

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **ST EDMUND'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Little Hulton

LEA area: Salford

Unique reference number: 105958

Headteacher: Mrs M Hawes

Reporting inspector: Dr B Blundell  
23868

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> April 2002

Inspection number: 196211

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bridgewater Street  
Little Hulton  
Manchester

Postcode: M38 9ND

Telephone number: 0161 790 2329

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Fr L Heakin

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23868	Dr B Blundell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9952	Mrs L Brock	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21910	Mr G Longton	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
22740	Mrs M Leah	Team Inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Edmund's RC Primary and Nursery School is a school for boys and girls, aged 3 to 11, situated in Little Hulton, Salford. There are 188 pupils on roll, including 15 children in the Nursery. The ethnic background of the pupils is largely white with United Kingdom heritage, with a small number having black or Chinese heritages. Six pupils have English as an additional language; the major languages spoken by these pupils include Tamil, Czech and Cantonese. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Both the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and the proportion with statements of special needs is average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes moderate learning difficulties, autism and speech difficulties. Pupil mobility is relatively high; for example, approximately one third of the pupils aged eleven who took their national tests in 2001 joined the school after the age of seven. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards for pupils currently aged eleven are in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve well. The overall quality of teaching is good, and leadership and management are very good.

The school is providing good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged eleven broadly match national standards; pupils achieve well.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; relationships are very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.
- The school cares well for pupils' personal development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

#### **What could be improved**

- The time allocation for history, geography and art is below that found in many schools; some English and mathematics lessons are too long.
- Provision for pupils having English as an additional language is inadequate on some occasions.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Standards at the end of the Junior phase have risen in reading, writing, the use and application of mathematics, investigative science, design and technology and in information and communication technology. In other areas, standards have been maintained, except in music where they are in line with national expectations rather than above them. The key issue to develop schemes of work has been implemented, except in music. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has been suitably developed. Assessment procedures have improved appropriately overall. Pupils take now responsibility for the presentation of their work. The overall quality of teaching has improved. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	C	D	B
mathematics	C	A	D	B
science	C	A	C	B

**Key**

well above average      A

above average          B

average                  C

below average          D

well below average      E

In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, pupils' attainment was below national averages in English and mathematics. Pupils' performance in science matched national standards. Compared with schools of a similar type, pupils' results were above average in English, mathematics and science. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 taken together, pupils have left St Edmund's half a term behind pupils nationally in English, and nearly half a term ahead in mathematics and science. The results at the end of the Junior phase, up to 2001, rose at a faster rate than results nationally. The school's targets are appropriately ambitious.

Standards for pupils aged seven in 2001 were above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared to that of pupils in schools of a similar type, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 taken together, pupils have left the Infant phase approximately half a term ahead of pupils nationally in reading and writing and in line with national standards in mathematics.

In the work seen during the inspection, standards for pupils aged eleven were in line with the national averages in English, science and mathematics. Standards for pupils aged seven matched national averages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The attainment of pupils aged seven and eleven, in design and technology, information and communication technology, geography, history, physical education, art and design and music, met national expectations. The majority of children aged five will not meet the majority of the Early Learning Goals, despite their good progress. This reflects their low attainment on entry to the school. (The Early Learning Goals are the nationally expected standards for children at the end of the Foundation Stage).

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards at this school are sufficiently high.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classrooms, is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good; relationships are very good.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is good; it is above the national average and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school; this is borne out by their rates of attendance.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. Strengths in teaching include teachers' expectations, which are generally good and sometimes very good. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. The school meets the needs of all its pupils appropriately. Pupils generally want to learn; they are most aware of what they have learned when teachers share the purpose of the lesson at the beginning of the session, and check whether this has been fulfilled at the end.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is inadequate; the school has requested further support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is very good, and for their moral and cultural development, it is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils.

The school tries its best to work well with parents; unfortunately, few parents are able to help in school. Provision for extra-curricular activities is currently good. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. The school cares well for pupils' personal development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and senior management team are very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' fulfilment of their responsibilities is good. The chairman of governors is a charismatic figure who visits the school regularly on an informal basis and enthuses the pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is good.

The strategic use of resources	The school's strategic use of resources is good.
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The levels of staffing and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The accommodation benefits from extensive playing fields; in other areas, it is only satisfactory, but the school makes the very best use of it. The accommodation is well maintained by the diligent school caretaker and cleaners. Displays enhance classroom environments. The school secretaries are both very efficient and helpful. Support staff work well with the teachers on behalf of the pupils, but are few in number. Welfare assistants and catering staff fulfil their roles well.

A particular strength in leadership and management is the vision of the headteacher.

The school spends its money wisely; finances are tightly controlled.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• School expects their children to work hard.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like to see a greater range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Some parents would like school to work more closely with them.</li> <li>• Some parents are not happy with the overall level of homework; some would like more and some less.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views; it finds that the range of extra-curricular activities is currently good, levels of homework are satisfactory and that the school tries to work effectively with parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. St Edmund's has a relatively high mobility. For example, approximately one third of the pupils who sat their end of Junior phase national tests in 2001 joined the school during the Junior phase. This needs to be borne in mind when reading about the school's overall results.
2. **Shortly after children enter the Foundation Stage in Reception**, they are assessed to see what they know, understand and can do; social and physical skills are also noted. This is known as the baseline test. The intake in 2001 was judged to be well below average. An analysis of previous intakes shows this to be broadly typical.
3. **By the age of five, near to the end of their time in Reception**, children are again assessed against national standards known as the Early Learning Goals. The majority of the children currently in Reception are not yet attaining the majority of these goals.
4. **At the age of seven, close to the end of their time in Year 2**, pupils take the end of Infant phase national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils who sat these tests in 2001 obtained levels that were above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment when compared to schools of a similar type was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Those who took the tests in 2000 attained standards that were below average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. Taking the results over the last three years from 1999 to 2001, averaged together, pupils' performance has been approximately half a term ahead of national averages in reading and writing, and in line with national averages in mathematics. In all three subject areas, boys have performed slightly better than girls.
5. **Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 2, who take their national tests in May, 2002, are reaching average standards in writing, mathematics and science, and in reading.** Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history, music, design and technology and physical education meet national expectations.
6. **By the age of eleven, near to the end of Year 6**, pupils take the end of Junior phase national tests in English, science and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 2001 tests in terms of national curriculum points scores was below average in English and mathematics, and in line with the national average in science. It was above average in English, mathematics and science, when compared with the performance of pupils in schools of a similar type. Taking the three years from 1999 to 2001 together, pupils have left the Junior phase half a term behind pupils nationally in English, and nearly half a term ahead in mathematics and science. If we consider those pupils who took their end of Infant phase tests in 1997 at St Edmund's and who then went on to sit the end of Junior phase tests in 2001, the results show that pupils have made satisfactory progress overall.
7. **Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 6** are working at average standards in English, mathematics and science. Both the quality and quantity of work in their books show that they have made good progress over the last twelve months in all

three subjects. As with pupils lower down the school, standards in information and communications technology, physical education, art and design, history, geography, music and design and technology meet national expectations.

8. **The allocation of time for some subjects** in the curriculum, notably history, geography and art and design, is insufficient, resulting in inadequate breadth of coverage. It is clear that the parts of these subjects which are covered, are covered well.
9. **Literacy and numeracy standards** meet national requirements The school has given a major thrust to raising standards in these core subjects, providing brief extra sessions on guided reading, mental mathematics and guided writing. These sessions are very effective in raising standards. At times, however, some of the actual literacy and numeracy sessions are over-long, and do not always maximise learning.
10. **Since the last inspection**, standards have risen at the end of the Junior phase in reading, writing, the use and application of mathematics, investigative science, design and in information and communication technology. In other areas, standards have been maintained, except in music where they are in line with national expectations rather than above them.
11. **Pupils with special educational needs** make good progress; they are helped in this by their individual educational plans, which contain appropriately focused targets.
12. **Pupils who have English as an additional language** make satisfactory progress, overall, but would benefit from additional support, particularly in their early days at school. Nonetheless, the school does its best to include all pupils.
13. **Pupils are generally achieving well**, considering their prior attainments.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Relationships with other pupils and with all adults who work in the school are very good. Such positive attitudes make a good contribution to pupils' learning, and help to create a calm atmosphere within the school.
15. The welcoming and pleasant atmosphere in the Nursery and Reception classes helps less confident children to overcome their reticence and they are soon involved in the activities prepared for them. They learn to share equipment, take their turn and are developing good relationships with other children and with adults. These good attitudes to learning were seen when Reception children engaged in imaginative play when setting up a doctor's surgery. The care and concern shown to the "patient" was a reflection of that shown to them during their days in school.
16. From the youngest upwards, pupils like attending school and arrive happily in the morning. They are keen to chat with staff about events that are important to them, and are also enthusiastic about taking part in the variety of extra-curricular activities that are available. They proudly show off any work on display and are pleased to receive house points, certificates and stickers as a mark of praise for those who work hard and behave well. Most pupils settle well, show interest at the beginning of lessons and set to work with a will. However, a small number of pupils find it difficult to sustain their concentration for long periods, and their attention begins to wander.

