

INSPECTION REPORT

ST OSWALD'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

PADGATE

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111369

Headteacher: Ms H T Lennon

Reporting inspector: Mr P Kemble - 7269

Dates of inspection: 27th November – 1st December 2000

Inspection number: 224624

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Padgate Lane
Padgate
Warrington
Cheshire

Postcode: WA1 3LB

Telephone number: 01925 813015

Fax number: 01925 820545

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Father Charles Canning

Date of previous inspection: 13th January 1997

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr P Kemble 7269	Registered inspector	Science; Music; Physical education; Equal opportunities; English as an additional language.	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? How well is the school led and managed?.
Mr D Read 11443	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents and carers.
Mr T Prosser 22669	Team inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Design and technology History; Special educational needs.	Staffing and learning resources; Assessment.
Ms G Wilkinson 2749	Team inspector	English; Art and design; Geography; Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered? Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The inspection contractor was:

NES Education Services Limited
Linden House
Woodland Way
Nr Halstead
Essex CO9 1TH

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Oswalds RC Primary School caters for boys and girls aged four to eleven. It serves the area of Padgate, on the outskirts of Warrington in Cheshire. There are 191 pupils on roll, comprising 100 boys and 91 girls, slightly below the national average. Twenty-four pupils are aged under six years old in the Reception class. The number on roll is higher than at the time of the previous inspection, when it was 175. The urban area served by the school is one of average social and economic circumstances. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A very small number of pupils is of ethnic minority origin. All pupils speak English as their first language. Children enter the school with attainment in line with the national average in personal and social, language and mathematics skills. The school has a below average percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are organised into seven classes. There is one Foundation Stage class, two Key Stage 1 classes and four Key Stage 2 classes. The average class size is 27.3.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school shows satisfactory levels of effectiveness. Standards are below those of similar schools in writing and mathematics at the age of seven, but above those of similar schools for English and mathematics at the age of eleven. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in some parts of the school. The quality of teaching is good overall. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is well led and managed. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- At the age of eleven, pupils' achievements are above those expected of their age in English, mathematics and art, and well above expectations in music.
- There is good teaching overall in all subjects throughout the school, with the exception of mathematics.
- The school is well led and managed and the headteacher shows very good leadership.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall; provision for pupils' moral development is excellent.
- Pupils are very well cared for and receive good support and guidance.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well; relationships between them and with adults are very good.

What could be improved

- Compared with similar schools, standards in mathematics are below average at the age of seven.
- Procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.
- Too many activities are teacher-directed and pupils miss opportunities to find things out for themselves or follow their own lines of enquiry.
- Co-ordinators, in subjects other than literacy and music, do not have sufficient impact on standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997. Since then, the school has achieved a satisfactory level of improvement. The previous inspection recommended improvements in science and design and technology standards, the role of the subject co-ordinator, schemes of work, assessment procedures and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. The majority of these matters have been successfully tackled and improvements made. However, unsatisfactory procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress have not been put right and there is evidence that some pupils are still not sufficiently challenged as a result. Helpful improvements have been made to the role of the subject co-ordinator, but most co-ordinators still have a limited impact on standards in their subjects. There have been improvements in several other areas of school life and the maintenance of good performance in others. Satisfactory improvements have been made in standards in art and music at both key stages since the previous inspection; the improvement in music by the age of eleven has been very good. The trend of national test results since 1996 in English, mathematics and science has been above the national trend. Within teaching as a whole, the proportion of good or better lessons has improved significantly and there was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. Pupils' attitudes to their learning, the promotion of pupils' moral development and the school's links with its parents have improved since the previous inspection. The school is well placed to meet its realistic targets to raise standards in the future.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	A	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A	B	B	
science	A	A	C	C	

The table shows a decline in standards between 1999 and 2000, but pupils in 2000 met the realistic targets set by the school. Results of national tests at the age of eleven since 1996 show that standards have risen above the national trend over that time.

Inspection evidence shows that the standards achieved by the present Year 6 pupils are at least average in English, mathematics and science.

By the age of five, children's standards in personal, social and emotional development are above expectations and progress is good and in other areas of their learning in line.

The results of tests and assessments for pupils at the age of seven were below average for similar schools in writing and well below in mathematics. This is due largely to the impact of severe staffing problems experienced between 1998 and 2000, which have now been rectified. Inspection evidence shows that the standards achieved by the present Year 2 pupils are below expectations for their age in mathematics.

Standards of attainment at the age of seven are above those expected in art and design and music. At the age of eleven, they are above expectations in art and design and well above in music and, in all other subjects, they are broadly in line with expectations.

Standards in speaking and listening are above expectations at the end of both key stages; standards in reading are above expectation at the end of Key Stage 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils are eager to come to school and show considerable interest in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; virtually all pupils behave well all the time.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils are polite, courteous and respectful of each other and adults. They enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Very good.

The small minority of pupils with behavioural difficulties are very well managed. Pupils are very supportive of each other and older pupils look after younger pupils during playtimes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Three-quarters of the forty-eight lessons seen during the inspection were of at least a good standard, including about a quarter which were of very good quality. The remaining quarter of lessons were satisfactory. There were no unsatisfactory lessons.

Teaching in English is of a consistently high standard. Teaching is often good in other subjects except in mathematics, where it is satisfactory overall. In mathematics, teachers do not match work well enough to pupils' individual needs. The quality of teaching for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good on an individual basis with the special needs teacher and in small groups in literacy and numeracy lessons in classrooms.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; broad and balanced with a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; individual education plans contain manageable targets and pupils receive good support from the special needs co-ordinator and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent provision for moral development, good provision for spiritual and social development and satisfactory provision for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; there are high levels of safety and concern for pupils' well-being. However, procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.

Teaching and non-teaching members of staff know their pupils very well but are only just beginning to formalise procedures to identify accurately their strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by their activities. Parents are kept well informed about the life and work of the school and their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the leadership of the headteacher is very good. Although all senior staff are new to the school, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how improvements might be made.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; governors are conscientious in their duties and very supportive of the work of the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory; governors and staff have only recently begun to analyse in detail the results of national and school tests to identify areas for improvement and prioritise these formally in a school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Staff make good use of the available resources and the accommodation in all classes to support pupils' learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

As the result of a previous headteacher's prolonged ill health since the last inspection, the school has, until recently, made slow progress in setting out its plans for the future in a systematic and formal way. However, the new headteacher and the governors have a good awareness of the school's long-term development and the action needed to promote it. Teamwork and a commitment to high standards are strong. The headteacher monitors and evaluates the work of the school very effectively, but subject co-ordinators are not as involved in this work as might be expected. The governors' financial planning and management are good and they apply the principles of 'best value' well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents state that their children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like school • make good progress • behave well in and out of school • get the right amount of homework • are expected to do their best • become mature and responsible <p>They also state that the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is well led and managed • provides good teaching • keeps them well informed about their children's progress • staff are approachable 	<p>A very small minority of parents feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children do not make good progress • their children do not get the right amount of homework • behaviour is not good in school • they are not kept well informed about their children's progress • the school is not well led and managed • there are not enough activities outside lessons for Key Stage 1 children

Inspectors' findings support parents' positive views. Pupils' progress is variable, but children's attainment on entry is average and standards by the age of eleven as shown by the results of national tests since 1998 in English, mathematics and science, are mainly above average, which indicates that progress is good overall. Inspectors judge the arrangements for homework to be satisfactory and similar to those found in most other primary schools nationally. Pupils' behaviour is judged to be very good and a strength of the school. The efforts the school makes to work with parents are very good. Inspectors judge the school to be well led by the headteacher, senior staff and governors. Inspectors agree that the range of after-school clubs and activities benefits mainly Key Stage 2 pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When children start in the Reception class, the results of early assessments, called baseline assessments, show that the vast majority of children achieve levels that are similar to those typical of four-year-olds nationally. By the time they are five, most children's standards are above those expected in personal, social and emotional development and they make good progress in this aspect of their development. Standards are in line with expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and their progress is satisfactory.

2. The results of the 2000 national tests at the age of seven were similar to the national average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. The results of teacher assessments in science were very high, although the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) or above was below the national average. These results are lower in reading and mathematics and slightly better in writing than those of 1999. They reflect the impact of severe staffing problems experienced by the school between 1998 and 2000, which have now been addressed and rectified. However, inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 2 pupils in mathematics, although showing an improvement, is below average. The school has appropriately identified writing and numeracy as areas for improvement in priorities for the academic year 2000-2001.

3. The results of the 2000 national tests at the age of eleven were above the national average and that of similar schools in English and mathematics and broadly in line with the national average and that of similar schools in science. In English and mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) or above was similar to the national average and in science it was below. These results are lower than those of 1999. However, the school had set appropriate targets in English and mathematics which reflected an accurate assessment of these pupils' likely attainment. The school has appropriately identified the attainment of higher attaining pupils as an area for improvement for the academic year 2000-2001.

4. Over the five years from 1996 to 2000, the school has maintained an upward trend overall in the results at the age of eleven above the national trend. Standards have fallen closer to the national average since 1998. This is largely due to the slow progress made over that time in improving assessment procedures and subject schemes of work as a result of major interruptions to the leadership of the school caused by illness. However, inspection evidence suggests that the attainment of the present Year 6 pupils is better than that of the 2000 group, with a greater percentage of pupils likely to attain the higher levels.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans in reading, writing and numeracy. They benefit from good support from the special needs teacher in withdrawal sessions, and from classroom assistants in class lessons, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science lessons. The progress made by higher attaining pupils varies from lesson to lesson. The match of work to their needs is not always close enough and, on these occasions, their progress is slow. This happens in some activities at the Foundation Stage and in numeracy, science, history and information and communication technology lessons at both key stages.

