

INSPECTION REPORT

Dane Bank Primary School

North Reddish, Stockport

LEA area: Tameside LEA

Unique Reference Number: 106217

Headteacher: Mr M. Cruden

Reporting inspector: Mr R. W. Burgess
OIN 20950

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th March 2000

Inspection number: 191856

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Junior and Infant
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Thornley Lane South North Reddich Stockport
Postcode:	SK5 6QG
Telephone number:	0161 336 5896
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G. Beckingham
Date of previous inspection:	20 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. R. W. Burgess	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Information technology	How high are standards?
		Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
		Special educational needs	
Mrs S. Dixon	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs D. Mackie	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
		Religious education	
		Art	
		Music	
		Under fives	
Mr H. Figgess	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		History	
		English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dane Bank Primary School is situated on the southern outskirts of Manchester in the borough of Tameside. Most pupils come from the immediate area, where the housing is both owner occupied and rented. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. Since the last inspection children's attainment on entry to the nursery class has declined. On entry to the nursery, a significant number of children's levels of attainment are below levels expected nationally for children of their age. The school operates an admissions policy for children to start school at the beginning of the academic year before their fourth birthday. A significant number of children attend preschool provision at the nursery, although several children enrol at the beginning of the reception year. There are 224 children in the school, including 26 who attend the nursery part time. English is the first language of all the pupils. Unemployment, in certain parts of the school's catchment area, is above the national average. At the time of the inspection, 14 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average. There are 116 girls and 108 boys, aged from three to 11 years. The school has recognised 35 pupils as having special educational needs, which is above the average for a school of this size and type, two of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Dane Bank Primary School is an improving school. At Key Stage 1 almost all pupils achieve satisfactory standards but few achieve higher standards. At Key Stage 2 the majority of children achieve satisfactory standards but very few achieve higher standards. This is a reflection of the improvement in the quality of teaching, the introduction of teaching groups based on ability in Years 3 and 4 and the increasing impact of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy on pupils' standards of achievement. There is careful analysis and monitoring of the different aspects of the school's work by the headteacher, staff and governors with the intention of raising standards. The strengths of the school outweigh its weaknesses. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- ◆ Teaching particularly for children under five and younger pupils at Key Stage 1.
- ◆ Very good provision for children under five.
- ◆ Good personal development of pupils.
- ◆ Good monitoring and development of teaching.
- ◆ Good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- ◆ Standards in information and communication technology.
- ◆ Provision in short term planning for the different ability groups in each class.
- ◆ Procedures and use of ongoing assessment to plan for pupils' future 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 has made a good improvement since the last inspection in January 1997. The school developed plans to tackle the weaknesses identified in the last report. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching in part due to the appointment of new staff and the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Strategic planning has benefited from the recent recruitment of new governors. The role of co-ordinators in managing their curriculum areas has been developed well and the school has good plans for further developments. It is well placed to continue to build on its recent improvements, supported by a committed and active governing body to raise standards of provision and attainment.

STANDARDS

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

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

In comparison with all schools standards were above average in English, below average in science and well below average in mathematics. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds standards were above average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Although still below national averages, when studied in detail the school's performance reflects a clear improvement in English and science since 1997 and a slight improvement in mathematics. The evidence of the inspection indicates this improvement is being maintained in all three subjects. The majority of pupils achieve standards expected nationally but few achieve higher levels. During the inspection standards attained in the Nursery were satisfactory. Standards for the majority of pupils were satisfactory in English, overall. The standards of reading are satisfactory throughout the school. In mathematics and science standards are satisfactory throughout the school. In information and communication technology standards are unsatisfactory for the majority of pupils throughout the school. Standards in religious education are good throughout the school.

There is clear evidence of improvement in English and science since the last inspection, even though children's attainment on entry to the nursery class has declined during this period. Pupils' competence in information technology is improving but is still unsatisfactory overall. Standards in religious education are satisfactory. Progress is at least satisfactory and often good in most curriculum areas for the majority of pupils. It is no better than satisfactory for more able pupils particularly in English and mathematics. Standards of achievement are good and above national expectations in art, design and technology and physical education

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes of the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. They show enthusiasm for school and this is reflected in their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The school is an orderly community. Pupils work and play well together.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. Pupils are friendly and polite.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils are keen to come to school.

Relationships are good and pupils have a high regard for others' feelings, values and beliefs. In their personal development, pupils willingly take responsibility for tasks and show initiative, such as when setting out equipment for assemblies.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5 - 7 years	aged 7 - 11 years
Lesson seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, 22 per cent of lessons seen were very good or excellent, 52 per cent good, 22 per cent satisfactory and four per cent unsatisfactory. Teaching of the youngest children was often very good, with many activities providing stimulating learning experiences for the children. The good and very good lessons at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 reflected teachers' good subject knowledge.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good for children under five and at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. There is insufficient provision for pupils' different levels of ability in some lessons for older pupils at Key Stage 2. In literacy insufficient emphasis is placed on handwriting and standards of presentation. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Support is not always effectively targeted to support these pupils, where it is used well pupils make good progress in their learning. Teachers do not always make effective use of assessment to inform their planning. The quality of learning is good. Pupils and teachers have good relationships, behaviour is good and there is a positive climate for learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very good for children under five. It is satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils with	Procedures ensure appropriate provision for pupils with

special educational needs	special educational needs. Provision within lessons is satisfactory.
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school effectively promotes pupils' personal education, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provides well for pupils' emotional and aesthetic development. Fosters a good understanding of cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for the welfare of its pupils. It recognises the need to develop effective procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal progress to inform planning for future learning.

The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, including a number of sports activities. The school cares well for its pupils. The use of assessment to inform teachers' planning is underdeveloped. Too little importance is placed on the results of assessments, particularly when planning work for more able pupils. The school is working hard to develop a partnership with parents. They are made to feel welcome and offer support to the school, attending performances and consultation evenings.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. There have been good developments in the management role of co-ordinators who give good leadership in their subjects. The headteacher leads a caring and committed staff well.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Governors are fully supportive of the school and many take an active role in school life. Several governors have only recently been appointed but show a commitment to supporting the school and new developments. The governing body is well informed of the school's progress and its relative strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is sound and the school recognises the need to use this well to inform development plans to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school has a very significant carry forward of funds which it plans to use to improve the level of resources and to fund maintenance to the buildings. The school makes effective use of learning resources.

There are sufficient staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and adequate numbers of support staff. Resources are sufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum, following the recent acquisition of additional resources for information technology. Through its monitoring and reviewing procedures, the principles of best value are soundly applied by the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
◆ The school is approachable. ◆ Their children like school. ◆ The attitudes and values the school promotes.	◆ Information on what standards they should expect their children to achieve. ◆ Homework.

The judgements of the inspection team generally support the parents' views of the school. The school does send some information on work to be covered and information on standards is available. Homework is set but parents are not clear when to expect it and would welcome a clear statement of policy.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. National performance data for 1999 indicates that in English the number of pupils attaining levels expected for pupils aged 11 was close to the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level was above the national average. In mathematics the number of pupils attaining levels expected for pupils aged 11 was below the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level was also below the national average. In science the number of pupils attaining levels expected for pupils aged 11 was below the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level was well below the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds standards were above average in English and well below average in mathematics and science.
2. National performance data for 1999 indicates that in reading the number of pupils attaining levels expected for pupils aged 7 was close to the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level was well below the national average. In writing the number of pupils attaining levels expected for pupils aged 7 was close to the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level was below the national average. In mathematics the number of pupils attaining levels expected for pupils aged 7 was very high in comparison with the national average. The number of pupils achieving above this level was well below the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds standards were broadly in line in writing and mathematics and well below average in reading.
3. Although still below national averages, the performance of pupils aged 11 reflects a clear improvement in English and science since 1997 and a slight improvement in mathematics. For pupils aged 7 these standards represent a fall in standards over previous years. Evidence gained during discussions with staff indicated that this is mainly due to a significant change in the school's intake. Since the last inspection children's attainment on entry to the nursery class has declined. Assessments made during the children's first term in school clearly indicate that there is a wide range of attainment amongst children who enter the nursery class but the majority have levels of attainment which are below those expected for their age. In both classes, they make good progress in language and literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social, physical and creative development. Most achieve the nationally agreed standards in all areas of learning by the time they are five.
4. Standards seen during the inspection indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and writing are in line with national expectations and all pupils, including talented pupils and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards in English which are in line with those expected for 11 year olds. Progress for talented pupils is not always satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate gains in learning.
5. Most pupils attain levels broadly in line with those expected for their age in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 1. Although the majority have an appropriate vocabulary which helps them to express their thoughts and ideas clearly, a significant number lack fluency in their speech. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain standards in line with those expected for their age. They acquire specific vocabulary to support work in all subjects and use it effectively.

6. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading broadly meet national expectations. The school's appropriate phonic programme gives pupils a good grounding. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' attainment in reading is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils acquire a wide range of strategies, they break down words into syllables and use context cues well. Pupils benefit from the school's recent acquisition of a wide variety of good quality children's novels, and most read with fluency and expression. Higher achieving pupils understand sub-plots and become increasingly aware of the more complex narrative structures.
7. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Most pupils form letters correctly and writing is evenly sized. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes in work to support other subjects of the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain standards in writing which are in line with those expected for their age. They have a clear understanding of the use of punctuation marks. The spelling of commonly used words is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 use interesting vocabulary to bring life to their writing.
8. Pupils generally have good attitudes to their language work, they enjoy what they do and make satisfactory progress overall in English. Attitudes and behaviour are good when work is suitably challenging and where lessons proceed at a good pace. A significant number of pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, chatter during independent activities and call out during discussions. Pupils want to succeed but many are fussy and noisy as they work. This is because of enthusiasm but it affects pupils' work rate and pace of learning.
9. In mathematics, the majority of pupils attain satisfactory standards in their numeracy skills. The effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in higher standards. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to name basic shapes. Most pupils are able to place numbers in order up to 100 and understand the concept of place value for tens and units. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have satisfactory mental skills in the four rules of number. They are able to double and halve three figure numbers and many are able to add or subtract two figure numbers from the result. Pupils are able to explain the meaning of mode and median with confidence in their work on averages when handling data.
10. In Key Stage 1 pupils have a good and sometimes very good attitude towards their work. They work effectively in groups and participate with interest and enthusiasm. In Key Stage 2 pupils attitudes are satisfactory. Whilst it does not distract most pupils from the task noise levels are quite high in some Key Stage 2 classrooms.
11. In science, pupils' attain satisfactory standards by the end of both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 clearly explain their findings in their investigations of their senses, when recording tastes they like and tastes they don't like. They readily use the correct scientific terms and take a pride in using these. For example, in their experiments to discover things that float. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand and make predictions based on previous knowledge. By the end of the key stage, pupils set up experiments to test their hypotheses. They are carefully helped to separate predictions from the tests. For example, in a Year 5 lesson when testing how seeds react to different growing conditions. This enhances pupils' understanding of the principles involved. Pupils clearly understand the principles of fair testing and show good scientific understanding. Progress in pupils' learning in science is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Talented pupils do not always make sufficient progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

12. In information technology pupils at Key Stage 1, follow instructions to start a program and click on the mouse to operate games. They can follow instructions to produce symmetrical shapes, supporting their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They can predict ways in which to alter the direction of a programmable toy. Pupils use a simple art program to produce their own greetings cards. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are skilled at word processing but have limited experience of entering and using information on a database or of using spreadsheets to control data. Pupils can write text on screen and edit their work, their word processing skills are good. Pupils, including talented pupils, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils were clearly looking forward to the greatly enhanced opportunities which they will have once the new equipment is installed.

13. In religious education pupils make good progress. Standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection and are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and make satisfactory progress in all foundation subjects.

14. The standard of achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils benefit from the effective support of the support assistants, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils show interest in their work and persevere. They receive good support both in and out of the classroom. This, together with the realistic targets set in their independent learning plans, contributes well to the pupils' attainment and learning. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The standard of achievement of talented pupils is sometimes less than satisfactory due to a lack of appropriate challenge in the work set.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are happy to come to school and approach their lessons and activities with enthusiasm. In lessons pupils work hard and for the most part remain attentive throughout the school day. Where instructions are clear and expectations high these are well met. There is a good response to questions and pupils are keen to offer their opinions and ideas. Most pupils work well in groups or alone as required. Independent learning skills are well developed in pupils of all ages. They are able to make good use of reference books and to make well considered choices about equipment and materials, for example, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson where pupils selected suitable materials for the production of parachutes and kites.

16. The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons, assembly and at lunchtimes. Pupils respond well to their teachers when expectations are clear and the schools system of rewards and sanctions are consistently applied. There are a significant number of pupils in all classes who present challenging behaviour. In most lessons this is effectively managed and the learning of others is not disrupted. Pupils with behavioural problems benefit from support in the classrooms when it is available. There have been two exclusions in the recent past which have been accompanied by appropriate procedures and support for pupils on their return to school. Pupils enjoy their work and display great enthusiasm in some lessons, this results in high noise levels which has a detrimental effect upon the pace of lessons and the productivity of the pupils. Poor acoustics in many of the classrooms is a contributory factor.

17. The relationships throughout the school community are good. Pupils are friendly, helpful and polite. They mix and play well together and show respect for their teachers and in

general for each other. Pupils are encouraged to value friendship and to be considerate towards others. Incidents of conflict and bullying are rare. Issues surrounding relationships and thought for others is well supported in assemblies, lessons and through the personal and social education programme. On such occasions pupils display understanding and often offer mature responses in discussions. For example, in the inspection week the theme for assemblies was friendship and this was complemented well with work done in religious education and personal and social education lessons.

18. The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils accept the many opportunities to take responsibility willingly and with pride. Most pupils respond well to encouragement to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. The opportunities for pupils to extend this into greater responsibility for their own learning are limited. The school has recognised that at present there are insufficient opportunities for pupils across the school to express and share their views with others.

19. The pupils' enthusiasm for school is shown in the good levels of attendance which are above the national average. A number of absences are due to holiday taking in term time, this has a detrimental effect upon the education of these pupils. Lateness is a considerable problem for the school and presents a similar situation as at the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching is very good for children under five. It is good overall at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching for children under five was very good or excellent in 50 per cent of lessons observed, good in 40 per cent and satisfactory in 10 per cent. The quality of teaching for Key Stage 1 pupils was very good in 14 per cent of lessons observed, good in 64 per cent and satisfactory in 22 per cent. For Key Stage 2 pupils teaching was very good in 16 per cent of lessons observed, good in 50 per cent, satisfactory in 28 per cent and unsatisfactory in six per cent.

21. In the very good lessons there is a good pace and a range of teaching strategies is used to good effect. The teachers' planning shows clear and appropriate learning objectives. For example, pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class enthusiastically respond well to a literacy session to develop their understanding of persuasive writing and how it is used in advertisements. There was good planning, the lesson was delivered with enthusiasm and questions by the teacher ensured good gains in learning by all pupils.

22. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, lesson objectives do not specifically reflect the needs of the different levels of attainment within the class and in some instances tasks lack suitable challenge, particularly for talented pupils. The explanation of tasks is not sufficiently clear, often due to the unsatisfactory behaviour of a significant number of pupils in the class. This is because of enthusiasm but it affects pupils' work rate and pace of learning and is not well managed.

23. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching is focused well and pupils are helped to set their own targets and recognise their own improvements. Class teachers and support assistants have positive approaches to pupils with special educational needs.

24. The teaching of children under five is good in the nursery and very good in the reception class, with evidence of excellence. Teachers have secure understanding of the needs of

young children. Planning is good and it follows national guidance. Appropriate tasks are set for children of different ages and abilities and there are carefully planned activities for children who have special educational needs. Teachers extend the children's knowledge and understanding through very good questioning.

25. The teaching of English is good overall, with evidence of very good teaching at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good for the youngest pupils, who make good progress. At Key Stage 2, there is a significant amount of good teaching and a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers plan literacy work carefully, following the National Literacy Strategy and have implemented the literacy hour very effectively. Their knowledge and understanding of the subject is secure at both key stages. They show good levels of technical competency. Weekly planning is helpful and is carefully linked to the National Literacy Strategy. Daily planning is more variable and there is no clear agreed school process for including elements such as the individual education plans for talented pupils or those with specific learning difficulties.

26. The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 1 is always good and often very good. All the teaching in Key Stage 2 is at least satisfactory and most is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. They motivate and enthuse pupils during the brisk mental mathematics sessions. Teachers' planning is good, with a clear focus on learning objectives. The plenary session, provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they have learned during the lesson. Teachers' short-term plans do not consistently identify ways of differentiating work and challenging the more able pupils.

27. In science, the quality of teaching in both key stages is at least satisfactory and often good. The teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers' short-term plans do not consistently identify ways of differentiating work and challenging the more able pupils. The inconsistency in planning leads to variations in standards of work obtained. When teaching is good, teachers display enthusiasm and ask probing questions which keep pupils alert. Teachers are well organised and scientific concepts are developed through practical activities and where possible by links with other subject areas, for example, design and technology.

28. In information technology the teaching is satisfactory mainly due to the limitations of existing levels of resources. There are good plans which should lead to a significant improvement following an increase in the level of resources. In religious education the overall quality of teaching is good. Planning is well matched to the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers make their lessons more interesting by making relevant links with the pupils' own experiences. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding. In the other subjects the teaching is good. The good quality of support staff has a good impact on the standards achieved.

29. Pupils with special educational needs are mostly taught within the classroom setting. The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is good. Teachers plan to ensure that pupils' targets are progressive and achievable. They use a range of effective strategies to support pupils; sometimes the pupils work in their small ability group and at others alongside other pupils. Teachers and support assistants also ensure that special educational needs pupils are included in class discussions. Overall, the quality of teaching and the effective use of additional help make a good contribution to the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.

30. The quality of teachers' short term planning is variable. On occasions it is very detailed and on others it is insufficiently informed by effective assessment of pupils' prior attainment and levels of achievement. This has a detrimental effect on the rate of progress made, particularly

by talented pupils. Most individual lesson plans clearly identify the objectives, which reflect the teacher's good subject knowledge which they use well to set clear objectives and focus on what is to be achieved. There is good provision through literacy lessons for the development of language skills. In most lessons class teaching is used effectively at the start of lessons and many lessons end with a useful discussion of what has been learned. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson studying the text of "The Silver Sword" when reviewing how to include tension and pace in a story. In many lessons the teachers provide good support through verbal comments which include guidance on how the pupils might improve.

31. In many cases teacher's marking gives pupils guidance on ways in which they can improve their work but this is an inconsistent feature throughout the school. The teachers use praise and encouragement effectively during lessons to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Most teachers have good control and relationships between them and their pupils are good. Homework such as reading and spelling is given to all pupils on a regular basis and makes a good contribution to their learning. In other subjects such as mathematics there is no consistent practice with regard to homework.

