

INSPECTION REPORT

Malpas Alport Endowed Primary School

Malpas

LEA Area: Cheshire

Unique Reference Number: 111282

Inspection Number: 188726

Head-Teacher: Mr J Womersley

Reporting inspector: Mr O L Thomas
16041

Dates of inspection: 20/09/1999 - 23/09/1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707072
Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown Copyright 1999

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

Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the appropriate authority must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. Every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school should receive a free copy of the summary of the report within ten working days of receipt of the summary by the appropriate authority. A charge not exceeding the cost of supply may be made by the appropriate authority for any other copies of the report and/or its summary provided to any person who asks for one.

The appropriate authority should make a copy of the report and the summary available for inspection by members of the public at such times and at such a place as may be reasonable

Any enquiries about this legislation should be addressed to the OFSTED Compliance Helpline

Tel. (0171) 421-6567

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chester Road Malpas Cheshire SY14 8PY
Telephone number:	01948 860 367
Fax number:	01948 860 803
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Captain Laurie Crump
Date of previous inspection:	16/04/1996 - 19/04/1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members

Mr O L Thomas, RgI

Subject responsibilities

Special educational needs
Provision for under five's
Equal opportunities
Science
Art
Music

Aspect responsibilities

Leadership and management
The efficiency of the school

Mr D Jones, Lay Inspector

Attitudes,behaviour and personal development
Attendance
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
Partnership with parents and the community
Curriculum and assessment
Staffing, accommodation & resources

Mr P Graham

Mathematics,
Information technology
Physical education
Design and technology

Mrs J Johnson

English,
History,
Geography
Religious education

Attainment and progress
Quality of teaching

The inspection contractor was:

Network Management Services
Fron Dirion annexe
Star Farm
Llangynhafal
Ruthin
Denbighshire
LL15 1RU

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

MAIN FINDINGS

Pages 4-7

What the school does well
Where the school has weaknesses
How the school has improved since the last inspection
Standards in subjects

Quality of teaching
Other aspects of the school
The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

Page 8

INTRODUCTION

Paragraph No's

Characteristics of the school
Key indicators

1-3

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress	4 - 17
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development	18 - 24
Attendance	25

Quality of education provided

Teaching	26 - 31
The curriculum and assessment	32 - 40
Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	41 - 45
Support, guidance and pupils welfare	46 - 50
Partnership with parents and the community	51 - 54

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management	55 - 61
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	62 - 65
The efficiency of the school	66 - 70

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECT

Areas of learning for children under five	71 - 77
English, mathematics and science	78 - 102
Information technology and religious education	103 - 116
Other subjects or courses	117 - 144

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence
Data and indicators

Page 37
Page 38

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The 1999 test results for 11 year old pupils show the proportion of pupils attaining at Level 4 or above are above national averages in English and science.
- Literacy and numeracy are effectively taught and pupils use their skills regularly within a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum.
- Resources, time and staff training allocated to information technology have been increased and this has supported pupils' progress very well.
- The Headteacher is wholly committed to the pupils' needs. He provides strong leadership and clear educational direction which drives the school's good practice and success.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and many lessons were judged to be very good and excellent. Teachers know and care for their pupils very well.
- The provision for pupils under five is very good. These young children receive a very positive start to their school career.
- Financial planning, control and the administration of the school are very effective in supporting the quality of education provided.
- The school gives overall good value for money.

.

.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Formal educational records of individual pupils' academic, personal and general abilities and skills, *as required*, are not available to give an overall picture of pupils' progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2 and from school to school.
- II. Monitoring of teaching and learning by all with management responsibility is not sufficiently broad, rigorous or formalised to raise attainment and progress to the highest levels.
- III. Pupils are not consistently helped to improve their work through marking, self evaluation and target

setting.

IV. Guidance on the management of pupils' behavioural and emotional needs is not clear enough to support pupils or teachers.

Malpas Alport Endowed Primary School is a good school; it cares for its pupils well. *The school's strengths far outweigh the weaknesses outlined*, but these weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

- **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

.

Since the last inspection, the school has addressed all of the issues identified with varying success. Priorities are identified through effective development planning. Progress is reviewed and targets set for curriculum and staff development. Through good planning and teaching the school has sustained an overall effective quality of education for its pupils. Recently there has been increased rigour in assessing, testing and targeting the needs of individuals and groups of pupils to raise standards. The improved national test results for 1999 are an example of the success of these strategies. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well carried out and are effectively supporting pupils' attainment and progress. Significant strides have been made in information technology in terms of provision of resources, time allocation and teaching ability which is making a marked improvement to pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills and their progress.

The curriculum co-ordinator's role does show some movement forward; they give valuable advice and support to colleagues and have some release time to scrutinise planning. However, their role has not been extended to observe teaching and learning at first hand in order to note areas for improvement nor have they shared their teaching skills and subject specialisms through demonstration. The Headteacher knows the pupils and staff very well however, his monitoring of classroom practice although regular is not formalised with clear criteria to set targets against which success can be measured.

- **The school's capacity to improve**

The Headteacher and staff are committed to providing the best education for the pupils. They spend much time and energy discussing issues and sharing information. Less emphasis is placed on formalising and recording their assessments or what they have agreed in order to set targets for improvements, measure progress and success or aid continuity. The mechanisms to raise standards are already available to the school most notably, its good leadership, the mainly good and at times very good teaching, the commitment to raising standards, clearly evident in the effectiveness of the school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and the good start the school has recently made to analysing test results more closely and providing additional support for those pupils who require it. Overall, the school is very well placed to improve and address the weaknesses identified.

.

- **Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds **in 1999** based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
English	B	D	<i>average</i> C
Mathematics	C	D	<i>below average</i> D
Science	B	C	<i>well below average</i> E

**The above table is based on average National Curriculum point scores achieved by pupils in the school. This takes account of the complete range of levels attained by the pupils not just those attaining at Level 4 or above. The inspection has identified factors that have an impact on the quality of comparison with similar schools and therefore caution should be exercised in interpretation.. Calculations are based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals which is very low at Malpas and is not a true reflection of the pupils' socio economic circumstances, which are comprehensive.*

The test results show a considerable upturn on last year's average levels and on previous years in all three subjects. The percentage of pupils attaining at Level 4 or above is well above average in English and science and slightly above in mathematics. The school has been rigorous in using a range of tests to track performance and raise standards.

The inspection finds that by the age of 11, current Year 6 pupils attain as expected nationally in English, mathematics and science with a small minority who attain above in all three subjects. Caution should be exercised when comparing the difference in the inspection judgements and national test results because different groups of pupils are involved and the inspection makes judgements over a wider range of pupils' attainment than the tests. In information technology pupils attain as expected nationally. Evidence indicates that during the last year progress has been rapid. In religious education pupils attain in line overall with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. By the age of seven, pupils attain as expected in the core subjects with a significant minority who attains above. Pupils who are under five attain as expected and their progress is good and often very good. In the other subjects, the curriculum is broad and balanced and enables pupils to produce work at a level generally expected by the age of 11. In art, pupils show skills and techniques at a better level than is usually found. Pupils' progress is good at Key Stage 1 and very good in about one third of lessons. It is satisfactory with some good progress at Key Stage 2 where teachers use their specialisms effectively. A small minority of lessons and some work show unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Excellent	Excellent	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Science	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory
Information technology	Very good	Very Good	Very Good
Religious education	N/A	Very good	Good
Other subjects	Very good	Good	Good

This table provides a positive picture of teaching seen during the inspection in the school. Pupils under five and at Key Stage 1 receive consistently high quality teaching. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is equally balanced between satisfactory and good, with examples of very good teaching when teachers' specialisms or enthusiasms are evident. Teaching in lessons was never judged to be less than satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well, most have high expectations for work output, attention to task and good behaviour. In most cases classrooms effectively support the learning and teachers provide positive role models for the quality of presentation and organisation. Plenary sessions are not used consistently to best effect to evaluate pupils' understanding, misconceptions or to evaluate what they have achieved and set targets. Marking of pupils' work is not aiding improvement well enough.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour ranges from excellent to poor and is satisfactory overall.
Attendance	Most pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good although there is a significant number of requests by parents for holiday taking in school time. The procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and early follow up of absence are not sufficiently rigorous.
Ethos*	The school's ethos is good. Most classrooms effectively support learning, pupils mainly have positive attitudes and teachers have high expectations of them.
Leadership and management	Good overall. Governors meet most statutory requirements and have paid good regard to recent government initiatives in literacy and numeracy. The Headteacher has a clear commitment to raising standards. Curriculum coordinators' make a sound contribution overall to subject developments. However, first hand monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently focused, formalised or rigorous to further improve standards.
Curriculum	Delivery meets requirements overall. The school has maintained a broad and balanced curriculum whilst introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Hours effectively. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are mainly accurate. Although not regularly recorded they do inform the next steps of learning within day to day work and enable teachers to match and plan work
Children with special educational needs	The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice overall. However, pupils' needs in relation to numeracy and their behaviour are not given a high enough priority. Provision is mainly good, most class teachers support individuals very well. Monitoring of progress is thorough and support, although limited, is effective.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good overall.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Provision is mainly good for all aspects. Teachers have suitable experience and knowledge. The number of support staff is low to match the range of needs within the school. The statutory appraisal process has lapsed during recent initiatives. Resources are supporting teaching and learning well, especially in Information technology and literacy. Accommodation is good overall.
Value for money	Overall, the school gives good value for money.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

• **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- V. School encourages active participation and the open door policy gives good access to teachers.
- VI. Complaints are handled well.
- VII. The breadth of the curriculum and the extra curricular activities.
- VIII. The homework provision.
- IX. The care their children receive.
- X. The values and attitudes which the school promotes.
- XI. The standards of behaviour.
- XII. That their children like school.
- XIII. The information which the school provides including reports.

· The inspection agrees with most of the parents' supportive comments. The main exception is that although most pupils display acceptable behaviour there is a minority who are unable to exercise self discipline and at times their behaviour is poor in spite of the teachers' best efforts. This hinders their own and others' progress. Homework provision is satisfactory and is used effectively to support attainment and progress. Not all parents actively support their children or the school's efforts, especially with reading. The system for rewarding good effort although evident would benefit from review to offer pupils incentives on a more regular basis to motivate them to achieve. The quality of information, including reports, is judged to be very good overall by the inspection although there is no formal system for informing parents about what is to be taught in advance. The inspection finds that teachers plan and match work well to pupils' needs overall. There is some variance in the pace and creativity with which lessons are delivered but during the inspection there was no significant, consistent evidence that pupils are not challenged or expected to work hard.

