

INSPECTION REPORT

**PENKETH SOUTH COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Penketh, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111198

Headteacher: Mr G Ashton

Reporting inspector: Graham Bate
20926

Dates of inspection: 18th – 22nd September 2000

Inspection number: 195908

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Finlay Avenue
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Warrington

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr S Makin

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G Bate 20926	Registered inspector	Science Physical education Equal opportunities	Characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Key issues for action
Ms S Bullerwell 12536	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mr A Jeffs 23412	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Special educational needs	Leadership and management
Mr I Chearman 28170	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Art and design	Quality and range of opportunities for learning Assessment
Ms K Trikha 19861	Team Inspector	Design and technology Music Religious education Foundation stage English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is of average size for a primary school having 258 pupils on roll, of whom 145 are girls and 113 are boys. The majority of pupils live in the immediate area of the school, which is set within the suburbs area of the industrial town of Warrington. Census information indicates a slightly below average percentage of adults with higher educational qualifications. About 80 per cent of pupils live in privately owned houses and the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. At the time of the inspection, 38 pupils on the register were under five, all of whom were attending part-time for the first three weeks. Children are admitted into the school at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. The school identifies 16 pupils as having special educational needs at a level requiring individual education plans. Of these, two have statements of special educational need. Both these numbers are below the national average. There is one under-five pupil of ethnic minority heritage who speaks English as an additional language. The current youngest pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly above average but in the previous years the range of attainment has been wider.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school achieves above average standards in speaking, listening, reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are average in Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communication technology are below average. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall. The level of pastoral care is good. The pupils show very positive attitudes to learning and relationships and work very well together. The school works well in partnership with parents. Overall leadership and management are satisfactory, with some good features. The governing body is well informed and supports the school effectively. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is unsatisfactory and current management responsibilities require review. Assessment procedures to evaluate pupils' progress are inconsistent. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Above average standards are attained in speaking, listening, mathematics and science.
- Children under five make good progress, especially in language, literacy and mathematical development.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and the classroom management skills of the teachers are very good.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good. Relationships are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- The school looks after the pupils well, and the provision for their spiritual, social and cultural development is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory.
- The opportunities for extended writing are insufficient.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching, to raise standards further, are unsatisfactory.
- The assessments of pupils' progress are inconsistent and there is no whole-school approach.
- Management responsibilities require review.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June/July 1997 and many aspects have improved since then but others still require attention. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and science have been sustained. In writing, standards are broadly similar whilst in mathematics they have improved, especially in mental recall. Standards in religious education remain satisfactory but they have dropped in information and communication technology and are now below average. The underlying trend of improvement in the core

subjects has kept up and the school has exceeded its challenging, but realistic, targets for English and mathematics in the last two years. A higher proportion of teaching is at least satisfactory and a larger percentage is at least very good. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching. The reduction of the number of different teaching groups in a class has improved the quality of teacher/pupil interaction and learning. The introduction of a range of detailed schemes of work in subjects which highlight learning outcomes has improved progress in pupils' learning. Assessment of learning outcomes was inconsistently applied, an issue in the last inspection, and it remains so. The installation of security fencing has reduced the incidence of vandalism. The active support of the parents has been maintained.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	D	B	D
mathematics	D	D	C	E
science	B	D	C	D

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

The results for 1999 showed that standards were high in English when compared with all schools nationally, but are below when compared with similar schools, that is those having less than eight per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals. Results in mathematics and science show broadly average performance against national standards but well below and below average respectively compared with similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 at Key Stage 2 is well above average in science, above in English and close to average in mathematics. The overall school performance over the last four years has been broadly in line with the national upward trends and the school's targets have been met. Provisional results for 2000 show that targets have again been well beaten and that comparisons with similar schools show improvement to average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The attainment of current Year 6 pupils indicates above average standards in the core subjects, with the exception of writing. The oldest infant pupils (Year 2) attain good standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are good in art, physical education and music by the age of eleven. Standards in information and communication technology are below average. Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards in the key areas of language, literacy and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good. The pupils are very enthusiastic and are very positive about everything they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standard of behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils are very polite and helpful and generally play very sensibly in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Virtually all the pupils relate well to one another, with older pupils regularly helping the infants, and they show consideration for the views of others.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is good and above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. There have been no exclusions.

The very good attitudes and behaviour, together with the good relationships that exist, underpin the good learning in the school. This has a very positive impact upon the overall standards the pupils attain.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is predominantly good and never less than satisfactory. English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, are taught well. A weakness is that insufficient opportunities are found, particularly in English, but also in subjects such as history and science, for pupils to undertake extended writing. The teachers manage their classes well and have high expectations, for example, for behaviour and standards of presentation. The good teaching is a significant contributor to the good quality of pupils' learning, particularly the interest they show, the concentration they maintain, and the standards they obtain. A number of the teachers lack confidence in the teaching of information and communication technology. Teachers' subject knowledge is, however, good and the teachers of under-fives understand well how children of this age learn.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. The time allowed for history and geography is just adequate. It is enhanced by a range of other learning opportunities, for example the science theatre. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The overall level of provision is good, which helps pupils to make good progress in relation to their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has only one pupil, who is not yet of compulsory school age, but for whom appropriate provision is made.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The overall provision is good and contributes well, for example, to the quality of relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a high level of pastoral care, particularly in relation to promoting good, and eliminating oppressive, behaviour. Assessment of pupils' progress, and using this information to guide curriculum planning, is unsatisfactory.

The school's partnership with parents is good. They are provided with good regular information and the quality of reports to them about their children is good. Homework diaries and reading records are effective means of communication between teachers, parents and pupil. Many parents provide good helpful support in the school and diligently raise funds for the benefit of all pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provided considerable stability during a period of uncertainty. Overall leadership is satisfactory with many good features. Current management responsibilities and roles require review.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed. It fulfils all its statutory obligations well and has a clear and effective committee structure.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher undertakes regular analysis of pupils' performances in a range of objective tests. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is unsatisfactory.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are well deployed and used effectively. Financial resources are well and efficiently managed.

The staff are suitably trained and provide a good range of experience and the school is well resourced. There is adequate accommodation, which is well maintained. The absence of a systematic framework for the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is a weakness. The school development plan is well structured and suitably detailed. It now includes a brief, longer-term strategic view. The governing body is beginning to apply the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reading comments book is helpful. • Homework diaries are a useful way of communicating. • They respect the values held by the school. • Their children like school. • The teaching is good. • Children are given the right amount of homework. • The school works closely with parents. • Behaviour in the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are insufficient extra-curricular activities. • Mixed-age classes. • Lack of communication about progress. • There is insufficient competitive sport.