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

32. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are satisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The provision for children under five is very good. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place providing equality of opportunity for all pupils.

33. The last inspection identified several key issues relating directly to curriculum provision. The school has now implemented schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum. The requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education have been fully implemented. Provision within lessons for special educational needs pupils is satisfactory. Procedures in relation to special educational needs have been amended and the school now fully complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. The requirements for a daily act of collective worship are in place.

34. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. In addition French is taught to Year 6 pupils. Time allocations for each curriculum area have been amended to accommodate the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The very good implementation of both strategies has been effective in raising standards of achievement. Weekly planning for the core and foundation subjects has been amended to identify greater detail and learning objectives for each lesson. Planning does not always identify the ways that work may be differentiated to meet the needs of pupils of differing prior attainment. The amendments currently being developed for the foundation subjects are being planned to ensure breadth and balance within each curriculum area is maintained. Provision for information and communication technology is underdeveloped. The good plans prepared by the co-ordinator include the introduction of the recently arrived new equipment and provide a great opportunity to enhance provision in this area. All pupils have equal access to the full curriculum.

35. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Activities for pupils in Key Stage 2 include soccer, cricket, badminton, netball, orienteering, steel band and a library club. The school also provides a very good care club, which is available for pupils of all ages before and after school, five days a week. Further extra-curricular opportunities are not currently available for pupils in Key Stage 1.

36. Suitable provision is made for sex education and drugs awareness. There is good provision for pupils' personal development, which includes the use of circle time. This provision is enhanced through the creation of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility within classrooms and around the school. Older pupils undertake many tasks to support the smooth running of the school. There is a good draft policy for personal, health and social education which should provide an effective framework to develop this aspect of provision significantly.

37. The school has satisfactory links with partner institutions. The link with Cromwell special school is well established. Pupils transfer to a wide range of secondary schools, for example, in September 2000, Year 6 pupils will be transferring to seven different secondary schools. Whilst satisfactory liaison arrangements are in place to support a smooth transfer, the development of curriculum links between schools is complex and is not in place. There are good community links, many of which have resulted from performances of the steel band at different locations within the locality.

38. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The ethos of the school is based on the aims as expressed in the school prospectus. The spiritual development of pupils is catered for through lessons such as religious education and assemblies, where pupils are effectively encouraged to develop a sense of awe and wonder. Spiritual development is further enhanced through cross-curricular topics such as the Millennium Project where pupils have written and displayed millennium prayers. Assemblies are important events in the school day and follow a series of themes. They make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are lead effectively by a number of different adults both staff and visitors. Some take place in classrooms led by the class teacher. An appropriate atmosphere and context is created to support the spiritual development of pupils, within which the conventions of worship are learnt through prayer and by joining in with appropriate songs and hymns. Pupils are given the opportunity to pray to God or reflect in a manner that is appropriate to them. This is managed with great sensitivity.

39. The school teaches the principles that distinguish right from wrong. The school expresses a determination to encourage pupils to develop a reasoned set of attitudes, values and beliefs. Staff illustrate positive co-operation between themselves and with pupils. Pupils care for each other and show respect towards one another. The use of circle time and opportunities provided within the varied contexts for assembly provides opportunities for pupils to reflect and discuss concerns. The code of conduct, which is prominently displayed in most classrooms, supports the moral development of pupils. The new curriculum for personal, health and social education should further support the moral and social development of pupils when it is implemented.

40. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for routine tasks in classrooms and around the school. Many pupils use initiative and take responsibility when they see a need. Pupils are often courteous, polite and welcoming. Adults set good examples and provide effective role models for pupils. The organisation of many lessons within which pupils work in pairs, groups or teams makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. Various educational visits, the involvement of members of the community, visits to the nearby Cromwell special school and the involvement of parents in assembly support the development of pupils' social development.

41. Opportunities for the development of pupils' cultural awareness are good. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the local culture through visits by local authors, members of the community such as the local nurse, railway police and grandparents who contribute to history topics from the recent past. School productions such as Alice in Wonderland and Bugsy Malone contribute to pupils' cultural awareness. The high profile and very active steel band performs within the local area and supports a wider cultural understanding. Equally, the prominence given to the Chinese New Year and religious festivals such as Eid-ul-Fitr further enhances pupil's wider cultural appreciation.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The arrangements for the care and protection of pupils are good. The pupils are well cared for and all are well known. There is a suitable health and safety policy accompanied by careful daily practice. The arrangements for child protection meet statutory requirements, there is an appropriate level of awareness and good written guidance is available to all staff.

43. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement and progress are satisfactory. Records of tests and assessments are maintained for each class in the core subjects. Baseline test results are maintained separately. The use of this information to monitor pupils' academic progress and inform the planning of future work is unsatisfactory. The present system does not allow individual progress to be sufficiently well tracked in detail or to provide sufficient information to identify specific areas of difficulty. Individual targets are not consistently provided and pupils are not involved in evaluating their own work. To some extent this information has been used in the setting of group targets and at Key Stage 2 for setting pupils for mathematics and English lessons. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always follow the schools policy. In some subjects it is infrequent and does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance for improvement or recognition for their efforts. Some pupils have been offered places in booster lessons although attendance at after school sessions varies and these are not fully used.

44. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. All pupils are well supported by the good relationships that exist. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and provided for. Good behaviour is monitored and promoted well. There is a well understood system of rewards and sanctions which when consistently applied is effective. Rewards include merit points and certificates. When behaviour is unacceptable pupils receive warnings and are then required to work apart from others. The school behaviour policy is lengthy and details of the school systems are unclear. School rules are generally followed well but their prominence across the school varies. There is a good bullying policy which provides clear guidance for staff, incidents are rare and pupils learn about issues surrounding bullying and peer pressure in personal and social education lessons.

45. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school meets statutory requirements although holidays that have been in excess of the permitted time have not always been correctly identified as unauthorised absence. A considerable amount of pupils are late for school and a recent Punctuality Week has been successful in bringing about improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The parents' views of the school are satisfactory. Parents are pleased with the welcoming atmosphere in school and the approachability of the staff. Some parents feel that the schools expectations and standards are not always high enough and that there are insufficient extra-curricular opportunities for younger pupils. Some parents have expressed a wish for more information about levels of attainment and expectations and a greater understanding of homework requirements and provision.

47. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is satisfactory. Parents are provided with opportunities to take part in the life of the school through class assemblies and special events, these are well supported. Workshops are held which offer parents information about new initiatives and changes to school systems, for example, with a recent workshop about the school library, how it is used by pupils and plans for its development.

48. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. A number of parents give up their time to help in school, for example with cookery, and this has a beneficial effect upon pupils learning. There is an enthusiastic Parents' and Teachers' Association that organises fund raising events and social occasions for the pupils.

49. The quality of the information provided for parents is satisfactory. There is a well presented and informative school brochure and governors' annual report. Other information includes an introductory leaflet for nursery and reception parents and newsletters which keep parents informed about every day events. Information is provided about coming topics and these are accompanied by requests for appropriate resources. There is little detail about the curriculum otherwise and parents do not receive information about attainment or the expectations of their children. Pupils' progress is discussed at twice yearly consultation events and written reports are issued in the summer term. These provide insight into what pupils can do but do not consistently provide guidance for improvement. There is good information about pupils' personal progress.

50. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is satisfactory. Parents show their willingness to support homework well where it is provided. They have expressed a wish for clearer information about homework, its provisions and expectations.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school is effectively led and managed. The headteacher is a good pastoral leader who leads his caring and committed staff well in order to reflect the school's aims. Governors fulfil their duties conscientiously and use their skills well in the service of the school. Governor training has been managed effectively so that new members are well informed about current issues. There is a rolling programme for the review and approval of curriculum policies. Governors are aware that some reviews have fallen behind during two busy years in which National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced positively. All statutory requirements are met. Relationships between the headteacher, staff and governors are good and they have tackled difficult issues resolutely.

52. Since the last inspection, the role of co-ordinators has been developed effectively so that they now play an important part in school management and the raising of standards. Co-ordination of special educational needs is satisfactory and education in the early years is managed well. The role of the deputy headteacher is not sufficiently developed. His expertise in the co-ordination of assessment and professional development is not sufficiently harnessed for him to play a more prominent role in school improvement and provide regular information directly to the governing body.

53. There have been significant improvements in the monitoring of teaching and learning and it is now good. The headteacher, co-ordinators and governors visit classrooms with clear criteria for observations. These are fed back to other teachers and governors and findings are incorporated into future planning. This has had a beneficial effect, particularly on standards at Key Stage 2. Recognition of the need to improve reading standards has led to improved provision of literature at Key Stage 1. Monitoring of pupils' written work has not been so well monitored; poor presentation and the inconsistent marking of work has not been identified and rectified.

54. The school's three-year development plan has been supported by brief annual action plans which are largely based on issues raised by the last inspection and national initiatives. Developments to help the school to reach targets set with the local authority are also appropriately included. Governors recognise that they now have sufficient expertise and experience to be more involved in robust, regular self-evaluation which probes into all areas of school life in order to raise standards, increase parental involvement and promote the positive profile of the school in the community.

55. There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers to meet the need of the National Curriculum. Support for pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties is too thinly spread and this adversely affects the learning of all pupils. Non-teaching staff make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with whom they work. An appraisal system is in place and professional development is managed effectively to meet identified current needs. Provision of information and guidance for teachers new to the school is not sufficiently organised.