·
·

What some parents are not happy about

- XIV. The amount of homework.
- XV. The system of rewarding good
- XVI. The information on pupils' progress
- XVII. A lack of challenge.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors, Headteacher and staff now need to:

Establish formal records for pupils' academic, personal and general abilities and skills to ensure that:

XVIII. requirements are met to keep a purposeful record of pupils' progress as they move from class to class and from school to school;

XIX. these records provide a secure base from which teachers may plan work at the start of the school year and at points of transfer to support continuity of learning;

XX. significant steps of progress or need are identified and targets set for improvement;

XXI. this information is readily accessible to parents and other relevant audiences.

· *The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph's: 31,38, 46, 61, 86, 95, 102, 109*

Establish an agreed programme of monitoring of teaching and learning to raise standards further by ensuring that:

XXII. all staff are trained to understand the purposes, nature and extent of monitoring;

XXIII. there is an established programme of who, when and what will be monitored;

XXIV. the outcomes of monitoring are recorded and action planned for sustained improvement;

XXV. the best teaching practice within the school is shared and built upon.

The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph's: 17, 55, 59, 62, 80, 81, 96, 95.

Involve pupils more actively in improving their own work by ensuring that:

XXVI. there is an agreed system of marking work which all staff adhere to;

XXVII. that marking makes clear to pupils what they have done well and how they can improve;

XXVIII. that targets are set and shared with pupils and the degree of success evaluated;

XXIX. that plenary sessions are allocated more time and emphasis is placed on what has been achieved, addressing misconceptions and evaluating what has to be done to improve.

· *The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph's: 29, 30, 40, 85*

Extend the current behaviour policy to ensure that:

XXX. teachers are given clearer guidance on managing pupils' behaviour assertively;

XXXI. that pupils fully understand the consequences of their actions;

XXXII. teaching time is focused on learning to aid progress.

The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph's: 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 42, 47, 84,

In addition to the key issues outlined above other minor weaknesses which the governors will want to address are outlined in paragraph numbers:6, 8, 25, 35, 36, 48, 51, 55, 61, 63, 82, 83.

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

1. The school is in Malpas, a rural village in south-west Cheshire. It has a wide catchment area, and is popular with parents, many of whom travel some distance to the school. The intake of 209 pupils reflects a comprehensive range of social and economic characteristics, which is mainly average. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups. Most pupils have experienced some form of preschool education prior to entry. Admission is in the September of the school year in which pupils are five years old. These four year olds are all taught together in the reception class. Pupils' attainment is broad and varies from year to year. Information from the school's baseline assessments indicates that overall attainment is broadly average on entry. The number of pupils identified with special educational needs is broadly average. There are three pupils with statements for special educational need and this is above average for the size of school. The 3.8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average for a school of this size but is not an accurate reflection of the comprehensive background of the pupils. The nature of the school's intake is changing and the range of personal, social and emotional needs of pupils is wider than at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils are not from high social class households as the PICSⁱ* indicates.

**PICSⁱ is pre-inspection information provided to the inspection team from census data.*

The school's aims

2. The school's main aims are to create a school with a uniform set of values, a demanding work ethos and a curriculum which is interesting and developmental.

The school's priorities

3. The governor's priorities have been to rebuild the school to bring all classes under roof with modern facilities capable of delivering a broad and balanced curriculum with a focus on literacy, numeracy and science, information technology and religious education. Planning, training and curriculum implementation have been high priorities.

• **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	8	8	9
at NC Level 2 or	Girls	15	15	15
above	Total	23	23	24
Percentage at NC	School	74 (77)	74(84)	77 (94)
Level 2 or above	National	86 (80)	86(81)	90 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	7	9	10
at NC Level 2 or	Girls	14	15	15
above	Total	21	24	25
Percentage at NC	School	68(84)	77(94)	81(94)
Level 2 or above	National	82(80)	86(85)	87(86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15	14	29

¹ Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	13	11	15
at NC Level 4 or	Girls	12	11	12
above	Total	25	22	27
Percentage at NC	School	86 (55)	76 (55)	93 (67)
Level 4 or above	National	70 (65)	69 (65)	78 (72)

**The lower results compared against national averages for the previous year can be explained by the high level of pupils with special educational needs within the test cohort.*

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	10	11	14
at NC Level 4 or	Girls	11	11	12
above	Total	21	22	26
Percentage at NC	School	72(67)	76(61)	90(73)
Level 4 or above	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

• **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	3.9
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

• **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:	Fixed period	Number
	Permanent	0

• **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:	Very good or better	%
	Satisfactory or better	44
	Less than satisfactory	100

·

· **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

·

· **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

· **Attainment and progress**

4. The 1999 national test results show a considerable upturn in the proportion of pupils attaining at Level 4 or above in all three subjects on previous years. The school has been rigorous in using a range of tests to track performance and set targets for improvements. In English and science, the results were well above the national average and in mathematics they were slightly above average. The inspection has identified factors that have an impact on the quality of comparison with similar schools and therefore caution should be exercised in interpretation. Calculations are based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals which is very low at Malpas and is not a true reflection of the pupils' socio economic circumstances, which are comprehensive. The school's results were below average in English and mathematics and average in relation to science. Taking the core subjects together there was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The 1999 results at the end of Key Stage 1, show that pupils' results are below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and very low in comparison to similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' abilities do vary considerably from year to year.

5. The inspection which assesses pupils' attainment across more aspects of pupils' learning than the national tests finds that by the age of 11, pupils attain as expected nationally in English, mathematics and science with a small minority who attain above in all three subjects. Caution should be exercised when comparing the difference in the inspection judgements and national test results because different groups of pupils are involved and the inspection makes judgements over a wider range of pupils' attainment than the tests. By the age of seven, pupils attain as expected in the core subjects with a significant minority who attain above in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

6. In English, standards in speaking and listening are sound overall at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. There is a real variance in pupils' abilities. Some are quiet and quite passive whilst others are articulate and forward in their responses and contributions in both key stages. With the exception of a small minority of pupils in both key stages pupils listen well to the teacher and to each other. There is a noticeable difference in pupils' listening skills which are mainly good in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 teachers have to work harder to gain all of the pupils' attention. In reading, some are beginning to read before they are five; all enjoy sharing their reading. By the age of seven, pupils attain average standards in reading and writing with a significant minority who are reading and writing better than expected. By the age of 11, they read and write soundly using their skills mainly accurately in the other subjects of the curriculum. A small minority of pupils read fluently, interpret text well and can locate and retrieve information from a range of sources. Planning, note taking and extended writing skills still require improvement and the school recognises this. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is good overall and is having a positive effect on pupils' progress.

7. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is currently in line with the national expectation at Key Stage 1 with a significant minority of pupils above this level. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is also in line with the national expectation with a small minority of pupils below the expected level and a small minority above it. By the age of seven, pupils are becoming proficient in applying their mathematical knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Pupils recognise numbers and use them confidently. By the age of 11, pupils have sound skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding when solving problems. Pupils' use and application of basic number skills is sound. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of multiplication tables to ten times ten. Many have well-developed mathematical vocabulary which is used appropriately. The school's strategy for developing pupils' numeracy skills is good and there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to practise these in

other subjects of the curriculum.

8. In science, most pupils by the age of seven attain in line with national expectations with a significant minority who attain above. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have good experimental and investigative skills. Many are able to record their findings in words, tables and charts. They can use their literacy skills and numeracy skills to good effect. Most have a good knowledge of life and living processes and their understanding of materials and their properties is good. By the age of 11, most pupils have well-developed scientific investigation skills. They have a clear understanding of fair tests and why they are important, most can make sensible predictions about what might happen and give some justifiable explanation as to why. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of both natural and physical phenomena are secure. Pupils generally have insufficient opportunities to follow their own lines of investigation.

9. In information technology, pupils attain as expected nationally by the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Evidence indicates that during the last year progress has been rapid. A significant amount of funding, time and staff training has been allocated to the subject and this has clearly influenced the pupils' progress knowledge, skills and understanding. A dedicated information technology room has been set up where pupils are taught specific skills. They have less opportunity to use these skills in the classrooms in the context of their other work.

10. In religious education, pupils attain in line overall with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the ages of seven and 11. They have improved their knowledge of other faiths and cultures since the last inspection but as yet their understanding of the need for respect and tolerance of others' beliefs is not as expected or desired.

11. In the other subjects, the curriculum is broad and balanced and enables pupils to produce work at a level generally expected by the ages of seven and 11. The pupils have many opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in the other subjects to find information, record and organise their work. In art, pupils show skills and techniques at a better level than is usually found.

12. The baseline assessments carried out for pupils under five shows a range of attainment on entry but indicate that most pupils are about average when entering the school.

13. Although they have only been in school for a short amount of time pupils under five are making a very positive and active start to their school career and their progress is good and often very good in lessons. The baseline assessments made show attainment on entry to be broadly average with the typical range for this age. The pupils' progress in personal and social development is very good and they have adjusted well to working together, establishing routines and by beginning to recognise that they are one of many. Their progress in literacy and numeracy is very good and sufficient emphasis is given to language development through structured play. The planned activities give a good breadth of experience to support their knowledge and understanding in the recognised Desirable Learning Outcomes for pupils of this age.

14. Pupils identified with special educational needs make good progress overall towards the targets set in their individual educational plans. A concern of the inspection is that these targets focus largely on literacy and do not pay enough regard to pupils' needs in numeracy, the use of their skills across the curriculum or their behavioural and emotional needs. Omitting these factors from the targets must affect pupils' progress somewhat. The support given to pupils identified on the register is limited but effective. Most class teachers adapt work well to meet their needs. A small minority of pupils who have concentration and behavioural needs are not identified on the register although the difficulties these issues raise do at times affect the progress of these pupils and others.

15. Pupils' progress in relation to their prior attainment is good overall at Key Stage 1 and very good in about one third of lessons. It is satisfactory with some good progress at Key Stage 2, mainly in the lower part of the key stage and where teachers use their specialisms effectively higher up the school. A small minority of lessons and some work show unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. The extent of pupils' progress is directly attributable to two factors; the quality of teaching they receive and the response of a minority of pupils who have behavioural and emotional needs. From scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils there is clear evidence that progress has been most rapid in literacy, numeracy and information technology which have all been areas focused for improvement with additional resources and training allocated to them.

16. Comparison with the previous inspection is complex. The 1996 national test results were in line with national averages at both key stages with significant groups of pupils attaining above in mathematics and science. However, the 1999 national test results show considerable improvement when compared nationally at Key Stage 2. The 1996 inspection found standards were good for most pupils at the end of both key stages in English, mathematics and science. This is not now the case except for groups for minority groups of pupils at both key stages. It is not possible to give accurate reasons for these changes given that different groups of pupils are involved and the school's intake is changing to take a more comprehensive range of attainment with higher levels and a greater range of special needs, including behavioural.