The inspection's findings agree with what pleases the parents most. Standards in the mixed-age class are not being adversely affected and the difficult decision was made to have one, rather than three, mixed-age classes, after appropriate and professional consideration. The number of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory but the school is considering more, for example a gym club. The school offers three verbal reports and one written report to parents a year. The statutory requirement is one end of year report followed by a consultation. The school welcomes consultation with parents at any time if they are concerned about their child's progress. There is a suitable balance between developing skills and competition.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards in mathematics were close to the national average. In English they were above average and well above average in science. At the higher Level 5, performance was close to the national average in mathematics and science and above average in English. When compared with schools deemed to be similar, that is having less than eight per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, performance in 1999 was below average in English and science and well below in mathematics.
2. The performance of seven-year-olds in the 1999 national tests shows above average performance in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. The position is maintained in mathematics when compared with similar schools and is broadly in line in reading and writing.
3. Provisional analysis of the 2000 national tests, indicates that standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 in mathematics, reading and writing. At Key Stage 2, provisional results show performance that is above the national average in English, mathematics and science, with a statistically significant improvement at Level 5 in mathematics and science. Against similar schools, analysis of provisional performance indicates improvements, in all three subjects, to be broadly in line in English and mathematics and above average in science. Inspection evidence confirms that overall standards are above average, at both key stages, but with further challenges needed for higher attaining pupils, especially in Key Stage 2. The school is meeting its suitably challenging targets and the underlying trend is one of improvement through both key stages. Most pupils' achievement is improving, aided by their very positive attitudes to learning. Overall progress through the school is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual targets, aided by the teachers' and support staff's good knowledge and understanding of their needs. Over the years 1996 to 1999, the comparison of the performance of boys against girls in the Key Stage 1 tests shows very little variation. Boys outperform girls in both reading and writing by very small margins and girls do better than boys in mathematics, also by a small margin. All exceeded the national average. The performance margins in Key Stage 2 are also very small. Girls outperform boys and both exceed the national average in English and boys reverse the position in science. Both fall marginally below the national average in mathematics, with boys by more so than girls.
4. Children under five make good progress, especially in the areas of language and literacy and mathematical development. They are taught well and an analysis of last year's work indicates that they attain a level above that expected of children on entry to compulsory education. The children behave sensibly and settle quickly into the school's routines even though, at the time of the inspection, they attend only on a half-day basis. Most speak well, listen attentively to the teachers and have good attitudes to their learning. The majority can now write their own name, with some able to write 'mum' and 'dad', and use positional words such as 'under' and count to twelve.
5. The majority of Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in English. The pupils speak clearly using well-formed sentences, some of which are highly imaginative. Pupils develop a good knowledge of phonics and use sound clues well when reading and spelling. By the end of the key stage, the majority produce extended stories, write simple reports of visits and imaginative poetry. The standard and quality of the pupils' written work is good compared with the national average. There is an obvious

enthusiasm for reading and this is well supported by the well-written book reviews and discussions. Handwriting skills develop well and most work is neatly presented and legible. Attainment is assisted by the good teaching in the literacy hour.

6. Progress is also satisfactory through Key Stage 2 in speaking, listening and reading. Most pupils speak with confidence in class, using extended and imaginative vocabulary. This extends to speaking in public, for example when taking part in a dramatic performance. In discussion, the pupils show a genuine interest in the views of others. The majority of pupils read well and express an interest in a range of authors, stories, poetry and non-fiction material. The pupils have a sound knowledge of figures of speech and recognise emotions within a work of fiction, for example when discussing the poem 'The Highwayman'. Pupils' work is well presented, with a high standard of spelling and punctuation. Some good story writing is well developed over a long period, for example in Year 5, but there is under-achievement generally in this aspect of pupils' work. Insufficient demands are placed on higher attaining pupils to undertake independent research or to extend their writing in other subjects.
7. Overall progress through the school is satisfactory in mathematics. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 have a secure understanding of number. Most pupils order and sequence numbers well, deduce missing numbers in an algorithm and show gains in vocabulary and handling notation. In Year 2, there is an increasing understanding of place value. Pupils partition numbers accurately and make good progress in tabulating data and constructing bar charts from pictorial representation in reception. Good progress is also now being made by Key Stage 2 pupils in developing their mental calculation skills, although not always at an appropriate speed. The pupils have a good understanding of the four rules of number and of multiplication tables, and solve problems accurately using a variety of methods. Appreciation of shape, the use of co-ordinates, attainment in fractions and decimals are good. Year 6 pupils generalise well, from their knowledge of degrees in a triangle, to those in a quadrilateral and higher order polygons. However, these skills are not fully developed through a lack of opportunity to deal with them. The lessons on numeracy are helping pupils to keep them on their mathematical toes.
8. In science, the pupils make satisfactory progress through the school and attain good standards in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lack of sufficient opportunities for investigative work indicates that this aspect of their work is less well developed. Year 1 pupils show a good knowledge of the properties of a range of materials and Year 2 pupils consolidate their knowledge of living things when experimenting on the absorption of water by plants. In Key Stage 2, there is a clear development of the notion of prediction, for example from Year 3 work on insulation of materials to Year 5 when predicting the size of shadows. The pupils have a clear understanding of fair testing. The teachers' good use of scientific terminology contributes well to pupils' progress; pupils use terms such as photosynthesis and synthetic with accuracy and ease.
9. Overall standards are below average in information and communication technology and lower than the last inspection. Some of the problems are related to hardware and teacher confidence. Key Stage 1 pupils effectively use a computer keyboard and mouse, but there is little development of skills, for example to control movement with a 'roamer'. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have the skills to log on and use basic spreadsheets but are insecure in handling data or researching reference information. Frequently those with developed skills have acquired them at home. Standards and progress in religious education remain satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of, for example, the Christian parables, and about other faiths, such as Judaism and Hinduism. The pupils' understanding of what we learn from religion is not well developed.