This happens occasionally when lessons lack pace and challenge or go on for too long. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic about school. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to each other and to the adults working with them. Most contribute readily in lessons, and enjoy being involved in the activities with other pupils in a fully inclusive learning environment.

17. There is a civilised and orderly environment in the school and this reflects the good standards of behaviour which are found there. Most pupils behave well and respond positively to the school's high expectations; occasionally some pupils, particularly in Year 4, do not behave appropriately. These pupils have received appropriate support. Pupils move around the building in an orderly manner and behave well in assemblies, entering the hall very quietly and waiting patiently for others to arrive. In the playground, pupils generally play well together. They are polite and helpful to adults as confirmed when they go on visits out of school. The orderly behaviour which predominates makes a good contribution to learning in the classroom. Year 6 pupils behaved well in a mathematics lesson when they learned how to calculate percentages. Ideas flowed between the teacher and pupils and as a result, they made good progress. Any incidents of bullying or unkind behaviour are dealt with well when reported, and there have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
18. Relationships are very good throughout the school, between pupils of different ages, ethnicity and attainment, and also between pupils and staff. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and to recognise that their actions affect others. They respond well to the opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of the school community. School council members are positive role models for others. They take their duties seriously when following up decisions made at their meetings. For example, they took responsibility for the appointment of the playground "buddies", after inviting pupils to set out their reasons for applying for the positions. There are opportunities to become house captains and monitors and pupils confirm that they regard these as a privilege. Attendance at the school is now good, it is above the national average, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is low. Pupils enjoy school because teachers make lessons interesting and they want to learn. Most pupils arrive at school on time, ensuring that lessons get off to a good start.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

19. The overall quality of teaching is good; St Edmund's is fortunate to have a dedicated team of teachers. Overall, teaching in the lessons seen was good in the Foundation stage, Infant phase and Junior phase. In all lessons observed except one, teaching was at least satisfactory. Overall, it was satisfactory in twenty per cent of lessons, good in fifty four per cent, very good in nineteen per cent and excellent in five per cent. Whilst good or better teaching was seen in every class in the school, the greatest concentrations of top quality teaching were seen in Years 2, 5 and 6.
20. The biggest strengths in teaching include the helpful manner in which some teachers share the learning objectives for lessons with their pupils, the way in which they manage their pupils, which is good throughout the school, and their generally high expectations.
21. Teachers know their pupils well. Pupils are aware of what is expected from them in terms of behaviour, and respond appropriately. In an excellent numeracy lesson for pupils in the Infant phase, in which the teacher showed excellent class management,

the pupils' response mirrored this and they showed very great enjoyment when working out the total price of different menus in a café. The learning about money that these pupils made was excellent. In a very good English lesson on sustained use of the present tense and the passive voice for pupils in Year 5, the pupils' attitudes were very good indeed, reflecting the superb class management. On the other hand, in the unsatisfactory lesson in the Junior phase, the teacher allowed pupils to carry on talking while she was teaching; this did not help pupils' learning. Classroom support assistants throughout the school make a most valuable contribution to pupils' learning, but at times, there are too few of them to provide the necessary support. Support for the under-fives is very good.

22. The pace of lessons is good through the school overall. In the best lessons, pupils are reminded of the time limits on an exercise, as in a very good numeracy lesson on fractions in the Junior phase.
23. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are well taught. Lessons generally start with productive question and answer sessions, to revise previous work and set pupils thinking about the work they are to do. For example, in a very good literacy lesson for pupils in Year 6, which was on the subject of the grammatical features of different types of text, the teacher asked searching questions that thoroughly assessed pupils' understanding.
24. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good in all subject areas. The teacher of the Year 3 class has great expertise in information and communication technology, and by spreading this to other staff, he has made a positive impact on pupils' learning in this subject throughout the school.
25. In the Infant phase and the Junior phase, day-to-day marking of pupils' work is good. It is generally thorough, with appropriate comments to praise pupils' efforts, particularly in Years 2, 5 and 6. Lessons generally have clear learning objectives and these are looked at again at the end of lessons, to see how far they have been met; this good practice is not, however, uniform throughout the school. Many lessons end with a worthwhile oral question and answer session, as in the majority of literacy and numeracy lessons. The use of homework is satisfactory overall; it is particularly effective in Year 2, where strenuous efforts are being made to inform parents of how they can help their children to work at home.
26. All teachers are familiar with the new Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are identified as soon as possible in the Nursery and Reception class, or when they begin at the school part way through their primary education. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the teacher discuss the pupil's individual education plan based on targets that need to be worked on. Long-term plans and short-term targets are shared with pupils. Short steps are essential to enable pupils to realise that progress is being made. Class teachers work hard to help special educational needs pupils make progress and receive good help from all support staff.
27. There is insufficient help available for pupils who are just beginning to learn English as an additional language. Teachers try their best to help these pupils but more specialist help is required. The local authority provides two part-time learning support assistants to give specific help to pupils with English as an additional language.
28. Standards of teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. At that time, only one in twenty lessons were judged to be very good or better; that has now

risen to around one in four lessons. Teaching in the Junior phase has improved considerably, particularly for the pupils in the upper Juniors. Teachers' marking has improved through the school.

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

29. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning experiences, which meet statutory requirements. There is a particular focus on literacy and numeracy. The school allocates ten per cent of time to the teaching of religious education. This fulfils the requirements of the Diocese and reflects the school's Catholic ethos. Since the last inspection, the school has revised its planning procedures. In all subjects except music, appropriate schemes of work have been implemented. These promote the systematic development of skills, as pupils move from class to class. Those parts of the curriculum involving the use and application of mathematics and scientific enquiry have been developed significantly. As a result, achievement in these areas is beginning to improve. There is, however, a weakness in the balance of the curriculum. The allocation of time given to art and design, geography and history is less than that found in many schools. This results in insufficient coverage of parts of the curriculum and hinders overall progress. Time is not used efficiently in the overlong literacy and numeracy sessions. The pace of learning slows when, for instance, an hour's lesson is stretched to fill a longer period.
30. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is appropriately planned to support the children's progress towards the nationally agreed early learning goals. The special attention given to personal, social and emotional development enables children to achieve very well in this area. The introduction of suitable elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, during the Reception year, prepares children for the next stage of education in Year 1.
31. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided. After school clubs include a range of sports, information and communication technology and drama, as well as study support. Year 6 pupils enjoy an annual residential visit. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of well-planned educational visits. Visitors provide personal insights, for instance, in history and contribute to the pupils' achievement through music, science and drama workshops. Lessons by visiting specialists provide good opportunities for some pupils to learn to play a musical instrument.
32. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. Diocesan guidance is followed on the teaching of sex education and support from the local education authority is used to provide an appropriate programme of drugs and health education. Relationships throughout the school are very good and there are good instances of Circle Time<sup>1</sup> being used very well in some classes to promote personal and social skills. A whole-school policy and scheme of work to promote personal, social and health education are in preparation, but are not fully in place, and skills are not yet developed systematically as pupils move from class to class.
33. The school has developed good links with the community, which enrich school life. Links with the parish of St Edmund's are especially beneficial. The parish priest, as

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<sup>1</sup> During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

chairman of the governors, is a familiar figure in school, and parishioners also make a very positive contribution to the children's education, providing, for example, first-hand information about local history or geography, and preparing the sacramental programme for pupils in Year 3. Pupils learn to feel part of the parish community by attending festivals, contributing to charities, and distributing harvest gifts. Effective use is made of the locality for educational visits, including a visit to the post office. Governors are currently investigating the possibility of sponsorship from local business.