56. Accommodation is adequate for the effective teaching of the National Curriculum and classrooms are of an adequate size for the age of the pupils. The accommodation is kept clean and warm by the conscientious caretaking staff. Some indoor decoration and frayed carpet is in need of attention in order to improve the pupils' learning environment and promote high standards in all areas of school life. Sections of wooden cladding on the external walls of the school are in a poor state.

57. The provision of learning resources is adequate for the teaching of most subjects and for pupils with special educational needs, but provision for science and geography is unsatisfactory. Provision for English is good and there are plans to further improve the well organised library. The school's fund-raising committee makes a valuable contribution to the enhancement of resources for learning. Equipment is managed and stored well.

58. Strategic financial planning is appropriately linked to the school's development plan. Priorities focus on addressing the issues raised in the last inspection and raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The very significant carry forward of funds is identified to fund maintenance of the accommodation, further improve the level of learning resources and improve the levels of non-teaching support. Specific funding for 'booster' classes to help the school to raise standards in national tests has not been fully spent. Some will be carried forward to the next financial year and spent in the summer term. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is spent appropriately on non-teaching support and specific learning resources. Recommendations in the last auditor's report have been dealt with appropriately.

59. Day-to-day administration is effective and contributes to the efficient running of the school. The headteacher and the school secretary organise the school accounts satisfactorily. Clear procedures are in place for the management of ordering materials and making payments. Principles of best value are applied appropriately. Information technology is used

regularly for administration. It is also used regularly to make useful materials to support pupils' learning. It has not, however, been effectively incorporated into the curriculum for pupils because of the lack of equipment. There are plans for the imminent use of recently acquired systems which are awaiting installation.

60. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. The school is well placed to build on recent improvements because of the firm commitment of governors and staff to raise standards. The majority of children enter the school with below average attainment and achieve satisfactory levels by the time they are 11. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled.

In order to improve standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ As identified in the school development plan, raise standards in information and communication technology by:
 - *improving the level of resources;*
 - *identifying appropriate opportunities in medium and short term planning to incorporate the use of skills in information and communication technology across the curriculum;*

(paragraphs 12, 28 and 102)

- ◆ Improve the quality of short term planning, by sharing existing good practice to:
 - *provide appropriate tasks and challenge with differentiation for the range of pupils' prior attainment within each class, particularly higher attaining pupils;*

(paragraphs 22, 25, 26, 30, 74, 93 and 100)

- ◆ Further develop assessment procedures by:
 - *implementing procedures to effectively assess individual pupil's progress;*
 - *using the results of these assessments to plan appropriate work for pupils, in particular for higher attaining pupils to work at higher levels;*

(paragraphs 14, 43 and 52)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. This is indicated in paragraphs 31, 46 and 94:

- ◆ communicating to parents a clear agreed policy and practice regarding homework.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

56

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	20	52	22	4	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	26	198
Number of pupils eligible for free school meals	0	30

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	35

English as an additional language

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

Pupils mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.05
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	21	5	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	17	18	21
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	22	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	88 (85)	100 (100)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	18	21	18
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	23	26	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	100 (96)	88 (66)
	National	80 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	9	19	28

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 or above	Boys	6	5	7
	Girls	15	12	15
	Total	21	17	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (77)	61 (56)	79 (66)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 or above	Boys	2	3	6
	Girls	8	10	12
	Total	10	13	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (46)	50 (50)	69 (60)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	174
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions, 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.
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3 : 1
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	1.7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13 1

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	359,765
Total expenditure	355,702
Expenditure per pupil	1,554
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,450
Balance carried forward to next year	9,513

Results of the survey of parents' and carers'

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out:	224
Number of questionnaires returned:	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	49	49	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	32	66	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good	31	58	11	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	22	40	31	7	0
The teaching is good	38	58	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	18	62	20	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	56	38	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	49	47	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents	33	51	16	0	0
The school is well led and managed	26	56	4	7	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	36	51	11	0	2
The school provides as interesting range of activities outside lessons	33	42	16	7	2

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

61. Children under five years old are taught in the nursery class where they attend part-time, and then in the reception class where they attend full-time. There is a wide range of attainment amongst children who enter the nursery class but the majority have levels of attainment which are below those expected for their age. In both classes, they make good progress in language and literacy, numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social, physical and creative development. Most achieve the nationally agreed standards in all areas of learning by the time they are five. Finer manipulative control for writing and creative work is not so well developed. Children with special educational needs make good progress and achieve standards commensurate with their ability.

62. Children soon adapt to the routines in the nursery and establish effective relationships with the staff and other members of the class. With good teaching and appropriate adult help, they gradually acquire independence in dressing and in personal hygiene as they get ready for outside play or prepare for painting and craft activities. A significant number of younger children lack concentration and they move constantly from one activity to another. Increasingly, they seek help where needed, increase their span of concentration and choose activities with confidence. There is clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. On the few occasions when behaviour is unacceptable, children respond positively to gentle reprimands from the staff. They are thoughtful for one another and become increasingly aware of how their behaviour affects others. In both classes, children benefit from skilful support from non-teaching staff and they adapt well when they move to the reception class. Visits during the previous term help them to prepare for the change and they settle effectively to the brisker pace of work. By the time they are five, most children are confident learners who enjoy school and have the appropriate personal and social skills to support their learning and help them to take part positively in school life.

63. Children's speaking and listening skills develop well. In the nursery and reception classes, children develop a growing vocabulary and gain increasing confidence in talking about their experiences and expressing their ideas. Reading skills develop well in the nursery class as children listen to stories with enjoyment. They become increasingly aware of how books are organised and handle books carefully, turn the pages and know that print has meaning. Children begin to recognise letter shapes and sounds and most recognise their names. In the reception class, children benefit from carefully structured daily literacy lessons and most recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. By the time they are five, most children have a secure sight vocabulary of commonly used simple words and a few read simple stories confidently.

64. Children's writing skills develop well in the nursery class as they make marks and try to convey meaning through pictures and symbols. They practise mark making from left to right, write messages in the writing corner and show some awareness of the different purposes for writing. The majority of children do not have the appropriate pencil control to form letters correctly. In the reception class children gain increasing control as they trace and copy the teacher's writing. They write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. Higher attaining children write simple sentences and illustrate their writing with lively drawings. Children's writing for many different purposes is displayed in the classroom and they enjoy reading it. The teaching of language and literacy is good in the nursery and very good in the reception class.

65. In the nursery, children develop their mathematical skills through a carefully structured programme which is strongly built on the appropriate development of mathematical language. Teaching is good and children gain a deeper understanding of counting and order as they sing number rhymes. In the home corner, they develop mathematical skills as they match the cutlery and crockery, lay the table and share out the food. As they play with sand and water, children talk about 'full, empty and more'. They consolidate mathematical vocabulary as they play games and take part in practical activities with play dough, sticky paper and building bricks. In the reception class, children practise the skills of matching, sorting and ordering objects. By the time they are five, most children count to 10 and count 10 objects reliably and begin to use mathematical understanding to solve problems. Teaching is very good and higher attaining children show good understanding of number operations such as addition and subtraction. They count on from a given number and are excited by the idea of big numbers. With the teacher's help, they count the number of steps they take from the playground to the classroom.

66. In both classes, most children achieve appropriate standards for their age in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They ask questions about how and why things work and want to know more about the environment. In the nursery, children observe, explore and ask questions in a comprehensive, well-planned range of activities in the classroom and the outside play area. As they play together in the home corner, children talk about their families and where they live. They describe some of the features of the area, such as the shops and the park. As they play with well-chosen items in the sand and water, children gain early scientific skills. They develop satisfactory levels of concentration as they thread beads, complete simple jigsaw puzzles and play with construction kits. In the reception class, children plant bean seeds and gain scientific language about the conditions necessary for plant growth. They develop an understanding of other faiths and ways of life as they learn about the festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and the Chinese New Year. As they cut pictures out of catalogues, children show an awareness of how to plan a garden. They enjoy using computers and control the computer mouse to follow a path through a maze confidently. In both classes, children are supported by skilful adult intervention and good teaching.

67. In the nursery class, children run, jump, climb and balance with confidence and control wheeled vehicles effectively. Most children move around with an awareness of space and are controlled and purposeful as they play in the outside play area. They throw balls, try to catch them and begin to play in pairs. Children walk in an orderly way to and from assemblies and keep their place in the line effectively. Children under five in the reception class spend their playtimes in the playground with pupils in Key Stage 1 and they join in games and run about confidently. They also have regular opportunities to share the nursery toy vehicles and show good control as they follow paths round the playground. In both classes, children enjoy physical activities in the school hall. In the classrooms, they gain increasing control of pencils, brushes and scissors and most achieve appropriate levels for writing and expressing their ideas effectively by the time they are five. A few write well and they illustrate their work with lively drawings. Good teaching in both classes includes the provision of a wide range of stimulating experiences and good support from non-teaching staff.

68. Children in the nursery class participate enthusiastically in a variety of creative activities. The good level of adult support helps them to develop their senses and be more aware of the shapes, sounds and events around them. Children interact with one another imaginatively as they reflect real life situations and pretend they are various members of a family in the home corner. As they paint pictures and make models, children explore colour, texture and shape in two and three-dimensions and gradually learn to make decisions and choices when selecting materials and equipment. Early experimentation with a wide variety of materials, including paint, crayons, felt tipped pens and brushes, helps them to express their ideas. They roll, squeeze and shape

malleable materials to develop skills and techniques for model making. Many younger children lack appropriate concentration and perseverance to finish work but they achieve success through skilled and sensitive staff support. In the reception class, children develop keener observational skills and their drawings and paintings become more detailed. Good teaching encourages children to express their feelings in creative ways. Every topic includes interesting and challenging creative activities. Children made Chinese dragons and Islamic prayer mats to support work in religious education. In the well organised role-play area, children make notices to show that it is the Three Bears' bedroom. Children enjoy listening to music and they join with pupils in Key Stage 1 to sing tunefully, rhythmically and enthusiastically in assemblies.

