The co-ordinator works very hard to improve standards which have risen since the last inspection. Her dedication and hard work in improving the mathematical curriculum and provision for learning are shown by the rising standards in the subject. The national strategy for the teaching and learning of numeracy is becoming well implemented and is making a significant impact on learning and pupils are now doing much better than at the last inspection. The monitoring of the subject is improving, and some attention now needs to be given to identifying more opportunities for mathematics in other areas of the curriculum. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology within the subject and more homework could be set, particularly in the later years.

SCIENCE

129. The 2001 National Curriculum teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 showed that standards in science are average with the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3 being well above the national average. The results were above average when compared with similar schools. Similar standards were seen during the inspection. These standards are higher than those reported at the last inspection mainly because more pupils are now reaching level 3 which is higher than expected for Year 2. Achievement in Year 2 is good because the pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are below those expected for their age.
130. Standards in Year 6 in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were below average but average when compared with similar schools but were adversely affected by pupil absence. Pupils of all abilities showed satisfactory achievement in Year 6. The Year 6 pupils have had periods of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 4 and 5 which have affected standards in past years; this has been counteracted by targeted support and good teaching in Year 6. Standards have risen considerably from being well below average four years ago and those seen in the inspection were average and therefore better than last year. Achievement is good.
131. Work seen in the inspection in Year 2 shows pupils have systematically learnt the important sources of light and that shadows are formed because there is an absence of light when an object blocks light from travelling. In a lesson seen, work had been pitched at a high level and pupils were learning ideas normally covered in later years. The higher attaining pupils could

identify through their observations that light is reflected from shiny surfaces such as mirrors and that different sorts of reflections are produced when you look at the different sides of a spoon. This illustrates their capacity to perform confidently at an above average level. At the last inspection it was reported that some pupils are given work to do which is too easy; this has been addressed and pupils are given challenging work to do.

132. In Year 6 work seen during the inspection confirms that standards are average, continuing the rise in standards. This is because the pupils have received consistently good teaching, do work which is well rooted in the National Curriculum and learn through a very strong emphasis on experimental and investigative science. Whilst only one lesson could be seen in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection but there is a good range of work on display and pupils talk enthusiastically about the science they have learnt. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have further developed their observing and describing skills and can describe some properties of a metal, plastic and wood and can sort different objects in different ways according to their observable features. Work on display, produced by Year 3 and 4 pupils, shows that they have studied the structure of human teeth in depth, naming teeth as incisors, molars or canine. This indicates that the weakness in the living things attainment target is being suitably addressed in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 6 talk with great conviction about the ways they act as young scientists and quote from their investigations on finding out if anything is dissolved in different kinds of water, how their pulse rates change as they exercise and what factors might affect how fast jelly dissolves. For example, they can correctly relate a scientific relationship such as “We breathe faster as we do more exercise because this enables our bodies to take in more oxygen which we need to give energy to our muscles to enable them to move.” This shows that their literacy skills and experimental skills have come a long way from their very low levels on entry to the school. When presented with new experimental data they can identify observations which do not fit the expected pattern. Work in books shows that presentation is good and they use a useful range of different ways writing up their work, such as through the use of simple writing frames, flowcharts and diagrams. Good exposure to scientific vocabulary is provided but many pupils are confused by words which have a similar meaning such as dissolving and melting.
133. The good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 has been maintained since the last inspection. Classroom routines are emphasised and this leads to pupils being able to work safely and independently. At the start of lessons teachers discuss what pupils have previously learnt which enables them to tune into their existing knowledge base. A good emphasis is given to discussing scientific ideas well and giving clues to help them remember so pupils can be clear what new ideas really mean. For example, to help them remember what concave means she used the idea of “A cave - you go in it” to illustrate that concave mirrors curve inwards towards the middle. There is a very strong emphasis on developing pupils’ investigative skills at both key stages which helps pupils develop a respect for evidence and open-mindedness in their scientific enquiry. Teachers root pupils’ learning very well at a level which is expected for different ages but also ensure that it is suitably challenging for pupils with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils. As a result all pupils are included in lessons and make steady gains in their knowledge and understanding. Although there are some examples of teachers incorporating computer activities into lessons such as spreadsheets being used to present data and draw graphs too few opportunities are provided for pupils to use computers to gather data, research the subject and to improve the presentation of their work.
134. There is good management of the subject. The co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has been successful in improving standards year on year. Planning has improved and national guidance is being used flexibly to meet the needs of the different classes and the way they are organised. Sufficient time is available to teach the subject. Regular first hand practical experiences provide the vehicle for learning the subject but there are inadequate levels of equipment and modern science texts to teach the subject. This is partly compensated for because the library has a useful stock of science reference books and the pupils undertake a variety of visits to places of scientific interest such as the Leeds Exploratory and Jodrell Bank. Levels of resources are not as good as the last inspection. Monitoring of the subject has not been a high priority and more time now needs to be set aside to observe teaching and to gain a clear overview of standards in each year so that teachers can