10. In all other subjects of the curriculum there are no unsatisfactory standards or progress. In history and geography there was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about standards at the end of Key Stage 2. However, observed lessons earlier in the key stage, and scrutiny of work, indicate that pupils have a well-developed sense of the passage of time and the use of maps and contrasting locations. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in history and geography are high. Standards are also high, at the end of both key stages, in art and physical education. Most pupils leave the school able to swim at least 25 metres. The pupils develop good skills in the use of colour, texture and materials to achieve artistic effect. In physical education, they develop good, imaginative control of movement and respond very well to instructions. High standards are attained in music at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory standards at Key Stage 1. Musical appreciation is well developed by Year 6 and most pupils sing well in assembly, showing an understanding of pulse and tempo. Standards in the school are satisfactory in design and technology and the process of design, make and evaluate is satisfactorily developed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have improved since the last inspection and are now very good and a strength of the school. They make a significant contribution to the school's learning environment and to the good standards which pupils achieve.
12. Pupils are eager and happy to come to school and fully involve themselves in all aspects of school life. They arrive on time and settle quickly during registration. They know what is expected of them and listen attentively. They can sustain good levels of concentration and perseverance in completing their work, throughout the day. These very good attitudes in lessons are due to good teaching and the good relationships that exist between pupils and staff.
13. Current Year 4 pupils displayed good attitudes towards the school environment last year. They wanted to be involved in more than just their lessons and volunteered to form an after-school gardening club and successfully created a wildlife garden. They explained the benefits for the school and local wildlife to a visitor, who could see the pride they had in their achievement. This project is an example of a good contribution made to the pupils' social, moral and personal development.
14. Pupils with special educational needs have a very positive attitude to learning. Their behaviour is usually good and sometimes very good, both within the classroom and during one-to-one sessions with a range of support staff. They are pleased to receive extra support and show considerable pride and enthusiasm in all aspects of their work. Their wish to succeed does not detract from their appreciation of the success of other pupils. In one small group literacy session, the entire group showed interest and pleasure in a game of word bingo, whoever won.
15. Attitudes to pupils with special educational needs are very positive from other pupils. Many of the lessons were characterised by the general class appreciation when pupils with limited literacy or attention skills were successful.
16. Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in class and around school. Pupils contribute to the 'golden rules' that operate within each classroom. These rules, along with teachers' good management skills, contribute to a positive learning environment. The introduction of organised games and play equipment, by the lunchtime supervisory staff, has made a very good contribution to pupils' behaviour outside lesson time. Pupils treat school property, and that of others, with respect. There is a family atmosphere in the playground, with pupils of all ages playing happily together. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

17. Pupils' personal development and relationships throughout the school are good. There is a good level of mutual trust between staff and pupils. Good pupil relationships do not rely on adult presence to maintain the respect they have for one another. They work well together in groups and support each other during lessons. Older pupils show a good level of self-discipline. When trusted to complete a task they work together quickly and politely, as demonstrated by Year 6 pupils setting up for assembly.
18. Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular activities offered by the school, such as musical and sports clubs. Older pupils have the opportunity for an annual residential trip to Wales. Pupils took part in a charity fundraising event and their success allowed them to give NCH Action for Children over £1000. These opportunities make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal development.
19. Pupils of all ages are given simple duties as monitors, which they fulfil sensibly and well. For example, they return registers to the office, take out play equipment at lunchtime, and help in the dining room and reception area. The youngest children in school are given responsibility to tidy away after themselves. Pupils in Year 6 are given a wider range of responsibilities and respond very well to the trust which the school places in them. For example, working in conjunction with Warrington's Road Safety Commission, two pupils are appointed as the school's road safety officers. They talk to pupils in assembly, display posters, organise and judge a competition, to raise awareness of road safety issues. They are good role models for younger pupils.
20. Attendance is good and remains above the national average. Parents are aware of the importance of regular attendance to support continuous learning, and the need to inform the school if absence is unavoidable. The reasons for authorised absence are predominantly medical and when parents take their children on holiday during term time. Unauthorised absence remains below the national average. Punctuality is very good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Teaching is a clear strength of the school. The overall quality is good and has a strong influence on the pupils' learning. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. In three-quarters of lessons the teaching was good, whilst nearly one in five were very good or excellent. This represents a significant improvement on the last inspection. The teaching is consistently good across subjects, except in information and communication technology, in both key stages, and religious education at Key Stage 2 where it is satisfactory.
22. The quality of teaching for children in the reception class is good. Children make good gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills that prepare them to access fully the National Curriculum in Year 1. Good teaching is characterised by effective organisation and planning which covers all the areas of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Teaching strategies, such as independent and collaborative work, give opportunities for children to take responsibility for choosing an activity, share equipment and enhance their personal, social and emotional development.
23. Teachers have good subject knowledge on how children under five learn, developing their language and literacy skills through focused work on letter-sound relationship, pencil control and reading awareness. Teachers extend the speaking and listening skills of children through skilful questioning. For example, while sharing the big book with the teacher, children described the pictures, guessed what could happen next and retold the story using picture clues. The teaching of numeracy skills is good and a wide range of resources, such as different sizes of plastic cars, are used to enable children to make comparisons, for example of long and short. The good ratio of adults to

children contributes positively to their acquisition of skills and meets the individual needs of children.

24. At the heart of the school's good teaching lies the teachers' very good management of the pupils. They adopt a whole-school and consistent approach to the management of their classes, which ensures that all pupils know what is expected of them at all times. This is not done at the expense of good relationships between the teacher and the pupils but successfully encourages high levels of concentration, co-operation and good behaviour. Also, very little time is spent at the beginning of lessons settling down to work or in clearing up and tidying away at the end. The very good management of pupils was clearly evident, for example in physical education lessons, when the deployment and storage of apparatus was carried out quickly, safely and responsibly, leaving the maximum time available for activity. Not only do teachers have high expectations for behaviour but also, for example, for the correct use of subject terminology. In an infant religious education lesson, higher attaining pupils use the term 'parable' correctly and respond to the challenge well of explaining how it is different from a story. Some Year 1 pupils are successfully introduced to the term 'vowel' and most pupils in Year 6 use terms such as 'alliteration', 'narrator' and 'synthetic' correctly and with confidence. Nearly all the teachers expect high standards of presentation and the completion of tasks. The pupils respond well to these expectations and take care, showing pride in their work. In one aspect of the pupils' work the expectations of most teachers are not high enough, for example higher attainers are given too few opportunities for extended writing in their literacy work and across the curriculum in such subjects as history, geography and science. In the majority of lessons, by the good use of question and answer techniques, the pupils are challenged and inspired to think, for example in Key Stage 2 literacy lessons, where the pupils develop a clear understanding of characterisation in stories. Few opportunities are, however, provided for independent learning.
25. The pupils' learning is not restricted by any inadequate subject knowledge of the teachers. The teachers take great care to brief themselves well, using the knowledge and skill of their subject co-ordinator colleagues very effectively when support is needed, for example in music and physical education. The benefit of this advice is evident in the systematic approach to the teaching of skills. There is, however, a lack of confidence, amongst a number of teachers, about information and communication technology, which results in the pupils' unsatisfactory standards. The school has already recognised this and high priority has been given to the extension of teachers' skills and understanding in the 2000/2001 school development plan.
26. Pupils with special educational needs receive good teaching within the class, individually and in groups, by specialist staff. The teaching is always well planned, taking into account both the academic and emotional needs of individual pupils. Thus, a pupil with severe attention difficulties participates in all of the class's activities but receives good support outside the classroom, when this is relevant for reducing distractions and enhancing reading skills. All staff welcome and support pupils with special educational needs within their classrooms. For example, the presence of a pupil with learning difficulties has prompted detailed and effective support which ensures full inclusion in the life of the class and the school. The teachers have a good understanding of, for example, the teaching of phonics and strike a good balance between word, sentence and text-level work. An amusing, but telling, example of the pupils' early awareness of phonics was shown by a young infant child who bravely attempted to write about 'Jesus' in a story, proudly proclaiming it, after much thought, to be 'cheesers'. The teaching of the mental recall and manipulation of number was criticised in the last report. The satisfactory use of a range of strategies for teaching such skills has raised standards considerably. However, there is room to increase the pace of mental recall in a number of classes, although levels of accuracy are much improved.