17. The school has been rigorous during the last school year in using a range of standardised tests, including optional national tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 to track performance. They have targeted specific groups of pupils for additional support, for example, those pupils who mainly scored at Level 2c in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. Some pupils during the last school year also attended the booster classes, funded nationally, and the Headteacher proposes to make use of this option again this year if available. All of these strategies are aiding the school in raising attainment as the 1999 test results indicate for 11 year olds. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact on standards and the lower results at Key Stage 1 are a reflection of the prior attainment of the pupils rather than the high quality teaching pupils receive. The pupils' abilities vary considerably from year to year, for example the current Year 2 class, has a significant group of higher attainers but also a number of pupils with high level special educational needs. There is some scope for greater added value in pupils' performance in lessons and work output by the age of 11 given their generally good progress in lessons lower down the school, although the increasing transient population coming into the school at Key Stage 2 and the higher levels of special educational needs must be taken into account when measuring added value.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

· 18. Most pupils have a good attitude to their learning. Their behaviour and personal development are satisfactory overall. The quality of pupils' behaviour ranges from excellent to poor.

· 19. Those pupils who are under five years have very positive attitudes; they are well behaved and sensible. The very caring and strong pupil, teacher relationship along with the effective guidance given by the classroom support assistant is a significant factor supporting their development. Children were very confident, eager to learn and well behaved during a lesson on how to use a computer. During this lesson they showed good levels of independence.

20. In Key Stage 1, the positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils have a favourable effect on their attainment and progress. During a science lesson for Year 2, pupils were learning how to make an electric circuit. They worked well in pairs, were eager to explore deeper and enjoyed their successes. An English lesson for Year 1 pupils showed them to be very well behaved, good listeners, able to evaluate their own work and caringly celebrating each other's success.

21. In Key Stage 2, attitudes are mainly good but the attitudes and behaviour of a small but significant minority of pupils have a negative effect on the attainment and progress of pupils. In Year 4 during a mathematics lesson this group of pupils were disruptive, lacked concentration and the lesson progress was inhibited. During an English lesson for Year 5 a number displayed poor listening skills, were passive and disinterested and did not contribute to the lesson.

22. The school has adequate policies and strategies to support and guide practice in behaviour management for most pupils. However, these have not been updated to take account of the increasing range of behavioural and emotional need within the school. There is insufficient guidance to aid teachers in the assertive management of this minority of pupils. Consequently, in spite of the teacher's vigilance groups of pupils and individuals are not sufficiently aware of the repercussions of their lack of self-discipline. This does affect their own and others' progress in some lessons at Key Stage 2. The school has award ceremonies for good effort and a Headteacher's award system. However, on a day to day basis there is little evidence in lessons or from marking of work of incentives to motivate all pupils, regardless of their temperament or ability, to achieve. There are sound home-school contracts as well as anti-bullying strategies. Parental views were sought for these policies to which they give strong support. Improvement to behaviour management guidance is most needed at Key Stage 2, where the conduct of a small but significant minority of pupils hinders lesson progress.

• 23. Relationships between the pupils are generally friendly and cooperative and they are trusting and respectful with teachers. During lessons they are mostly collaborative and supportive with each other. Although they are mostly caring and sensitive to the needs of others a small group at Key Stage 2 lack consideration. During a religious education lesson comparing the Christian and Muslim religions, some pupils were seen to be rude, disinterested and disrespectful in spite of the teacher's vigilance for attention and participation.

• 24. The personal development of pupils is supported through visits to outside venues, residential visits and opportunities for responsibility within the school organisation. They organise their own trays and equipment, they are encouraged to protect the school environment and assist with litter collection about the school grounds. Two pupils are elected by their peers to represent the school on the parish council where they raise issues of concern to young people. They support a number of charities both local and national.

• **Attendance**

• 25. Levels of attendance are consistently above 90 per cent and this level suitably supports pupils' attainment and progress although pupils absent for holidays during term time is a small but significant feature of non attendance which must in some measure affect their progress and continuity of learning. Pupils attend school on time and records of attendance are completed promptly at the start of each session. The school governors have met their responsibility for the publication of attendance levels. Records of attendance are not maintained in accordance with the guidance and the school does not make provision for rigorous monitoring to ensure their proper completion. There are no arrangements for early follow up in the event of a child's' non-attendance.

• **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

• **Teaching**

26. The quality of teaching is good overall with some significant variation between the key stages. Teaching was never judged as less than satisfactory during the inspection. When separated by key stages teaching for pupils under five and at Key Stage 1 is consistently of high quality. It is mainly good with some very good teaching in lower Key Stage 2. In Years 5 and 6 teaching is largely satisfactory except in Year 6 where teaching is very good in mathematics and information technology.

27. The quality of teaching for children under five was judged to be either very good or excellent in all lessons seen. This high quality significantly affects the children's learning and the speed with which they settle into school, lays positive foundations for learning and aids the children's progress well. The teacher, supported very capably by the classroom assistant, has a secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children, and how to support them. The teacher and support staff have very positive, caring relationships with the pupils which promotes the children's personal and social development very well. They work hard to make the children feel secure whilst encouraging concern for others. Planning is excellent, thorough, detailed and comprehensive, if at times repetitive and time consuming for the teacher. Accurate assessments of need have been made and recorded well to form a useful on-going record of progress which aids transfer to Key Stage 1. This practice is not replicated through the rest of the school. The pace of lessons is brisk and creates an air of excitement for the children to engage them actively but this level of control is high to safeguard learning. A good range of practical experiences are planned covering all of the recommended areas of learning for children under five. The organisation and methods used are broad and well suited to the children's wide ranging young needs. Organisation is regularly changed if it is not suiting the purpose well enough or the children's mood. Clear routines have been established and time and resources are used extremely well. There is a strong element of 'not a moment to lose'. The quality and use of day to day assessment is detailed and the baseline assessments have been conscientiously completed. Parents are supportive of the induction which their children receive into school and most actively support with reading at home to support learning.

28. At Key Stage 1 teaching continues to maintain the same high quality. The teaching of literacy was never judged to be less than excellent. The teaching of mathematics, science, information technology, religious education and physical education were all judged to be at least very good. No teaching of history, art or design and technology was seen at Key Stage 1. Both teachers have a secure knowledge of most subjects of the National Curriculum and of the broad needs of young pupils. Planning is very good particularly for literacy and numeracy and at least satisfactory for the other subjects. In Years 1 and 2 there is a good pace to lessons whilst maintaining a healthy interest from the pupils. Expectations are high. There is a relentless pursuit of making the best of time and resources, requiring attention from pupils, ensuring they know what to do and keeping them on task. These factors combine effectively with clearly established routines, very good management of groups to match work to individual needs and excellent management of pupils' behaviour. Teaching quality adds clear value at Key Stage 1 to pupils' average levels of attainment from entry.

29. At Key Stage 2, teaching is more variable and ranges from very good to satisfactory. Mathematics, religious education, art, design and technology and history were mainly well taught. About half of the lessons were good and one in seven very good where specialisms such as mathematics and information technology were taught. Just over one in three were satisfactory and these ranged across all subjects but mainly English, science and physical education. Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Curriculum requirements and where specialisms are taught this has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Planning for English and mathematics is detailed and closely follows the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The teachers' expectations for output of work and behaviour are variable. They are best in Years 3 and 4. They are adequate in Year 5 and satisfactory in Year 6 with some high expectations set for the oldest pupils in terms of improving their work through marking. At the early key stage the pace and challenge of lessons is at least good even though some pupils in Year 4 are quite disruptive and immature in spite of the teacher's vigilance. In Year 5 there is also a minority of pupils who lack self-discipline and who are not easily motivated, however, the management of their behaviour requires greater rigour and intent. Most classes use resources well and work is prepared to match the range of need. Introductions to lessons made good use of effective questioning and this was usually continued by teachers to assess on going progress. In too many lessons plenary sessions were not used as well as they could be to check on misconceptions, share success or note targets for improvements. Not all teachers in Key Stage 2 present good role models for organisation to pupils. Classrooms are very attractively displayed to support learning and reflect pupils' achievements in Years 3 and 4 but this is not so for the oldest pupils.

30. Marking of pupils' work is generally a weakness noted from scrutiny except in Year 6 where the teacher's comments are relevant and help learning to go forward. Marking is rarely sufficiently critical to support errors being rectified or improvements to quality of content and presentation. Homework makes a sound contribution to pupils' progress where parents encourage their children to be involved.

31. Although teachers keep some informal notes of their assessments and pass on information verbally they do not keep on going records of pupils' progress over time in the core subjects to aid continuity at points of transfer as is required. Too much of what teachers know about their pupils is retained in their heads. Overall teaching shows some improvement since the last inspection. The incidence of good and high quality teaching is greater than before but at upper Key Stage 2 too much of the good practice in Years R to 4 is not replicated except where specialisms exist. The teaching of literacy and information technology are significantly better than previously found. Teaching quality is not shared or monitored rigorously enough to raise standards in the core subjects to the highest levels.

· **The curriculum and assessment**
·

32. The curriculum for children under five is very good. It is broad, balanced and relevant, and meets all the nationally recommended areas of learning for pre-school children. It has a very good impact on learning. There are good opportunities for a wide range of practical experiences to enable children to make good progress towards achieving the standards of learning generally deemed appropriate by the age of five. Children are assessed when they join the reception class and very good arrangements are in place to monitor their continuing progress. Detailed planning and the teacher's high quality assessments of pupils' attainment promote a smooth transition to Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum when children reach the age of five.

33. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum meets statutory requirements to include all of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has managed to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum whilst effectively implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Policies are in place for health education and sex education. Pupils' personal and social education is catered for through many subjects of the curriculum but this is not planned for specifically. The curriculum is effective in promoting the intellectual, personal and physical development of pupils, and ensuring they are ready to move on to the next stage of education.

34. Overall, the school promotes equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers' planning generally takes account of the needs of different groups of pupils and those who are capable of higher attainment are given appropriately challenging activities.

35. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are supported within class and by being withdrawn in small groups by the headteacher for additional help. Individual educational plans are appropriate with clear targets which most teachers take account of when planning their lessons. These plans are reviewed regularly and revised as necessary. Provision for special educational needs concentrates very much on addressing difficulties in literacy. There is less emphasis on numeracy or social and behavioural targets where these would be helpful.

36. Overall, curriculum planning is very good for pupils under five and good in Key Stages 1 and 2 although there is some variation in quality and format. Although subject policies are in place, many are in need of revision. The school is aware of this. Teachers work hard to produce very detailed long, medium and short term planning which clearly identifies the knowledge, skills and understanding that they expect pupils to develop at each stage. Whilst planning is good, there is insufficient identification of sharply focused assessment criteria against which to judge pupils' attainment and progress.

37. The curriculum is enhanced by educational visits. Pupils visit a variety of museums to support work in history and science and they use their own locality and places further afield to develop geographical skills and knowledge. Numerous visitors contribute towards pupils' knowledge in subjects such as history and geography. A wide range of interesting and well supported extra-curricular activities help to enrich the curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 2. Team competitions against other schools in games such as football and netball contribute to pupils' personal and social development, as do residential trips which are enjoyed by pupils in Years 4 and 6. The French club makes a contribution to pupils' cultural development.

38. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing pupils' attainment at the end of the key stages. Overall, teachers know their pupils well and day to day assessments such as the use of question and answer techniques, are generally effective. However, the information which is gathered about pupils' attainment and progress is rarely recorded in any detail. Recording of pupils' academic and personal progress is a significant weakness and does not meet requirements to keep such ongoing records in the core subjects and for pupils' personal and general skills. During the inspection it became apparent that some teachers do not see the need for formal record keeping. The assessment of pupils under five is very good. Children are assessed when they join the Reception class and the ongoing records of their progress which are kept by the teacher are used well to inform the planning of future work and this ensures that they make good progress.

39. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils undertake a number of statutory and non-statutory tests including National tests at the end of the key stages, Cheshire Tests and reading tests. Information is derived from these tests and teachers use the information well overall to target pupils' learning

40. Subject policies give guidance on assessment procedures however, the school does not have an overall assessment and marking policy. Whilst some teachers' marking is detailed and helpful to pupils, the standard of marking is inconsistent. Opportunities are missed for teachers to provide pupils with suitable comments and targets which will help them to improve their learning in the future. Where marking is good, teachers make detailed and helpful comments and there is evidence of pupils correcting work. Some, marking is much more superficial and there is some evidence of work being left unmarked.

· **Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

· 41. The delivery of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values to pupils is good. Such delivery is assured by the breadth and balance of the curriculum and is supported by a range of extracurricular activity. The pupils' sense of awe and wonder is stimulated through a range of curriculum studies. In science Key Stage 1 pupils have studied how electricity works. Pupils in Year 5 have looked at the life cycle of butterflies and plants. Both key stages have studied art through the work of leading artists. The quality of their artwork in watercolour, pencil sketches, collage and model making reveals their appreciation for the wonder of art. Their religious education studies include comparing Christianity with other world religions whilst worship is used to give insight into relationships and self worth. Collective worship meets with statutory requirements.

42. The school provides good moral guidance through its behaviour management strategies, its opportunities for self development and provision for the pupils to reflect on the needs of others. This works well for most pupils. They understand right from wrong and the majority conduct themselves well. A small group of junior age pupils persistently display poor behaviour and lack self-discipline, and their conduct unfairly restricts learning for the majority. The school's provision to support these pupils is not entirely effective.

43. The quality of pupils' social development is good overall. During observations pupils were often seen on cooperative activities when they worked well together and were keen to celebrate the work of others. There is a good range of extracurricular activities in which pupils can join in. They also have opportunity to go on residential visits away from home, and visits to places of interests linked to the curriculum. Parents comment that pupils show good social skills during these activities. They support a number of charities through donations and are represented on the parish council.

44. The pupils gain a broad insight into the values and beliefs of their own and other cultures through broad curriculum provision. In history lessons they have studied Roman and Egyptian cultures. Year 4 pupils have looked at the history of the British Isles over the last 10,000 years and studied what life is like in a village in India. Year 3 pupils have visited Chester as part of a project studying the Roman occupation of Britain. Several classes across the key stages have compared Christianity with other world religions. Visitors to the school have introduced the pupils to how Victorians dressed and a Caribbean artist has worked with them to produce painted masks. There is a range of extracurricular provision for sport and music as well as a French language club for Year 6 pupils and a computer club. The quality of provision is good, the school has improved on this aspect since the last inspection with a greater emphasis on knowledge of other cultures.

45. The development of values for those pupils who are under five years is good. During an assembly for Key Stage 1 the youngest pupils were eager participants during a story on friendship and understood the concept. When moving between lessons they are well behaved and during lessons they are seen to work well together.

· **Support, guidance and pupils welfare**

· 46. The quality of pastoral care is very good. The pupils are well known to staff and their knowledge is used for the effective delivery of support and advice. Assessment of pupils' academic progress is thorough but in some cases inconsistent. However, the recording of personal and academic progress is a significant weakness and does not meet requirements. Effective monitoring arrangements are in place for behaviour incidents but the school does not have rigorous arrangements for monitoring attendance. Provision of support for pupils with special educational needs is mainly good.

47. There are useful rules for good conduct which are displayed in every classroom and this is supported by a rewards system. However, in practice not all pupils live up to these expectations and a minority of them require a much clearer framework of what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour along with a full understanding of the consequences of their actions. The system for rewarding good effort although evident would benefit from review to offer pupils incentives on a more regular basis to motivate them to achieve. There is a home-school contract arrangement which involves an agreement between parents, pupils and the school, which includes an agreement for good behaviour and compliance with the school's code of conduct. The school does not tolerate bullying and its strategies include measures to deal promptly with any incidence. Overall the school's provision for the management of behaviour is effective for most pupils but does not fully meet the needs of all of them.

48. The Headteacher is the designated child protection officer. The very good pastoral relationships serve to ensure that teachers and support staff would recognise a child whose welfare was of concern. However, although the school uses the LEA guidelines for child protection staff do not generally understand the formal procedures required in the event that a child revealed an incident to them. In this regard, the school does not meet with the previous inspection report finding: that the school complies with legal requirements for child protection.

49. Pupils are tutored through a structured programme for health and sex education. Visitors invited to the school, to support the teaching of health and safety issues include, a fire safety officer, police constable, school nurse and a hospital nurse. The school is a safe, secure learning environment.

50. The provision for education of those pupils who are under five years is in a building separate from the main building. These pupils have their own play area and the provision is safe and secure.

- **Partnership with parents and the community**

- 51. The school has a clearly stated commitment to involve parents in the life of the school and parents acknowledge that they are welcomed. They feel able to be involved and are happy with the school's open door policy. Parents are overall satisfied with the quality of information provided, with some concern that not enough information is provided on children who have difficulties.

52. Regular and frequent newsletters inform on all aspect of school activities and are used to consult with parents on issues such as school uniform and the home, school contract. The school receives significant support from fund raising by the parent teacher association. The home, school agreement has formalised responsibilities in relation to the children's education. Although the school has produced guidance for parental assistance in school, limited support by parents in the classroom was observed during the inspection.

53. The current provision for community involvement is insufficient to impact well on attainment and personal development and the school has not improved on the previous reports finding: that community links contribute to attainment and personal development. However, there are some positive links including regular visits from the fire brigade for fire and smoke safety, and the local police constable teaches pupils cycle skills and 'stranger danger' awareness. The pupils support a local charity through the sale of Harvest Festival produce The school has close links with its local secondary school but there are no formal pre-school links.

54. Induction procedures are good and parents welcome the support and information they receive when their children start school.

- **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

- **Leadership and management**

55. The quality of leadership is good. The Headteacher gives a firm steer to the work of the school and has a commitment to raising standards, which is well demonstrated in practice. He sustains a high profile within the school and provides clear leadership and direction as well as a good model of teaching. The introduction of recent, national initiatives have been effectively implemented to support attainment and progress. The management of some on going matters for example, of appraisal, updating job descriptions, formalised monitoring and the compilation of on-going records of pupils' progress have been discussed at length but not actioned. The Headteacher has the utmost respect of governors, staff, pupils and parents. As noted in the previous inspection report his leadership is a strength of the school.

56. The governing body works closely with the Headteacher and staff in determining the way forward. Through its committee structure and linked governors, the governing body fulfils most of its duties and responsibilities in ensuring that statutory obligations are met. Individual governors make frequent visits to the school and offer their knowledge, expertise and support on a regular basis. Named governors have undertaken training in the implementation of the recent government initiatives for literacy and numeracy. This dynamic approach ensures they have a good awareness of the life of the school. This is in line with previous findings.

57. The school has addressed all of the key issues in the 1996 report but with varying degrees of success. The school development plan now covers five years and includes priorities as suggested in the first key issue. Through an agreed system of development planning the Headteacher and governors identify relevant targets, take the necessary action and evaluate their progress towards them on an annual basis in partnership with the staff.

58. The school has sustained the quality of provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social education and has improved their knowledge of other cultures and faiths. It has maintained a broad and balanced curriculum and made significant strides in improving its provision for information technology.

59. The school has addressed to some extent the issue of developing the curriculum coordinator's role. Coordinators have led policy development and given valuable advice and support to colleagues but they have not been given the opportunity to observe and monitor teaching and learning at first hand neither have they shared their teaching skills and subject specialises through demonstration. This does diminish the school's potential to sustain and extend good standards of attainment in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education as noted in the last key inspection.

60. The school is very successful in being a caring community. The Headteacher and staff know their pupils and families well. The ethos for learning is good. The school's aims, covering curricular and personal development for the pupils, and the achievement of an enjoyable but purposeful approach to its work, are largely met. The school's policies are obvious in its work, and are generally implemented successfully, save for the behavioural policy. The inspection agrees with most of the supportive comments made in the last report and of the parents' comments. The main exception is that although the school has high expectations for pupils to behave well their behaviour ranges from excellent to poor and that in spite of the teachers' best endeavours incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour affect progress in some classes.

61. Most statutory requirements, including equality of opportunity for pupils with special educational needs, the curriculum and assessment, and collective worship are met. However, there is no whole school procedure for recording pupils' attainment and personal development, no established Child Protection procedures are in place and the statutory appraisal procedures for the Headteacher and teachers have not been well sustained during recent initiatives. The school prospectus does not detail information about the curriculum or the school's policy for sex education.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

62. The school benefits from an effective team of appropriately qualified, committed and dedicated teaching staff. Teachers are generally well deployed and they have appropriate expertise and experience to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are coordinators for all subjects who take a lead in developing the curriculum but their role in monitoring standards is presently insufficiently developed. The number of support staff is low to match the range of needs within the school. However, educational support staff are of a very high calibre and they provide good levels of support to both teachers and pupils and this has an impact on pupils' progress. The classroom assistant who works with older pupils is not always deployed where she is most needed.

63. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory but not linked well to appraisal. Teachers are provided with a variety of relevant training which is generally linked to curriculum development priorities but also takes account of individual needs and wishes. Much of the recent training for teachers has been focused on the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. This has had a positive impact on teachers' knowledge and understanding of these initiatives with the result that the school has a good strategy for both literacy and numeracy. A further priority has been to develop information technology. There has been much training in this area which has had a significant impact on both teachers' knowledge and understanding and on pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers are generally supportive of each other and this helps new teachers to settle quickly into the school. Whilst teaching and support staff are generally clear about their roles within the school, they do not all have up to date job descriptions and the formal system of teacher appraisal has lapsed.

64. Overall, the accommodation of the school is good. The school is spacious and provides good opportunities for pupils to learn in a pleasant, bright and stimulating environment. A designated computer room is put to effective use to enable pupils to make good progress in developing information technology skills. The school hall which is used for assemblies, physical education lessons and for pupils to eat their lunches is adequate overall but its size restricts the opportunities in gymnastics lessons particularly for large classes of older pupils. Outside, there are adequate hard areas for play but the school does not have the benefit of a grass area on site. The reception class is some distance from the main school building and this impedes some activities where the facilities, such as the hall, are within the main building, particularly during bad weather. Pupils in the reception class have a separate secure play area but this does not have any form of markings and consequently it is uninteresting. A wide range of attractive and informative displays help to create many interesting classrooms, shared areas and corridors. However, the oldest pupils do not benefit from such stimulating surroundings. The cleanliness of the school buildings is a credit to the site manager and cleaning staff.