69. The overall teaching of children under five is very good. It is good in the nursery and very good in the reception class, with evidence of excellence. Teachers have secure understanding of the needs of young children. Planning is good and it follows national guidance. Appropriate tasks are set for children of different ages and abilities and there are carefully planned activities for children who have special educational needs. In both classes, teachers extend the children's knowledge and understanding through very good questioning. The provision of relevant practical and stimulating activities motivates the children well so that they are keen to get on with tasks. In both classes, the daily organisation is very good and there is good provision for the development of literacy and numeracy. There is good balance of directed and freely chosen activities so that children increase their levels of concentration and become more confident in making independent choices. Care is taken to ensure that children in the reception class have sufficient opportunities for play during the day. In both classes, children are managed very well and teachers ensure that there is a calm atmosphere for quiet activities such as story and sharing times. Staff plan and work very effectively and parental help in the classrooms is well organised so that all adults have a clear understanding of the learning objectives for activities in which they are involved.

70. Assessment procedures are good and staff build helpful profiles of the children's achievements and needs. Information from assessments is usually used to prepare an appropriate teaching programme which builds step-by-step on what children already know. Statutory assessments of children's attainment are carried out in the reception class. Detailed records are meticulously kept and passed on to the next teachers so that there is continuity in children's learning. Non-teaching staff are deployed well and they make a valuable contribution to the children's learning. In both classes, the good, well-chosen range of resources is used effectively to support the teaching programme and attractive displays of children's work raise their self-esteem. The well-designed outside area and comprehensive range of play equipment provide a stimulating learning environment which is used very effectively by the staff to promote development in all areas of learning.

71. In the last inspection, attainment on entry was average, children made good progress and were on course to achieve above average standards in reading and number by the time they were five. Attainment on entry is now lower, children still make good progress and achieve the nationally agreed outcomes by the time they are five. There have been improvements in outdoor provision.

ENGLISH

72. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, the percentage of pupils aged 11 achieving the expected level was close to the national average and at the higher level, it was above. The average National Curriculum points achieved by pupils was above that of similar schools. Results have improved since 1997 and the performance of both boys and girls, taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, has exceeded the national average for their age group.

In 1999, the percentage of pupils aged 7 achieving the expected levels in National Curriculum assessments in reading and writing was close to the national average. The percentage achieving the higher level was well below in reading and below in writing. The average National Curriculum points achieved by pupils were well below that of similar schools in reading and broadly in line in writing. This is because few pupils achieved at the higher level. Results have declined since 1997 in both reading and writing. Over the four years from 1996 to 1999, the performance of boys in writing was higher than that of girls.

73. In the last inspection, pupils at Key Stage 1 attained at or above the national average in all aspects of English. Results in national tests show a decline in the school's results since then. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery class has also declined. The introduction of the literacy hour and a stronger emphasis on the direct class teaching of reading has had a beneficial effect and brighter pupils now achieve high standards in the key stage. At Key Stage 2, there has been an improvement since the last inspection. Standards were seldom higher than the national average and progress was inconsistent. The school's commitment to raising standards by the time pupils leave the school has been successful and higher results in national tests reflect the positive attitudes of staff and pupils. This commitment gives the school the strong capacity to improve at Key Stage 1 and improve further at Key Stage 2.

74. Evidence during the inspection indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and writing are in line with national expectations and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards in English which are in line with those expected for 11 year olds. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate gains in learning. Talented pupils are not always provided with appropriate challenge in the work they are set.

75. Most pupils attain levels broadly in line with those expected for their age in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 1. Although the majority have an appropriate vocabulary which helps them to express their thoughts and ideas clearly, a significant number lack fluency in their speech and rely on the teachers' encouragement to extend their answers. Pupils are keen to communicate and contribute to discussions. In a religious education lesson about 'right and wrong', pupils shared ideas and then performed the story of 'The Little Red Hen' very well for the rest of the class.

76. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain standards in line with those expected for their age. They acquire specific vocabulary to support work in all subjects and use it effectively. Most pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions, for example, when they gave well-considered answers during an art lesson based on the work of van Gogh. In a science lesson, pupils talked about setting up an investigation and recording evidence on a line graph. They used words such as 'vertical and horizontal axes' confidently. Skills develop effectively as pupils speak to larger audiences and take part in assemblies, concerts and plays for parents and friends.

77. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading broadly meet national expectations. The school's appropriate phonic programme gives pupils a good grounding and they learn letter sounds in a systematic way. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with special educational needs. A significant number of these pupils have difficulty in blending sounds to build words, but they enjoy reading and use effective strategies such as picture cues to gain understanding from texts. In the literacy hour, pupils practise rhyming words and, with the teacher's help, this helps them to gain success in deciphering and spelling words. Higher achieving pupils have benefited from the more detailed analysis of simple texts. They read aloud fluently, with expression, which shows an awareness of punctuation and mood. They

read simple storybooks confidently and discuss the characters and story line with assurance. By the end of the key stage, most pupils use simple dictionaries and information books confidently to locate information to support other areas of the curriculum. Most pupils, even the youngest in the key stage, are aware of the contribution of authors and illustrators to books.

78. Pupils' attainment in reading is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils acquire a wide range of strategies to decipher meaning from print and they break down words into syllables and use context cues well. In the literacy hour, pupils read together from enlarged print and this benefits less able readers and those with special educational needs by encouraging pace and expression. Pupils benefit from the school's recent acquisition of a wide variety of good quality children's novels and most read with fluency and expression. They recount the significant ideas, events and characters in stories. Higher achieving pupils understand sub-plots and become increasingly aware of the more complex narrative structures. The study of vocabulary and sentence structure in texts enhances pupils' levels of reading comprehension and enriches writing activities. Pupils' knowledge of well known authors is satisfactory and most use the school library effectively to find books by the end of the key stage.

79. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Most pupils form letters correctly and writing is evenly sized. Capital letters and full stops are usually used correctly and pupils begin to write interesting stories which show an understanding of narrative sequence and an awareness of a reader. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes in work to support other subjects of the curriculum. They label diagrams, write instructions and identify dialogue in 'speech bubbles'. Higher achieving pupils begin to use inverted commas confidently. Their writing is well organised and imaginative and they use interesting vocabulary. Opportunities for pupils to extend and improve their writing are hampered by the school's excessive use of printed worksheets, many of which require one-word answers or simple matching of pictures and words. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the school's multi-sensory approach to teaching letter shapes and sounds. Pupils improve their listening skills, feel the shapes of letters and memorise letter patterns.

80. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain standards in writing which are in line with those expected for their age. They write grammatically correct sentences and have a clear understanding of the use of inverted commas and paragraphs. Pupils benefit from the clear focus on word and sentence work in the literacy hour. The spelling of commonly used words is secure and most pupils understand the use of connecting words to create longer sentences. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 write interesting short scripts for television documentaries and use interesting vocabulary to bring life to their writing. Throughout the key stage, the quality of handwriting and presentation of work is variable. Although pupils write neatly and join letters effectively during handwriting lessons, this is not transferred satisfactorily to all work. Pupils rise to the occasion and present work well for display around the school and they use word processing effectively. Many pieces of writing include illustrations to inform or amuse the reader. Appropriate forms of writing are used to support other subjects, for example, report writing in history, labelling of diagrams in science and instructions for making models in design and technology.

81. The use of literacy is satisfactory throughout the curriculum. In all subjects, pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and justify their answers. Teachers are consistent in the way they expect pupils to speak clearly and concisely when they reply to questions. Non-fiction books are included in the reading programme so that pupils gain appropriate levels of specific subject vocabulary. The flourishing library club engenders a love of literature and plays a significant role in promoting pupils' good levels of research skills.

82. At both key stages, most pupils' attitudes to learning are good but a significant number of pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, chatter during independent activities and call out during discussions. Pupils want to succeed but many are fussy and noisy as they work. This is because of enthusiasm but it affects pupils' work rate and pace of learning. Throughout the school, most pupils respond positively to the teachers' instructions, understand the object of the lesson and know what they are trying to improve. Relationships are good and pupils treat resources with respect.

83. Teaching is good overall, with evidence of very good teaching at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good for the youngest pupils, who make good progress. At Key Stage 2, there is a significant amount of good teaching and a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have implemented the literacy hour very effectively and their knowledge and understanding of the subject is secure at both key stages. They show good levels of technical competency in teaching phonics and this has a positive effect in improving the word building skills, especially of pupils in Key Stage 1 and those with special educational needs. Weekly planning is helpful and is carefully linked to the National Literacy Strategy. Daily planning is more variable and there is no clear agreed school process for including elements such as the individual education plans for gifted pupils or those with specific learning difficulties. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are taught in groups according to ability and this helps teachers to pace lessons appropriately so that pupils complete work in the time available.

84. At both key stages, there is often a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in written work. When teaching is very good, teachers inspire pupils with their enthusiasm and ask probing questions which keep pupils 'on their toes'. This has a positive effect on their progress as they learn to use time well. Where teaching is less effective at Key Stage 2, group work is interrupted when pupils with learning difficulties lose interest because they do not have sufficient adult support. Where they are deployed, non-teaching staff support groups of pupils well.