6. Under the leadership of the new headteacher, the school staff and governors are beginning to make more effective use of national and school data on pupils' attainment to set realistic targets for improvement by the ages of seven and eleven. By the age of eleven, pupils have achieved close to the targets set since 1998 and the targets set for 2001 are likely to be met.

7. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on pupils' reading and writing skills at both key stages. This is particularly apparent in the increased interest shown by many pupils in books and their knowledge of favourite authors, illustrators and styles of writing. Pupils' imaginative use of words and phrases in their written work has also improved. Weaknesses still exist in spelling and handwriting, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teachers have made a satisfactory start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils at both key stages explain their methods and give reasons for their answers with increasing confidence, but group activities are not always sufficiently challenging, for higher attainers in particular, and there are weaknesses in pupils' recall of number facts in Key Stage 2. The standards in science of the current Year 6 pupils are better than the previous year because of the high expectations of the class teacher and the provision of more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding to following their own lines of enquiry. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in several areas of the curriculum such as literacy and science.

8. At the age of seven, standards in art and design and music are above the expectations for pupils of their age and pupils make good progress. At the age of eleven, standards in art and design are above expectation and progress is good. Standards in music are well above expectation and progress is very good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have successfully maintained the good attitudes, behaviour and personal development reported at the time of the previous inspection. All teaching and non-teaching staff work hard to promote a stimulating and supportive atmosphere in the school in which pupils feel safe. As a result, pupils are eager to come to school and respond very well to procedures and activities designed to develop their learning and social skills. Parents are very pleased with this aspect of school life.

10. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good overall and make a significant contribution to their learning. Standards have made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. In the Reception class, children respond well to the interesting activities planned for them and concentrate for extended periods of time on their work and play. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes are very good overall. Pupils listen intently to their teachers during whole-class sessions at the start of lessons and join in eagerly in answering questions. When they work on individual or group tasks, they persevere well when encountering difficulties and the vast majority of pupils try hard to present their work neatly. Co-operation is good, and this is particularly evident when pupils share equipment in the computer suite, during paired work in physical education lessons and when sharing instruments in music lessons. Pupils work well together when enacting parts of stories they are studying in literacy lessons. Pupils of all abilities show very good attitudes to their lessons and there are very few occasions when pupils are restless or lose concentration in lessons or assemblies.

11. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is very good. The school promotes and expects high standards of behaviour from its pupils. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and, as a result, the school is a well-ordered and civilised community. Oppressive behaviour is not tolerated by either staff or pupils. Pupils take a pride in wearing the school uniform and being members of the school community. Parents report that pupils behave well out of school on educational visits and residential trips. Parents are very pleased with the standard of their children's behaviour.

12. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are courteous and respectful of one another and of adults. Teaching and non-teaching staff set pupils very good examples in their conduct and this is reflected in the very good relationships which exist between all adults and pupils. There is mutual respect between pupils and staff. These very good relationships are a prominent feature of school life. Pupils are very keen to undertake tasks and responsibilities in the daily life of the school. Many pupils in both key stages show mature attitudes in the classrooms and around the school. Pupils have few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning in lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2 and, consequently, this aspect of their personal development is less well developed.

13. Attendance levels are very good. Virtually all pupils arrive on time, which enables lessons to begin promptly at the beginning of the day. The home-school partnership agreement clearly indicates parents' responsibilities for their children's regular attendance and, coupled with pupils' eagerness to attend school, results in unauthorised attendance being a rare occurrence. There has been one exclusion in the last school year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons seen, about seventy-five per cent were good or better, including about twenty-five per cent which were very good. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. The quality of teaching has shown a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when ninety-four per cent of teaching was good or better and six per cent was unsatisfactory. The improvement is due largely to effective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching by the headteacher.

15. The quality of teaching at the Foundation Stage is good overall. Of the lessons seen, about eighty-five per cent were good or better, including about thirty per cent which were very good. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. The Reception teacher provides an interesting and stimulating environment, with colourful displays of children's work and good quality resources for children to use. The teacher works very well with the nursery nurse and classroom assistant and the quality of their teamwork makes a significant contribution to children's learning. Activities stimulate successfully children's interest and help them to maintain concentration and perseverance for considerable amounts of time. For example, in a handwriting session, the teacher used praise and encouragement very well to recognise children's achievements as they followed her instructions on correct letter formation. She used a variety of resources, such as individual whiteboards, playdough and a computer, to develop children's skills. As a result, children were keen to complete their work and made good progress. The close involvement of the nursery nurse and the classroom assistant in the activities was very effective in helping children to overcome problems and improve their work. Activities are less effective when they are too adult-directed and opportunities are missed for children to explore and find out for themselves, for example in physical and creative activities. Assessments of children's skills are carried out early in the first term of starting school but the results of these are not used effectively enough to match all activities to children's individual needs. Consequently, there are times in lessons when children are working on tasks that are suitable for most of them, but are not sufficiently challenging for the higher attaining children.

16. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good overall. Of the lessons seen, about seventy per cent were good or better, including about twenty per cent which were very good. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. Where the teaching is very effective, management and organisation of pupils are good. Resources are well prepared and readily available and unnecessary interruptions to the pace of the lesson and children's learning are few. This is a characteristic of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology lessons. Strong subject knowledge helps teachers to teach with confidence and authority, which are conveyed to pupils and they respond well to the teachers' enthusiasm. This was observed in history lessons in Years 1 and 2, where teachers' skilful use of questions and involvement of all pupils in discussions of good quality helped pupils to make good progress. Good use is made of non-teaching staff to support individuals and groups of pupils. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, as the teacher reviewed the outcomes of an investigation into types of food, a classroom assistant worked quietly and effectively with four lower attaining pupils, helping them to make responses and join purposefully in the discussions. Where lessons are less effective, but are satisfactory, activities are not matched well enough to pupils' needs and there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in particular. This occurs in mathematics lessons in Years 1 and 2 where, in addition, expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. This is not the case in literacy lessons, where teachers use their assessment of pupils' attainment and progress well to plan challenging activities for all pupils.

17. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good overall. Of the lessons seen, about seventy-five per cent were good or better, including about thirty per cent which were very good. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. In lessons where the quality of learning is good, expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and, because of the very good relationships between teachers and pupils, pupils respond to these expectations and make good progress. This is a characteristic of all lessons in Year 6. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher maintained a good pace to oral and written parts of the lesson. She challenged pupils with her questions and encouraged pupils to explain their methods and give reasons for their answers. There was a positive working atmosphere throughout the lesson as pupils showed evident enjoyment in producing work of a high standard and of which they were proud. Good lessons are well resourced. For example, in a Year 5 art lesson, pupils were able to make good progress because of the good range of materials and equipment available for pupils to experiment with making black and white patterns. Use of good quality resources also makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of literacy and information and communication technology lessons in all classes. Where teaching is less effective, but is satisfactory, all pupils tackle similar tasks and the level of challenge is determined by how much pupils produce. This means that higher attaining pupils complete work that is too easy for them before they move on to harder work. Lower attaining pupils find the work too hard. This happens in some mathematics, geography and history lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5.

18. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils receive good teaching on a one-to-one basis from the special needs teacher. All teachers show a high level of care for pupils with special educational needs and there is a good level of inclusion within classes. Teachers' knowledge about how to plan and provide for children with special educational needs is satisfactory. Activities for pupils meet their needs in literacy and numeracy lessons. However, activities in other subjects are not always so well matched.

19. The quality of literacy teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers make good use of a wide range of good quality large and small texts to stimulate pupils' interest in reading. Drama is used well to promote pupils' speaking skills, as well as to explore the feelings and emotions of characters in stories. The quality of the subject co-ordinators' example lessons for teachers is of a consistently high standard. The quality of numeracy teaching is satisfactory at both key stages, but teachers are not as successful as they are in literacy lessons in matching work closely to pupils' needs.

20. Teachers plan together in key stage groups and this provides good support for less experienced staff as well as giving subject co-ordinators opportunities to provide support and guidance where appropriate. Short-term plans identify the curriculum areas to be covered within a week, whilst daily planning identifies specific activities, learning objectives and resources to be used. Assessment opportunities or activities are sometimes not included in daily planning and, as a result, planning over time reflects the planned curriculum rather than how adjustments have been made to meet pupils' individual needs. This is one of the main reasons why there is insufficient challenge for pupils in some lessons.

21. The quality of teaching is good overall in science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to use computers and make good use of the computer suite. Art and design, and design and technology lessons are characterised by well-resourced activities with materials readily available for pupils so that they move on in their learning at a good pace. In geography and history, effective use of questions to stimulate pupils' thinking and good use of artefacts and educational visits help pupils make satisfactory progress and maintain their motivation. In music, teachers' expectations are high and, as a result, standards of pupils' singing and performance are very good. Successful lessons in physical education are characterised by a good pace and opportunities for pupils to suggest ways that they and others might improve their performance.

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

22. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection to the breadth and balance of the curriculum, particularly in the provision for information and communication technology and by extending the range of extra-curricular activities.

23. The quality and range of the curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Provision is based on national guidelines, called Early Learning Goals, with a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and science. Activities are well planned and support children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. However, there is no agreed whole-school policy to support improvements in provision.