65. Overall, the range and quality of learning resources is good, comfortably meeting the needs of the National Curriculum. All subjects are at least adequately resourced and the resources for English, science, information technology, art, geography, history and music are good. The school has invested a large amount of money in improving the resources for teaching information technology. This has had a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The school's stock of resources for religious education and history is supplemented well by regular loans from the local authority and museum loans service. Visits and the local environment are used well to support pupils' learning.

·
·
·

The efficiency of the school

66. Governors, working with the Headteacher and staff, have ensured that most of the key issues from the previous inspection have been fully addressed, and that improvements have been made. The exception to this is the extent of the curriculum coordinator's role.

67. Financial planning and control are very good. The governors' finance committee together with the Headteacher regularly and carefully monitors spending and evaluates value for money effectively.

68. There is a deficit in the budget, agreed with the local authority, which is carefully budgeted for over the next two years. The reasons for the deficit are linked to refurbishments of the building and increased allocation of resources to information technology. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Effective use is made of the Headteacher's time in working with pupils with special educational needs, and contributing strongly to the quality of support. This compensates well for the loss of the part-time special needs teacher. Time and effort is put into enriching the experiences offered to the more able pupils in partnership with neighbouring schools. Teaching and support staff are well deployed. Funds for in-service training are used effectively. The impact of staff training on pupils' progress in information technology has been very positive. The staff are using their training well to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

69. The accommodation is well maintained and its use by the staff and pupils has a positive effect on the overall quality of education provided. Resources are good and staff and pupils make best use of what is available. Extra funding made available through the school's own efforts has resulted in significant strides being made in the provision for information technology.

70. Given its staffing, resources and accommodation and the efficiency of their use, the school gives good value for money.

· **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

· **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

71. The quality of education for pupils under five is very good and is a strength of the school. Curriculum planning for these pupils is of the highest quality. It is accurately based upon excellent assessments of the children's needs and the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five years old. The classroom is located away from the main school building and this causes some constraints on linking with the rest of the school. However, the accommodation is used well and is safe and secure. The areas of learning are evident in the organisation and displays, which are very well presented. The quality of teaching is consistently either very good or excellent. Young children receive a very good start to their school career in this class and benefit from the warm relationships, teachers' hard work and care given by the classroom assistant.

72. The children's personal, social and emotional development are well served by the teachers' knowledge and understanding of young children. They have plenty of opportunities to be independent, select resources and tidy away. They are regularly encouraged to listen to each other and to share. Although these young children have only been in school for a short time they live up to the expectations of the teachers very well. The children's behaviour is very good. Planning for personal and social development is extensive and is focusing rightly on learning to share, respect for others, concentrating and trying hard. The children are able to show sensitivity towards the feelings of others close to them.

73. Most children speak clearly and listen well. Some are shy when talking to visitors whilst others have considerable confidence to say what they think and ask questions. They can recite a good range of nursery rhymes by heart and the teacher uses this knowledge very well to introduce letters and sounds during reading activities. They gain particular enjoyment from listening to stories for example, 'The story of Noah' and many children show excellent listening skills. Only a few lose concentration. Books are handled well, most children are acquiring the early conventions of reading from left to right and they can make up their own version of the story from following the pictures and turn the pages carefully. Pupils enjoy reading to an adult and some can already read simple text with repetitive words. They are developing early writing skills well and can trace over the lines of pictures and trace their own name. They are beginning to know the shapes of letters and copy them with varying degrees of accuracy. Some can write their names, identify and write the letters of the alphabet and use these to attempt to spell words. A number of children quickly identify the sounds which start a given word. These young children are already becoming aware of patterns within words and some can recognise common sight words, for example, 'the'. These children are working very well towards the targets for literacy on entry to the National Curriculum.

74. Standards in numeracy and mathematical understanding of shapes and measures are good. The children are able to count to ten, and recognise and sequence the numerals one to ten. Interesting activities which capture their imagination enable them to remember and recognise their numbers. For example, they can make sets of two objects, decide which sets containing two objects should be coloured in, recite rhymes such as 'Two Little Dickey Birds' and consolidate their knowledge by making two large and two small sandcastles. Scrutiny of the baseline assessments shows that the children can make and continue a pattern, match and colour objects and follow a key with some help, to colour shapes. Other examples of their skill in early mathematics includes their ability to sort a set of animals that live on a farm, draw large and small apples and tall and short flowers. Most pupils can recognise squares, circles, rectangles and triangles. They sing a variety of number rhymes to consolidate their understanding of numbers up to five. Pupils make good progress in the Desirable Learning Outcomes towards the targets of the National Curriculum.

75. Pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They develop their senses by using a 'feely bag' and explore natural and man made materials. They are able to describe a stone as cold and hard, a sponge as rough and a fir cone as prickly and some are beginning to look closely at similarities and differences of materials. They have studied insects and can recognise and name some by sight. Children are familiar with computers. The children concentrated very well when being introduced to the computer. They were eager to learn and have hands on experience. They make good progress in using a mouse to click on objects and respond to instructions. Most share well when using the computer and help each other.

76. Children who are under five attain average standards in physical activity. They make good progress in developing control and mobility. The children enjoy creative activities and attain well. Many manipulate materials and control paintbrushes well to make large class friezes to show insects which live in grass. They mainly use paint carefully and are able to glue on materials. The teacher and classroom assistant allow the pupils to use their own imagination and do not try to impose their own ideas on the children's work. No actual physical education lessons were observed but planning thoroughly identifies the range of activities to be covered which are all appropriate for the children's age, for example, travelling using different body parts and an emphasis on the use of space. The children have access to a safe, secure outdoor play area.

77. The classroom is organised to give children opportunity for structured play and role play activities. It is bright, well displayed and supports learning well. Pupils attain and progress as expected for their age in creative and imaginative development. In a music lesson the children explored the different sounds they could make with their bodies, for example, clapping and stamping. During story time children can take on the roles of characters and they discuss how they might feel or replicate the sounds made by animals.

· ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

· English

78. The most recent national tests in 1999 show the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 or above was well above the national average. In comparison to similar schools the school's standard were lower than others. This shows an upward shift since the last inspection when the school's results were comparable with the national average and well below other schools. The caution previously described in the attainment section applies within English as the comparisons are based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals and this is not an accurate reflection of the socio-economic background of pupils. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The 1999 results for seven year olds show that reading and writing results were below average when compared nationally and very low in comparison to similar schools. This is a reflection of the pupils' prior attainment rather than teaching quality which is very good at Key Stage 1.

79. The inspection (which assesses pupils' attainment across all aspects of their learning in the subject) finds that by the age of 11 most pupils attain as expected nationally with a small minority who attain above. By the age of seven, most attain as expected but a significant minority attain above the national expectation. The school has not maintained and improved on the better than expected standards for most pupils found in the last inspection although test results by the age of 11 are now above average. This difference, and that between the most recent test results and the current inspection findings can be explained by the fact that different groups of pupils with varying needs are involved in the comparisons. The school is also recognising higher proportions of pupils with special educational needs than at the time of the previous inspection.

80. There is a noticeable difference in the rate of pupils' progress between and within the key stages. In Key Stage 1 pupils' progress is good with some very good progress when all of the available evidence, including work from the previous year, is taken into account. In lessons, the majority of pupils, whatever their levels of prior attainment, are learning sounds to help with reading and writing, consolidating skills and acquiring new knowledge about language patterns and their use. The reason why so many pupils make good progress is because teachers have high expectations of all pupils and provide interesting and challenging tasks. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress in Years 3 and 4 is at least satisfactory and mainly good. They are consolidating key skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing to enable them to communicate effectively in a wide range of situations. However, when they move into Year 5 pupils' progress is adequate but disappointing given their prior attainment. There is evidence of repetition in work from the previous year. Some time is lost in lessons partly because of pupils' behaviour and in part due to a lack of rigour in disciplining pupils. In Year 6, pupils are expected to work hard and the quality of the teacher's marking regularly highlights areas for improvements, which aids progress. This good practice is not securely replicated throughout the school. These older pupils mainly apply their growing skills in literacy to good effect in the other subjects and this enhances their progress in such subjects as science, history, geography and religious education. Throughout the school pupils identified with special educational needs make generally good progress and are developing confidence in expressing their thoughts in speaking and writing as well as developing effective strategies to enable them to read unfamiliar words and texts. They receive good quality support from their teachers and learning support staff. All are making good progress towards the learning targets set for them in their individual educational plans. Most pupils, whatever their prior level of attainment, are making good progress in developing the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and grammar.

81. At both key stages, pupils attain standards as expected nationally in speaking and listening with a significant minority of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 who attain higher standards. A small minority of seven year olds are passive and lack effective listening skills and the ability to phrase their responses in sentences. Most pupils speak confidently and listen carefully in lessons. For example, in Year 2, many

are able to read aloud with confidence a poem called 'Anger'. They add appropriate expression and answer the teacher's questions correctly. In the literacy hours observed many are keen to respond to questions from class teachers and they join readily in discussions about books and language. By the age of 11, most pupils can explain their work, have the confidence to open conversations with adults and are keen to offer their ideas on subjects which require debate, for example, fox hunting. The listening skills of most pupils are acute but a minority do not listen well. For example, a group of pupils were clearly given a task by the teacher but when proceeding with their work almost all were unaware that they were required to make notes about the main points from their reading book. During the school year pupils have opportunities to engage in regular debates, drama productions and to perform in assemblies. All of these activities support their confidence and abilities to talk to an audience.

82. Attainment in reading is in line with the national expectation by the ages of seven and 11 with a significant minority of seven year olds who read very well and a smaller proportion of 11 year olds who are fluent and critical readers. By the age of seven, pupils have gained a firm knowledge of letter sounds, blends and key words. The teaching of phonics is very thorough to help pupils move forward with reading independently and most pupils are learning appropriate ways of working out how to read unfamiliar words. Pupils are regularly encouraged to look for clues to help them read the words. By the age of seven, many can identify the plot of the story, talk about and find their favourite part and the higher attainers show an understanding of the main points. Thesaurus are not available at Key Stage 1 to support higher attainers in extending their understanding of word meanings. By the age of 11, pupils can discuss the storyline, give clear views on the genre of a story which they enjoy reading, refer to the text to make a point and locate information using a range of sources including CD ROMs. The average and higher attainers can readily explain how to use reference tools, for example, an index, contents page and glossary. Pupils write short reviews of the books they have read to influence their classmates' choice. The most capable readers at Key Stage 2 quickly correct their reading errors without help. Pupils throughout the school do not have sufficient, regular opportunities to read poetry and playscripts but the school recognises this and has targeted it as an area for improvement. Overall, the pupils' attainment in reading has a positive influence on work in other subjects. Reading homework supports pupils' attainment where parents are supportive of this initiative.