27. The overall level of teachers' planning is satisfactory and is being improved by the development of well-structured schemes of work, many of which have successfully incorporated school and local schemes with current national advice, for example in science. The best planning includes a clear statement of the learning objectives, which are identified to the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and used to consolidate learning in the plenary session. In a Year 3 geography lesson on rivers, for example, expectations are clearly identified at the beginning, differentiated tasks are set with all pupils able to explore, at the close, their understanding of such concepts as erosion, transportation and terms including estuary, meander and mouth. Where planning is weaker, the learning objectives are too general, the subsequent tasks do not recognise the varying abilities of the pupils and assessment opportunities are not identified. The teachers are successful in motivating their pupils by the use of a range of methods, using stimulating resources, for example a very wide range of musical instruments, and effectively using support staff and volunteers when available. This variety of approaches helps the pupils to learn as quickly and effectively as possible. The school is clear where support staff are needed and this ensures, for example, in the large Year 5 class, groups can be more effectively formed to assist the pupils' exploration of new ideas and skills.
28. There is very little waste of time in most lessons and this is reflected by the productivity of nearly all pupils. They remain on task during lessons and, as resources are efficiently deployed by the teachers, most work is completed within the allocated time. This has a positive impact upon the pupils' learning, for example in a reception class when the pace of learning is maintained by varying the stimulus in order to keep the children's interest during an assessment session. The use of information and communication technology to support the pupils' learning is currently inconsistent.
29. The teachers know their pupils well. In most lessons it is clear from the quality of questioning that they build up a clear picture of gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a Key Stage 1 music lesson, the teacher used a volunteer helper to assess individual pupil's contribution to the singing. This is a very effective strategy in assessing pupils' learning and achievement. When the pupils are working in groups, the teachers' interventions support, stimulate and enhance the pupils' learning; it is not merely to ensure pupils remain on task. As a result, it allows pupils to make progress and stimulates their individual effort. Nearly all lessons end with effective plenary sessions where learning is consolidated and gaps in understanding identified. Whilst most work is marked regularly by the teachers, the quality varies considerably. The best includes targets for future learning, as well as motivating praise. A consistent pattern of homework ranges from regular reading to research tasks for older pupils. The majority of parents support the present policy and the pupils' response to homework is good. There is generally a clear connection between the tasks and the current work in school, for example when Year 5 pupils are asked to investigate shadows.

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

30. The curriculum is carefully planned to cover all the subjects of the National Curriculum, the areas of learning for children under five and religious education. The school meets the statutory curriculum requirements. Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught, but the full range of required skills is not yet planned, mainly due to the lack of confidence of some staff. The issue of ICT forms a significant part of the current school development plan. The time allowed for history and geography is just adequate but the recent focus for improvement in numeracy and literacy has required additional time for mathematics and English to be found. The curriculum for the children under five is of good range and quality and learning is focused on the required early learning goals.
31. Some satisfactory improvements have been made to the school's curriculum provision since the last inspection. Planning focuses on the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and on what pupils are to learn rather than what is to be taught. The introduction of the numeracy and literacy strategies, over the last two years, has improved planning for continuity and progression. The strategies have been satisfactorily introduced. The numeracy strategy, although only adopted a year ago, is beginning to raise standards and is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching, as is the literacy strategy. The implementation of the strategies is effective in improving access to the curriculum for pupils of all abilities by the setting of clear learning objectives in teachers' planning.
32. Through the numeracy strategy, the school is successfully addressing a key issue from the last inspection and standards in mental calculation have risen. However, insufficient opportunities to consolidate mathematical skills in other subjects are given, especially in science. There is a weakness in the range of strategies pupils use for learning to spell competently, as there is also in the opportunities made available for pupils to produce extended writing. In both science and mathematics the provision for pupils to use and apply their knowledge and skills is under-developed. This is most noticeable in the limited opportunities for the higher attainers to undertake open-ended, collaborative investigative tasks.
33. The school has a clear commitment, in its aims and objectives, for inclusion, equality of opportunity and to the raising of standards, which is shared by the governing body. The organisation of classes, and the groups within them, confirm that this is achieved, as all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Those with special educational needs, or of lower attainment, or with English as an additional language, are supported well in class to ensure their full participation. The provision for higher attaining pupils, to enable them to reach their full potential, is still weak but is an issue the school is beginning to tackle. All pupils are included in school journeys, for example to the River Mersey. Such visits provide interest and motivation for the pupils. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is offered by the school. Some of these take place at lunchtime. They include netball, tag-rugby, soccer, choir, recorders and gardening. A gym club is soon to be added. Some parents expressed concern at the range of activities and lack of 'fully competitive' sporting activities. The judgement of the inspectors is that the school has achieved a balance between skills training and competition.
34. Pupils with special educational needs participate in the same curriculum as other pupils. Classroom activities are planned to take into account limitations of literacy and numeracy skills and non-teaching staff are used well to support groups of lower achieving pupils. As well as the full classroom curriculum, pupils who experience difficulties also receive a well-planned and detailed programme to support particularly language skills, literacy and numeracy. The close contact between the co-ordinator and classroom teachers ensures coherence in planning and the daily exchange of information. The support provided by non-teaching assistants is of a high quality and

contributes significantly to the progress made. The detailed target-setting and classroom planning is good and ensures progress for pupils whose pace of learning is sometimes slower than others. For example, a pupil experiencing dyslexic difficulties receives daily one-to-one literacy sessions which cover a range of spelling and phonic skills, relevant to both his stage of attainment and his particular ways of learning.