34. The school has effective links with other primary schools in the area, with the Roman Catholic high school and with local colleges. These promote the sharing of expertise through joint in-service training and through curriculum liaison. Transfer arrangements at age 11 are sensitively handled through good social and academic liaison.
35. Since the last report, the school has improved its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall provision is now very good and is a significant strength. The school lives up to its mission statement in being a 'living, worshipping and caring community'.
36. Provision for spiritual development is very good. The school reflects the Catholic ethos of its foundation. A short period of carefully organised prayer and quiet reflection promotes a calm, supportive atmosphere in each class at the beginning of every session. All staff are skilled in establishing appropriate foci for meditation, which help the pupils to think about their own place in God's world. Spiritual growth is further developed by the prayer focus in each classroom and in the displays throughout the school, which remind pupils of God's care. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to consider the nature of worship. With help from the priest, all pupils in the Junior phase organise their own class masses each half term. In class, staff are sensitive in encouraging pupils to experience wonder at the world around them, as when observing the intricate patterns on a butterfly's wing or in realising the power of electricity in lighting a bulb.
37. Provision for moral development is good. The school's agreed code of conduct is prominently displayed around the school, and is consistently and positively reinforced by all staff. Consequently pupils know what is expected of them, and try their best to conform. Stories, including those from the Bible, are used effectively in assembly to explore moral issues. In subjects like literacy, geography and history, pupils are taught to see both sides of an argument, as well as learning about specific issues such as pollution. They are encouraged to take a positive role in looking after the environment. Pupils learn to help and care for people less fortunate than themselves in collecting for charities.
38. The school makes very good provision for social development. All adults provide very good role models and take care to promote friendly and co-operative relationships. Many opportunities for pupils to work together in teams are provided, for instance, through the house system, or through collaborative groupwork in class. The recently introduced Buddy System and School Council encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own well-being and to care for others, especially at break and lunchtime. All pupils, in turn, are expected to carry out minor administrative tasks as monitors in class. Older pupils are encouraged to take pride in the school and to compete fairly as representatives on school sports teams. The annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6 supports their growing independence, as well as enabling pupils to get on together in a less formal setting.



39. The school makes good provision for its pupils' cultural development. First-hand experiences, like visits to museums such as Lark Hill Place, are used very well to help pupils appreciate their heritage. The choice of materials used in the literacy hour enables pupils to appreciate a wide range of literature, from Dickens and Shakespeare to modern authors. The works of famous artists and composers are used to reflect western cultures well. Pupils' knowledge of other cultures has been improved since the last inspection. A good range of library books, including traditional tales from Britain and around the world, and up-to-date non-fiction accounts of life in countries such as Bosnia are increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Studies of societies as diverse as the Ancient Egyptians and the Victorians provide good insights into how events in the past affect life today. Consideration of other religions such as Judaism, including a visit to a synagogue and the observation of Holocaust Day, is raising pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own. A range of workshops and visitors including the Poet in Residence from the Lowry Centre, and workshops, for instance, on Chinese Dance, also effectively broaden the pupils' cultural experience.
40. All pupils have access to the curriculum and this is a good feature of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, so that they can work alongside their peers to take advantage of the curriculum offered. Provision for pupils with statements is good. When necessary, the curriculum is carefully adapted to their needs so that their individual education plans are met. The school moves quickly to take effective action when there is a need. Until the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is brought up to the same standard, they will be unable to understand some areas of the curriculum.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of pupils are good. Members of staff work together well to create a nurturing environment in which pupils grow in confidence within the "family" of St. Edmund's school. By listening to pupils and showing them that they are valued, through their high expectations of behaviour and consistent application of rewards and sanctions, teachers ensure that their pupils are growing into effective learners. All these features are an improvement since the last inspection.
42. The school's procedures to ensure health and safety and child protection are clear and effective. The school follows local guidelines for child protection, and the designated teacher ensures that all staff are fully aware of the procedures to follow if they have a concern. There is a detailed health and safety policy, which outlines the responsibilities of all who work in the school. The health and safety governor works closely with the co-ordinator, to ensure that pupils work and play in a safe environment. Despite the age and condition of the building, the caretaker keeps the school very clean. He is observant on a daily basis and documents any concerns in his weekly reviews. Risk assessments take place and issues raised are reported to the governing body. The local authority is due to conduct a whole school health and safety audit. Two members of staff are fully qualified to administer first aid, and the headteacher is organising training in emergency first aid procedures for all staff.
43. The procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are good and an improvement since the last inspection. Parents value the way the school has strengthened the procedures to promote discipline and good behaviour. Staff work hard to promote good behaviour and are consistent in their praise and encouragement for work well done. House points are

given for effort, work and behaviour, and teams vie with each other to win the weekly cup. The procedures for dealing with incidents of unkind or inappropriate behaviour are good. Year 6 pupils confirmed that when they do occur, they are dealt with well. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and successful, as seen in the current high attendance rate of pupils. Parents confirm that pupils enjoy school, are enthusiastic about their learning, and want to attend regularly.

44. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory, with room for improvement. There is no whole school formalised programme of personal and social development that allows the school to monitor progress from one year to the next. It is left to teachers to deliver topics as and when they consider it relevant, and to monitor progress on an informal basis. The school has plans to develop a programme of activities to include citizenship, as seen in the school development plan. Sex education is included in science and the "Education in Personal Relationships" programme. Older pupils have discrete lessons on puberty. Teachers do record their comments on personal development in the annual reports to parents on pupils' progress, and these show that they know pupils very well.
45. The assessment of pupils' work and its use to plan future work is satisfactory overall, but could be better in art and music, in particular. Progress in this area has been made since the last inspection, and some effective tracking is now taking place in English, and to a lesser extent, in mathematics. The school uses the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 appropriately, but the tracking of pupils' academic progress, particularly in mathematics and science, could be improved.
46. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. Initial assessment is quickly followed up by individual education plans for pupils to tailor learning and provision to the pupils' needs, using whatever support is required. Regular reviews ensure that pupils are making progress and developing in their learning. There are good working relationships with outside agencies. The school is trying as much as possible to give support to pupils who are studying English as an additional language.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

47. Parents view the school as a good school that is helping their children to be mature and responsible. Most parents view the school as successful, and one which their children enjoy attending. The information that parents receive has shown an improvement since the last inspection, and they now consider that the headteacher and staff are approachable and will deal with any concerns they may have. However, they have yet to be fully involved in the life of the school, and whilst links with parents are satisfactory, they have yet to have a full impact on pupils' learning.
48. The parents' questionnaire indicates that parents are generally satisfied with the education that the school provides. A few parents expressed concerns about the amount of homework which children receive and the range of extra-curricular activities, but inspection findings are that homework is satisfactory and the range of extra-curricular activities is good. The information which parents receive is good and an improvement since the last inspection. The prospectus is informative and is currently being updated to include illustrations. Many letters go home informing parents about events and activities taking place within the school. Parents receive information about what their children are learning, and a range of information leaflets to support this, such as the "Maths at home" booklet. Parents can also borrow maths games to help their children's learning. End-of-year reports on pupils'

progress are satisfactory. Some comments by teachers give specific information on achievement in subjects, but others are not quite so detailed. Targets for future development are set out, but these are not always in user-friendly language. Parents are invited into school to receive information on the tests that pupils take in Year 2 and Year 6.