83. Attainment in writing at both key stages is in line with national expectations. As with reading a significant minority of seven year olds can write at a better than expected level. By the age of seven, most pupils write neatly and are developing a joined script. They know how to use capital letters and full stops and are beginning to use them regularly in their writing. They spell simple words correctly and many spell more complex words with good, plausible attempts. Pupils use their writing to phrase questions in history, for example, when studying old toys they write riddles to be answered 'What is it?'. Other examples of their growing ability to write to describe and communicate what they know includes, letters to Red Riding Hood, retelling of the Easter Story, writing party invitations, and describing the life cycle of butterflies. A good deal of effort has been given by teachers to aid pupils in writing independently and this is evident in the overall good quality and originality of the work by the end of Key Stage 1. By the age of 11, pupils can write good descriptions of their studies of Malpas in geography and complete charts accurately about what homes are made of. They are able to rewrite famous stories in their own words, for example, the tale of Romulus and Remus. In history they sequence facts correctly to describe the routes of the Roman Legions and write from the perspective of others, for example, describing a legionnaires life. Writing is usefully linked to all subjects including art, when they write well-constructed descriptions of the artist, Nicholas Hillary, who lived in Tudor times. Their skills in note taking are less well developed and also their extended story writing often lacks structure, that is, clear introduction, setting and conclusion, and contains only limited vocabulary. The school's literacy audit had identified a number of areas for improvement including these noted by the inspection. There are examples of very well-written poetry by pupils from all age groups which have been collated to form a book called 'Alport Voices'. Many of these poems are humorous, touching and incisive.

84. Pupils' response is mainly good with some variance between the key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes are good and at times very good. They respond extremely well to the highly motivating teaching they receive. In Key Stage 2, most pupils' attitudes are at least satisfactory with some, which are very good. For example, pupils with special educational needs feel secure in their learning in small groups and enjoy co-operating together. Pupils in Year 3 pay very good attention when concentrating to identify the atmosphere of a story. In Year 4, most pupils are attentive but there is some regular disruptive behaviour from a group of boys who persistently lack self-discipline and waste the teacher's time in spite of her vigilance. This behaviour is detrimental to progress within the lesson. A similar picture emerges in Year 5 when for example, many pupils show a willingness to join in shared reading work, a significant minority are not concentrating and are frequently fidgeting or are entirely passive in their responses. Too many of these pupils work at their pace, which is too slow, rather than one directed by the teacher. The oldest pupils are capable of lively, good natured debate. They can settle quickly to work and are quite clear about what is required of them. However, an element within the class lacks the maturity and initiative to settle to work. From Year 4 onwards there is a definite link between the inappropriate response of some pupils and the progress made.

85. The quality of teaching literacy is good overall but is most effective at Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. This is an overall improvement since the last inspection when now, teachers are catering for a wider range of ability and higher levels of special educational needs than previously. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen although some general weaknesses are evident higher up the school. In Key Stage 1, the quality of the teaching of literacy was consistently excellent during the inspection. In a lesson introducing speech to Year 1 pupils, the teacher's firm but caring approach settled the pupils quickly to make the very best use of time. The teacher's lively reading of 'The Pig in the Pond' captivated the pupils and enthused them to join in. Without losing the atmosphere so skilfully created, the teacher was able to introduce and reinforce technical points about punctuation, emphasising a word where there is an exclamation mark and highlighting reading cues. Although some pupils are still very young and lack concentration at no point did the teacher accept anything less than the best attention. Support and guidance during the well matched writing tasks were highly effective and a very good balance of praise and constructive comment enabled very good progress. This same unrelenting expectation for high quality, attention and participation was evident in Year 2 where teaching was also excellent. Very good teaching was also seen in Year 3 where although the approach is quieter it is nonetheless effective. Teaching in Year 4 is also of good quality but the teacher has to work much harder to curb the immaturity and silly behaviour of some pupils, which wastes her valuable time. In all of these very effective lessons each section of the literacy hour flows effortlessly from one section to the next. Lesson aims are clear, planning is good and work well-matched to build and reinforce on what pupils know, understand and can do. Effective questioning to test understanding was a regular feature of lessons seen in all classes. The teaching of English in Year 5 is satisfactory overall but lacks the rigour and high expectations seen elsewhere. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 6, lessons are well prepared and text is well chosen to suit the age and interests of pupils. The classroom environment and role model presented by teachers does not offer a sufficient support for literacy teaching in Years 5 and 6 as well as it does in the other classes. To further improve the quality of literacy teaching and aid pupils' progress, plenary sessions need to be given more emphasis in terms of time and use to check on what pupils have understood and to share targets with them, especially for the older pupils. Marking needs to be more consistent and helpful in directing how work can be improved and encouraging pupils to self check their own efforts. There is definitely scope to improve pupils' progress with clearer guidance and consistency of approach to managing pupils' behaviour in the upper school.

86. The management of English is effective overall. Considerable thought has been given to the literacy audit which has recognised many weaknesses raised by the inspection. Resources for the subject, which are mainly good, are efficiently used. The delivery of English meets the requirements outlined in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is good. The National Literacy Strategy Guidelines are used effectively to plan and teach the English programme. Teachers' daily judgements about attainment are reasonably secure. However, the school does formalise these into ongoing records of progress to aid continuity between classes and phases as

required. Teachers' plans and pupils' work are monitored but rigorous observation of teaching and learning and sharing the expertise of staff through demonstration is not common practice to improve and use skills to best effect or support the teaching of English in the upper school. The library is attractive, very accessible and well stocked. More playscripts and poetry books are required and thesaurus are not available at Key Stage 1. In most respects, the overall ethos in which English is taught is good and the subject supports the school's aims well.

• **Mathematics**

87. National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 2 pupils in 1999, show slightly more pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 or above than is found nationally. In comparison to similar schools the school is below others. The caution previously described in the attainment section applies within mathematics as the comparisons are based on the numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals and this is not an accurate reflection of the socio-economic background of pupils. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

88. National Curriculum tests of seven year olds in 1999 show that pupils results were below national averages and very low in comparison to similar schools. This is a reflection of the prior attainment of the pupils rather than the teaching quality they receive as this is high quality and supports progress well.

89. The previous inspection found that attainment by the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 was better than the national expectation for most pupils. This inspection finds a change in that pupils' attainment is currently in line with the national expectation at Key Stage 1 with a significant minority of pupils above this level. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is also in line with the national expectation with a small minority of pupils below the expected level and a small minority above it. This difference can be explained to some extent by the different groups of pupils assessed and the changing nature of the school's cohort.

90. By the age of seven, pupils are becoming proficient in applying their mathematical knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Pupils recognise numbers and use them confidently. They count in twos, fives and tens, and use addition and subtraction to solve simple problems which involve number and money. Their understanding of place value is satisfactory. For example, they add and subtract numbers with tens and units. Most pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of multiplication and they solve simple multiplication problems. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures. They recognise and name two and three dimensional shapes such as cubes and cuboids and they refer to the number of faces and edges when describing them. They think of an angle as a turn and they identify right angles in different shapes. Pupils know that a fraction is a part of something and they identify a half and a quarter of a given shape.

91. By the age of 11, pupils have sound skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding when solving problems. Pupils' use and application of basic number skills are sound. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of multiplication tables to ten times ten. They identify the factors of numbers, noticing any which are common to different numbers. Pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers accurately and many add and subtract numbers which have two places of decimals. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of fractions and decimals and they are beginning to understand the relationship between them. For example they equate a quarter with 0.25. When working with fractions, most pupils are proficient at finding fractional parts of shapes and numbers. Pupils have a clear understanding of shape, space and measures. They use a range of standard measures accurately and correctly. Pupils have a well-developed mathematical vocabulary which is used appropriately. Pupils measure and draw angles to the nearest degree. When examining, measuring and describing angles, they use terms such as 'acute' and 'obtuse'. They calculate the area of rectangles by both counting squares and by multiplication and they confidently work out the perimeter of shapes. The great

majority have a good understanding of co-ordinates and they locate points on a grid both accurately and confidently. When handling data, pupils display a secure knowledge and understanding of different ways of recording information and statistics. They use tally charts and both create and interpret accurately bar, line and pie charts.

92. Overall, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils arrive at the school with average mathematical skills and knowledge, with lower attaining pupils coming in with below average number skills. The youngest pupils begin to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than' and they develop sound number skills such as recognising numbers and matching the number of objects to the written number. They count confidently and place the numbers to ten in the correct order. By Year 1, pupils add numbers to 15 and begin to use mathematical symbols for 'add' and 'equals'. In Year 3, pupils make good progress in their understanding of number relationships and use their knowledge effectively to solve money problems. For example, they convert pence to pounds and pence and vice versa. Most Year 4, pupils add and subtract two digit numbers mentally using appropriate strategies. Many pupils know at least the two, five and ten times tables and also know other multiplication tables. Pupils in Year 5 further develop a range of strategies for solving number problems such as doubling to build up multiplication tables.

93. Overall, pupils have good attitudes towards mathematics. Response in Key Stage 1 is very good. Pupils often enjoy the challenge of mental mathematics. They are enthusiastic and keen to answer questions. Behaviour is mostly good and many pupils concentrate well on their tasks. A small minority of pupils lack concentration and perseverance which limits their progress. Pupils respond well to the good teaching, listening attentively and joining in discussions and answering questions keenly. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are strong at both key stages.

94. The quality of teaching is good overall. In Key Stage 1, teaching is of an exceptionally high standard and one third of lessons observed were very good whilst two thirds were excellent. In Key Stage 2, teaching varied between satisfactory and very good with one sixth of lessons being very good, two thirds being good and one sixth satisfactory. Teachers have taken on the National Numeracy Strategy with great enthusiasm and this is conveyed to the pupils who respond positively. The implementation of the strategy is good. Lessons have a brisk pace, are fun and they challenge pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers plan their lessons well, identifying what they want the pupils to learn, including appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In the very best lessons, which were in Year 2, the teacher employed very effective direct teaching and questioning skills to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding which supported their progress well. A significant minority also attain at higher levels because of this good teaching. The very good teaching led to high levels of interest and a keen desire by the pupils to work to a high standard.

95. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Whilst teachers know their pupils well and a variety of statutory and other assessments are carried out, there is no formal system of recording the outcomes of these assessments and consequently the information is not put to best use in ensuring that pupils build effectively on their prior attainment. The school's strategy for developing pupils' numeracy skills is good and there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to practise these in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in science where they measure and record information in the form of tables and graphs, in design technology where they create scale drawings, and in geography as they use co-ordinates to read maps. The role of the coordinator is insufficiently linked to monitoring standards of teaching and learning.

• **Science**

96. The results of the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds were well above the national average and well matched to teacher assessments. In comparison to similar schools the results were close to the average. The caution previously described in the attainment section applies within science as the comparisons are based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals and this is not an accurate reflection of the socio-economic background of pupils. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. There is a significant positive difference in the test result performance from the previous inspection.