35. The small group of pupils who experience significant behaviour difficulties also have a carefully planned programme, ensuring access to the full range of classroom activities, as well as appropriate opportunities to receive individual attention in a setting with few distractions. All special needs staff utilise a good range of skills arising from wide experience and appropriate training courses.
36. Appropriate and satisfactory provision is made by the school for health education which covers an appropriate range of topics, including sex education and drugs, such as tobacco and solvents. It is taught within curriculum subjects, such as science and physical education. The introduction of 'circle time', when teacher and pupils sit together for discussions, gives the opportunity for personal and social education to be taught, such as pupil safety in relation to strangers. Health is successfully promoted in physical education and healthy eating, for example in choosing food for packed lunches and involving parents through newsletters. The school works well with other institutions, for example the joint use of a High School technician and the planning with the adjoining primary school for such events as the visiting science theatre.
37. The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, social, moral, cultural and personal development is good. This broadly reflects the position found during the last inspection.
38. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The quality of school assemblies underpins spiritual development, as pupils are enabled to reflect on the deeper meaning of stories from the Bible. The school has a regular programme of collective worship which is implemented through Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and whole-school assemblies. This provides opportunities for prayer and reflection. Assemblies cover a range of themes such as 'neighbours', which provide the pupils with opportunities to listen to stories from the Bible and reflect on the meaning of, for example, 'love thy neighbour'. At the end of the assembly, moments are set aside for prayer and reflection. Recently the school took the opportunity to involve the pupils in reflecting upon and praying for the well-being of a teacher recently involved in a car accident. Provision is also made in lessons for pupils to reflect. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, the pupils consider the romantic and tragic elements of 'the Highwayman'.
39. The provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are involved in formulating the 'golden rules' that teach them to be considerate to others. All adults working in the school are good role models and they take every opportunity to raise the pupils' awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Time is taken to ensure pupils understand that certain behaviour is unacceptable and to highlight examples of consideration and understanding shown by pupils to others. However, there are fewer planned opportunities to explore with the pupils the concepts of honesty, fairness and respect for truth.
40. The school provides good opportunities for the development of pupils' social skills. In lessons, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to work together either in pairs or in small groups. Relationships within the school are strong and older pupils are encouraged to interact well with younger pupils by, for example, helping to ensure new pupils to the school find a friend. The school provides opportunities for pupils to take social responsibility, for example by nominating some pupils to be the road safety monitors who are contacted by the local road safety commission and given useful information for dissemination in assemblies. Arrangements last year were made for

two pupils to meet the local mayor in their role as the school's road safety monitors. Very good provision is made during the lunchtime for pupils to undertake a range of responsibilities, under the guidance of the senior lunchtime supervisor, for example manning the school telephone, ensuring the cleanliness of dining tables and issuing playground games resources.

41. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Impressive displays in the entrance, and around the school, include posters and fabrics from India and musical instruments used in the teaching of music include a range of instruments from other cultures, for example the African drum and Indian bells. Pupils are also given opportunities to value the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of others. In a Key Stage 1 assembly, the teacher used Cantonese and English to convey birthday greetings. Outside speakers from various cultural backgrounds like Nepal and Sri Lanka are also invited to talk about their cultural traditions. Discussion with pupils revealed that they are given opportunities to see writing in other languages, for example Hebrew in the Torah scrolls and to read the Greek myths and legends. Other cultural opportunities are offered through, for example, the choir, which is soon to perform at a concert in Manchester with other schools, the visiting science theatre and Tudor musicians and participation in school productions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school provides a good level of care for all its pupils. They thrive within a safe and happy community. Class teachers are responsible for the day-to-day care of pupils and know them very well. The personal support and guidance that pupils receive contribute to the good standards they attain. Pupils are confident that when they are hurt or upset they have someone to turn to. Supervision at lunchtimes is very good and meaningful activities are provided which help to reduce all possibility of oppressive behaviour.
43. The school has effective procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. The new gates to the playground have improved security of the site. Health and safety procedures are in place and risk assessment is carried out. There are two qualified first aiders. There is a designated person for child protection and all procedures are followed. Special attention is given to the safety of pupils while using the internal and external stairs to the upper floor.
44. The school has done all it can to ensure pupils are safe when arriving and leaving the school premises. Parents are aware of the school's position and the danger to pupils from cars that drive near to the school.
45. The school has very good procedures for promoting good behaviour and for deterring and dealing with bullying if it should occur. Teachers have clear and consistent expectations of good behaviour and rewards of stickers help to motivate pupils to always do their best. The whole-school approach to rewards effectively encourages pupils to respect and help one another and discourages harassment. The school monitors attendance well and discourages parents from taking holidays during term time, correctly emphasising that this interrupts pupils' learning and the progress they make.
46. All staff make every effort to support pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. This is shown by the attention to detail when planning for these pupils, both in full class work and when withdrawn for individual or group support. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the specialist support staff use a variety of formal and informal assessments to ensure that progress is checked and recorded. This provides valuable information for class teachers and when discussions take place with parents. Particular care is taken to assess when a pupil should be included and when withdrawn from class. In all of this, staff pay careful attention to ensuring that all pupils get the

maximum access to the full range of activities. Assessment of attainment and progress is very detailed for pupils with special educational needs and this allows staff to match work very closely and identify where more input is required. Special needs records are detailed and always kept up to date.

47. It was noted in the last report that procedures for assessing pupils' work and progress were inconsistently applied across the school. This broadly remains the case. A good and thorough assessment of the children is made on entry into the reception classes and the information gathered is used effectively in determining need and to plan work. Effective analysis is now undertaken of the results using the national statutory tests at seven and eleven. It was, for example, such an analysis that alerted the school to begin to address the needs of higher attaining pupils. A range of other tests, for example the optional national tests for Year 4 pupils, provides some evidence of progress. These procedures are generally satisfactory. However, these assessments are insufficiently balanced by a consistent, whole-school approach of assessments to evaluate pupils' development of skills, to guide the planning of the curriculum in the future and to support and monitor their academic progress. For example, it was noted in the last report that the school intended to establish moderated portfolios of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science. However, this work is still to be completed. Some useful work is being developed, for example in Key Stage 1, where key objectives for learning are now being identified and the recording of individual pupil's performance is starting to be used to plan teaching. However, in Key Stage 2 English, for example, sufficient detail is recorded about reading skills but not about writing, restricting the opportunities to identify accurately the setting of future tasks. There are good examples of end of topic and year's assessments in science but the process is also inconsistent. The school also lacks a commonly agreed framework for the systematic appraisal of the curriculum in the light of an evaluation of the effectiveness of, for example, a topic or theme that was taught.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school has a good partnership with parents, which has been maintained since the last inspection. This has a positive impact on pupils' education. All parents, who returned the questionnaire, agree that their children like school, make good progress, behaviour is good, teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard. Inspection findings confirm parents' positive views of the school. A small number of parents have concerns about the work pupils are expected to do at home and the range of extra-curricular activities. Inspection findings show these are within the range provided nationally.
49. The school has good links with parents. The majority of parents feel well informed and happy to approach the school with any concerns. The school provides good quality information, including a weekly newsletter, which keeps parents informed about what is currently happening in school. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements. They have a range of information to help parents understand how the school operates. This includes subject information covering each area of the curriculum, including sex education, and the need for parental support in matters of safety, homework and attendance.
50. Reports to parents on pupil progress are good. For English, mathematics and science the reports outline pupils' strengths and weaknesses and give the next step, which is an individual target for improvement. In all other subjects suitable information is given about what pupils know understand and can do. Parents receive three verbal reports and one written over the year. They have the opportunity to discuss these with teachers. Homework diaries and pupils' reading records are used effectively for communication between teacher, parent and pupil. Homework diaries are used to set individual targets, on a weekly basis, where necessary. Parents find these useful when helping with homework.