49. Parental involvement in the life of the school is satisfactory. The school reaches out to parents, but not always with the success it would like. A small number of parents help regularly in the school; for example, a parent and a governor have organised the loan of mathematics games from the library and some parents help at coffee mornings. Not all parents help with homework and listen to children read at home. The school offers three consultation evenings each year, and teachers make themselves available before and after school. The headteacher is a visible presence in the playground each morning, and parents can speak to her on an informal basis. Workshops have been held on literacy and numeracy, and some parents have attended computer classes held in school. Children who are starting in Nursery or Reception have a good induction course, which includes their parents. Although there is no parent-teacher association, the school holds coffee mornings for parents and organises sponsored events to raise funds for the school. All these initiatives have yet to have an impact on children's learning, because not all parents take advantage of them. The headteacher is considering new ways of involving parents in order to make the links with them more effective.
50. As far as possible the school establishes close relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are always invited to reviews of statements and individual education plans, and an increasing number now accept the invitation.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

51. The leadership and management by the headteacher are very good, in both the academic and pastoral spheres. The headteacher is very hard working, self-effacing, committed and able, and she knows just how she wants the school to develop. Her leadership ensures clear educational direction for the school, and she is fully backed by the governing body. The headteacher wants the best for her pupils. The school's aims and mission statement are easily seen in the daily routines of the school, although, following discussions with staff, governors, parents and children, both are due to be re-drafted shortly. The senior management team, which includes the co-ordinators for the Infant phase, the Junior phase, the ICT co-ordinator and the special educational needs co-ordinator, is very competent. Although the school has no deputy headteacher, the role is ably filled by the senior teacher. The subject co-ordinators manage their subjects appropriately, monitoring planning and marking, although they are not yet all involved in the monitoring of teaching in their subjects. This is an area identified for development in the school improvement plan, but is already carried out by the co-ordinators for English and mathematics. The headteacher has monitored teaching throughout the school and has provided all staff with both verbal and detailed written feedback. Co-ordinators monitor the planning of their subjects and marking across the school.
52. The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is good. The governors want the best for the school and are determined that it should continue to succeed. Their role in helping to shape the educational direction of the school is good. Governors visit the school regularly, and have monitored the implementation of some areas appropriately, particularly literacy and special educational needs. The

governing body has a good understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. The chairman of governors, who is the local parish priest, is most enthusiastic; his enthusiasm has a very positive impact on both staff and pupils.

53. The school's targets are appropriate and sufficiently ambitious. Pupil mobility has had an adverse effect on recent results, but inspection evidence and provisional test results suggest that the targets for 2002 in English, mathematics and science should nearly be met. The school's targets for 2003 look on course to be met. The school has a good capacity to succeed.
54. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. The recently appointed teacher in Year 5 has been appropriately mentored by the Junior phase co-ordinator. Appropriate policies and plans are in place for checking the effectiveness of teachers.
55. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is currently satisfactory. However, in some lessons, there are insufficient support staff for both general support and support of those pupils having English as an additional language. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, and is very well maintained; the school makes the best use it can of what it has been provided with. Classrooms have attractive displays. Resources are generally satisfactory in quality and quantity, and are good in English.
56. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is good. The school secretaries help ensure that the school runs smoothly. Finances are handled well, and the school applies the principles of best value very well. Specific grants are used appropriately. The school development plan is a most useful working document that clearly prioritises the school's needs.
57. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well organised. She provides very good leadership in special educational needs, working closely with teachers to provide the best possible service. She has established good links with all staff and support services. There is a link governor who takes a particular interest in pupils with special educational needs. Unfortunately, the local education authority has not been able to respond to the co-ordinator's request for extra help for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
58. Leadership and management have improved appropriately since the time of the last inspection.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

59. In order to further improve the school, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:-

- revise the time allocation for history, geography, music and art and design and for some literacy and numeracy sessions;  
(paras 8, 9, 29, 90, 95, 114,125)
- improve the provision for pupils having English as an additional language.  
(paras 25, 40, 88, 99,114 )

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	10	31	12	1	0	0
Percentage	5	18	54	21	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	173
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	35

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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 2)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	11	15	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	25	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (91)	96 (96)	96 (87)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (96)	96 (87)	100 (96)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	13
	Girls	10	10	12
	Total	19	18	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (85)	62 (90)	86 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	13
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	21	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (75)	79 (80)	90 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	151
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	24.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	411,005
Total expenditure	401,425
Expenditure per pupil	2,035
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,573
Balance carried forward to next year	18,153

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.0

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	187
Number of questionnaires returned	81

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	27	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	59	41	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	47	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	31	14	5	3
The teaching is good.	64	33	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	33	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	26	4	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	23	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	46	37	14	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	30	10	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	42	23	10	12

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

60. As at the time of the last inspection, the school makes satisfactory provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
61. Children start Nursery in the September of the school year in which they become four years old. They transfer to the Reception class in the September before they are five. Currently there are 15 pupils on roll in the Nursery, and 19 children in the Reception class. All attend full time. Each class is taught by one teacher and one Nursery nurse.
62. Careful admission procedures initiate good links between school and home. There is appropriate liaison between Nursery and Reception staff in planning the curriculum for the Foundation Stage.
63. The curriculum follows the nationally recommended curriculum for children of this age. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *Stepping-Stones*, from which progress and standards can be measured.
64. Whilst attainment on entry to compulsory education varies from year to year, local authority tests indicate that standards over the last three years have been below those expected of this age group. Assessments made soon after the current Reception children started in the Nursery indicate that attainment was very low. Further tests on entry to the Reception class show that whilst there had been good improvements, overall standards were still well below those of most schools. Due to good teaching and an appropriate curriculum in the Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children achieve well, although a high proportion are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in five out of the six areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. The very good teaching of personal and social skills enables children to achieve very well in this area, and the majority are well placed to meet the relevant early learning goals. Children with special educational needs are identified early and supported effectively so that they make good progress. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
65. Assessment is carried out conscientiously through observation of children at work. There are some good instances of the information gained being used to plan work and set targets in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. In other areas, assessment information is not used consistently to focus planning on the specific needs of pupils.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall. There are particular strengths in the high quality teamwork between the teachers and the Nursery nurses, and in the use of play to promote learning. All staff use their secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children to plan interesting practical experiences which enable the children to achieve well. Staff, especially in the Nursery, use everyday, incidental opportunities to promote personal, social, mathematical and linguistic skills, as well as teaching groups of children in more focused sessions. In some

areas of learning, teachers' planning is not focused clearly enough on the appropriate *Stepping-Stones* to provide the small steps in learning which systematically promote progress.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

67. Children in the Reception class are working within the fourth *Stepping-Stone*. Children enjoy coming to school and leave their carers confidently. They become increasingly independent in selecting activities and, as they get older, gradually extend their concentration spans to persevere with challenging tasks. Nursery children respond very well to carefully established routines. With adult help, they take turns in tabletop games, and share responsibility at snack time. Most Nursery children play alongside others, with just a few higher attaining children linking up to work together. In the Reception class, children show curiosity and independence in tackling a range of activities, both indoors and out. In the home corner, they co-operate and share with some sensitivity to the needs of others. In physical education, they work collaboratively in pairs to throw and catch bean bags. Almost all Reception children respond thoughtfully at prayer time.
68. Teaching and learning are very good. All adults establish caring and supportive relationships so that the children feel welcome and secure. Staff value the children's ideas and efforts, and use praise and encouragement effectively to raise self-esteem. Expectations of appropriate behaviour are made clear and consistently reinforced in positive ways. Consequently, the children know the boundaries set, and learn to become responsible members of the school community.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

69. The majority of the Reception children are working towards the third *Stepping-Stone*. Nursery children listen attentively in small groups. Most are enthusiastic and confident in communicating with adults and with others. They use simple sentences and gestures to make their intentions clear. Most are beginning to recognise their own name in print, and higher attaining children know the initial letter of their name by shape and sound. They are beginning to copy and, with difficulty, trace their name. In the Reception class, children listen with interest to their peers and to adults in class discussions, but few are sufficiently confident to ask purposeful questions. At 'news' time, they contribute short sentences such as, 'I went to the park'. Most Reception children know which letters represent which sounds, and recognise familiar words like the names of the characters in the first reading books. They use letter shapes in their own writing, frequently getting the initial sound of a word correct.
70. Teaching and learning are good. The Reception teacher skilfully adapts the National Literacy Strategy to meet the children's needs, using plenary sessions effectively to consolidate learning. Lessons in the Reception class are planned with clear focus on the systematic development of skills. Appropriate emphasis throughout the Foundation Stage is given to the development of speaking and listening skills. Teachers use questions purposefully to extend the children's use of spoken language. Higher attaining children are not always fully challenged; for instance, when they have finished their work quickly they sometimes spend too long on unstructured tasks, such as colouring or home play, which do not fully meet their needs. This is as a result of shortcomings in planning.