85. Teachers use learning resources imaginatively and computers are used effectively for pupils to edit their written work. Annual formal assessments of pupils' attainment are used effectively by teachers to plan groups and set appropriate long-term plans. Teachers also assess pupils' attainment and progress in a variety of less formal ways; they know the pupils well and ask appropriate questions. There is little sense of dialogue with pupils through the marking of work to convey the message that only the best possible effort is acceptable at all times. Pupils rarely correct work in their exercise books and printed worksheets are used too often. Homework is a regular feature in all classes and pupils benefit from the consolidation and extension of work done in school.

86. There is a comprehensive draft policy for English, with clearly stated aims which include equal opportunity for all pupils. Positive and enthusiastic co-ordination of the subject is a major feature in the school's success in the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers keep a well-organised portfolio of pupils' assessed work based on their discussions of appropriate standards. Resources are good and the library is well organised and maintained. The school has recognised the need for a wider variety of books to interest and motivate the boys to read; this is having a positive effect, especially for boys at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has a satisfactory supply of CD-ROMs to support the development of pupils' research skills.

MATHEMATICS

87. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils attaining at the expected level 4 is below the national average. The percentage of

pupils attaining at the higher level 5 is also below the national average. Boys are performing better than girls. Between 1996 and 1999 the attainment of pupils at the school varies from year to year and is slightly below the national trend.

88. The 1999 results of National Curriculum assessments for mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the percentage of pupils attaining at the expected level 2 is very high. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 is well below expectations. Between 1996 and 1999 the attainment of pupils has improved in mathematics and is above the national average for most years.

89. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. Evidence gained from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers planning and from discussion with pupils and teachers, indicates that attainment for the majority of pupils, is satisfactory at the end of both key stages. The rate of learning is good for most pupils across the school, including pupils with special educational needs. The last inspection identified that higher attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress. This position remains unchanged. The pace of learning for more able pupils is unsatisfactory.

90. In Key Stage 1 the youngest pupils are able to stand in a line in numerical order when given cards with different numbers on. Older Key Stage 1 pupils are able to count forward and backwards mentally in units, fives and tens with the support of a 100 number board. Pupils respond well to open questions and are able to use mental strategies to find appropriate methods to calculate a response. Pupils are able to name basic shapes by their properties and state the number of sides and corners that each shape has. Pupils are able to interpret diagrams using ordinal numbers. They are also able to interpret diagrams and begin to draw conclusions. By the end of the key stage most pupils are able to place numbers in order up to 100 and understand the concept of place value for tens and units.

91. In Key Stage 2 younger pupils are able to divide numbers mentally and present the result using a number fan. Older pupils are able to double and halve three figure numbers mentally and many are able to add or subtract two figure numbers from the result. Older pupils are able to identify near doubles and use their knowledge of place value to calculate the result as a decimal fraction. Year 6 pupils are able to explain the meaning of mode and median with confidence.

92. In Key Stage 1 pupils adopt a good and sometimes very good attitude towards their work. Pupils are attentive, well behaved, work effectively in groups and participate with interest and enthusiasm. Older pupils within the key stage take a very good level of responsibility within the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to support and praise one another. In Key Stage 2 pupils attitudes are satisfactory. Most pupils are well motivated, relationships are good and pupils are generally supportive of each other. Noise levels are quite high in some Key Stage 2 classrooms and whilst this does not distract most pupils from the task, expected standards of behaviour are not always reinforced.

93. The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 1 is always good and often very good. At Key Stage 2 teaching is never less than satisfactory and most is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and teach the basic skills well. They motivate and enthuse pupils during the brisk mental mathematics sessions. Teachers' planning is good, with a clear focus on learning objectives in most classes, which is effectively conveyed to pupils. Learning objectives are used very well in most classes as the focus for the plenary session, providing good opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they have learned. Teachers' short-term plans do not consistently identify ways of differentiating work and challenging the more able pupils. In the good and very good lessons there are high expectations of pupil behaviour. In most lessons pupils are well managed and kept on task with

interesting and varied activities. Teachers assess progress in class by means of the numeracy learning objectives and use these to highlight weaknesses or to identify groups of pupils requiring additional support.

94. The school is introducing the National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily, which is resulting in all pupils receiving an increase in the amount of mathematics they undertake. The teaching approach expected by the strategy has been fully adopted. The subject is effectively led by the subject co-ordinator, supported by the deputy headteacher in Key Stage 2. A new mathematics policy is currently being developed to reflect the aims of the National Numeracy Strategy and is at a draft stage. The draft policy does not identify the schools strategy towards raising the standard of attainment of the more able pupils. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject has been introduced since the last inspection, which includes scrutiny of teachers' planning. This is a positive step forward and now can be developed further. Monitoring does not currently include a regular review of pupils' work. The subject co-ordinator and other staff have attended in-service training and have provided extensive staff training within the school to effectively support the development of the numeracy hour. There is currently no clear procedure for the setting of homework. Some parents express concern about an inconsistent approach to the setting of homework across the classes and an uncertainty about what to expect.

95. The school has satisfactory systems for the assessment, analysis, evaluation and recording of pupils' work. The use of National Curriculum non-statutory tests introduced in Years 3, 4 and 5 and the structures that have been put in place in Years 2 and 6 to analyse areas of strength and weakness of pupil understanding through testing, are very good. Records of pupil attainment in National Curriculum levels are not systematically maintained across the school. Teachers are aware of the need for constant dialogue and feedback to pupils on their performance in mathematics during lessons. This takes place effectively and often to great effect during the plenary session towards the end of lessons. Most pupils work is marked; not all work is effectively marked in Key Stage 2.

SCIENCE

96. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils who achieved standards expected of pupils aged 11 in the 1999 National Curriculum assessments was below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was well below the national average. Pupils' performance over the past four years, particularly since 1997 has been upward and similar to the rate of improvement nationally. When compared with all schools, the school's performance was below the national average. In comparison with pupils from similar schools standards were well below average. There was a significant difference between boys' and girls' performance over the last four years, with boys achieving better than girls. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, teacher assessments indicated that pupils' performance was broadly in line with the national average in most aspects of the subject.

97. Evidence gained during the inspection indicates that standards of achievement for the majority of pupils are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know a good deal about themselves and about their senses. They recall work done previously and use that to develop new knowledge. They readily use the correct scientific terms and take a pride in using these, for example, in their experiments to discover things that float. They clearly explained their findings, showing good understanding of their sense of taste, when recording tastes they like and tastes they don't like.

98. At Key Stage 2, younger pupils study natural and man-made materials learning their different properties and differences. They learn how peat is used as a growing medium and the different types of soils and rocks which can be found locally. Older pupils in the key stage have good understanding of physical processes such as forces and the different effects of friction on moving objects. They understand electrical circuits and recognise the need to match the strength of bulbs to the voltage of batteries. They understand and make predictions based on previous knowledge. By the end of the key stage, pupils set up experiments to test their hypotheses. They are carefully helped to separate predictions from the tests, for example, when testing the solubility of different materials in a Year 6 lesson. This enhances pupils' understanding of the principles involved. Pupils clearly understand the principles of fair testing and show good scientific understanding.

99. Progress in pupils' learning is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Talented pupils do not always make sufficient progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, being supported well by non-teaching staff. Pupils respond well, showing interest in science and have enthusiasm for the subject. Most listen carefully and follow instructions. A few of the older pupils in the school lack sustained concentration.

100. The quality of teaching in both key stages is at least satisfactory and often good. The teachers have good subject knowledge. The inconsistency in planning between classes leads to variations in standards of work obtained. When teaching is good, the teachers plan good investigations to stimulate interest in science, the pace is brisk, teachers' expectations are high and pupils and time are managed well. Teachers display enthusiasm and ask probing questions which keep pupils alert. This has a positive effect on their progress as they learn to use time well. Teachers' short-term plans do not consistently identify ways of differentiating work and challenging the more able pupils.

101. The accommodation and resources available for the subject are satisfactory overall with some shortages of specific items of equipment when conducting whole class investigations. The co-ordinator has good plans for developing resources for experimental work in the subject and to develop assessment to effectively monitor pupils' achievements in order to improve standards. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching has had some impact on improving teaching, though there are insufficient regular opportunities for this.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

102. At the time of the inspection the school had recently taken delivery of several new computers and were awaiting their installation. During the inspection, small numbers of pupils were observed working with computers. No discrete teaching was seen. From the evidence provided, pupils achieve standards that are slightly below national expectations by the end of both key stages. This is mainly because of the limited opportunities which the school was able to provide due to the unsatisfactory resources. The school has recently received funding from the National Grid for Learning project and at the time of the inspection was awaiting installation of new equipment which will greatly enhance the opportunities which the school has and enable it to effectively provide a good range of opportunities for all pupils.

103. At Key Stage 1, pupils follow instructions to start a program and click on the mouse to operate games. Pupils know names such as "monitor, printer and mouse". Pupils recognise patterns and relationships and explain what would happen using the mouse to follow the instructions on the screen. They can follow instructions to produce symmetrical shapes, supporting their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They can predict ways in which to alter the direction of a programmable toy by amending the length of each leg to produce a

corrected path. Pupils have used a simple art program to produce their own Christmas cards.

104. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to use information technology to support their work in different subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are skilled at word processing, being able to edit, amend and print their text. They are confident in following instructions and have a good understanding of the retrieving and storing of work. Pupils start, save, print and close programs independently. Pupils have limited experience of entering and using information on a database or of using spreadsheets to control data.