51. Parents whose children experience learning difficulties receive detailed information and are informed of targets and review meetings, so that they can comment and attend. Special educational needs raise many sensitive questions and these are dealt with well by the special needs co-ordinator. There is a close relationship with most parents and every effort is made to inform them when a child has been identified as having literacy, numeracy or attention difficulties. The records indicate close involvement and regular discussions where pupils require additional medication or support.
52. Parents' involvement with the school has a positive impact on pupils' education. Parents, and grandparents, come into school to help during lessons across the age range. Teachers value the help that parents give within the classroom and expertise is effectively co-ordinated. For example, an artistic parent was helping a Year 1 class draw self-portraits in charcoal. Year 4 pupils benefited from the support given by a parent with measuring during a numeracy lesson. A group of parents sewed story sacks for use in the reception class. Parents help on out of school visits and regularly accompany pupils on their swimming lesson. All parents help to make costumes for the Christmas productions, which are well attended. Parents also encourage friends to have connections with school. For example, a lady from Sri Lanka gave a talk about her national dress and cultural differences.
53. There is an active and successful parents' and teachers' association, which organises events to raise funds to buy resources for use within school. For example, a well-attended Easter bingo event was a good social occasion and raised over £600. A substantial amount of money was given to the school to buy whiteboards for every classroom. An annual budget to the midday supervisor enables the buying of lunchtime play equipment and reward stickers. This is a very positive initiative.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The school has experienced an unsettled period since the last inspection. The movement of the previous headteacher to a new post and significant changes in staff have taken place at the same time as many new and demanding challenges have been placed before primary schools. In this context the present headteacher has provided an important period of stability and has earned the respect of parents, staff and the governing body. The new group of staff feel able to contribute to the development of school curriculum policy and recommend priorities. Key stage and curriculum co-ordinators have invested considerable time in reviewing and updating their areas of responsibility, and this has contributed to the maintenance of good standards of work and the high level of pupil motivation within the school. However, an over-emphasis on day-to-day administration has meant that the key skills and strengths of the school's senior management team have not yet been fully utilised. The senior management team does not meet on a regular basis and there is no coherent process for the many strands of curriculum development and assessment to be pulled together. This results largely from the failure to identify clear roles and responsibilities within these areas and a lack of management time for senior staff to support colleagues.
55. The governing body makes a valuable contribution to the management of the school. It has a clear and appropriate committee structure with experienced and well-informed chairpersons. This contributes to good communication between staff, headteacher and the governing body. Individual governors make regular visits to the school, meeting with the special educational needs co-ordinator, reviewing finances and gaining an overall picture of curriculum developments and their effect on the progress of pupils. The governor responsible for literacy spends a considerable amount of time each week in supporting teachers by working as a volunteer classroom assistant. She consolidates this by attending training and contributing to literacy discussions within the school. Individual governors relay information to the full governing body and this provides data

to assist the decision-making process. This close contact means that the governing body is now well placed to set targets for the headteacher, as the school implements its developing performance management policy. The governing body also ensures that it fulfils its statutory duties to the full.

56. Although the headteacher and governing body pay close attention to the school's performance in national assessments, there is no coherent method of collecting and analysing information about individual pupil progress and the success of curriculum initiatives. Curriculum co-ordinators have reviewed their subjects in some detail and developed clear ideas for development. Some have also identified ways that pupil progress across the school can be regularly checked to identify areas for additional attention. For example, much effective development has taken place within music as the result of the sharing of high level teaching skills, but this has not taken place in all curriculum subjects. There is no systematic framework for evaluating teaching and the sharing of good practice. English co-ordinators, for example, have well-researched and realistic ideas relating to the sharing and development of teaching skills with regard to extended writing and spelling strategies. The previous inspection identified the need to assess the learning outcomes of lessons as an important area for attention. Practical arrangements are not yet in place for this to develop effectively, although the school's development plan identifies the 'monitoring of teaching and learning' as a key target for the current year.
57. Developments are well supported through detailed financial planning, and the school development plan is now closely linked to educational priorities and costed appropriately. Administration and financial procedures within the school are good. The headteacher, the chair of the governing body's finance committee and the school secretary all contribute very effectively to the smooth running of the school. Where the school receives grants for specific purposes, such as special needs support and training and computer hardware, these grants are used for the appropriate purpose and often topped up by the school to make the most effective impact on pupil learning. Information and communication technology is used appropriately and the school is already planning to develop this when it begins its chequebook system next year.
58. The governing body keeps a careful check on expenditure and ensures that the best value is gained in purchases and resources. The school's linkage with its neighbouring primary school, St Vincent's, is a good example of this. The sharing of information and communication technology training should ensure that all teachers receive much more input than they would have received without the collaboration.
59. The school is adequately staffed in respect of both teachers and classroom assistants, and subject co-ordinators cover all areas of the curriculum. The level of support is enhanced through the special needs budget which adds to the effective group and individual work that takes place, particularly in English and mathematics. Staff training is identified to support current developments within the school. Recent training has included preparation for the literacy and numeracy hours and plans are in place for the training of all teachers in the field of information and communication technology. The school has also drawn on the skills of visiting behaviour support staff to allow their own teachers to receive training in this complex area.
60. The accommodation is adequate and makes a satisfactory contribution to the quality of education provided. The building is clean and well cared for and the grounds are well maintained. Pupils and staff take pride in making it a pleasant environment for learning. Planned improvements at the time of the last inspection have taken place. The covered courtyard has increased the teaching area and allowed for an increase in numbers. The security fencing along the front boundaries has made the site less accessible to vandals and unauthorised users outside of school hours. It has also made a positive contribution to pupils' safety while playing at breaktimes. Other improvements include a

jointly funded staff car park, shared with the next-door primary school, and a ramp at the front entrance to provide access to the school by wheelchair users.