## Mathematical development

71. Most children in the Reception class are working within the third *Stepping-Stone*. All children in the Foundation Stage enjoy sorting, matching and counting. Following the adult's lead, they join enthusiastically in number action rhymes, which involve reciting numbers to five or counting objects or fingers practically. Higher attaining Nursery children recognise numerals to six on a dice or jigsaw, although only a few are consistently correct when counting one-to-one. They respond to mathematical language like *long* and *short*, but do not use this independently. In the Reception class, most children are just beginning to recite to 100 as the teacher points to the number on a 100-square. They count forwards and backwards to ten, moving with confidence along a number line. Higher attaining children count on accurately to find one or two more, but become confused when trying to find one or two less. A few lower attaining Reception children are not yet accurate in matching one-to-one or consistently recognising numerals to five. Most recognise two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, circles and triangles, confidently.
72. Teaching and learning are good. Staff plan clearly-focused practical play activities which are structured to promote learning and which are fun. This motivates the children to work hard and try their best. In the Reception class, elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are used to good effect. Lessons proceed at a lively pace. Good use is made of information and communication technology to consolidate mathematical skills.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Most children in the Reception class are working towards the third *Stepping-Stone*. All Nursery children are curious and interested in the world around them. In the Nursery, children observe the changes in growing things when watching the bulbs they have planted produce daffodils. They are learning to look after plants and grow cress from seeds by constant watering. Some children expect immediate growth and are disappointed when the first watering does not produce this. Good opportunities are provided for Reception children to develop their skills of close observation, using magnifiers to look carefully at eggs on a leaf. They show awareness of change in considering the life cycle of a butterfly and marvel at the patterns on butterfly wings. Almost all are competent at using the computer to support their learning. They use the mouse skilfully to move objects on screen.
74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Appropriate use is made of the outdoor areas to promote learning. The children benefit from the provision of first-hand practical experiences, which enable them to explore with their senses. Resources are well prepared and accessible. Planning is often not sufficiently focused, with too much emphasis on the activity itself and not enough thought given to exactly what the children are to learn. Not enough use is made of the *Stepping-Stones* to set systematic targets for learning.

## Physical development

75. Most Reception children are working at the third *Stepping-Stone* but in some activities involving gross motor control, many pupils are approaching the fourth *Stepping-Stone*. Nursery children are confident in controlling large wheeled vehicles. They negotiate space in spontaneous racing or chasing games. Children in the Reception class use space with an awareness of others. They co-ordinate their movements to run, skip, jump and hop with energy. They are becoming increasingly adept at catching and throwing beanbags and concentrate hard to aim at a target.

When exploring malleable materials they pat, squeeze and pull and pinch to complete a set task, like forming letter shapes. All pupils demonstrate increasing control over tools like pencils, paintbrushes and glue spreaders as they move through the Foundation Stage.

76. Teaching and learning are good and activities are well organised to allow pupils to enjoy space in safety. Staff manage children very well with praise and encouragement, which builds up confidence and increases their effort. Teachers themselves provide clear demonstrations or choose children to show good practice. This makes sure the children know exactly what to do and can concentrate their efforts on improving their skills. In the Nursery, planning for outdoor play does not always concentrate enough on exactly what is to be learnt, and higher attaining children are not always fully challenged.

### **Creative development**

77. Most Reception children are working at the third *Stepping-Stone*. In the Nursery, children play out familiar situations, like making a cup of tea in the home corner. When working with an adult to build a home for dinosaurs, they stack wooden bricks vertically and horizontally to make enclosures and create spaces. They show some imagination in responding to an action rhyme. They curl up tightly to 'be' a daffodil in a bulb and grow up *straight* and *tall* in response to *sunshine* and *rainfall*. In the Reception class, children develop role-play in the *doctor's surgery*. When given the choice, children select materials for their own purpose. Reception children explore techniques such as splatter painting, bubble printing and rag rolling.
78. Teaching is satisfactory. Staff provide an interesting range of creative activities which enable children to explore different media. All adults are encouraging and respect the pupils' efforts. Care is taken to display the children's work attractively, so that they take a pride in what they have done. However, tasks are sometimes over-directed, and children are not encouraged to use their own ideas or mix their own colours, for instance, when making caterpillars from egg boxes, or painting butterflies.

### **ENGLISH**

79. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the ages of seven and eleven, the pupils' attainment in English matches the standards attained by pupils of a similar age nationally. This is a similar result to that found at the previous inspection.
80. The 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in reading and writing was above the national average, and well above average when compared to that of pupils in similar schools. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 taken together, pupils have left the Infant phase approximately half a term ahead of pupils nationally in reading and writing.
81. The 2001 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that the pupils' achievement in English was below the national average, but above the average for similar schools. Over the three years from 1999 to 2001 taken together, pupils have left St Edmunds half a term behind pupils nationally. The difference in the 2001 results and the standards of attainment seen during the inspection can be explained by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2, and the

very good teaching and extra effort by the pupils in the upper Junior classes. Pupil mobility is an additional factor. However, given the well below average attainment on entry to the school, the pupils' achievements are good. The school's targets are appropriately ambitious.

82. Standards of listening among most Year 2 pupils are good. The majority of pupils listen closely to the teacher's instructions, and respond promptly to questions, showing that they have followed what is being said. They concentrate hard and follow explanations of their tasks, retaining what they have been told and then translating this into action for learning. However, there are a number of pupils who find it very difficult to sustain their concentration for any length of time. In the lesson observed during the inspection, the teacher asked abundant questions, giving many pupils the opportunity to answer. Pupils co-operated well to prepare conversations, which they read out to the whole class. These activities helped pupils to develop their speaking skills.
83. Listening develops well in the Junior phase, although pupils make the best gains at the upper end of the school. In these classes, pupils listen closely to the teacher and to other pupils, often through lengthy explanations, during which they concentrate well. In Year 4, where there is a large group of pupils with special educational needs, the pupils' listening skills are not progressing at a satisfactory rate, and pupils in this class do not reach the expected standard for their age. By the age of eleven, most pupils are confident when answering in class. Because of their good listening, they know about the topic under discussion. They speak clearly and audibly, and many add to the ideas of others in a constructive and purposeful way. At the end of lessons, they share their learning with the remainder of the class. For example, one girl had visited the Lowry building, and described the building and the facilities available to the whole class with confidence. This led to an interesting discussion about how local authorities decide which areas of a town need to be regenerated.
84. Pupils with special educational needs show levels of confidence similar to their peers' when speaking in class. The teachers' high expectations of their contribution ensure that they feel valued equally, and on a par with their peers. They make good progress. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language still find conversation very difficult, but they try hard and listen well. The ability to speak formally for an extended length of time could be developed for many pupils, who do not have enough planned opportunity for this kind of speaking.
85. The school has worked hard to improve the pupils' attainment in reading. By the age of seven, most pupils read simple texts accurately and with understanding. They express views about ideas and major events in stories, poems and non-fiction texts. They use more than one strategy to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning. The progress of pupils in reading is regularly assessed throughout the school. The use of graded reading schemes is beneficial in ensuring good progression in pupils' skills, and teachers are always ready to move pupils on to the next stage of their reading. Pupils are taught library skills at an early age. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning. By the age of eleven, most pupils show understanding of significant ideas, themes, events and characters in a range of texts. One girl in Year 6 read 'The Goblet of Fire' from the Harry Potter series and could retell the story in detail with obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment. The school has invested heavily in very good materials to help stimulate pupils' interest in reading. The school library has been reorganised, and a large number of non-fiction books are on order to add to the good range of fiction books already available. Pupils are encouraged to take their reading books home each night to read to their parents. Many parents give good

support to their children in this way. A number of pupils of all ages belong to the local libraries and read an increasingly wide range of non-fiction books for pleasure. Pupils' interest in reading is further stimulated by two book fairs each year, when pupils look forward to the opportunity to buy books for themselves.