105. Pupils make satisfactory progress and develop a sound understanding of communicating and handling information. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They have good support from programs that reinforce their literacy and mathematical skills. Pupils enjoy working with computers. Those using computers during the inspection were interested and worked conscientiously. They talked about their work well and tried to produce good quality work. Discussions showed that they understood most functions and appreciated the value of using information technology to solve problems and to find information. Pupils worked well together, with more experienced users helping those who were less secure. They were clearly looking forward to the greatly enhanced opportunities which they will have once the new equipment is installed. Pupils with interest in computers and who have their own personal computers at home willingly undertake some independent research, such as in history.

106. The quality of the aspects of teaching seen, such as planning, was satisfactory. There is an appropriate policy and scheme of work and the co-ordinator has worked hard to establish a suitable programme of work for the school within the resources previously available. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and regularly supports colleagues. He has had limited opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching in the school. He has good plans for in-service training in the use of the new equipment. Assessment is undertaken by recording pupils' experiences as they take turns on the computer. The recently delivered equipment provides an adequate number of computers. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching information technology.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make good progress. They develop their knowledge of the Bible as they relate the stories to their own lives and gain a good understanding of a range of other faiths. Pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of teaching have improved significantly since the last inspection, when insufficient time was spent on the subject, pupils did not reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the quality of teaching was variable.

108. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils discuss their feelings and experiences confidently. They express their views with candour on what is right and what is wrong as they talk about the way the other animals would not help the Little Red Hen to do her work. Pupils' knowledge of the Bible is good. In the reception class, pupils know the Bible story of the wise and foolish men who built houses with different kinds of foundations. Older pupils recount and illustrate stories from both Testaments. They know about Noah's ark, Joseph and his coloured coat and Jesus and His friends. Throughout the key stage, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Islam and they recognise that there are special times in everyone's life and become more aware of the beauty of the environment as they learn about the Creation.

109. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils recognise that there are similarities and differences in a range of world faiths. They have a sound knowledge of the principal festivals of the Christian year and know that Lent and Good Friday lead to Easter Day. They know about the celebration

of the Eucharist and their knowledge of the Christian faith and Bible stories is good. Throughout the key stage, pupils become more aware of the teachings of Jesus and the relevance of the parables and miracles. As they study other religions, pupils gain a deeper understanding of Judaism and Islam and become more aware of the importance of religion in many people's lives. Pupils know that religions have their own special holy books, places of worship and festivals. Rituals are discussed and pupils recognise the powerful need of people to express their grief in funeral ceremonies. They express their views in a mature way. At both key stages, all pupils, including talented pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress in their understanding. All pupils become increasingly aware of the importance of sharing the earth's resources and making good relationships in their own families and between religions.

110. Pupils behave well in religious education lessons. In discussions, they listen well to each other and make sensible contributions. The atmosphere in lessons is thoughtful and sensitive, and pupils speak confidently and share their experiences openly and candidly. At Key Stage 2, pupils display a mature attitude to relationships when they discuss important times in people's lives.

111. The overall quality of teaching is good. Planning is usually good and it is well matched to the locally agreed syllabus. Most teachers make their lessons more interesting by making relevant links with the pupils' own experiences. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the teaching material. They ask probing questions which elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. They listen to the pupils well and development of vocabulary and the appreciation of literature from holy books is good. Writing skills are not sufficiently developed in the subject but art is used very effectively for pupils to express their ideas and understanding. Pupils respond well to the good teaching in most lessons and behaviour is good but, when planning is not clear and the lesson is less relevant, pupils lose interest and become restless. Teachers use the local church effectively for pupils to learn about the Christian faith, festivals and artefacts.

112. Religious education is given appropriate emphasis in the school and it meets statutory requirements. The co-ordination of the subject is good, there is appropriate support and helpful guidance for teachers. Resources are satisfactory and they are used very well to inform and enlighten pupils' understanding of a range of faiths.

ART

113. Pupils' overall attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is above that typically found for 7 and 11 year olds. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 1 but judgements reflect scrutiny of the many displays of pupils' work. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the school.

114. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils express their ideas imaginatively and use their artistic skills to create work in two and three-dimensions. Art is used effectively to bring life and colour to stories such as 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Throughout the key stage, pupils increase their observational skills and use them to support work in other subjects. Pupils in Year 2 made an attractive book of detailed bird sketches after a visit to Reddish Vale. Bold work in black and white supports work on the solar system. Paper collages of astronauts and printed black and white rockets record the excitement generated by the topic. In Year 1, pupils study warm and cold colours and make bright mobiles from shapes painted in different shades of orange and blue. They make three-dimensional models of penguins to support work about the Polar Regions.

115. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils become more aware of the different ways in which pictures can be made. They use a wide variety of media and techniques to record their ideas with confidence. They bring their knowledge of the pictures of famous artists to influence their own work. In Year 5, pupils create pictures in pastel, charcoal and collage in various shades of yellow after studying van Gogh's 'Sunflowers'. They discuss the composition of the picture in a mature way and talk about the bold brush strokes. Pupils know about the work of Clarice Cliff and recognise the colourful patterns in her work. In Year 3, pupils study the work of Lowry and make well-designed collages of buildings based on the picture 'Coming from the Mill'. Lively drawings in felt-tipped pen and detailed sketches support science work on plant life in Year 4. In Year 6, pupils use bold, bright brush strokes to create effective designs on the windows of their classroom.

116. Pupils enjoy art and talk about their achievements with pride. Behaviour is good and pupils demonstrate their independence as they experiment with ideas and different materials. They work well collaboratively and are generous in their praise for the work of other pupils. They use materials and tools carefully and help to clear away at the end of lessons.

117. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, but from examination of teachers' plans and scrutiny of a wide range of pupils' work, teaching is at least satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good. Teachers at both key stages link work skilfully to other subjects but opportunities for the extension of skills are missed when pupils colour in worksheets rather than doing their own lively drawings. Teachers display pupils' work in imaginative ways so that the school is a haven of colour and creativity. Pupils become confident artists who are willing to experiment and try new techniques. They achieve high standards as they respond positively to teachers' enthusiasm and high levels of subject knowledge.

118. Teachers plan the use of a variety of materials so that pupils are constantly stimulated and motivated to get down to work. Pottery lessons are planned so that pupils create items such as attractive and well-executed photograph frames, tiles and portrait plaques which are relevant to their lives. Teachers use the work of well-known artists very effectively. At Key Stage 1, pupils gain good levels of knowledge and skills as they study van Gogh's self-portrait before creating their own portraits. Good teaching encourages pupils to express their ideas and understanding through art. In religious education, pupils demonstrate a thoughtful response to the wonders around them as they create careful crayon drawings of the Creation. Well-planned support from non-teaching staff gives pupils with special educational needs opportunities to succeed in a subject which does not rely so heavily on literacy.

119. The subject is co-ordinated in an enthusiastic and positive way which inspires both staff and pupils. Advice and support is always available and staff share ideas willingly. There is a helpful policy for art and planning identifies the systematic development of skills. Pupils are encouraged to enter local artistic events and the school is well represented in prize-winning competitions. Resources are adequate and they are used carefully and efficiently.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. Design and technology is given a high profile within the school. The standard of attainment is good at the end of both key stages in relation to national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. More able pupils extend the opportunities available to make good progress.

121. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 discuss and develop their designs to make "The mouse ran up the clock". They work collaboratively to make the clock using paper plates, split

pins and staples. Other Key Stage 1 pupils design and make items such as pizza using play dough mixed by the pupils themselves, unfired clay models, weaving, clay photograph frames and chocolate crispies. Older Key Stage 1 pupils design and make a range of different styles of books.

122. The younger Key Stage 2 pupils design and make puppets with eventual performance as one aspect of the design brief. Pupils design Tudor houses, which have to be robust to be displayed vertically on a wall. By the middle of Key Stage 2 pupils are designing and making models of the interiors of houses, designed and constructed to scale, with lighting and even an alarm system installed. This very effective opportunity within the curriculum creates a link to support pupils' understanding of electrical circuits in science. The oldest pupils design and make models of river valleys and scale models of cars.

123. Pupils respond with enthusiasm. They enjoy the range of opportunities that the subject provides. Pupils are attentive and involved in the development of their work. Pupils identify a purpose in their work, work constructively with other pupils and take responsibility for themselves.

124. The curriculum policy is good, although it does not identify the importance of evaluation within the subject. In practice there are some good examples of pupils evaluating their work. The design and technology curriculum is broad and balanced. It is based on national guidance materials and is very effectively planned to link design and technology to other curriculum areas such as science, geography and history. The subject co-ordinator intends to create links with information technology through control and with music when the school incorporates the revised curriculum guidance for the next school year. The scheme of work provides good opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and challenging opportunities for more able pupils.

125. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. The quality of work produced indicates good knowledge and understanding and that the work is carefully planned by teachers to enable pupils to produce work of a good standard. Teacher expectations are high but realistic, thereby ensuring that pupils of varied levels of prior attainment are presented with appropriate opportunities.

126. Pupils acquire and develop skills and knowledge effectively through the provision made by the curriculum. The standard of work produced indicates that pupils are productive and work at a good pace. Pupils' knowledge of their own learning is good when the opportunity to evaluate their own work is provided.