24. The curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is broad and balanced and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The curriculum includes satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education, sex education and attention to drugs misuse and these are addressed through the curriculum as opportunities arise or as separate planned activities. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and pupils are taught the basic skills well overall. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy as part of the school's initiative to raise standards. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide pupils with a wide range of interesting and relevant opportunities. The time allocated to subjects is appropriate. Information and communication technology skills are taught effectively in the computer suite and are applied effectively across the curriculum. The curriculum is socially inclusive and provides equality of access for all pupils.

25. Teachers make very effective use of the National Literacy Strategy recommendations to match work carefully to pupils' individual needs. Literacy is taught consistently well in all classes. Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory. Teachers are following the national recommendations closely when planning their lessons, but are not applying them as consistently as they do when teaching literacy. However, both strategies are supporting well the systematic development of pupils' skills and knowledge.

26. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. They are identified early in their school life. Those with particular difficulties are withdrawn by the special needs co-ordinator for short periods of individual help. All pupils on the special educational needs register have individual education plans, which are written by the co-ordinator and class teachers. These are of good quality and contain specific learning targets which help pupils make good progress in withdrawal sessions and in the classroom.

27. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in several areas of the curriculum such as literacy and science. A range of interesting and stimulating extra-curricular activities extends the statutory curriculum and includes sporting and creative activities. The majority of these are for pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy these activities and they are well attended.

28. The school's involvement in community initiatives, such as a local literacy project that involves residential visits to Northern Ireland, makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and helps them to develop knowledge and understanding about the community outside school. The choir takes part in local music festivals and performs regularly for a variety of occasions at church services, local venues and theatres. Performances have included concerts for the elderly, people of the parish and the wider community, as well as concerts to support local and national charities. The school makes good use of visitors and

visits to places of interest, within the local community and further afield, to broaden pupils' learning and promote their personal and social development. Links with other local schools and playgroups are good.

29. Overall, provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of previous inspection, but provision for pupils' moral development has improved and is excellent.

30. The promotion of pupils' spiritual development is good. It is particularly evident in collective worship and in the use by teachers of stories, songs and music. The celebration of pupils' achievements and opportunities for personal reflection make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. In lessons, pupils are sometimes given opportunities to reflect on their own lives, attitudes and feelings. However, opportunities for promoting pupils' spiritual development within the curriculum are missed, in subjects other than religious education, because they have not been formally identified.

31. Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. The school's behaviour policy places a strong emphasis on positive rewards and praise and this, together with individual classroom codes of conduct, which pupils draw up themselves, makes a significant contribution to promoting pupils' moral development. These arrangements are very successful in promoting very good behaviour and mutual respect by setting clear and consistent expectations that are shared with parents. Pupils have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and this is reinforced very well by staff. They provide positive role models by demonstrating respect and care for others and commitment to their work. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly community. There is a strong work ethic and all pupils work well, even when not directly supervised. Stories and themes covering moral issues are regularly included in collective worship, literacy lessons and story times.

32. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Teachers and support staff set a good example to pupils through their work as a mutually supportive team. In all classes, pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to take on responsibility that they accept willingly. They work well together, for example in the computer suite and during competitive games. However, opportunities are missed within the curriculum to promote pupils' social development through collaborative group work, for example in mathematics and science. They play well together in the playground at break-times. Pupils demonstrate kindness, care and concern towards one another in all aspects of their work and play. The school actively participates in both local and national events and this helps pupils to think about their place in the local community and the wider world.

33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils make visits to places of interest such as museums and historical sites. There is a programme of visitors with specific expertise, such as artists and a drama teacher, who share their skills with pupils. These arrangements make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Community projects, such as a literacy project with Northern Ireland and exchange visits, contribute well to pupils' awareness of other cultures. This awareness is promoted by activities in art, geography and the study of world faiths and religions in religious education. However, education for life in a multicultural society does not receive such a strong emphasis. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to celebrate and recognise the richness and diversity of non-Western cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school is a very caring community and provides a safe and pleasant environment for its pupils, staff and visitors. Standards represent a satisfactory improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection

35. Procedures for child protection are very good and comply fully with statutory requirements. Awareness amongst teaching and other staff is high but, due to the many staff changes that have taken place over the last two years, not all teachers and classroom assistants have received appropriate training. Health and safety procedures are very good. The school promotes and achieves a high standard of health and safety through its programme of building and grounds maintenance and safe systems of working. The school building and grounds are well maintained and cleaned. There is no evidence of any graffiti or litter around the site, which reflects very well the attitudes of both pupils and staff. Equipment is well maintained, kept safe and in good order.

36. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. All staff are consistent in their application of the school's code of conduct and discipline policy. Staff use effectively praise and encouragement and a system of rewards for academic and social achievements to promote positive aspects of good behaviour. Expectations are high and unkindness and bullying are strongly discouraged and occurrences rare. A small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties are well managed. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are very good.

37. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The attendance record and punctuality of the vast majority of pupils are consequently very good. Attendance figures for each class are worked out each week by the class teachers and collated by the school secretary and the class with the highest attendance is celebrated and wins an award. This procedure is successful in promoting amongst pupils an understanding of the importance of regular attendance and there are very few instances of unauthorised absence. Completion of class registers fully meets statutory requirements.

38. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory overall. All staff know their pupils very well as individuals and parents are pleased with the quality of annual reports and the information they receive about their children's achievements at parents' meetings. However, procedures are largely informal and there are no agreed systems for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress or their personal development.

39. There are a few examples of teachers using assessment effectively within their own classes. However, there is inconsistency in practice and there is no agreed policy in place. Teachers' termly and weekly plans do not generally identify assessment opportunities, concentrating mainly on identifying what pupils are expected to learn. Some teachers use opportunities to evaluate pupils' learning and modify future plans accordingly, for example by using the results of tests set for pupils at the end of units of work in science. Procedures for marking have been agreed by the school staff and are consistently applied. In all classes, there is evidence of constructive marking which helps pupils improve their responses and there are positive comments on pupils' written work.

40. This situation is due to interruptions, caused by illness, to the leadership and management of the school over the last three years, which have resulted in slow progress being made in improving assessment procedures. The new headteacher is very aware of the shortcomings in assessment procedures and their development has a high priority in the current work of staff and governors. An assessment co-ordinator has recently been appointed to the school and is aware of the unsatisfactory nature of this aspect of the curriculum. She has already started to analyse the results of national tests and has put in place an audit of assessment practice to evaluate the future development needs of this area. Assessment procedures in place within her own classroom are good and demonstrate her clear understanding of the way forward for the school.

41. The use made of assessment information to identify skills or groups of pupils where improvements are required is unsatisfactory, but is receiving considerable attention from senior staff. Children under five are assessed within their first few weeks of starting school but there is little evidence that information from this procedure, called baseline assessment, is used in planning programmes of work to meet children's individual needs. Information obtained from the results of national tests and assessments at ages seven and eleven is supplemented successfully in Years 4 and 5 by the results of tests similar to the national tests and in Year 3 by the results of local authority tests. These procedures have resulted in staff focusing their attention on pupils' standards in writing at both key stages this term. The headteacher and assessment co-ordinator are aware of the need for a more detailed analysis of how individuals and groups of pupils perform, especially in Years 2 and 6, to assess fully the strengths and weaknesses of the delivered curriculum.

42. Procedures for monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. Reviews of pupils' individual education plans take place at agreed times and pupils are placed at the appropriate stage on the special needs register.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Taken overall, the school's partnership with parents is very good. This is a satisfactory improvement on the good standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. The vast majority of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting or returned the questionnaire expressed considerable satisfaction with many aspects of school life. They reported that their children like coming to school and make good progress. They are pleased with their children's good behaviour and that teachers encourage their children to become mature and responsible. Parents are pleased with the information they receive about their children's progress, the way that the school works closely with them and they are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. Parents consider the school is well led and managed, that their children get the right amount of homework and that there is an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

44. Parents make a very good contribution to the life of the school. They are well represented on the governing body. The active Parents Friends Association makes a significant contribution both socially and financially through its programme of fund-raising events. Attendance at these events is good and parents show good support for the school in this way. The Association has purchased a wide range of equipment over recent years, which has helped to extend pupils' learning, including computers, furniture for the Reception class, football kit and other resources. Several parents help teachers in classrooms and accompany classes on educational visits and trips. Parents give good support to their children at home, especially with their reading. Many children have positive attitudes to school before they enter the Reception class as a result of parents' helpful pre-school work at home.

45. The quality of information provided for parents about the work of the school and of their individual children is very good. Written information sent to parents, such as newsletters and the school prospectus, is of a particularly high standard and, where applicable, fully meets statutory requirements. The quality of communication with parents is kept constantly under review. For example, the annual reports to parents have recently been modified in order to make them more personal and easier for parents to understand. The reports are informative and indicate areas where children need to improve. Curriculum workshops are held to inform parents about new initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy hours, and attendance at these is very good. The school operates an open-door policy for parents who have specific problems about any aspect of their children's education. Parents appreciate this and report that concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the support provided for their children and are active participants in the annual review process.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. At the time of the previous inspection, it was reported that the school had experienced a period of instability due to the ill health of the headteacher in post at that time. Since then, the school has suffered further problems with its leadership and management, again as a result of illness. There has also been a high turnover in staffing since the previous inspection. As a result, progress in dealing with the key issues from the previous inspection report and in reviewing and up-dating some significant systems and procedures has been slow. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2000 and, at the time of this inspection, had been in post just under a term.