97. The inspection finds that most pupils by the age of seven attain in line with the national average with a significant minority who attain above. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good experimental and investigative skills. They make effective use of observation and are beginning to predict what will happen in their investigations. Many are able to record their findings in words, tables and charts. They can use their literacy skills and numeracy skills to good effect. Many pupils know at a basic level what constitutes a fair test. Most have a good knowledge of life and living processes for example, they can recount that plants and animals need water to survive and that a healthy diet is important to human beings. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties are good, as is their awareness of physical phenomena. For example, when experimenting with electricity they understood that batteries store electricity and that some materials are better conductors than others.

98. By the age of 11, pupils attain in line with the national expectation and a small minority attain above. Most pupils have well-developed scientific investigation skills. They have a clear understanding of fair tests and why they are important, most can make sensible predictions about what might happen and give some justifiable explanation as to why. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of both natural and physical phenomena are secure. Pupils use and understand a good range of scientific vocabulary associated with animals such as 'carnivore, omnivore, and herbivore' to describe their eating habits. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of electricity when connecting light bulbs in series within a circuit. Pupils' progress in following their own lines of enquiry is less well developed.

99. The significant majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory, steady progress at both key stages in developing their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. Progress is good in Key Stage 1 where the teaching is of high quality. Year 2 pupils make good progress in applying their knowledge to construct simple electrical circuits. Year 3 pupils further their understanding of the different purposes of animal and human teeth and the type of food they eat. Year 4 pupils make early attempts at classification keys when categorising animals and birds into groups. In Year 5, pupils learn about the solar system, the relationship of the earth to the sun and its effect on our environment. Year 6 deepen their knowledge of working with electrical circuits and solving problems.

100. Pupils' response is overall positive at both key stages. In Key Stage 1, in Year 2, they are very well behaved and sensible and show a real eagerness to explore 'Why would you buy a throw away torch?' They worked cooperatively in pairs and engaged in purposeful talk about the task. At Key Stage 2, most are willing and interested learners however, there are echoes from the previous report in identifying a small minority of pupils throughout Key Stage 2 who lack the self-discipline necessary during practical activities.

101. The quality of teaching seen at Key Stage 1 was high. In Key Stage 2, most teaching was satisfactory with a good lesson seen for the oldest pupils. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the aspects of the subject, particularly of life and living processes and physical phenomena such as electricity which is well passed on to pupils. Scrutiny of work in Year 3 shows extensive work in science of good quality. Where teaching was excellent in Year 2 direct teaching of subject skills and use of scientific terminology supported the pupils' understanding. The teacher put an onus on the pupils to think for themselves. The lesson had excellent pace and presented suitable challenges for these young pupils which was well supported by skilful questioning. Where teaching was good the lesson was well organised, with effective intervention. Where teaching was satisfactory lessons were carefully planned and soundly structured but there were limited opportunities for pupils to go beyond the task set by the teacher. An area for improvement is in allowing pupils to determine their own investigations or in framing hypotheses without direction by the teacher.

102. The delivery of science meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment is integral to the teacher's questioning and intervention. Teachers day to day assessments are good and inform planning well. However, records of ongoing progress in the subject are not available to aid continuity or support progress over time. The quality of long term planning is good. Resources are good and well used. Effective use is made of the environment to support learning in lessons. The subject is well managed and the coordinator has given advice and support to colleagues but has not monitored teaching and learning to look critically at how improvements could be made to raise attainment and progress. The most notable variation from the previous inspection is that standards were found to be better than expected and currently most pupils attain in line with the national expectation. This could be attributed to the changing nature of the school's intake with higher levels of special educational needs and that different groups of pupils are involved as teaching quality has remained the same.

Information technology

103. Attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. Over the past year, substantial advances have been made with regard to both curriculum provision and pupils' attainment and progress.

104. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers to generate and communicate information in different forms. Pupils log on to their chosen program, save and print work with help and sometimes unaided, and close down programs when they have finished. They name various parts of the computer such as mouse and keyboard and they have a clear understanding of the purpose of these components. Pupils demonstrate a growing subject vocabulary and are at ease in using terms such as 'icon'. When using a paint program, pupils select appropriate instruments to draw, erase and colour their pictures. When using a word processing program, pupils make effective use of the space bar, shift and capitals lock keys, and they make the font larger and smaller. Pupils are confident in using the click and drag function. For example when using a science program they move labels around the screen to match the names of body parts to the correct picture.

105. By the end of Key Stage 2, the substantial majority of pupils use computers confidently. They modify the style of text when word processing by making it bold, underlining and using italics. They are familiar with using spellchecker and they both save and print work unaided. When accessing different screens, pupils display an understanding of how to maximize and minimize windows. Pupils develop their own multi-media presentations which involve creating text boxes, moving these boxes around the screen and changing their size. Within these boxes, pupils compose text of different fonts, colours and sizes.

106. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least good progress at both key stages with pupils in Years 1 and 6 making very good progress. Keyboard and mouse skills are

successfully developed from the Reception class onwards as the pupils become acquainted with a wide variety of programs. These skills are built on effectively in Year 1 as pupils use a good range of different programs which support other subjects of the curriculum such as mathematics, science and geography. By Years 3 and 4, pupils are beginning to understand the versatility of the computer. In Year 3 they experiment with changing the colour of the print when word processing and in Year 4, pupils create numbered lists and change the position of text by using the 'cut and paste' functions.

107. Pupils' attitudes to information technology are at least good and often very good. They show a keen interest and this has an impact on their progress. They sustain concentration and persevere. For example, Year 6 pupils listened attentively to their teacher as he explained how to carry out some quite complex tasks and they then set about their tasks purposefully. When working together in pairs and small groups, pupils do so well, taking turns and sharing ideas. They treat computers and other equipment with respect. During information technology lessons, pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils in Key Stage 1 display particularly good attitudes as they set about their challenging tasks with enjoyment and a determination to develop their skills.

108. The quality of teaching is very good overall, never less than satisfactory and very good in three quarters of lessons. Teachers have made significant developments in their own knowledge, skills and understanding over the past year and they display an enthusiasm which is transferred to the pupils. There is very effective direct teaching of skills which revolves around a secure knowledge of the programs being used, clear explanations, and some very good demonstrations. Lessons are very well organised so that time is used well to keep pupils on task. The balance between direct teaching and pupils using this new knowledge to develop skills is very good and this has a significant impact on pupils' progress.

109. The curriculum for information technology is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Standards have remained the same since the last inspection but progress has improved. It is important to note when making comparisons in information technology that school's have had to address changes in the subject requirements and advances in technological hardware since 1996 when previously inspected. The recent improvements in both the curricular provision and pupils' progress, owe much to the teachers' commitment to develop their own skills in meeting these innovations. This has been achieved through in-service training led by the subject coordinator. The subject is supported well through the enthusiasm of the coordinator who has led the development of the subject very well. Whilst there is no doubt that the pupils make good progress overall, there are presently no ongoing records kept of individual pupils' attainment and progress. Resources are good. The school has recently invested a significant amount of money in the provision of high quality computers and software.

Religious education

110. Pupils attain in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of both key stages in their knowledge of Christianity, other religions including Islam, Hinduism and Judaism and their religious leaders. The pupils' responses to, and understanding of, why people worship, their levels of respect for other people and lifestyles, and that all religions are based on relating beliefs to actions and behaving with a sense of individual responsibility are less well developed.

111. By the age of seven, pupils know that the Bible is a holy book, that God made the world and gave us the sun for warmth and light. They are able to express their feelings about right and wrong when listening to the story of Adam and Eve. Pupils have a sound knowledge of religious festivals including Christmas, Easter and Harvest for Thanksgiving. They know that Moses was a messenger of God, and that the Burning Bush was sent as a message to him. Many can name the Ten Plagues of Egypt.

112. By the age of 11, pupils have a sound knowledge of the stories Jesus told from the New Testament. They have also studied Islam, Hinduism, and Judaism. They are able to name the Five Pillars of Islam, know that Muslims are followers of Islam, that their God is Allah and his messenger was Mohammed. Many can name similarities and differences between the Christian faith and Islam following discussion and then chart their findings in a table to match, for example, which religious festival belongs to which religion. They know that Ramadan is a festival when people fast. When studying Easter pupils have recognised the symbolism of the passionflower representing the Cross, the wounds of Christ, His crown of thorns and the apostles who betrayed Him. In their studies of Judaism, they are able to describe a synagogue and attributes of the faith.

113. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages in deepening their knowledge of Christianity and the other principal religions in Great Britain. Their progress in responding to religious and moral issues, reflecting on their own beliefs or developing respect and tolerance for other people and their beliefs is not yet satisfactory for all pupils. A small minority of higher attaining pupils are able to offer their views and make reasoned comments but this is not so for most pupils. Year 3 pupils showed a good recall of their learning about Islam over the past few weeks and were able to discuss and explain what they had to do very well.

114. At Key Stage 1, pupils respond well to the experiences offered to them. For example, in Year 2 when they listen to the story of Adam and Eve they concentrate hard and answer questions on its content. In Key Stage 2, most pupils listen attentively to the teachers and settle to the task. However, there are groups of pupils who lack self-discipline and maturity for their ages, have little respect for their peers who want to listen and get on nor do they show any respect for the religion they are studying.

115. In the lessons seen teaching was very good at Key Stage 1 and equally balanced between good and very good at Key Stage 2 and is good overall. No teaching of religious education was seen at upper Key Stage 2. This teaching quality is an improvement on the last inspection. Teachers relate stories very well to the pupils' lives. They create a positive ethos for the subject to aid pupils in developing respect. In Years 3 and 4 the teachers show a very good knowledge of the subject matter and explain vocabulary well. In Year 3 interesting activities were offered to check pupils' understanding and extension work given for the higher attainers. In Year 4, the teacher's vigilance and care shown to pupils who have behavioural and emotional needs were high and her patience was tested but nevertheless the teaching was good quality.

116. The school uses the Locally Agreed Syllabus as a basis for its planning. Since the last inspection, the Headteacher, who is the coordinator, has endeavoured, successfully, to place more emphasis on the teaching of other faiths and for pupils to use their literacy skills to record their work. The school recognises the need to focus more closely on pupils' understanding. Resources have improved and the school makes use of loan centres to complement its own resources. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of displays is very high and these were very well used to support progress in the lessons. The delivery of religious education meets overall the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

· **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

·
Art

117. At both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils produce artwork at a level better than is normally found for their ages. All pupils, including those with special educational need, make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills. As noted during the last inspection, pupils understand that 'images and artefacts are good sources of ideas for their work'. They are able to experiment successfully using tools and techniques for designing, drawing, painting, print making and textile work.

118. Pupils make good progress in drawing and sketching, for example, their observational drawings of features from the Blist Hill Museum showed good detail and perspective. Pupils throughout the school have tried different media such as pencils of different thickness, felt tips; pastels, watercolours and poster paints which they realise can be mixed to create different shades and tones. When drawing, Year 3 pupils are beginning to use line and shading well and they are becoming disciplined in their observations to draw what they see with a good degree of accuracy. The displays around the school pay tribute to the quality of teaching which has improved pupils' understanding and use of a wide range of techniques, including the production of two and three dimensional work; Tudor plaques, picture frames, masks and printed fabrics are just some examples.