be clear as to where to concentrate their efforts. There is still no systematic approach to assessing pupils' standards, particularly through Years 3 to 6. As a result pupils' standards cannot be tracked effectively through the key stage and this limits the degree to which appropriate action can be taken to address pupils' misunderstandings in what they have learnt.

ART AND DESIGN

135. During the inspection only two lessons were seen, both in Year 6. No lessons were seen in other years. Pupils' present and previous work was examined and discussion took place with pupils and teachers in relation to their work.
136. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average in both Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily through both key stages but standards could be higher if the planning in the later years were clearer and more precise. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. National planning guidelines have recently been adopted in the subject and this is helping to improve provision.
137. Pupils, including those with special educational needs use a range of media and materials to develop their skills in the subject. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their sense of colour as they explore and investigate a range of materials and textures to create a collage of 'Winter Wonderland'. In Year 5 pupils developed their skills in drawing still life objects. They explored the idea of contrast in shape and tone. Pupils collected a range of objects, which had different qualities. They discussed with the teacher the meaning of 'still life' and arranged the objects into a composition for a 'still life' study. In Year 6 pupils had designed parts of the 'Iron Man's' body and using a line of symmetry cut and stuck part of the image onto card. Pupils developed their knowledge skills and understanding of other artists by discussing the work of William Morris to develop their historical knowledge when observing his prints and methods of presentation. Pupils developed their understanding further by making their own design in his style which will eventually be made into a clay tile.
138. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons proceed well and discussion ensures that pupils have a clear idea of what they have to do. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject, but are not clear about the distinctions between art and design and design and technology, particularly in Years 3 to 6. As a result opportunities are missed to pinpoint interesting features of learning. For example, when the pupils were working on their designs in the style of William Morris, pupils were not directed to look for symmetry in their designs which limited their expression and quality of their work.
139. Pupils work well together in lessons and this makes a satisfactory contribution to their moral, social and cultural development. Links to literacy are strong with the book 'The Iron Man' being used effectively to provide stimulus. The learning environment, especially that developed through display, is a strength and encourages pupils to give of their best.
140. The uncertainty about what pupils should be learning at each key stage was identified at the last inspection and the policy and scheme of work still require strengthening. The use of information and communication technology is not yet fully established to investigate famous artists and the use of software to create designs to support the subject. Both the level and quality of resources are satisfactory and are well managed and organised. They are easily accessible to staff and pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

141. No lessons were seen during the inspection as art and design is the focus for work this half term, with design and technology planned for next half term. Pupils' previous work was examined and discussion took place with pupils and teachers in relation to their work undertaken. Planning was examined and displays were scrutinised. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average in Years 2 and 6 and achievement is satisfactory for pupils of all abilities in all years. Standards in relation to the previous inspection report have improved in Years 3 to 6 and cannot be compared in Years 1 and 2 as a secure judgement was not made due to lack of evidence. As no lessons were seen it is therefore impossible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching.
142. By the end of Year 2 pupils produce their own original ideas for example of how to make a room in a house. They carry out work in a logical order and plan what to do next using their knowledge of materials. They use tools to assemble and join. From scrutiny of the display it is evident that pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of their learning. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to extend and develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject and by the end of the Key Stage pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils enhance the quality of the curriculum by attending a craft club in the local town. Pupils proudly displayed the things that they had made which included a bracelet for their mother and a key ring. They had used a variety of materials which they had chosen with care, and assembled and joined together with accuracy and skill.
143. No overall judgement on teaching can be made as no lessons were observed during the inspection. Displays, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions demonstrate that teachers in Years 1 and 2 have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. However in Years 3 to 6 teachers display demonstrates confusion in their understanding of the subject with that in art and design.
144. Resources are satisfactory and support the subject well. There is a policy and scheme to support teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has produced an action plan for the development of the subject. However this is the same document as that for art and design. This supports inspection findings that confusion occurs between the two subjects. Little use is currently made of information and communication technology within the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