86. At the age of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in writing is as expected nationally but well above that found in most similar schools. By the end of Year 2, the writing skills of many pupils are developing well. Pupils are neat writers whose spelling is as expected for their age because of the good emphasis that the teachers place on spelling and their own skills at sounding out words. They have a good knowledge of how to write for different purposes, because they apply their writing skills to other subjects. For example, they write an account of their visit to The Salford Museum in history and write a list of instructions on how to make toast as part of their studies in design and technology.
87. Standards of writing have improved by the age of eleven. Pupils' handwriting is well formed and neat. Standards of written presentation are good, demonstrating the pride that the majority of pupils take in their work. Spelling becomes more accurate and punctuation is correctly used. Many pupils have a good vocabulary, which they use well in their writing. There are many good examples of pupils' writing displayed around the school. By Year 6, pupils have had the opportunity to write for a wide range of purposes. Both average and high attaining pupils show a good sense of audience in their writing and adapt their writing style to suit. Higher attaining pupils write with control, and are beginning to use paragraphs. Evidence in pupils' books shows that they are able to adopt the correct tone and style for letters, accounts, stories and factual writing. Pupils' accounts of their school residential visit to Prestatyn were very interesting, and showed how much the pupils had enjoyed the experience. A group of Year 5/6 pupils worked well to write a short account of the water cycle, thus making an effective link between their literacy, science and geography. There is effective use of information and communication technology in English, which helps pupils to develop their word processing skills and supports their spelling and research skills with regular use.
88. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in the majority of classes. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned and well organised, with teachers following the requirements of the Literacy Strategy well. In their planning, teachers are particularly careful to provide work that is suited to the needs of all pupils, and higher attaining pupils are provided with extension activities when necessary. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen to stories and various forms of instruction. In the Year 1 class, pupils could retell the story they were studying very well and could not wait to start reading the next pages together from their big book. Teachers make good use of intonation in their voices, as well as humour, to help maintain pupils' interest. They provide opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills through good use of questions and discussion. For example, the Year 6 teacher skilfully led a very lively discussion before pupils wrote their letter to a manufacturer expressing their opinions about a school satchel. Teachers provide a wide range of writing activities for their pupils, both in English and in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently, often reminding pupils of the need to improve their work. The majority of pupils respond enthusiastically to the opportunities provided in all aspects of the subject, although many pupils in Year 4 do not concentrate satisfactorily. Very good relationships are developed between teachers and pupils. Teachers and classroom assistants provide good support and guidance during lessons, though more help is required for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

89. Pupils' attitudes to English are good and sometimes very good, and this greatly enhances the progress they make. Most pupils work co-operatively in pairs and small groups. They are prepared to help each other and share books amicably. Except for some pupils in Year 4, pupils behave well and work enthusiastically.
90. The curriculum is well planned and organised. Schemes of work are based on the National Literacy Strategy, and are planned to ensure the continuous progress of pupils. The curriculum is enriched by extended time for writing, a drama club and opportunities for all pupils to take part in concerts and religious events. The leadership and management of English are very good. Procedures for assessment and evaluation are in place. They provide valuable information on pupils' progress, which is used to identify pupils who will benefit from extra support. The scrutiny of all English books, carried out on a regular basis by the subject manager and the head teacher, is particularly effective. It highlights pupils who are making either good or insufficient progress, and informs all staff of areas of strength or weakness in their teaching. It is helping to improve the teaching of literacy throughout the school. However, some literacy lessons are too long. This is particularly noticeable in classes where pupils find it hard to sustain their concentration. Resources are good and used well. There is a shared commitment to further improvement in the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

91. Standards in mathematics currently match those at the time of the last inspection for pupils at the end of the Junior phase, but are below those observed previously at the end of the Infant phase. This does not represent any decline in standards, but is simply due to the fact that the current group of seven-year-olds has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
92. The 2001 national test results based on average national curriculum points scores, attainment in mathematics was above the national average at the end of the Infant phase. The percentage of pupils obtaining level 2, the expected level, was above average; the proportion obtaining the higher level 3 at the end of the Infant phase was below the national average. Pupils' performance at the end of Infant phase mathematics test was well above average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The average attainment of pupils aged seven in the three years 1999 to 2001 was in line with the national averages. The performance of girls was slightly lower than that of boys in the end of Infant phase tests.
93. In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' attainment in terms of points scores was below the national average. The proportion of pupils obtaining level 4, the expected level nationally, was slightly below average, but the proportion reaching the higher level 5 was broadly average. When compared with pupils from schools of a similar type, standards were above average. The performance of boys has been a little lower than that of girls over the last three years.
94. For the current groups of pupils, evidence from the lessons observed, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicate that attainment is average for pupils aged seven and for those aged eleven. In the work seen during the inspection, many pupils in the Infant phase demonstrate a satisfactory level of attainment related to investigative mathematics and number. Pupils in the Junior phase generally have sufficiently good knowledge of their multiplication tables, because they are practised in class with sufficient regularity. This really helps attainment in other areas of mathematics. Pupils aged eleven recognise the equivalence between decimals and fractions. They can count in 1 / 10ths, 0.25's and 1 / 5ths, for example. Pupils are



expected to use correct mathematical vocabulary throughout the school, and this greatly helps their learning. They develop their own strategies when solving problems in their heads, and are very keen to explain their chosen strategy and why they have chosen it. Pupils aged seven are appropriately familiar with the addition of money. They solve written problems, picking out the key terms. Pupils of this age work hard reckoning the total cost of bills in "café menus." There was no discernible difference in the performance of girls and boys in the work seen during the inspection. To raise standards of attainment further in both key stages, there is a need to continue the work of building up a coherent mathematical vocabulary, to continue to ensure that pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables, and to develop pupils' work on measurement further.

95. In both the Infant and Junior phases, overall learning of pupils in mathematics is good; this includes the learning of those pupils having special educational needs. At times, those pupils having English as an additional language could do with more support. Factors aiding overall learning include the positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, the very good relationships between pupils and their teachers, and the overall good standard of teaching. The teaching observed was excellent in one of the eight lessons seen, very good in one lesson, good in four lessons, satisfactory in one lesson and unsatisfactory in one lesson. In a very good lesson, the teacher was extremely enthusiastic and dynamic; she expected the pupils to work hard when expressing quotients as fractions or decimals. In other high quality lessons, the teachers ensured that a brisk pace was maintained throughout. In all three of these lessons, the learning objectives were clearly explained at the outset, and re-visited at the end of the session to see how far they had been achieved. In some of the other lessons, the pace flagged at times; in the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were allowed to misbehave and not pay attention to the teacher. Some numeracy lessons are too long - at times as long as eighty minutes - and this is too long for pupils to concentrate; learning is not maximised in these lengthy sessions. Teachers in most numeracy lessons begin with very effective question and answer sessions, to revise previous work and set pupils thinking.
96. The co-ordinator for mathematics is extremely capable and enthusiastic; she is rightly recognised locally as a leading mathematics teacher. She has monitored the delivery of the curriculum appropriately and is in the process of developing a worthwhile assessment scheme. Resources are satisfactory overall. ICT is used appropriately. Pupils' achievements are good.

## SCIENCE

97. As at the time of the last inspection, overall standards observed in Year 6 were found to be similar to those in most schools. In Year 2, standards are close to the national average. They are not as high as in the last inspection, due to the large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 2 class.
98. In the teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in 2001, the pupils' attainment was very high. All pupils reached the nationally expected level. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher level matched the national average. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, pupils' attainment matched the national average at both the expected level and the higher level. Compared with schools of similar type, pupils' results were above average. When the results of the last three years are taken into account, pupils have left St Edmund's at the end of Year 6 nearly half a term ahead of pupils nationally.

99. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in all areas of science. This is due in the main to the high standards of teaching. Adequate support for pupils whose first language is not English is not always available in class, and this hinders their progress. Since the last inspection, the school has revised its scheme of work. Greater emphasis is put on the step-by-step development of the skills of scientific investigation. This is improving achievement in this area of the curriculum.
100. Pupils in Year 2 have good knowledge of life processes. Through planting seeds and watching them grow, they become aware of conditions basic to survival. Lower attaining pupils are unable to say whether happenings are as expected. Higher attaining pupils appreciate the need for water in keeping plants alive, and of the importance of a suitable diet to their own good health. Pupils' knowledge of materials and of physical processes is sound. They are aware of the uses of electricity at home and in school, and of the dangers involved. The vast majority are adept at making simple circuits to light a bulb. Higher attaining pupils add a buzzer to their circuit and can draw an accurate picture to show what they have done. Most make reasonable suggestions to explain why a particular circuit does not work. The high emphasis put on oral discussion increases pupils' understanding of scientific investigations. However, pupils' skills in planning and recording their work, for instance, in using tables to present their results, is not well developed.
101. Pupils in the Junior phase apply their sound scientific skills to investigate life processes, materials and physical forces. Pupils in Year 5 are knowledgeable about the main organs of the body, like the heart. After measuring pulse rates accurately, and comparing them before and after exercise, they draw conclusions about the way the heart muscle works. In Year 6, pupils are confident in applying fair test criteria and making informed predictions when investigating air resistance. They collect evidence accurately, using equipment such as force meters with care. The vast majority record their evidence in block or line graphs to interpret trends. Most draw relevant conclusions. Higher attaining pupils make generalisations from their findings to establish, for instance, that 'when an object falls, air resistance acts in an opposite direction to the weight'. Lower attaining pupils are not independent in asking their own questions and in planning investigations for themselves.
102. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. In all lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory. In three-fifths of lessons, teaching was good and in one-fifth very good. In all classes, teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding of the subject to introduce pupils to correct scientific terminology. This is successful in enabling pupils to express their ideas accurately in discussion, to clarify issues and so deepen their understanding.
103. Teachers begin lessons by effectively recapping on earlier work so that pupils are confident to build on what they already know. Lesson objectives are usually shared with the class. Consequently, pupils are aware of the teachers' expectations and try hard to succeed. Although occasionally teachers talk for too long, in most lessons clear and concise explanations and careful demonstrations increase pupils' understanding. For instance, the teacher's graphic demonstration using a balloon and pump in Year 5 greatly enhanced the pupils' perception of the workings of the heart muscle. Teachers organise investigations carefully and prepare resources efficiently. As a result, pupils work purposefully and little time is wasted. In Year 1, for example, pupils investigate push and pull forces at first-hand. A wide variety of activities including blowing through straws and flapping paper fans, are carefully planned so that pupils demonstrate and observe for themselves how moving air can

be forced to push toys along. Teachers manage pupils well and establish good relationships, which give pupils confidence to express ideas, and promote co-operative attitudes in carrying out investigations. Occasionally, teachers give too much direction and do not allow sufficient opportunity for pupils to use their own skills.

104. Management of the subject is good. Analysis of National Curriculum tests results by the headteacher and Year 6 teacher, gives a clear overview of standards and leads to the setting of challenging targets. The curriculum co-ordinator has been instrumental in implementing the improved scheme of work, and in leading the school's effective response to the last inspection report. Assessment is carried out conscientiously at the end of each unit of work, but is not always used appropriately to plan new learning.
105. Cross-curricular links with literacy and mathematics are good in the writing-up of experiments and in the many opportunities to practise measuring and data handling skills. Links with information and communication technology are satisfactory, with some instances of good use in recording information and identifying trends. The pupils have insufficient experience of using sensors, for example, to record changes in temperature, as the school has only just acquired suitable equipment. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development through the opportunities afforded to develop a sense of awe and wonder at the natural world and at forces such as electricity. Social development is fostered by emphasis on co-operative group work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe lessons in art and design because of timetable difficulties. Evidence upon which judgements are based was obtained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, interviews with pupils and teachers, and an analysis of work on display.
107. The majority of pupils' attainment at the ages of seven and eleven broadly matches the standards attained by pupils of a similar age nationally. This finding is similar to that found at the previous inspection.
108. Year 1 and 2 pupils link art to their history visit to Salford Museum. In their religious education studies, they make a class collage of people Jesus met in the story of Zacchaeus. The whole scene makes a very attractive feature in the classroom. Another set of linked paintings of the sunset with good silhouettes of buildings adds interest to a rather dull corner of a corridor in the Infants.
109. Most of the artwork seen in the Junior classes is linked well to other subjects. Pupils in Year 3 produce a time line with pictures illustrating different periods of history. In their geography topic on the water cycle Year 6 pupils had produced good illustrations of rural and urban landscapes. Pupils were keen to explain how they had constructed their pictures, using a viewfinder to help find the best area to draw. Junior pupils use sketchbooks, which show how pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. For example, in Year 5 pupils investigated different types of shading which were then used in their final drawings. Several classes include portrait painting in various forms as part of their artwork. Pupils say they enjoy this and can sometimes recognise who the portrait represents. However, owing to the school's concentration on the core subjects, teachers have not had

sufficient time to develop art and design to a high standard. Sketchbooks do not, as yet, contain enough examples of work to reflect earlier experiences, nor do they provide sufficient stimulus for new work and the progression of skills.

110. The new subject manager for art and design is very enthusiastic and is currently selecting ideas from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documentation as a basis for a whole-school scheme of work. An audit of resources has already been carried out. Assessment of pupils' work is at an early stage of development. The subject manager is well informed, and has the necessary skills to move the subject forward, if more time could be allocated to art. Resources were judged to be satisfactory; no evidence of the incorporation of information and communication technology was available during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in this subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111. Standards in design and technology now meet national expectations in all areas; this was not the case at the time of the last inspection, when standards in design were judged to be unsatisfactory. Owing to timetable constraints, it was only possible to see two lessons in design and technology for pupils in both the Infant phase and the Junior phase. These were taught very well indeed; one was excellent, and the other very good, with pupils making very good progress overall. Learning is good, overall for all pupils, including those having English as an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs throughout both phases. Pupils are now systematically building up the key skills of designing and making as they go through the school. Teachers manage their pupils very well indeed and have high expectations; this helps to ensure that pupils' learning is good. Examples of previous work carried out include designing and making useful slippers by eleven-year-olds, and very effective puppet making by seven-year-olds. Pupils in Year 5 are involved each year in a local Easter egg competition; despite not winning, their work is most commendable and detailed.
112. Pupils respond very well indeed and show great enthusiasm for the subject. They enjoy their work and collaborate amicably and very effectively. They are very interested in their work and enjoy explaining what they are doing and why they are doing it. They pay due attention to health and safety matters. No evidence of the inclusion of implementation of information and communication technology was observed.
113. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has attended relevant in-service training. Resources are satisfactory and are stored sensibly.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

114. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those found in most schools. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in acquiring skills of geographical and historical enquiry. The breadth and depth of their knowledge of places and of the past is limited by the very low allocation of teaching time given to the subjects. The volume of work in pupils' books is low, and there is insufficient coverage of some aspects of topic work. Pupils who learn English as an additional language do not achieve as well as they could, as they do not receive adequate support to enable them to join in lessons fully.

115. In Year 2, pupils understand the concept of travel through following the journeys of a toy bear. They recognise a number of places on the map and know that different types of transport are suitable for different journeys. Pupils make simple comparisons between Little Hulton and a seaside location. They compare Brighton and Paris in such terms as tourist attractions, food and currency. They do not express views on environmental features or consider ways in which the environment is influenced by people. They use sources such as photographs and books, together with first-hand observations of the local area to find information. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have acquired appropriate skills of geographical enquiry. They use maps and plans efficiently, together with information gathered on well planned field trips, to study particular areas. They are becoming aware of environmental issues, particularly those close to home such as traffic pollution. Through studying the course of the River Irwell, they understand how rivers form and grow. They identify the changes in a river as it travels from source to sea. They are beginning to extend their vocabularies to describe features, using words such as *source*, *erosion*, *meander* and *tributary* correctly in their discussions. They describe features of urban and rural landscapes. In discussion with the inspector, pupils in Year 6 show satisfactory knowledge of land use in the local areas, and of geographical studies in Britain and in Europe. Their knowledge of the world beyond Europe is very limited.
116. In history, pupils in Year 2 are developing a sound sense of the past. They collect evidence from people, objects and pictures to investigate what seaside holidays were like in the past. They recognise change over time by comparing kitchen equipment like irons, kettles and cookers from 1900 and 2001. They gain a sense of what life was like in Victorian times by visiting the Victorian Street in a local museum. Almost all are aware of the role of Florence Nightingale, and most can give a reason for her actions. Most pupils are aware that there are several ways of finding out about the past. In Year 6, pupils show adequate knowledge of aspects of past societies such as the Romans, Celts, Tudors and Victorians. They are aware of some of the differences in everyday life between societies and of the significance of some important characters like Boadicea, Henry VIII and Queen Victoria. Through their work on World War II, they are becoming aware of the different ways in which facets of the past are represented and interpreted. They use a range of sources for finding out about the past, and know that some are more reliable than others. Few pupils sustain their knowledge to create organised written work with appropriate use of terms and dates.
117. Because of the organisation of the curriculum, only one history lesson was seen. Therefore, no overall judgement is made on teaching and learning. Teachers' planning closely follows the new scheme of work and is satisfactory, given the time restrictions on the curriculum.
118. The quality of teaching and learning in geography lessons is good overall. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory, with one-third judged as good and a third very good. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to promote the teaching of geographical skills, which enable the pupils to find and evaluate information for themselves. Field studies, from walks in the locality to museum trips, are well organised and relevant. They are significantly beneficial to the pupils' achievement, especially in promoting interest and enthusiasm for the subject. All staff use subject-specific vocabulary carefully with good explanations, which heighten the pupils' understanding. In class and group discussions, teachers use skilled questioning to help pupils extend their own ideas. As a result, pupils become increasingly confident in proposing hypotheses. Relationships are very good and teachers manage pupils well with praise and encouragement. Groupwork is efficiently organised so that