119. At both key stages pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and enjoy sharing with visitors the techniques which they have used to produce the high quality work. In the lessons observed pupils behaved well, concentrated on their tasks and tried hard to improve their skills. Relationships were relaxed.

120. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. In the lesson seen, activities were well planned and specific skills effectively taught. For example, in teaching the skill of using shading and tone in observational drawing; as the pupils worked the teacher gave appropriate help and guidance on techniques which led to improvements in the quality of work.

121. The art curriculum is broad and balanced and effectively used to support work in the other subjects. The quality of displays is very good. Art is a strength of the school.

Design and technology

122. Standards in design and technology are as generally expected by the ages of seven and 11. By the time they leave the school, pupils display sound skills in designing and in making products from their designs. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.

123. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 begin to develop their design and technology skills through their use of a range of construction materials. They gradually become more accurate and confident in using simple tools such as scissors whilst making butterflies from paper and tissue. They design hanging decorations which incorporates their initial design, make it from clay and then create an attractive finish using paint. Year 2 pupils develop their awareness of design as they draw domestic appliances and label the parts. Pupils in Year 3 make satisfactory progress in developing food technology skills as they prepare and cook food for celebrations such as Ramadan and Christmas parties. When designing window scenes, pupils pay appropriate attention to their selection of materials. They then use fabrics, paper and card to produce some well-constructed and finished models. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils design and make doll's houses complete with working lights. They pay good attention to the scale of furniture, the materials they will use and how they will join them. Having constructed their houses, pupils evaluate their quality and suggest improvements. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 utilise and develop their design skills as they design and make lighthouses which incorporate an electrical circuit. These are well finished. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the design process. Designs are accurate and pupils produce scale drawings such as when they design a 'Squatter's Cottage'. When constructing their designs, pupils work with a range of materials and the tools needed to cut, shape and join them including saws and glue guns.

124. Pupils enjoy design and technology lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate well and persevere with their tasks. When working in pairs or small groups, pupils do so well, sharing ideas.

125. Although only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection at Key Stage 2, scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of teachers' planning and discussion with pupils enable a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching at both key stages.

126. At Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory, but teaching at Key Stage 2 was good in the lesson seen. Lessons are well planned to provide a balance between direct teaching of skills and providing pupils with adequate opportunities to develop skills and to be creative. The lesson was well organised, pupils were managed effectively and the teacher displayed secure subject knowledge.

127. The curriculum for design and technology is broad and balanced and provides a good range of interesting activities which help to develop progressively pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Resources are adequate.

Geography

128. No teaching of geography was seen during the inspection but scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils enable the judgement to be made that by the ages of seven and 11 pupils have a knowledge and understanding in line with what is generally expected for their ages.

129. By the age of seven, pupils have studied a contrasting locality and can identify different types of buildings within them and their uses. They have studied their village of Malpas in detail. They can describe a plan of the school and they know and use geographical words such as, road, footpath, map and field. Most know their own address, know that a globe represents our world and they can name the constituent countries of the British Isles.

130. By the age of 11, pupils have carried out detailed studies of their own village. They use their mapping skills to good effect when studying coastlines. They know about types of housing, homes and the materials they are made from. There is some good quality work on rocks, volcanoes and fossils linked to this topic. They have a sound knowledge of the weather, seasons and the course of a river. Pupils know about the similarities and differences between their lives and those of children who live in Chembakoli in India. They are able to draw information from graphs, maps and charts and compile the same when studying settlements.

131. Pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. They use their literacy and numeracy skills well to record what they know, research information and interpret data. Educational visits and the use of the local environment enhance the pupils' progress. By the time they leave the school pupils have established a sound base of learning about people, places and themes.

132. No overall judgements can be made about teaching or pupils' response as no teaching was seen at either key stage. However, from the teachers' planning and scrutiny of work it is evident that the delivery of the curriculum is broad and balanced and contributes well to pupils' social development. The pupils enjoy the activities and recall their studies with some enthusiasm.

History

133. No history teaching was seen at Key Stage 1 but scrutiny of work enables judgements to be made. Pupils have a suitable knowledge and understanding about history, people in the past and their lifestyles as is generally expected by the ages of seven and 11.

134. By the age of seven, pupils have learned the skills of being a history detective when they study pictures of the past. They have used timelines about their own lives and they can look for clues. They have used first hand sources to find out about the past, for example, in their study of St. Oswald's Church in Malpas. By the age of 11, pupils have broadened their knowledge and they know about the major periods in British history and have studied ancient civilisations such as The Ancient Greeks. Their current studies focus on the Romans and the Victorians. Pupils know that a fact is something that is true and an 'opinion is something that we think'. They can make justifiable comparisons between life in Roman times and present day. They are able to apply these skills when they study the Victorians. They can describe in detail attributes of Victorian homes and know about the influence of Queen Victoria.

135. Their progress, including for pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall but they do make good progress in Years 3 and 4. Visitors to the school enhance pupils' progress, for example, during the inspection a visitor brought in Victorian clothes for pupils to view and discuss. Pupils make satisfactory progress in handling artefacts to identify possible uses and then draw conclusions to make judgements. Pupils in Year 5 use their reading skills well to piece together characteristics of family members.

136. The pupils respond satisfactorily to the experiences offered. Most are very interested and curious to explore further either through research or by handling artefacts. They treat old objects with good care and work together cooperatively. A small group of boys in Year 5 has little respect for others when working in a group and continue talking out of turn.

137. The quality of teaching is good overall in the lessons seen at Key Stage 2. Planning covers a broad range of topics and teachers are creative in making introductions interesting to motivate pupils. There was good focus in Year 3 on key historical questions. The teacher worked very well with a group of lower attaining pupils to re explain the work and check that they fully understood the task. This gave many of them the confidence and security to work independently later in the lesson. In Year 5 teaching was well planned, prepared and resourced. Effective questioning probed what the pupils' has understood and encouraged them to qualify their ideas.

138. Resources are good and well used. Pupils use their literacy effectively to research and record and information. There are some very attractive displays, including timelines in Years 3 and 4 to support pupils' interest and curiosity. Educational visits to places of historical interest support the use of sources and pupils know how to access information from a CD ROM. The delivery of history contributes well to the school's broad and balanced curriculum.

Music

139. No music lessons were observed during the inspection. No judgements can be made about how well pupils attain and progress. However, there is evidence from planning and discussions with pupils that they are given access to engage in musical activities. In assembly pupils sang in tune and showed a good sense of rhythm and dynamics. They take care with the diction of the songs. There are many opportunities for pupils to listen and appreciate music and to perform. Pupils have opportunities to sing in the school choir, at musical concerts accompany actors in drama productions, carol concerts and social events for parents during the school year. Instrumental tuition from peripatetic instructors is available. There is expertise on the staff to accompany pupils singing in assemblies. The school is well resourced for music, with a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments.

Physical education

140. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and by

the age of 11, their skills are similar to those which might be expected for pupils of that age. The great majority of pupils can swim at least the prescribed 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

141. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, approximately half of the pupils are able to swim 25 metres. Pupils develop progressively their gymnastic skills and are beginning to understand the importance of warming up before undertaking strenuous activity. Space is used appropriately as pupils hop, run and jump around the hall successfully avoiding others. Many pupils demonstrate good poise as they perform sequences of movements which involve jumping and balancing. When pupils move basic apparatus such as mats, they do so with care and due regard for the safety of themselves and others. Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their physical skills. In a Year 4 dance lesson pupils demonstrated sound skills in changing their shape, size, direction and level when portraying prey or predators. By Year 5, pupils are often creative as they perform a number of different balances on two, three and four body parts. By Year 6, pupils analyse the performance of others, commenting on what they liked about various movements and giving appropriate reasons. For example, one girl commented that the balance of another pupil was good because she kept her back straight.

142. Most pupils enjoy physical education. They have positive attitudes to lessons and the majority both concentrate hard and try to improve their performances. Most pupils behave well, listen carefully to their teachers, and willingly follow instructions. When given the opportunity to work together in pairs, pupils usually do so with good levels of cooperation and collaboration. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils worked well individually and then with a partner. The response of a small but significant number of older pupils' response is unsatisfactory. These pupils do not listen to the teacher with sufficient care or carry out instructions appropriately.

143. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with elements of good and very good. The best teaching which is very good is mainly in Key Stage 1. Lessons are appropriately planned and they have a sound structure which always includes a warm up activity. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. Most lessons have a brisk pace which promotes pupils' motivation and interest. Where teaching is very good, such as in a Year 2 lesson, there is very good direct teaching of skills, an onus on pupils to think for themselves as they explore different movements, and demonstration of pupils' skills is used to very good effect.

144. The physical education curriculum is broad and balanced and generally provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to build on their prior skills. The curriculum in Key Stage 2 is supported by an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, by the school's involvement in sports competitions with other schools and by an annual residential outdoor activity trip which is enjoyed by Year 6 pupils.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

XXXIII. A team of four inspectors carried out the inspection, one of whom was a lay inspector. The inspection lasted for four full days. Fourteen inspector days were allocated to the school.

XXXIV. During the course of the inspection observations of lessons or parts of lessons, registrations, assemblies, breaks and lunchtimes were made. Pupils' work was scrutinised in all classes; the team inspected random samples of pupils' books across the ability range in each class. Approximately 15 per cent of pupils were heard to read formally and many more read within the context of classroom work. In all, these numbered 107 observations.

XXXV. The time spent on all lesson observations during the inspection was:-

XXXVI.	3.7 hours at under fives
XXXVII.	7.8 hours at Key Stage 1
XXXVIII.	20.5 hours at Key Stage 2

XXXIX. The total time spent on all observations was 65.1 hours.

XL. Discussions took place with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, all teaching staff and a number of non-teaching staff.

XLI. All the documentation provided by the school was analysed including the previous inspection report and action plan.

XLII. Attendance records were examined.

XLIII. The financial information provided by the school was examined.

XLIV. Teachers' planning documents were scrutinised along with records of pupils' progress kept by the school.

XLV. Discussions were held with the pupils, parents and a sub group of governors.

XLVI. A parents' meeting was held prior to the inspection and the views of 20 parents at this meeting, and those of 68 parents who responded to a questionnaire, were taken into account.

·

·

· **DATA AND INDICATORS**

· **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR-Y6	209	3	36	8

· **Teachers and classes**

· **Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26.1:1

· **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	64

Financial data

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	361266
Total Expenditure	359355
Expenditure per pupil	1679
Balance brought forward from previous year	-1255
Balance carried forward to next year	-24028

N.B.The school has agreed the above deficit with the Local Education Authority and has a detailed plan to reduce it.

·

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 162
 Number of questionnaires returned: 68

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	44	51	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	66	29	1	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	20	62	10	7	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	18	69	9	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	19	67	8	5	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	38	58	2	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	28	68	3	0	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	24	61	6	8	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	35	60	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	39	50	10	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) their school	60	37	2	2	0