47. The leadership and management provided by the new headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear educational direction to the life and work of the school. She has implemented a wide ranging audit of many aspects of school life and this is providing her, and the members of the senior management team, with very useful information about the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has successfully maintained the caring, supportive atmosphere reported at the time of the previous inspection. The aims of the school are very well reflected in the strong emphasis placed on pupils' personal and social development. Since taking up her post, the headteacher has worked hard to support newly appointed members of staff, newly qualified staff and those with limited teaching experience in order to raise the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of teamwork is very good and all teaching and non-teaching staff share a commitment to raising standards and maintaining and improving the school's good reputation in the local area.

48. The headteacher's procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are very effective and provide a good model for other members of staff. She observes all staff teach, analyses planning and looks at samples of work on a regular basis and these arrangements are successful in identifying areas for improvement. This has been particularly successful in her role as literacy co-ordinator and she has had a significant impact on standards and the quality of teaching and learning in all classes as a result. In other subjects, co-ordinators' knowledge of strengths and weaknesses is not so well developed. Co-ordinators monitor standards by looking at teachers' planning and through discussions with colleagues. However, their work is not sufficiently rigorous or critical and they have limited impact on standards. This situation is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection and was the subject of a key issue for the school to address. The present position is partly due to some teachers' inexperience and others having only been in post a short time. The headteacher recognises the need for the subject co-ordinators' roles to be extended further by allocating them time to observe their colleagues teach and developing a more critical analysis of teachers' planning. In her programme of school audit, co-ordinators are gathering information about their subjects in order to prepare action plans to be presented to the governors in the Spring term 2001.

49. Arrangements to co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. The systematic review and analysis of pupils' progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans are a regular feature of the co-ordinator's work. She liaises effectively with teaching and non-teaching staff so that work pupils complete with her in the special needs room is linked closely to their work in classrooms. The individual education plans are of good quality, with manageable steps and achievable targets. The co-ordinator keeps parents fully informed about their children's progress.

50. The members of the governing body fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. The chair of governors has managed very well the severe staffing problems, experienced since the previous inspection, and maintained parents' confidence in the school. Several governors have only been in post since September 2000 but are receiving good support from the headteacher and other governors in developing their roles. The governors have a clear perception of how the school might develop over the next few years. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and a strong desire to see an established, stable staff. Governors' procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are largely informal, but they are already benefiting from their increased involvement with the headteacher in analysing the results of national and school data and the formulation of a school development plan.

51. The governors have been remarkably successful in managing the school over the last three years without an agreed, formal school development plan. They have responded well to the implementation of national initiatives and have managed the school budget very carefully in order to allocate funds appropriately, for example to the development of the computer suite and consequent improvements in pupils' skills in information and communication technology. However, the absence of a school development plan has meant that governors have dealt with situations as they arise and have not been able to plan for school improvement over an extended period of time.

52. Governors regularly review spending and look closely at alternative ways of spending money before final decisions are made. For example, governors are currently reviewing the value for money obtained from the present cleaning contract arrangements. Good use is made of special grants and funds received from the Parents Friends Association. Funds received for pupils with special educational needs are used well. A recent auditors' report raised several minor issues and the headteacher and governors have acted promptly in addressing and rectifying these. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

53. The school has an adequate number of appropriately qualified teaching and non-teaching staff to deliver the requirements of the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum. There are experienced teachers in senior management positions but there is a general lack of experience within the school staff. This is because seven teachers have been appointed during the last two years and four members of staff are in their first year at the school. There is a vacancy for a deputy headteacher. These major staff changes have come about through retirement, ill health and teachers moving to other schools. The headteacher is aware of this lack of experience and has useful plans to make best use of the enthusiasm, commitment and expertise that now exist within the school staff. All school staff have a responsibility for co-ordinating at least one curriculum subject. Satisfactory arrangements for the professional development of staff are in place and a performance management policy has recently been agreed by the governors. A good induction policy for newly qualified teachers is in place, which includes access to the local authority provision.

54. Non-teaching members of staff are well deployed within the school. They are briefed by teachers and in many cases are involved at the lesson planning stage. The partnership with teachers is very effective and they give good support within the classroom. Administrative staff are efficient and helpful and provide the school with a most welcoming point of contact for parents and visitors arriving at the school. The site manager works hard to keep the school clean and tidy and the working partnership that exists between him and the cleaner is very good.

55. The school is situated next to the parish church of St Oswald and was built on and around the original church, which is now the main hall. The old church has undergone considerable refurbishment to make it suitable for school use and provides good accommodation for assemblies, physical education, concerts and school lunches. Recent modifications by the governors include the provision of a computer suite and a staff resource area. Catering facilities have also been successfully separated from the daily educational activities by additional doors. The headteacher and governors have worked hard to adapt the school premises to make best use of the interior accommodation, making effective use of the budget and available grants to improve classrooms, the staffroom, administration and storage areas. Accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is well organised but does not have direct access to an enclosed outdoor education area. Access to some classrooms involves walking through others and this is very distracting for staff and pupils in Years 3 and 4 in particular. Governors have tried for many years to attract sufficient funds for this to be rectified but have not been successful. Governors are also aware of the potential dangers to children and adults as a result of the lack of a clear boundary between the school and the adjacent church to separate pedestrians from cars, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day.

56. All subjects are at least adequately resourced. Resources are good in literacy, music and information and communication technology. Both the quality and quantity of books available to support literacy are good. The new information and communication technology suite is a very useful addition to the school's resources. In art, there is a good range of books and posters for teachers to use. There is a shortage of globes and atlases in geography. In design and technology, there is a good range of resource books for teachers. The school makes good use of the local education authority's lending schemes to supplement resources in literacy, geography and history.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Raise standards in mathematics at the age of seven by:
 - a) increasing the level of challenge in the activities provided, especially for higher attaining pupils;
 - b) increasing the pace of work in lessons so that more is achieved in the time available;
 - c) providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to practical situations, in mathematics lessons and in other subjects of the curriculum.
(Paras. 2, 16, 76, 78, 81, 82)

2. Establish as soon as possible whole-school agreement on procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects so that:
 - a) groups of pupils and particular skills where improvement is required are identified more accurately;
 - b) adjustments can be made to future planning in order to address identified weaknesses in pupils' attainment;
 - c) activities in lessons, particularly in mathematics at both key stages, are matched more closely to pupils' individual needs and work is consistently challenging, especially for higher attaining pupils.
(Paras. 7, 15–20, 39–41, 58, 74, 78, 81, 82, 91)

3. Improve in all classes the balance in lessons between activities that are directed throughout by the teacher and those in which pupils have opportunities to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding and follow their own lines of enquiry or work independently.
(Paras. 15, 60, 62, 80, 88, 90)

4. Extend the role of subject co-ordinators so that they have a greater impact on standards in their subjects by:
 - a) developing a more critical analysis of teachers' planning;
 - b) providing opportunities for them to observe their colleagues teach;
 - c) using the work of the literacy co-ordinator as a model of good practice;
 - d) ensuring they are knowledgeable about standards and pupils' progress throughout the school.
(Paras. 48, 96, 105, 109, 124)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

1. Introduce more formal and systematic procedures for governors to gather information about the life and work of the school on which to base assessments of the effectiveness of their decisions.
(Para. 50)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	48	27	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	191
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	27

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	12
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	26	26	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86.6 (91)	86.6 (85)	80 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	15
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	26	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86.6 (91)	86.6 (91)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	23	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88.4 (86)	88.4 (95)	96.1 (91)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	24	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92.3 (86)	96.1 (95)	96.1 (95)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	165
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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	27.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	332,904
Total expenditure	337,975
Expenditure per pupil	1,690
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,786
Balance carried forward to next year	9,715

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	152
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	83	17	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	22	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	28	0	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	62	33	5	0	0
The teaching is good.	68	28	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	38	2	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	88	12	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	65	35	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	20	5	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	77	23	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	28	3	0	0

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

57. Children are admitted into the Reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. All children attend part-time during the first three weeks of the autumn term and then attend full-time. The school has developed good induction procedures to support children and their parents on entry to the Reception class. Tests, called baseline assessments, are carried out during the first half of the term following admission. The results of these assessments indicate that the attainment of the majority of children on entry is in line with the national average. By the age of five, the vast majority of children make good progress and exceed the nationally recommended standards, or Early Learning Goals, in their personal, social and emotional development. Progress is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and the vast majority attain the expected standards. A small minority exceed them.

58. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. It is provided mainly through adult-directed and some structured play activities based on the Early Learning Goals and the national literacy and numeracy guidelines. There is no agreed school policy for the Foundation Stage but the headteacher is aware of this and there are useful plans to prepare one by Spring term 2001. The Reception teacher is responsible for planning all the activities in consultation with support staff. Weekly and daily planning is detailed, with clear learning objectives. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, about eighty-five per cent of the lessons observed were good or better, including about thirty per cent which were very good. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. The nursery nurse and other support staff work well with the class teacher. The relationship between teaching and non-teaching staff is good and makes a significant contribution to the well-being of all children. Baseline assessments provide early identification of pupils with special educational needs and are used to group pupils for particular activities. However, there is no agreed system in place for the recording and assessment of children's progress so that planning can be adjusted to meet children's individual needs. As a result, all children often do the same tasks and this slows the rate of progress that some children make, particularly the higher attainers. Resources are satisfactory overall. Parental involvement is encouraged and supported. During the inspection, parents were observed to be relaxed and confident when approaching and talking to staff. Positive liaison activities have been established with the adjacent playgroup.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. By the end of the Reception year children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and exceed the standards expected of children of their age. The quality of teaching is good. Children are made to feel welcome and, as a result, settle quickly and show a good understanding of daily routines. They sit quietly and are well behaved during registration and when adults are talking, sometimes for extended periods of time. They are eager to answer questions during whole-class and group discussions. The teacher has high expectations of their behaviour and concentration. Children respond well to these expectations and persist at teacher-directed tasks and directed play activities, showing good levels of concentration and perseverance. There are well-established rules for

behaviour and these, together with the good role models provided by the adults, make a positive contribution to children's very good behaviour. Children tidy up sensibly without fuss. They participate readily in group and whole-class activities and listen carefully to adults and each other. They show consideration for others in all activities. For example, when lining up and moving around the school, they do so quietly so that they do not disturb pupils in the classrooms through which they have to pass. The teacher successfully encourages children to take responsibility for looking after themselves. For example, before and after physical education, most children were observed taking responsibility for undressing themselves and putting their clothes away securely so that they could find them easily when changing again.