127. Subject leadership is good. The subject co-ordinator recognises the areas for development, particularly the need to ensure that pupils' evaluation of their own work takes place consistently across the school. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject is taking place through classroom visits and through the monitoring of teachers' planning. The subject co-ordinator recognises the need to develop this function further. Staff are increasingly confident about their role in the teaching of design and technology. Parents support the teaching of technology through the schools' system of parental support in the classroom. The resources for design and technology are satisfactory. The quantity of tools is sufficient and the storage of these has been improved since the last inspection. The accommodation provides flexibility to teach the subject adequately. The provision for design and technology has improved since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

128. During the period of the inspection it was only possible to observe two lessons, both in Key Stage 2. Evidence gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff and the scrutiny of teachers' planning, identifies that attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are only attaining in line with the standard expected for all pupils at the end of each key stage. They are not being challenged to attain at a higher level. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress but not enough opportunities are created for the more able pupils to progress at a rate appropriate to their prior attainment.

129. In Key Stage 1 younger pupils are able to distinguish the different characteristics of the Arctic and Antarctic regions. They are able to place pictures of the wildlife of each region appropriately. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to identify different geographical environments by painting images of mountains, volcanoes, deserts and rain forests. Pupils produced a collage of the world as seen from space with adult support, indicating the position of Europe and North and South America.

130. In Key Stage 2 younger pupils are able to gather information from an oblique view and transfer it to a map with accuracy. Many pupils appreciate the concept of a map as a birds eye view. Pupils in this age group are able to use two figure references with accuracy. Towards the older end of the key stage pupils are able to locate information in an atlas by using the contents and index. Many are unsure how to identify locations on maps using grid references. The oldest pupils are able to explain how the water cycle works, why warm air cools as it rises and the effect of altitude on the determination of different types of precipitation. Pupils are able to name different parts of a river, where a river flows fastest and what a meander in a river is.

131. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are interested and involved in their work. They are confident and eager to talk about their geographical understanding. In Key Stage 2 pupils' interest and involvement varies from good to unsatisfactory. When it is unsatisfactory pupils work at a slow pace and remain uninvolved in their work. When pupil interest is high they discuss their work with enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 6 discussed the design and construction of models of river valleys made in conjunction with their work in design and technology with pride and interest. The construction of these models enhanced their understanding of the geographical concept. Relationships are good and most pupils are supportive of each other.

132. The quality of teaching varies between very good and unsatisfactory. When it is very good teachers' subject knowledge, supported by effective planning and clearly stated learning objectives are conveyed to and understood by pupils. Unsatisfactory teaching is characterised by unclear learning objectives, a slow pace and uncertain management and control of pupils, who subsequently work at a slow pace.

133. Subject leadership is good. The subject co-ordinator has established a new policy in consultation with staff and has introduced an effective scheme of work for geography. Whilst the time allocation for geography has been reduced to accommodate the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. The curriculum effectively supports pupils with special educational needs. Planning does not identify opportunities for differentiation; more able pupils are under challenged. The curriculum policy identifies the subjects' contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The monitoring and evaluation of the subject is becoming effective. The co-ordinator has audited the curriculum provision and reviews pupils' completed work. The limited resources are effectively used. The level of resources is unsatisfactory and currently leaves the subject too dependent on the use of worksheets and teacher prepared materials. The accommodation is appropriate for the subject. There has been a satisfactory rate of

improvement since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the policy and guidance available to teachers and with the monitoring and evaluation of the subject.

HISTORY

134. During the period of the inspection only one lesson observation was possible. This took place in Key Stage 1. The scrutiny of pupils' work for Key Stage 1 and aspects of Key Stage 2, displays around the school, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils establishes that pupils' attainment in history is broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

135. In Key Stage 1 pupils are able to explain how washing equipment from the first part of the twentieth century was used. They can explain why two heating irons were used, make links with science relating to metal cooling and are able to compare the artefacts with modern equipment.

More able pupils are able to make judgements about chronology and the number of generations since the equipment was originally in use. Pupils further develop their appreciation of chronology by linking illustrations of people from different generations. In their work on teddy bears pupils are able to gather information. Year 1 pupils are able to explain how to gather information from books. They are able to explain the purpose of the contents and index pages in a book. Pupils are enthusiastic about history and they work with interest. Pupils have good working relationships, are co-operative, take initiative and take responsibility for resources.

136. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils gain a clear understanding of the way that the Vikings lived through the design and making of Viking dwellings. Older pupils have good information gathering skills and are accustomed to applying those skills when making use of the school library in connection with history. The curriculum is enriched by visits to the Portland Basin at Ashton-under-Lyne and the Air Raid Shelter museum at Stockport.

137. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding, supported by effective planning, ensures that good teaching methods are used. Expectations of pupils are appropriate. Lessons are well managed, with pupils being given clear instructions. The quality of ongoing assessment supports pupils' progress. Good teaching supports pupils to develop skills and knowledge and to work productively and at a good pace.

138. History is effectively led by the subject co-ordinator who has good plans for its future development. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work. The current history policy is out of date. The subject co-ordinator has prepared a draft replacement policy, which is currently awaiting the opportunity for consultation with staff and governors. The comprehensive draft policy and the current scheme of work meet the requirements of the National Curriculum well. The amount of time available for history has been reduced due to the expectations of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategy. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is being maintained; pupils continue to study a good range of topics. The subject is well resourced. There has been a satisfactory rate of improvement since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the leadership of the subject.

MUSIC

139. Standards by the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Pupils who play in the steel band achieve very well.

140. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know and perform a good range of songs from memory. Singing is well pitched and rhythmical and pupils vary the dynamics to add meaning to the words. They add instrumental accompaniments and maintain a regular beat. Pupils know how to hold and play untuned percussion instruments correctly and follow a conductor and simple pictorial score effectively to perform confidently with others. Pupils gain early skills of composition as they sit in a circle and pass round simple clapping patterns and chants. They respond enthusiastically to the strong rhythm of a modern hymn and enjoy singing with older pupils in assemblies.

141. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils listen attentively to other performers and sing effectively in unison. In assemblies, they adapt their singing appropriately to reflect the meaning of the words and they sang a modern version of the Lord's prayer respectfully. No part-singing was heard during the inspection. Pupils develop appropriate listening skills and musical knowledge; they recognise and name the composers of popular pieces of classical music. Skills of appraisal and composition develop well as pupils discuss the music of Benjamin Britten and draw symbols to make simple scores of 'Noyes Fludde'. Pupils who learn to play the steel pans make very good progress as a result of playing in small groups with regular teaching of high quality. They play with a strong sense of rhythm and perform to a high standard.

142. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. They respond well and want to do well. At Key Stage 1, pupils concentrate well and are keen to play instrumental accompaniments. Older pupils co-operate well in groups to create exciting sounds on steel pans. In a class lesson at Key Stage 2, pupils had difficulty in curbing their enthusiasm and were fussy when asked to work independently.

143. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good overall, with outstanding teaching of steel pan playing. Good pace and vitality are positive features in all lessons, together with teachers' secure subject expertise. Well-focused instruction helps pupils to achieve success and build effectively on what they already know. Teachers' choose an imaginative selection of songs and pieces of music which appeal to pupils. Lessons are planned effectively to include listening, performing, composition and appraisal of music. Pupils are usually managed effectively so that they make good gains in learning but progress is hindered at Key Stage 2 when fussy behaviour is not curbed immediately.

144. The school's policy for music is under review and the scheme of work is satisfactory. It is helpful for teachers and includes national guidance and elements from a commercial scheme. Resources are adequate and they are well organised and stored. The school organises visits which enhance pupils experiences and extend their learning. Pupils attended an instrumental workshop in the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and they have valuable opportunities to join with other schools in local musical events. School musical and drama productions, such as the recent show to celebrate the Millennium, give pupils opportunities to perform and share their talents.

145. At Key Stage 1, standards are broadly in line with those at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved at Key Stage 2. This is because of improved subject co-ordination and the inclusion of the full range of musical components of the National Curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Standards of achievement in physical education at the end of both key stages are good and above those expected nationally of pupils aged 7 and 11. At the time of the last inspection, standards in both key stages were also above national expectations.

147. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils move with confidence and good control of their bodies. In a lesson seen, linked to work on the Chinese New Year, pupils developed imaginative balanced positions, using different parts of their bodies. Pupils know about the need for warming up and cooling down after exercise. They relate their learning in science about their bodies to their understanding of physical exertion. They set out the mats and other apparatus in the hall carefully and dependably. Pupils showed good awareness of the use of space. By the end of the key stage, pupils have sound control. They balance on different parts of the body. They develop satisfactory ways of travelling around the hall, with good awareness of the use of space.

148. At Key Stage 2, pupils show increasing understanding of the advantages and benefits of physical activity. They develop sound understanding of sequence, such as in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson, practising different jumps and landings. Pupils consider timing and ways in which to synchronise the movements. Pupils worked well in small groups and are well motivated. In a swimming lesson for Year 4 pupils, they worked hard to develop a range of strokes and followed instructions quickly and safely.

149. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in physical education. They understand the rules, the need for safe practice and recognise the contribution exercise makes towards their well being. Pupils show keen interest in physical education and most work hard to improve their performance. They behave well, co-operating in small groups and with a partner. Pupils listen and follow instructions.

150. The range of activities provided in physical education cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum. This makes a significant contribution to the pupils' experience. The personal challenge provides an important element in their personal and spiritual development.

151. In the few lessons seen, the teaching of physical education was mainly good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They manage pupils well. They select appropriate resources and make efficient use of time. Planning shows suitable content, though there is limited planning for pupils with differing prior attainment.

152. The subject is well resourced with recently purchased and well-selected apparatus. Most apparatus is stored around the walls in the hall. Visitors, such as coaches from a professional football club, provide specialist coaching from time to time. A number of extra-curricular activities take place, these include team games and competitive events. Pupils enjoy participating in a number of tournaments with other local schools.