145. Standards in geography are below average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievements in geography are satisfactory by the end of Year 2, but achievement by the end of Year 6 is unsatisfactory. This is because geography has had little focus of attention for older pupils and the scheme of work has been in place for one whole term only following appointment of a curriculum manager. Pupils by the age of seven acquire sound knowledge and skills, but by the age of 11 their skills, such as in mapping, are weak. They do, however, have good awareness of the importance of their home location in relation to historical development of cotton mills in the area. Evidence from the inspection is drawn from talking with pupils from in Year 6 and a scrutiny of work in Years 1 and 2.
146. Pupils by the age of seven map routes around the school and local area and know physical features of Glossop. Following discussion they can compile their own list of likes and dislikes of the area: 'like the quiet' or 'like the hills', dislike 'the litter at the shops'; and would recommend that visitors 'walk in the hills', 'visit Maron Park' or 'the Roman villa'.
147. Pupils by Year 6, know why the local river has played an important part in the first settlement in the area, and later, as a good place for a cotton mill. They know that cotton comes from America and India, but are uncertain about where these countries are located on a map. Pupils in Year 5 have very little knowledge of where their town and important cities are on a map, and about the position of Britain in relation to other countries.

148. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. By Year 2, pupils' learning is satisfactory. All pupils show pride and interest in, and good awareness of their own locality through geography in Year 1 and 2 and history in Year 6. They are enthusiastic about visits to places of local importance and have a good knowledge of the changes and new developments in Glossop and in the local area over time.
149. At the time of the last inspection standards were average although there was no scheme of work. Standards appear to have slipped, because more attention has been given to other areas of the curriculum and insufficient time has been allotted to the subject. Resources for geography are limited, in particular maps. However, there continues to be good links through history. Information and communication technology is not yet developed in geography. However the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

150. Standards in history in Year 6 are average with the current pupils showing good achievement from the age of seven. There is insufficient evidence for judging standards and achievement in Year 2 due to the topic cycle timetable. Standards in Years 6 have improved since the last inspection report and there is now a good, recently implemented scheme of work for the whole school. However, assessment has not yet been developed. The quality of teaching has improved, but there are some weaknesses in planning. There are now appropriate opportunities for pupils by the end of Year 6 to learn independently, research and find information in books, and use computer software, although the school is not yet on line to research on the Internet. There has been good improvement in provision since the time of the last inspection.
151. By the age of seven, pupils have an awareness of the immediate past and the past in relation to their own growing up, and their families. They know about local features in their town that are old and which are new. By Year 5 pupils are interested in visiting sites of historical interest such as the Roman villa nearby and learn about the Viking invaders. Enthusiastically, they learn how an archaeologist goes about piecing together evidence from the past by working together in small groups to reconstruct broken clay pots. By Year 6 pupils have a keen interest in Victorian times, they have visited the local heritage centre, and have dressed in Victorian costume. They are fascinated by the changes in their own town from the development of cotton mills to the present.
152. Higher attaining pupils discuss observations in pairs, and small groups research in local history books and from old maps the development of Glossop. They identify buildings that were built in Victorian times and study the census data. Average attaining pupils research fashion using a range of texts, but need help to sift information rather than copy it from the book. Others download pictures from CD-ROMs about the royal family in Victorian times in their work on that topic. They have good awareness of main events, and important people such as Florence Nightingale. They create a timeline with significant events. Lower attaining pupils study pictures about transport and talk about what they observe, and how things are different. They are knowledgeable about child labour and write the diary of a chimney sweep boy with a sense of empathy. There are good links with art in the study of the work of William Morris and they know about the arts and crafts movement. They make a study of patterns and select one to develop a design for a tile. They are aware when prompted of symmetry and reflection of pattern. History makes a very good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
153. The teaching in history in the three lessons observed was satisfactory in two and good in the third. The strength of the teaching was in the enthusiasm shared by the teachers, particularly in the study of Victorians which caught the interest of pupils in Year 6. Their knowledge, understanding and curiosity were good. They enjoyed pursuing their own research and the quality of their work, linked to art and literacy on display, was of a very good standard. The focus of teaching in Year 5 on evaluating evidence from primary sources, the 'Lindisfarne Gospel', was very worthwhile. The teacher, through skilful questioning, drew parallels between their personal experience of invasion (of their bedrooms) with how the Saxons felt about the Vikings coming, taking and destroying their property. Pupils worked hard to empathise and higher attaining pupils

offered the idea that the Vikings were not “all wicked”, that they would have families and children of their own. Planning in Year 5 overestimated pupils’ geographical skills. The worksheet written task was the same for all, and set too high for lower attaining pupils. In Year 6, planning for average attaining pupils to research gave insufficient guidance to assist pupils in extracting information, so that pupils were tempted to copy information straight from the book.

154. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement. The well-planned scheme of work and new policy has recently been put into place by the subject co-ordinator but assessment opportunities are not yet fully developed. The National Programmes of Study are securely covered. Too little use is made of information and communication technology.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

155. Standards are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, and achievement through the school is unsatisfactory overall, although it is satisfactory up to the age of seven. Very few teachers feel competent to teach information and communication technology although there has been some staff training in school. Further training is planned for spring 2001. There appears to be a fall in achievement by age 11 since the last report which may be explained by staff changes. The school does not comply with statutory requirements for the Years 3 to 6 because there are currently no opportunities for pupils to use control systems or to access the Internet. Timetabled time is low compared to recommendations.

156. Since the last inspection, resources for teaching information and communication technology have improved a great deal and there is now an excellent networked computer suite which has been in place since summer 2001. Internet linking is scheduled for Spring 2002 as the Local Education Authority is seeking a new provider. There is now a computer and printer in each class, donated by a local business. Although the intention is for most teaching of skills within subjects of the curriculum, information and communication technology is often absent in planning. Well-targeted, discrete, small group sessions delivered by the technician in the computer suite have recently been scheduled for all classes. A number of pupils have computers at home and their skills are better than others. A systematic skills check-list to assess all pupils’ skills is now in use. There is also a popular, weekly after-school club in which pupils practise keyboarding skills.

157. Pupils in Year 2, access the relevant systems, understand that a variety of information can be entered and stored on the computer, and save and print out their work; lower attaining pupils requiring a degree of support to do so. They enter text such as their names and addresses, and stories they have written, using the shift key to produce capital letters and colour change to enhance work. Using appropriate art software they produce simple designs and pictures. Pupils understand that information and communication technology can be used to control movement using a ‘Roamer’, but no use of the floor turtle was evident during the time of the inspection because it had broken down and a new one was on order.

158. By the age of 11, pupils use a variety of fonts in the presentation of their texts and can combine text with pictures. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are at almost the same stage. In Years 3 and 4 they apply word processing skills in science, religious education and history. For example, they caption their work for display on important buildings in Glossop. Year 5 pupils word process redrafted stories of the ‘Willow Pattern Plate’, making a choice of clip-art to compliment the story and improve the presentation. Year 6 pupils word process work more frequently, redrafting stories, writing lists, and using bullet points. They present a science investigation on ‘dissolving jelly’ using spreadsheet, graphs and word processing. Computers in classrooms remain underused but new computer software programs are coming into increasing use, both to support learning and for information researching. There is satisfactory use of overhead projectors, tape recorders and videos across the curriculum. The school has recently acquired a digital camera, which is not yet in use. Information and communication technology makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

159. No formal teaching was observed during the inspection but groups of pupils withdrawn from class and within class were observed. The instruction observed was good on a one to one basis, and pupils were enjoying practising typing using the mouse, shift key, space bar and to activate the printer. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 pupils worked independently to search for and find information in the context of their history lessons on the Vikings and the Victorians. The current lack of an Internet facility limited the scope of research and pupils' experiences.
160. The curriculum manager has worked hard to improve facilities for information and communication technology in the school. She has also had to become skilled herself in information and communication technology from a low starting point three years ago. Following further staff training, the school is poised to move forward, and for the good resources to have an important impact on learning.