Communication, language and literacy

60. By the end of the Reception year, children make satisfactory progress and attain the standards expected of children of their age in this aspect of their learning. The quality of teaching is good. A strong emphasis is given to the development of early reading skills through well-planned activities using elements from the National Literacy Strategy guidelines. As a result, children are developing a satisfactory knowledge of phonics by learning the sounds of individual letters. Many children identify the sounds at the beginning of words and give other words that begin with the same sound. The teacher provides a wide range of activities to promote children's listening skills. For example, children enjoy sharing personal news to which the adults listen carefully and with interest. Children listen very attentively to stories and rhymes and show good recall of characters and events in well-known stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They join in with story refrains and familiar rhymes with obvious pleasure and know most of the words. Children take books home to read with their parents and are regularly heard to read at school, with helpful records kept of their progress. Children are taught well to form letters correctly. Higher attaining children copy-write a simple sentence accurately. Many children write their own names legibly and correctly. However, the high percentage of time given to adult-directed activities means that children have too few opportunities to look at and read books from choice or to practise their developing writing skills. The teacher provides good facilities and resources for role-play to promote communication, language and literacy but there is limited adult involvement in these activities to help children clarify their ideas or learn new vocabulary.

Mathematical development

61. By the end of the Reception year, children make satisfactory progress in their mathematical development and attain the standards expected of children of their age. The quality of teaching is good. Planning for numeracy activities is based on the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines and have clear learning objectives which all staff follow. The use of correct mathematical language and appropriately challenging questions by all staff help children make satisfactory progress. As a result, they count forwards and backwards to ten through the regular use of well-selected number rhymes and other counting opportunities, recognise numbers to ten, write numerals to five and make simple mathematical patterns. Higher attaining children draw the correct number of objects to match numbers up to five. They recognise coins up to one pound and some children confidently use different coins to make five pence. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of plane and solid shapes as they handle everyday objects. They are developing an understanding of capacity and volume through play with sand and water.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. By the end of the Reception year, pupils make satisfactory progress in this aspect of their learning and attain the standards expected of children of their age. The quality of teaching is good and is characterised by the provision of a wide range of interesting and motivating activities. As a result, in conversation, children talk knowledgeably about themselves, their families and events in their lives. They are beginning to make comparisons between then and now and most sequence a simple set of pictures that show how they have changed since they were babies. The teacher provides activities that often have a strong science content. For example, children learn about other aspects of change as they predict what will happen when water is added to different substances such as instant coffee. They have regular access to computers to support their learning and, as a result, children use these confidently and with enjoyment. They use tools and equipment purposefully and safely. Opportunities are missed to let children explore and investigate aspects of their surroundings and find things out for themselves.

Physical development

63. By the end of the Reception year, children make satisfactory progress and attain standards expected for children of their age. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher successfully encourages children to exert themselves physically and develop control of their bodies when moving and balancing. As a result, children enjoy opportunities for vigorous physical activity in the hall and outside and work hard in these lessons. They respond quickly to any instructions. They are beginning to learn about their bodies and use space well, showing good awareness of others around them. For example, children were observed taking part in a range of activities in the playground. The teacher had provided a range of activities that promoted several different movements. Children ran, jumped and skipped and controlled wheeled toys with confidence. They use apparatus, such as balls, beanbags and hoops, with enjoyment and staff helped them to learn the skills of throwing and catching. Children respond enthusiastically to opportunities to move to music, for example when they portrayed the movements different animals might make. However, opportunities to think about how they might improve these movements were limited. Children handle a variety of tools confidently, including pencils, crayons, brushes, glue spreaders and scissors and are taught how to use these safely and with control.

Creative development

64. By the end of the Reception year, children make satisfactory progress in their creative development and attain the standards expected of children of their age. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher provides a wide range of activities for children to express themselves creatively and they develop good attitudes to art, drama and music activities. For example, they enjoy joining in with simple rhymes and songs and sing tunefully. They play confidently untuned percussion instruments and are beginning to understand changes in tempo. The teacher makes good links with children's literacy development as they paint pictures to illustrate characters in stories. They have regular opportunities for imaginative role-play and they act out different characters and events within a given theme.

ENGLISH

65. The results of the 2000 national tests at the age of seven showed that attainment in reading was in line with the national average and that of similar schools. In writing, test results showed that attainment was below both the national average and the average for similar schools. In writing, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) or above was well below the average for similar schools. Trends over the period 1996-2000 show that standards in reading and writing declined in 1999 and this trend is reflected in the 2000 test results. This is due largely to significant staffing problems the school experienced between 1998 and 1999. Between 1997 and 1999, the performance of girls and boys was broadly in line with the national trend, with boys performing slightly better than girls.

66. The results of the 2000 national tests at the age of eleven showed that attainment in English was above the national average and that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level (Level 4) or above was well above the average for similar schools, but the percentage attaining the higher level (Level 5) or above was broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Results in 2000 are significantly better than those reported at the previous inspection and reflect the general improvement in standards in recent years. Trends over the period 1997-2000 show standards rising above the national upward trend. Taking the years 1996 to 2000 together, the performance of pupils in English was above the national average for all schools. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, but boys perform slightly better than girls.

67. Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the ages of seven and eleven. By the age of seven, virtually all pupils listen attentively to teachers, other adults and each other and make appropriate responses. They are eager to participate in whole-class and group discussion, express themselves clearly and confidently and maintain the general flow of discussion without divergence. They make good gains in their ability to ask relevant and sensible questions and show sensitivity to the needs and ideas of others when making responses. They use appropriate language well to talk about stories, discuss grammatical features, empathise with characters and events and express feelings and emotions. Higher attaining pupils read aloud with good expression, taking account of punctuation and features of print. By the age of eleven, this good rate of progress is sustained as pupils respond to the many opportunities provided in literacy and other lessons for them to speak and listen. Whole-class and group activities, that are a daily part of literacy lessons are particularly well planned by teachers and contribute significantly to the good progress pupils make. Pupils show a good understanding of formal language structures and take account of different contexts and audiences when making informed comments or asking questions. They express themselves confidently using a wide range of vocabulary. They are particularly good at listening carefully to the contributions made by other pupils. The majority read aloud from self-chosen books with good expression and understanding

68. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen to and read a variety of story, poetry and non-fiction books and this helps them to develop an enjoyment of reading which is maintained throughout their school life. They respond well to questions about plots, events, characters and vocabulary and this reflects their good understanding of the texts read. Teachers are aware of the decline in reading standards over the last two years and are using the literacy hour to good effect to raise standards. Phonic skills and spelling are taught systematically. As a result, by the age of seven, most pupils read fluently for their age, using phonic strategies well to decode unfamiliar words and standards are average. They regularly use

personal dictionaries to extend their vocabulary and are beginning to develop their study skills. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with evident enjoyment and standards are above average. They skilfully use evidence from texts to support their views when discussing meaning and often make mature, personal responses. They use an appropriate range of linguistic terms with understanding when discussing texts and demonstrate a sound understanding of syntax and grammar. Pupils scan and skim texts for information accurately and select information appropriately as a result of good gains made in their study skills. They make very good use of dictionaries and thesauri to support their work. Parents make a significant contribution to their children's progress in reading. Pupils in both key stages take books home to either share with parents or read on their own and home-school reading diaries provide an effective means of communication between parents and teachers.

69. Current standards in writing are average overall by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. However, by the age of seven, whilst higher attaining pupils use their knowledge of key words and phonics well to assist them in writing words and sentences, there is a significant proportion of pupils whose spelling is unsatisfactory. The school has identified this as an issue and is giving greater emphasis to the learning of the most commonly used words, phonics and spelling. Teachers are helping pupils to devise effective personal spelling strategies. All pupils take spellings home to learn and are regularly tested on these. Good teaching in the literacy hour is helping pupils to reflect on what they write and undertake some revision and editing to improve their work. They are beginning to write with greater complexity and most have a good understanding of basic punctuation. In Year 2, pupils begin to learn joined-up writing, although virtually all pupils use print for most of their work. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress as they write for a variety of purposes and audiences, including imaginative fiction, personal writing, poetry, play scripts, reports and letters. In Years 3, 4 and 5, whilst higher attaining pupils spell correctly and use punctuation consistently, there is a significant number of pupils whose use of spelling and punctuation, particularly with regard to sentence demarcation, continues to be inconsistent. By the age of eleven, most pupils plan their writing well and write extensively, using complex sentences and paragraphs. They use punctuation accurately and spell correctly. They have regular opportunities to draft, revise and edit their work.

70. Standards of handwriting are average overall. Pupils begin to learn to join their writing in Key Stage 1 and continue to refine their skills through regular and systematic teaching at Key Stage 2. Handwriting practice in Key Stage 2 classes shows that pupils are mastering the cursive style successfully. However, there is no agreed policy amongst teaching staff as to when pupils should use their cursive writing skills when doing written work. As a result, some pupils continue to print their work, for example in Year 5. In Year 6, pupils use cursive handwriting in all their work. This regular practice is helping them to develop good fluency and write with speed. Some pupils are beginning to develop a personal style. They write carefully and present their work well in all curriculum subjects.