61. Resources are adequate in all subjects and good in music, special educational needs and within reception. Hardware for information and communication technology is just adequate, but is not being used in a way that allows either the development of computer skills or effectively backs up classroom curriculum work. The library areas are satisfactory for individual key stages, but currently lack appropriate Dewey indexing to encourage the development of advanced research skills especially for higher attaining pupils. Good use is made of external resources, such as special educational needs staff, in enriching pupil programmes and in staff training.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) Raise standards in information and communications technology by:
 - undertaking a systematic programme of staff training to improve confidence and skills;
 - further improving access to the existing hardware.(Paras: 9, 21, 25, 28, 59, 61, 78, 89, 110, 112, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 126)
 - (2) Provide more opportunities for extended writing, especially in English but also in subjects such as history and science.
(Paras: 6, 24, 32, 56, 76, 78, 80, 99, 118, 140)
 - (3) Establish an effective framework for the regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching, to further improve standards and to share the good practice that exists within the school.
(Paras: 56, 81, 92, 100, 106, 112, 120, 126, 132, 141)
 - (4) Establish monitoring and assessment procedures, using a whole-school, approach which will:
 - track the progress of individual pupils more consistently;
 - inform the planning of the curriculum in the light of experience;
 - ensure pupils' full potential, for example, higher attaining pupils.(Paras: 3, 6, 7, 24, 29, 32, 33, 47, 56, 75, 76, 78, 80, 84, 86, 89, 90, 99, 106, 120, 135, 141)
 - (5) Review the existing management structures in order to establish a more effective oversight of whole-school curriculum and assessment development.
(Paras: 47, 54, 56)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	17	54	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	238
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	12	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	9	12	11
	Total	23	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (78)	93 (89)	93 (90)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	15
	Girls	12	11	11
	Total	26	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (84)	93 (90)	90 (89)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	12	21	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	11
	Girls	19	16	20
	Total	27	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (71)	73 (57)	94 (76)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	16	15	19
	Total	24	23	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (71)	70 (77)	88 (85)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	196
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	428,365
Total expenditure	417,927
Expenditure per pupil	1,771
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,950
Balance carried forward to next year	48,388

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

171

Number of questionnaires returned

45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	36	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	36	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	40	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	36	11	4	0
The teaching is good.	64	36	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	38	0	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	27	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	33	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	56	31	9	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	44	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	27	33	9	16

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were concerned regarding the establishment of a mixed-age class.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. Children start school on a part-time basis at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five, which is a change from the time of previous inspection, when children were admitted into the reception class in September and January. All the children start by attending for half-days and, before half term, start full-time in reception. Before joining school, most children have experienced some form of pre-school provision. There are no children with special educational needs and there is one child for whom English is an additional language. Evidence from this year's baseline assessments in language and literacy and mathematical development, together with inspection evidence, shows that children's attainment on entry is above average. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in children's social development and speaking and listening skills. Evidence from the baseline assessment from last year and this year shows that children are now broadly functioning at an above average level.
64. An analysis of the previous year's work, ranging from baseline assessment to the work covered in the Summer term, shows that the children make good progress throughout the year and attainment of children by five is above the average level expected of children on entry to compulsory education, particularly in the areas of language and literacy and mathematical development. By the end of reception year, a majority of children can write in complete sentences using words like 'mummy', and attempt to write polysyllabic words like circus phonetically as 'sercs'. Handwriting also shows correctly formed letters, showing progression in pencil control. Inspection evidence indicates that all children, including the English as an additional language learner, communicate clearly and use appropriate vocabulary to express themselves in a variety of situations. The children enjoy books, handle them carefully and can use their knowledge of letters and sound-symbol relationship to write words like cat. In the mathematical area of learning, they use appropriate words to match two-dimensional shapes and are familiar with number rhymes and counting games. Some above average children can take numbers away from 20, and attempt horizontal addition using numbers to ten.
65. The school is involved with the Halton scheme for baseline assessment and this year's assessment, which is partly completed in language and literacy and mathematical development, shows that a majority of children know at least 13 letter-sounds, have a very good book awareness and are beginning to form letters. A majority can write their own name and some children can spell 'mum and dad'. They ask and answer questions related to big books, know that the title tells us what the book is about and understand the correct use of positional words like 'beside'. Records of each child's assessment of mathematics show that all children can count to 12 and one child can count orally to 29. All recognise the two-dimensional shapes, can complete a pattern, know the difference between longer and shorter and high and low and name the basic colours.
66. Children have good opportunities for personal, social and emotional development. The organisation of half-day sessions for the first few weeks, contributes significantly to children feeling secure in the school environment, and helps them to develop a good relationship with the staff. On arrival, each day, children take responsibility for hanging up their reading bags and choose from activities which have been prepared for them. Children have varied opportunities to work in their small groups, play together with their peers and with older pupils. Children co-operate happily when taking turns to play musical instruments like the 'triangle'. Children are well behaved in the classroom, hall and in the playground. The well-established routines already attained in two weeks, the

consistent expectations of behaviour, and the caring attitudes of all adults, make a significant contribution to the sense of security felt by the children.

67. The standards in language and literacy are above those expected nationally for children on entry to reception. The quality of teaching is good and enables children to learn with enjoyment. As the class size is small and there are four adults, children receive individual attention in articulating letter-sounds and make good progress in improving their gross and fine motor skills. They develop their speaking and listening skills through good opportunities for listening to stories and nursery rhymes on tapes and using language to explain, retell, and imagine what happens next in a story. Challenging questions like, 'How do we play this instrument?' enable the children to think of specific words like banging, tapping, and shaking. Children practise their writing through role-play situations, such as a party invitation to a friend, with the teacher asking the children to read what they have written and scribing it underneath their writing. Higher attaining children can write recognisable words like their friend's name. Good emphasis is placed on developing reading skills and children regularly take books home to share with their parents. Through practical activities and games, appropriate emphasis is placed on teaching literacy skills and this ensures a firm foundation for the development of reading skills.
68. Attainment in mathematics is above average on entry to reception. The children can tell which objects are longer or shorter and which are higher or lower. Most children count and use numbers to ten with confidence. They develop their mathematical skills well through playing games and using a range of objects. The children also make and initiate patterns. Through stories they develop an understanding of positional words, such as before and after, and notice page numbers which contribute positively to the development of their numeracy skills. They know a variety of number rhymes such as 'five little ducklings', which they sing spontaneously, and some children put their hand up to sing the number rhymes they have learnt in their playgroups.
69. The children's physical development is in line to meet the standards expected at five years old. The quality of teaching is very good and a good range of skills, such as running, jumping, curling up, enables children to develop their confidence and control over their bodies. Due regard is given to the safety of children and good use is made of the support staff who ensure that space is used efficiently. Children gain confidence in using space through regular opportunities for physical activities in the hall. Children handle small toys, pieces of jigsaw and scissors to develop their manipulative skills. Outdoor play enables children to develop their balance in riding a three-wheel bike
70. The children's creative development is above the standards expected on entry to reception. The quality of teaching is good and enables children to express themselves through painting, drawing and music. An analysis of work shows children have made observational drawings of shells, looking closely at size, shape, colour and texture and a collage on the topic 'Jungle'. While colouring various two-dimensional shapes, children are encouraged to choose the type of glue for sticking and give reasons for their choice. Children sing a variety of rhymes and have opportunities to play an instrument and listen to older children during hymn practice. For example, in one music lesson, they learn the term dynamics and practise loud and soft voices.
71. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is in line to meet the standards expected at five years old. It was not possible to observe any lessons in this area due to the baseline assessment being carried out in other areas. However, samples of work and photographic evidence shows that children are provided with activities that help them develop an understanding of the world around them. For example, through the practical experience of growing cress seeds, children learn what seeds need in order to grow. They have opportunities to use large construction kits to make models. They make 'rice crispie cakes' and learn about the use of melted chocolate to make the cake

solid.