MUSIC

161. During the inspection all the lessons observed were in Years 1 and 2 and Year 6. Through discussions with teachers, looking at planning, attending assemblies and listening to pupils sing, it is apparent that the school provides a sound programme of work throughout the year. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average and pupils are showing good achievement. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained in Years 3 to 6 and cannot be compared in Years 1 and 2 as no judgement was given due to lack of evidence.
162. By the end of Year 2 pupils use their voices expressively when singing songs and chants, for example pupils sang their name to the teacher in response to "hello, how are you?" They use their voices expressively when singing 'Christmas is coming' and 'This little light of mine'. They learn to sing simple songs from memory and use a developing vocabulary of musical terms. They create their own compositions using a variety of un-tuned instruments, for example, pupils composed 'Rain Music' and played their instruments with confidence. This excellent lesson demonstrated the power of music therapy to inspire all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with more challenging behaviour. In Year 6 pupils learned to put part of a story, 'The Iron Man', to music. Pupils developed their composition skills well and, through collaboration, developed and played a piece of music to the rest of the class.
163. Excellent teaching was seen in one lesson in Years 1 and 2 and good teaching in a lesson in Year 6. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach with confidence. The co-ordinator is a talented musician who inspires and develops confidence in pupils and teachers. The scheme of work supports teachers in their planning however the co-ordinator is planning to review and reassess this and further improve provision for teachers by purchasing a published scheme. The co-ordinator has purchased musical instruments for music therapy. Pupils respond well and achieve well in this subject, developing their creative talents and interests. Opportunities are provided for pupils to listen to work of traditional musicians. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development effectively. Resources for the subject are good. However the school aptly plans to purchase some new keyboard instruments.
164. Peripatetic specialists visit the school and offer a range of instrumental tuition. Opportunities are provided by these visitors, for pupils to try and experience playing, for example, the clarinet, trumpet, trombone and many more. The school provides extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to play the recorder, to sing in the choir, and to take part in singing to the elderly in the town at Christmas, and to sing in the local supermarket to raise money for homeless people. Pupils are given opportunities to play instruments and to sing in the Carol Service and perform in the Christmas play. The wider use of information and communication technology needs to be extended.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

165. Standards in physical education have risen since the last inspection and are above average in both Years 2 and 6. Achievement is good in both these years because teachers have high expectations and pupils are keen to do well and work hard at improving their skills. Local

community sports clubs, amateurs and professionals, provide very worthwhile opportunities in coaching Year 5 and 6 pupils in a wide range of games such as football, netball, cricket, tennis and tag rugby. The quality of teaching is consistently of at least a good standard. The school has been successful in winning the local schools football league and of being finalists in the netball competition, in which they entered two teams, such was the enthusiasm and skill of the group. Pupils also take part in the local schools swimming gala, but swimming achievement is less strong. Because of the distance of the swimming baths to the school, pupils' opportunities to learn to swim out of school time and with their families are very limited. Not all pupils learn to swim in the time allotted by the authority. Dance has not yet been developed fully on the curriculum, but gymnastics is a strong feature despite some inappropriately sized apparatus for young pupils.

166. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know about warm up and warm down activities, and are aware of the importance of safety, not only for themselves, but also the impact that working without care could have on others. They are keen to join in activities individually, in pairs and in teams. They work hard in gymnastic activity to improve their skills in movement, balancing and travelling in different ways. They understand that being active helps to keep them to have healthy bodies. They are creative in thinking of different ways of travelling and make choices about how to move, for example along the bench. By the age of 11, pupils' attitudes are at least good, and they answer questions about working safely, for example, showing good understanding of the correct way to somersault. They use opportunities well to think and plan with partners how they will work together to make patterns of movements and avoid knocking into each other. Within a lesson they improve performance and are proud to demonstrate sequences of movements. Individually, in pairs, and in teams, most show good ability to co-operate to produce a good result. When practising and improving football skills, they listen and follow instructions successfully, for example, body position when aiming a particular ball kick. Some pupils need more help to achieve the correct stance than others. Boys and girls play games in good team spirit, within the rules, and are quick to praise success.
167. In the three lessons observed, the teaching was very good in one observed with Years 1 and 2, and good in two lessons observed with older age groups. Features of good teaching were the teacher's knowledge and understanding, which led to good organisation and effective teaching of skills. As a result pupils enjoyed their lessons, worked creatively but safely, and made good gains in improving their skills. The two gymnastics lessons were conducted at good pace with ample opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their achievement. Whilst pupils answered well the good questions put to them, there were no opportunities for them to discuss each other's performance and to make suggestions for improvement. In the football coaching session, only boys were chosen as team captains, but they chose a balanced mix of boys and girls for their teams.
168. The co-ordinator has worked hard to successfully promote physical education in school, to build resources and to gain the involvement of the community. Physical education makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. However, the teachers do not use assessment effectively to help identify what the pupils can or cannot do and improve their planning of lessons to provide activities that are better suited to the needs of each class. Apparatus for gymnastics is inappropriate in height for younger pupils and floor mats are worn out and this impairs standards. Little use is made of information and communication technology in the subject.