71. In both key stages, there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils write for a range of purposes in subjects other than literacy, for example factual writing in science and accounts of life in different historical periods. Speaking and listening skills are well developed in discussion activities and role-play related to all areas of the curriculum. Pupils use computers to wordprocess their written work in literacy, science, geography and history and to gather information in support of projects. For example, pupils in Year 6 made good use of the Internet to conduct additional research on the life and works of William Shakespeare as part of their literacy work.

72. Good use is being made of the national Reading Recovery programme and Additional Learning Support materials, as well as the local education authority's Early Intervention Project, to support pupils who would benefit from additional focused literacy activities. These have been effective in helping the pupils concerned to make particularly good progress.

73. The quality of teaching is consistently good or better in both key stages. Of the lessons seen, about forty per cent were good and sixty per cent were very good. The good quality of teaching is largely due to the very good work of the literacy co-ordinator in working alongside teachers and teaching example lessons. Where teaching is very good, teachers make effective links between previous work and new learning. This is a common feature of the whole-class discussions at the start of literacy lessons when teachers skilfully review what pupils have previously learned so that their work is relevant and purposeful. Teachers make the purpose of lessons very clear and this helps pupils to understand what they are doing and why. During group activities, pupils complete tasks which are well matched to their individual needs and they are able to make good progress as a result. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and of their behaviour and this means that there are few unnecessary interruptions during lessons. Relationships with pupils are very good and these are significant in promoting and maintaining pupils' very good attitudes to their work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to teach with confidence.

74. There is no agreed whole-school system in place for the recording and assessment of pupils' progress in literacy skills. This means that teachers rely on their own records and knowledge of their pupils to adjust their planning from day-to-day to meet pupils' individual needs. Teachers are largely successful at providing challenging activities for all pupils, but there are occasions when higher attaining pupils consolidate what they already know rather than extend their learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked and well annotated with comments that help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. The work of classroom assistants in liaising with teachers to provide additional support during the literacy hour makes a valuable contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Helpful spelling and reading homework is set regularly in Key Stage 1. Key Stage 2 pupils receive writing tasks, in addition to reading and spelling.

75. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator, who is the headteacher. Through her effective leadership, the National Literacy Strategy is well established in all classes. She has excellent subject knowledge and an enthusiasm for the subject which she generates successfully to both staff and pupils. She promotes literacy effectively through a variety of activities such as writing competitions and the very good presentation of high quality reading materials. This means that the subject has a high status in the daily life of the school. She provides informed support and advice for colleagues through exemplar teaching, by monitoring teaching and learning and analysing teachers' planning. Test results are monitored and evaluated. As a result of these procedures, the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to raise standards. Training in issues related to literacy form part of the school's in-service programme. Literacy resources are good and these are centrally organised to meet the requirements of each key stage. All classes are well resourced with a good range of general reading material and readers for home-school reading. There is also a well-resourced school library. The good quality resources are used well and make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

76. Results of the 2000 national tests at the age of seven showed pupils' attainment to be well below the national average for all schools and well below when compared with similar schools. Test results over the last four years show a decline in standards between 1998 and 2000. This is due largely to severe staffing problems experienced at Key Stage 1 during this period. Inspection evidence indicates that the work of the present Year 2 pupils is better than the previous year, but is below average.

77. Results of the 2000 national tests at the age of eleven showed pupils' attainment to be above the national average and that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) or above was broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Test results over the last four years show that standards have remained above the national average but showed a slight decline between 1999 and 2000. Inspection evidence indicates that the work of the present Year 6 pupils is broadly in line with the national average. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

78. By the age of seven, most average and higher attaining pupils are developing a good understanding of number. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are identified and well met. Progress is, however, unsatisfactory overall because the work for higher attaining pupils lacks challenge. Work observed in pupils' books shows that higher attaining pupils generally complete all tasks easily and without any errors. Lower attaining pupils in Year 2 are successful in their work on space and shape mainly because of the effective support provided by the classroom assistant. The work for this group is similar to the average attaining pupils and, without the support being available, they are not able to make satisfactory progress. By the age of seven, pupils are developing a good knowledge of number bonds, are accurate in their computations and most use a variety of mental strategies to make simple calculations. They identify the correct operations required to solve problems and have a good knowledge of mathematical terms. Pupils are familiar with measuring of length but are not secure in telling the time.

79. At Key Stage 2, all pupils make satisfactory progress because there is a better match of work to pupils' needs than in Key Stage 1. This is especially so in Year 6, where pupils are challenged throughout the whole of a lesson. Pupils' ability to recall number facts quickly in Years 4 and 5 is barely satisfactory. By the age of eleven, pupils have a well-developed understanding of number operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They understand and use different strategies to make calculating easier and to solve a variety of problems. Pupils successfully use fractions and percentages and are becoming increasingly confident with larger numbers. Pupils accurately construct a variety of graphs and charts and analyse data in order to make assumptions and predictions. Pupils with special educational needs reach levels appropriate to their levels of ability.

80. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the lessons seen, two-thirds were satisfactory. The other lessons were good or better and were observed in Years 5 and 6. Where the teaching is good, it is characterised by a brisk pace, so that pupils' interest and motivation are sustained throughout the lesson. Questions are used effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding, particularly at the beginning and end of lessons. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and this plays a significant part in the effectiveness of teaching in Year 6. Where lessons have shortcomings, but are otherwise satisfactory, activities do not fully match pupils' understanding and the pace of lessons is slow. Opportunities are missed for pupils to apply their skills to practical situations in mathematics lessons and in other areas of the curriculum, such as in science and geography.

81. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. Much of teachers' planning is closely related to the numeracy hour guidelines, but teachers are inconsistent in their ability to match activities to pupils' needs. As a result, tasks for some pupils are too difficult and too easy for others. Scrutiny of work within both key stages indicates that, generally, work is presented to the whole class and additional activities made available to pupils who finish the tasks provided. These additional tasks often tend to be similar in nature and so do not help pupils to develop their understanding further.

82. Procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory because there are no agreed systems in place. Consequently, teachers tend to assess coverage of the subject rather than pupils' understanding. This is one of the reasons why work is not always sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils and why standards are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. Teachers have begun to analyse the results of national tests and school data but do not analyse pupils' national test booklets to identify specific areas of learning where improvement is required.

83. The subject has suffered from the many changes of staff within the school over the past two years and the role of co-ordinator has changed hands several times in that period. The present co-ordinator has only been in post since September. This instability has led to slow progress in the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the implementation of the numeracy hour. Shortcomings in the quality of teaching and learning have been identified and are being addressed.

SCIENCE

84. The results of the 2000 teacher assessments at the age of seven showed that pupils' attainment overall was very high when compared with the national average and that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) or above was below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the work of the present Year 2 pupils is average overall and standards are currently in line with expectations.

85. Results of the 2000 national tests at the age of eleven showed pupils' attainment in science was close to the national average and that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) or above was below the national average and that of similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the work of the present Year 6 pupils is average overall, with more pupils working at the higher level than the previous year. It is likely that the 2001 test results will be significantly better than those of 2000 because of improved teaching and more challenging activities. These standards represent a satisfactory improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

86. The results of the national tests and assessments at the ages of seven and eleven show that standards improved significantly after the previous inspection 1997, but have fallen since 1998. This is due to severe problems the school experienced during a two-year period in the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 and a high rate of staff turnover at both key stages, which had a significant impact on standards. These difficulties have now been addressed and rectified.

87. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of aspects of the subject and, by the age of seven, standards are average. The vast majority of Year 1 understand that light is needed to make objects shine. For example, pupils carried out an investigation observing objects through a peephole in a black box. Many pupils gave simple explanations of why shiny objects could not be seen through the peephole without a source of light. Higher attaining pupils recorded the results of their observations well and showed good levels of attention to detail for their age. Year 2 pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of healthy foods as they respond enthusiastically to interesting and motivating investigations. They were observed discussing the results of a sorting activity in which they looked at the list of ingredients on tins and packets to see what kinds of food they contained. Many pupils were able to make sensible decisions to classify foods into six categories and give simple reasons for their choices. Some higher attaining pupils used the knowledge they had gained to draw the conclusion that a varied diet would be a healthy diet.

88. At Key Stage 2, pupils show an increasing interest in investigations and experiments. The positive attitudes they show towards science activities contribute significantly to the good progress made in most lessons. Year 3 pupils show good recall of information learned at Key Stage 1 as they sort foods accurately into those that are harmful to, and those that are good for, teeth. Higher attaining pupils give clear explanations of the processes involved in sugar damaging teeth. Year 4 pupils show good levels of co-operation and a systematic approach to investigations as they try to find out which materials conduct electricity and which do not. By the time pupils are in Years 5 and 6, they make predictions before carrying out experiments and record their results neatly. By the age of eleven, presentation of science work is of a good standard and reflects the care pupils take to draw well-labelled diagrams and graphs and record results in tables. Year 6 pupils have a wide range of general knowledge. For example, in a lesson on food chains, pupils confidently explained the link between water, carbon dioxide and energy from the sun in the process of photosynthesis. Pupils throughout the key stage invariably complete activities that have been planned by their teachers. They have few opportunities to carry out investigations and experiments of their own or to devise their own recording systems. As a result, some activities are not sufficiently challenging, particularly for higher attaining pupils. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress due to good support from classroom assistants.

89. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the lessons seen, about eighty-five per cent were good and the remaining lessons were satisfactory. Lessons are well resourced so that pupils can move on in their learning at a good pace. A good example of this occurred in a Year 5 lesson, where pupils were investigating how to alter the pitch and volume of a sound. The teacher had assembled an extensive collection of percussion, string and wind instruments, which meant that pupils always had an instrument available to test their ideas. This good level of resourcing also served to maintain pupils' motivation and interest in their tasks and was a key factor in the good progress pupils made during the lesson. Teachers share the objectives of lessons with pupils at the start. These are often written on whiteboards or printed on large sheets of paper and enable teachers to constantly draw pupils' attention to the purpose of their work and help to sustain a good pace to pupils' learning. Sessions at the ends of lessons are particularly effective when teachers ask pupils what they have learned and link this learning to the original objectives. In lessons which have shortcomings, but are satisfactory, pupils' natural enthusiasm and excitement are not directed firmly enough towards the purpose of the lesson and the quality of learning is reduced. This happened in a Year 1 lesson on sound outside in the playground, where pupils lost concentration as they enjoyed the freedom of the open space.

90. At both key stages, teachers plan their lessons thoroughly to make sure that all aspects of the required curriculum are covered and the results of this are evident in the good levels of general knowledge shown by many pupils. However, this means that the vast majority of activities are teacher-directed and pupils follow prescribed methods of recording their work or gathering data. This is often of benefit to lower attaining and average attaining pupils who need a structure in which to focus their thoughts. However, higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunities to devise their own experiments or investigations so that they can apply their well-developed skills, knowledge and understanding to following their own lines of enquiry. This is one of the main reasons for the low percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in the national tests and assessments at the ages of seven and eleven.

91. The subject co-ordinator has led the staff well in preparing for the new National Curriculum. As a result, teachers are making effective use of national guidelines to prepare their lessons. She has a satisfactory understanding of standards in the subject through analysis of national and school test results and looking at teachers' planning. However, the link between identified weaknesses and adjustments to planning, in order to focus learning on specific skills or with groups of pupils, is not sufficiently strong. This is partly due to the fact that there are no agreed procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. However, there are useful plans to establish systematic procedures by the end of the academic year. A good start has been made in the helpful practice of testing pupils on what they have learned at the end of each completed unit of work.

ART AND DESIGN

92. During the period of the inspection, it was only possible to observe two art lessons, in Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on the lessons observed, a scrutiny of work on display, teachers' planning and discussion with the subject co-ordinator. On the basis of this evidence, pupils' attainment in art is above national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Standards are a satisfactory improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection and are due largely to an increased emphasis on the quality of art and design activities in the curriculum.

93. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good gains in their ability to use a wide range of techniques and materials. Pupils in Year 1 use paint and other materials to recreate their own ideas or illustrate aspects of their work in other subject areas. For example, they illustrate favourite characters or events in stories they are studying in literacy lessons and use printing techniques to illustrate ideas about autumn. They explore colours and colour mixing through pattern making and three-dimensional paper sculptures. In Year 2, pupils develop and refine their skills, for example by applying printing techniques to tissue paper. In both year groups, pupils' skills are extended by the effective use of the computer to compose and create imaginative pictures. In observational drawing, most pupils show an awareness of line, tone and texture and some pupils produce drawings that show careful and perceptive observation. They make good gains in learning techniques from the work of famous artists and using these in their own work.

94. In Key Stage 2, pupils respond well to good skills teaching and, as a result, develop their understanding of a variety of techniques at a good pace and apply them to different aspects of their work. For example, pupils used several different techniques to create full-length Tudor portraits that show an exciting use of colour and careful selection of materials. Teachers link art work well to projects in other subjects and this makes pupils' work relevant and motivating. For example, pupils used pastels with good control to draw portraits and illustrate aspects of work being done in geography. They used pencil skilfully and to good effect to show light, shade and tone in portraits. Work on the Aztecs in history resulted in careful and finely detailed felt pen work. Pupils use clay and other materials well to produce three-dimensional structures. They make good use of their information and communication technology skills to illustrate work done in English.

95. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan and organise their work well and use a variety of appropriate activities to enthuse the pupils. They are confident in their knowledge of the subject. Skills and techniques are taught systematically with clear instructions and good exemplification. Teachers use pupils' finished work to good effect to demonstrate good practice and in tasteful displays in classrooms and around the school. The standard of display is good and, as a result, classrooms are attractive and stimulating learning environments.

96. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who joined the school in September 2000. She sets good standards both by the quality of her own teaching and through the work she undertakes as co-ordinator. She has a good understanding of her role and has a clear view of the future development of the subject across the school. She monitors planning to ensure that programmes of study are followed and provides guidance and support for teachers when they plan their lessons. She is not allocated time to observe colleagues teach. There is a good range of centrally stored and readily accessible materials. The quality and range of books and posters to support the work of teachers and pupils is very good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed, in Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on evidence from this lesson, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. Pupils' work included that seen in classrooms, on display and in photographs. Standards are in line with those expected at the ages of seven and eleven and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

98. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to consider the planning and designing required before they can carry out their tasks. This was observed in the lesson in Year 2, where pupils were engrossed in discussion regarding the design of their puppets. A group who had already assembled their puppets were very articulate in explaining the process that had taken place.

99. In Key Stage 2, standards of attainment are variable. Year 4 pupils' work on designing and making a chair is of a good standard. Pupils completed a design brief, sketching the chair and then constructing the chair out of wood. In Year 3, work on free-standing photograph frames is less well developed. Pupils sketched their ideas in design books and, on concluding the task, explained why their designs were effective or not. A lack of suitable materials limited the extent to which pupils could extend their skills and expand on their ideas. In Year 6, pupils had undertaken a project to make a fairground ride with moving parts. They combined successfully their design and making skills and produced finished work of a good standard and satisfactory levels of accuracy. Pupils were keen to talk about the work and explained their initial planning, construction, methods used and the evaluation of the finished work. They were particularly keen to explain how they would improve on the model if they repeated the task.

100. The quality of teaching is good. Resources are well organised and readily available, enabling the pupils to proceed with their work quickly and without unnecessary interruptions. Good use is made of toys as examples to encourage discussion and the sharing of ideas. In the Year 2 lesson, the management and organisation was good and meant that pupils could work at a sustained pace, maintaining the interest and motivation. The lesson concluded with pupils fully involved in evaluating their own work and the work of others. Teachers integrate design and technology activities well into other subjects such as history, art, mathematics and information and communication technology. The decoration of historical masks in art as well as the production in information and communication technology of posters and tickets for fairground rides are of a particularly good standard. Careful measuring required in design and technology extends pupils' mathematical skills by enabling them to use these in a real life situation.

101. The subject co-ordinator is a recently appointed teacher. He is keen to develop the curriculum area and is aware that he will need time and support before this can be carried out. The school has adopted the new National Curriculum guidelines as a scheme of work on which planning for the year is based. Book resources are good and provide helpful support for staff when they plan their lessons. However, other resources available, especially tools and work benches, are barely adequate in quantity to cope with the needs of the subject area.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Due to the fact that geography is taught in half-termly blocks during the year, not all classes were studying this subject during the inspection and only two lessons in Key Stage 2 could be observed. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, work on display and discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. On the basis of this evidence, standards are in line with the national expectation at the ages of seven and eleven and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

103. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of their own environment and that of other parts of the world. In Year 2, they have used their personal holidays to begin to learn about other countries and consider features that are similarities and differences. They have looked at the world map to locate different holiday destinations. They have considered ways in which travel affects people's lives both at home and abroad and are developing an understanding of how places are linked to others worldwide. They are developing their understanding of geographical language. In Key Stage 2, pupils interpret maps and use keys and symbols to identify geographical features. In Year 4, they are studying a village in India and, as a result, are making good gains in their knowledge and understanding, learning of life in the region and the different features, such as climate, that

affect people's lives. They make good use of reference books to find out information as part of their work. They use their knowledge of their own lives to make comparisons with people's lives elsewhere. In Year 6, pupils have just begun to study mountainous regions. They confidently use maps, reference materials and the Internet to research information about specific areas, both in the British Isles and other countries of the world. With effective guidance from their teacher, they formulate relevant questions that assist them in identifying significant geographical information from these sources and collate and present this using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils reproduce maps freehand and do so accurately and neatly. Good use has been made of an ongoing literacy project to provide pupils in Key Stage 2 with the opportunity to undertake fieldwork in Ireland.

104. In the two lessons seen, planning was detailed with clear learning outcomes. Classroom organisational skills were generally good. Group work and collaborative activities supported pupils in working at an appropriate level. The use of mixed-ability groups in the lesson observed in Year 6 created a high degree of challenge to all pupils and led to good progress being made. Open-ended questions, using appropriate geographical terms, were well used by teachers to check pupils' understanding and promote pupil participation and involvement.

105. The recently appointed co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has a clear idea of what needs to be done to support pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory overall, although there is an insufficient number of globes and up-to-date maps to support mapwork. The co-ordinator monitors termly planning and looks at samples of work across both key stages but is not required to critically analyse planning content or observe her colleagues teach. This limits the extent to which she can assess the standards in the subject. She provides good support to other teachers both individually and through the weekly planning sessions.

HISTORY

106. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and attain standards in line with those expected of pupils of their age by the ages of seven and eleven. This is confirmed by scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of historical knowledge and in developing a sense of chronology, but their enquiry skills are underdeveloped. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they are well supported by the class teachers or the learning support assistants.