pupils co-operate successfully to share information and ideas. Occasionally lessons proceed at a slow pace. When the teacher talks for too long, pupils lose track of the main lesson focus. Opportunities are missed to make pupils aware of their learning when lesson objectives are not shared with pupils.

119. The management of these subjects is satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator provides good support for teachers in the Junior stage, but is less experienced in the Infant phase. Whilst she is instrumental in implementing a revised curriculum, her role in monitoring standards is not yet developed. Appropriate assessment is carried out at the end of each unit of work. The data gained is used inconsistently to plan future work. The subjects make good contributions to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through the opportunities to consider environmental issues and to learn about the past. Frequent opportunities are created for pupils to take responsibility and to co-operate with others in groupwork and on visits. Links with numeracy are particularly well developed in geography, for instance, in map reading and in data-handling. Appropriate cross-curricular links are promoted with literacy and information technology. Resources were found to be satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. The school has made great improvements in the standards it attains in information and communication technology since the time of the last inspection. Standards at the end of both the Infant and Junior phases now meet national expectations, whereas previously they were below these expectations.
121. By the end of the Infant phase, pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to generate text and insert appropriate pictures, and to save and retrieve information. By the end of the Junior phase, pupils are able to make multimedia presentations with due regard to the needs of their audience; for example, when preparing instructional leaflets on the second world war or sport for younger pupils. They present information in different forms, appropriately. Pupils are able to link pages together effectively. Older pupils control output devices such as juice machines and lifting devices. They are appropriately aware of control in every-day situations. Pupils routinely use ICT as a tool to help their work in other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics and history.
122. Learning is good in both the Infant and Junior phases, for all pupils, including those having special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. It was possible to see six lessons in this subject, which were all taught very well. In one of these, teaching was excellent, three were very well taught, in one the teaching was good and in the other it was satisfactory. Whilst the school does not have an ICT suite, pupils in Years 2 to 6 have a set of fifteen laptop computers for a full afternoon each week. Each morning, these classes each have access to three laptop computers to assist in other work. During that period, they get one taught ICT lesson and one cross-curricular lesson. This works very effectively and enhances pupils' learning well. These classes also benefit from a mobile "smartboard" to aid teaching. Year 1 pupils have their own set of three computers. The school is about to be linked to the Internet. Assessment is being used effectively to monitor pupils' progress in this subject.
123. Pupils' response is very good indeed. They show great eagerness for, and interest in, this subject. Pupils work hard in practising their skills and work co-operatively very well. They are not afraid to volunteer their own suggestions; relationships are excellent.

124. The co-ordinator for this subject is knowledgeable and he has devoted a lot of his time to staff training. He has made a big impact on raising standards in this subject. There is an appropriate range of cross-curricular software.

## **MUSIC**

125. Standards at the time of the last inspection were identified as being above those expected nationally. There has been some deterioration since then. By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment currently matches the standard attained by pupils of this age. Less time is now devoted to music and this is the main cause of the relatively lower standards. Teachers throughout the school have not had the time to include much appraising or composition of music in recent years. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs who are always included in all musical activities, and those pupils with English as an additional language, make sound progress in their learning.
126. Most classes benefit from the specialist part-time music teacher who teaches each class for one lesson per week. In these lessons pupils sing tunefully. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 have a good memory for words of different songs and are able to sing louder or softer in response to directions. Year 1 pupils used the percussion instruments well to accompany songs from Pinocchio during the BBC programme. They can keep a steady beat to the sound of the wooden blocks and triangles. Pupils in the Juniors sing confidently and with good understanding of the difference between rhythm, dynamics and expression. In assemblies pupils sing much better when accompanied by the piano, but try hard to sing well when they have to rely on the teacher's voice to give a lead.
127. Pupils' attitudes to music are generally good. Most pupils sustain concentration well. They enjoy music making and respect each other's ideas and contributions. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in music at harvest, Christmas and Easter. Many pupils remember their involvement in masses, and a group of pupils interviewed were especially enthusiastic about the recent production of 'The Easter Cantata' when the school hall was packed with parents and friends of the school. In fact, they were so keen about this that they arranged for Year 6 to sing one of the songs to illustrate how much they had enjoyed the production. Learning for many pupils is enhanced by the opportunity to learn to play the recorder, clarinet and violin.
128. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. The part time teacher gives generously of her time during the lunch break to teach pupils recorders. The small group of pupils learning the clarinet reached a high standard in their examinations. During their weekly lesson, the quality of teaching was excellent as they developed their jazz playing with obvious enjoyment.
129. The subject is managed as effectively as circumstances allow, but, as the subject manager is only in school one day per week, she has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. A new scheme of work is to be introduced soon in order to help teachers who find the subject difficult to teach. Resources for learning are good, and are well organised. At the moment there is no organised assessment in music, and no use of information and communication technology in this subject was seen during the inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. Pupils were observed in gymnastics, dance and games lessons. Overall, standards of attainment are as expected nationally at the end of both Infant and Junior phases,

although there are many examples of above average attainment by some pupils in most classes. This is a similar result to that found at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language, make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. Attainment in swimming is satisfactory, with most pupils being able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

131. Year 1 pupils were observed learning how to travel in a stretched or tucked-up position, both on the floor and on the apparatus. Year 2 linked together a series of dances they had learned during the term from a radio programme, which told the story of 'The Sleeping Beauty'. Pupils listened carefully to the music and performed the dances well. In the Juniors pupils continue to make good progress in their physical development. The school makes very good use of its large playing field, which affords excellent facilities for athletics and games in the summer term. For example, Year 5 used the open space well to practise their throwing skills safely. The newly resurfaced playground provided an excellent smooth surface for pupils in Year 6 to improve their hockey skills. Year 6 pupils were set the task of choreographing a series of dance movements based on 'The Samurai Warriors', another radio programme. After rehearsing each dance and joining the whole together, the class divided; each half presenting their interpretation of the music while the other pupils watched and commented on their success. At the end of the performance, the generous applause of their friends helped boost the pupils' self- esteem.
132. Pupils' attitudes to these lessons are good. They clearly enjoy the opportunity to engage in physical activity and almost all behave well, even when they have to sit still, listening to the teacher, or waiting their turn to demonstrate. They all change quickly and quietly without fuss, and follow safety rules well, clearly understanding the need to warm up and cool down before and after exercise. They co-operate sensibly in pairs and small groups and use their initiative and imagination creatively.
133. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers are always dressed appropriately and all have secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject and all safety issues, such as being careful with hockey sticks in Year 6 or restricting Infant pupils to a safe level of climbing on the apparatus. In most lessons seen, teachers demanded constant effort from all the pupils in order to extend their movements beyond a satisfactory level. Teachers build assessment strategies into lesson planning and use these to check progress.
134. The resources are good. There is a plentiful supply of small apparatus, which is well stored and organised. The scheme of work is being reorganised at present to take account of the latest national guidelines. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.