107. In Year 1, pupils identify similarities and differences between 'old and new' toys and talk confidently about what they have found out about the toys. Pupils in Year 2 learn about the Great Fire of London, using evidence from the time such as diaries and paintings. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the Tudors. Through well-constructed discussion relating to modern day problems, pupils make good gains in their understanding of the problems encountered by Henry 8th when he divorced Catherine of Aragon. Through effective use of text and illustrations, pupils in Year 5 develop an understanding of the differences and similarities between Victorian classrooms and modern classrooms. In books and classroom displays, evidence shows that Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of the lives of the ordinary people at the time of the Anglo Saxons. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they share a great deal of information about the Aztecs and the influence that the Spanish brought to bear on their civilisation.

108. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and this is reflected in the confident way that they teach history. Where teaching is

good, questioning about previous work is used well to lead into new learning. Good use is made of resources such as literature, pictures and artefacts to stimulate pupils' interest and extend their thinking. There are good links with information and communication technology to help pupils find out about the Victorians and the Tudors by using CD-Roms and the Internet. A scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out independent research work as many of the activities are teacher-directed.

109. The subject is led by a recently appointed enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has a good awareness of how the subject might be developed in the future. However, she is not required to analyse teachers' planning critically and is not allocated time to observe her colleagues teach and this limits the extent to which she can assess fully standards in her subject. No systematic recording or assessment of progress is undertaken. Resources are generally satisfactory, although there are only a limited number of historical artefacts for pupils to handle and study.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and their attainment is in line with the expectations for pupils of their age. The satisfactory standards reported in the previous inspection report have been maintained.

111. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught well keyboard and mouse skills, including the necessary function keys. As a result, they confidently access, save and retrieve information stored on the computer. In Year 1, pupils open a painting program and select and use, with the minimum of support, the tools required to enable them to experiment with the program. By the age of seven, pupils have made good gains in their word-processing skills. They enter simple sentences and higher attaining pupils confidently correct errors. For example, pupils in Year 2 were observed word-processing a poem and then accessing a program that enabled them to draw and colour an illustration.

112. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills systematically as a result of regular focused support from their teachers and learning support assistants. Consequently, they are beginning to achieve good standards in some aspects of their work. For example, pupils in Year 4 successfully program a screen turtle to follow a sequence of instructions. Pupils in Year 5 browse the Internet for information on the Victorians, copy and paste information into a word-processing program and then confidently use it simultaneously with the Internet program. By the age of eleven, pupils use information and communication technology as an integral part of their learning. This is demonstrated by the way that they were observed investigating and practising ways of organising text for a specific reason. Pupils produced templates, which helped them organise the text into a form of a report and then illustrated their work with graphics.

113. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Of the lessons seen, about forty per cent were satisfactory and sixty per cent were good. Within all the lessons observed, the teacher and the learning support assistant provided very good support to individual pupils. The support provided by the learning support assistant not only to the children, but also to the teachers, is of a high standard. When common misunderstandings or developmental points occur, they are shared with the whole class and this technique helps pupils to make

good progress. Teachers use praise and encouragement well to maintain pupils' interest and motivation, as well as the self-esteem of those pupils who are less confident. Where teaching has shortcomings, but is otherwise satisfactory, all pupils tackle a similar activity throughout the lesson and this restricts the progress that higher attaining pupils make. Throughout the school, information and communication technology is being used well to help pupils understand and access other areas of the curriculum. Pupils were observed working on literacy and numeracy tasks and research work in history and geography. Work in design and technology is also produced on the computer. Pupils demonstrate a growing confidence in using information and communication technology and it is developing into a useful tool for supporting pupils' learning.

114. The subject co-ordinator has only recently been appointed to the school. He is enthusiastic and has some useful ideas about the future development of the subject. The co-ordinator is aware that there are no systematic whole-school procedures for recording and assessing the skills acquired by pupils, but has already begun trialling a recording system as part of a whole-school focus on assessment. The school is well equipped, with a new computer suite, as well as a computer, networked to the computer suite, located in each classroom.

MUSIC

115. By the age of seven, standards of attainment are above those expected of pupils of their age and are well above expectation by the age of eleven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at Key Stage 1 and very good progress at Key Stage 2. Standards are a significant improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection and this is due mainly to very effective use of the expertise and enthusiasm of the subject co-ordinator.

116. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good gains in their ability to clap rhythms or play them on percussion instruments. For example, Year 1 pupils were observed clapping the rhythm of their names and clapping the rhythm of other pupils' names for the class to identify. This activity was successful in promoting pupils' listening skills and they made good progress as a result. They begin to distinguish between the sounds they hear when listening to percussion instruments or pieces of music being played in the classroom or in assemblies. By the age of seven, pupils play confidently rhythms they identify in a variety of names such as days of the week. They play percussion instruments with the correct techniques and follow non-standard musical notation well. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed performing a composition using strings of different lengths as a guide for the duration of their playing. They showed a good understanding of loud and soft as they played and were obviously delighted with their achievements when they had finished. Pupils have a good understanding of musical terms such as crescendo, pianissimo, tempo and largo. The standard of pupils' singing is particularly high. They sing with good awareness of dynamics, singing loudly or softly when appropriate, and pay close attention to the meaning of words. They perform actions to songs and hymns with considerable enthusiasm. They remember the words of a wide range of songs.

117. At Key Stage 2, pupils make very good gains in their performance skills. They use their previous knowledge and understanding gained at Key Stage 1 to interpret with expression the words of songs and compose music of a high standard to accompany their performance. For example, pupils in Year 5 were observed practising and refining their work on a piece to be performed to their parents at a forthcoming concert. They played percussion instruments with confidence and skilfully followed music in standard notation.

Very good attitudes to their work and a well-developed awareness of others led to a performance of good quality at the end of the lesson. By the age of eleven, the standard of pupils' singing in assemblies and school concerts is very high. Many pupils show considerable freedom of expression as they move in response to the rhythm and tempo of songs they are performing.

118. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise vary but all staff teach the subject confidently and make good use of a commercial music scheme to plan their lessons. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are very good and are an important reason why pupils tackle musical activities so confidently. The subject is given a high status in the life of the school. The enjoyment shown by both staff and pupils in lessons, during singing in assemblies and as they make music together contributes significantly to the high standards achieved.

119. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator, who is the headteacher. She makes very effective use of her own considerable expertise and talents to promote high standards of performance. She has had a significant impact on standards over the last three years as a result of her very good teaching in all classes and by improving the quality of teaching of all staff through example lessons. She has extended successfully the range of musical extra-curricular activities and the school's involvement in the musical life of the local community. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning each term and, by her involvement in many of the lessons, hymn practices and assemblies, has a good understanding of standards in the subject. Procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainment and progress are largely informal, but a useful procedure for recording pupils' individual skill level is currently being trialled. Resources are well managed and in good condition. There is a good range of percussion instruments and examples of music from different world cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Standards of attainment at the ages of seven and eleven are in line with those expected of pupils of their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

121. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good gains in their ability to move freely and confidently in gymnastics, floor work and dance activities. For example, pupils in Year 1 practised and refined dance movements based on the actions of clowns in a circus. They made good use of the space available in the hall to move amongst each other as they combined several different movements in a sequence. Their evident enjoyment of the task and response to their teachers' guidance helped them to make good progress. By the age of seven, pupils use floor apparatus, such as benches and agility tables, with increasing confidence and most perform jumps and rolls to a satisfactory standard. A small number of lower attaining pupils require help from adults to land from jumps and carry out forward rolls safely. Boys and girls perform confidently when asked to demonstrate movements in front of others.

122. At Key Stage 2, pupils' good attitudes to the subject are maintained and they try hard to achieve the standards set by their teachers. Year 3 pupils showed good levels of perseverance as they practised stretch, tuck and wide jumps and many made good gains in their skills as a result. By the age of eleven, pupils' gymnastic skills are well developed.

Year 6 pupils were observed working in pairs to synchronise a series of movements. They showed good levels of imagination and co-operation as they worked out their routines and discussed how they might be improved. A small number of higher attaining pupils move gracefully and their work is of a high standard. A significant number of pupils move freely and confidently but do not control their movements well enough for each part of a sequence to flow smoothly into the next.

123. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Of the lessons seen, seventy-five per cent were good and the remaining lessons were satisfactory. Lessons are well planned with a range of activities that extend pupils' skills step-by-step. Teachers share the objectives of the lessons with pupils at the start and this helps pupils to be quite clear about what they are doing and why. Praise and encouragement are used well to motivate pupils and encourage them to try harder. The management and organisation of lessons are good and pupils at both key stages set up and put away apparatus quickly and safely. Teachers dress in suitable clothing for physical education lessons and often demonstrate movements themselves. As a result, they provide good role models for pupils by giving the subject a high status. Where lessons have shortcomings, but are otherwise satisfactory, pupils are not required often enough to comment on their own performance and that of others to suggest improvements. Pupils are sometimes not given enough time between periods of teacher instruction to exert themselves physically.

124. The co-ordinator has led the staff successfully in implementing the new National Curriculum. She has a satisfactory understanding of standards in her subject through looking at planning and informal discussions with staff. She has no time allocated to observe her colleagues teach and is not required to analyse critically teachers' planning and so her impact on standards is limited. However, through her work, she has extended the range of extra-curricular sporting activities and re-established swimming on the timetable. Very effective use is made of non-teaching staff, parents and local coaches and players to promote and extend pupils' skills in football, cross-country, athletics and rugby. Procedures for recording and assessing pupils' attainments are largely informal. Resources are of good quality and are well maintained.