72. In assembly, three reception children showed their models, which they had made out of mobilo.
73. The quality of teaching is good and lessons have clearly outlined learning objectives. The planning is in line with the Early Learning Goals for under-fives in the Foundation Stage. Teachers make very good use of time, support staff and resources. Children are very well managed and the classroom assistants play an invaluable role in providing small group support, by caring for children, in and out of classroom, and by making the environment a safe and organised place to work in.
74. The accommodation for children in the reception classes is satisfactory. There are child-sized toilets and children can hang their bags and coats on a peg that is within their easy reach. The open plan classrooms enable children to access freely the computer, art area and the sand tray.
75. The co-ordinator for early years provides good leadership. She works successfully with the teacher and the classroom assistants to plan for group activities She has prioritised in the school development plan, the reviewing of the curriculum banks to ensure they are in line with the Early Learning Goals. However, the assessment procedures indicating the progress made by children linked to the curriculum areas are less extensive and have not been identified as a priority in the school development plan.

ENGLISH

76. In the 1999 National Curriculum Key Stage 1 tests, pupils attained above the national average in both reading and writing and this represented an improvement since the last inspection. The levels were broadly in line with schools of a similar type. The number of pupils reading at the higher Level 3 was well above the national average, but this was balanced by a significant percentage who performed at Level 1. The school was only average in terms of pupils achieving Level 3 in writing. Teacher assessments and inspection evidence suggest that 2000 standards in reading and writing are likely to be higher in terms of the overall number of pupils attaining at or above the national average. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests the attainment of eleven-year-olds represented an improvement on the previous year, when the school's results were above the national average. This reflects an upward trend in standards within the school with 90 per cent of pupils performing at or above Level 4. On analysis, the results indicate two areas of weakness. Provisional comparisons suggest that the levels, although good against the national picture, are less successful when the school is compared with other schools of a similar type. This was so in 1999. The main concern relates to the percentage of pupils who attain Level 5 in English where the level remains the same as 1999. When girls' and boys' performances are compared it is clear that the percentage of boys gaining Level 5 is only half that of the girls. Overall results and current work suggest that the level of attainment on leaving is better than at the last inspection, but there is still a weakness with regard to the number of pupils performing at higher levels and in particular those producing writing of high quality.
77. At the beginning of Year 1, pupils demonstrate a good level of English skills. Although a few experience difficulties with reading, the majority read books both at home and school, use a range of reading techniques and are strong in the use of sound clues when reading and spelling. All sustain short pieces of writing from four or five lines to a page or more. Handwriting is generally developing towards well-formed print with only one or two having difficulties with size or formation. Story work, poetry and discussions within the classroom indicate that language skills range from short, well-formed sentences to vocabulary and sentence structures which are very sophisticated for five-year-olds. These standards are maintained through Key Stage 1 and, at the end of Year

2, the majority of pupils produce between one and four pages of story work and write imaginative poetry and clear reports of visits and events. Although a small percentage demonstrate weak spelling strategies, the quality of written work and handwriting overall is good compared with the national average. Book reviews and discussions with pupils indicate an enthusiasm for reading and all pupils speak coherently in well-formed sentences, which range from the appropriate to the highly imaginative.

78. Progress continues satisfactorily through Key Stage 2 with regard to speaking, listening and reading. By Year 6, most pupils can deliver a five-minute presentation to the class and take great pleasure in listening to and using an evocative vocabulary. Within a good Year 6 lesson, pupils were enraptured by the poem 'The Highwayman' by Alfred Noyes and articulately discussed its vocabulary and development. All demonstrated a good idea of both rhyme and rhythm, a sound knowledge of figures of speech and a sensitivity to the subject matter, involving as it did a range of emotions. Video evidence of recent performances demonstrates that pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, develop a confidence in speaking in public and show considerable presence in dramatic performance, remembering lines and speaking with good intonation and clarity. All enjoy reading and, while a few still read slowly but accurately, the majority show sophisticated reading skills in terms of both story and reference work. Most belong to libraries outside of school and have a range of books at home. There is considerable interest in a range of authors, in poetry and non-fiction, as well as stories. The written work also indicates enthusiasm and imagination. All pupils write for a wide range of purposes, such as stories, reports, plays, reviews and poetry. Presentation is good, indicating self-correction and a high standard of spelling and punctuation. Some good story work is developed over a long period, particularly in Year 5. This encourages pupils to sustain and develop both plot and vocabulary. However, there is not the amount of sustained writing, long stories built up over time or detailed reports within subject areas such as history and science, that is expected of Key Stage 2 pupils. This was a weakness highlighted in the last report and still needs some attention. A scrutiny of written work in English, and a range of other subjects, also indicate that not enough is demanded of some higher attaining pupils in independent research, using library and CD-ROM materials.
79. All pupils enjoy English work. At all ages they enjoy listening and responding to class stories and poems, within the literacy hour, at the end of the day or as part of developing skills in grammar. A good English lesson, for the Year 2 element of the mixed Year 1/2 class, sees the pupils building up an alien story with the teacher as 'scribe'. They show both skill and enthusiasm in creating an interesting plot and using an exciting vocabulary. They also demonstrate good skills in taking turns and respond positively to each other's ideas. The excitement and high level of co-operation make the experience a very profitable one for all pupils. Good group work skills are evident in all classes, at both key stages. Pupils move from whole-class to group work with a high level of motivation and proceed to work in a mature way, with little or no time lost in preparing for the tasks. Within all classes, the level of discussion is high and a genuine interest is shown in the ideas of others. This assists progress by sharing ideas and making the most of the time available. Pupils with special educational needs also demonstrate considerable enthusiasm for their work. The inspection team was impressed by the concentration of these pupils and their enthusiasm to succeed.
80. All classes were observed within the literacy hour and standards of teaching were always at least good. All teachers demonstrate a good understanding of the full range of English skills, with a strong emphasis on grammar, accuracy and interest. Both within literacy lessons and other subject areas there is good reinforcement of technical vocabulary. Teachers of the younger children always use the correct vocabulary for punctuation and aspects of style such as 'express', 'emphasis', 'describe', 'noun' and 'verb'. In Key Stage 2, more sophisticated concepts such as 'alliteration', 'simile' and 'metaphor' are used regularly and accurately by staff and gradually by pupils. Teachers

are particularly good at using time and resources efficiently. Little or no time is wasted in moving around the class and every effort is made to use questions within teaching to develop thinking and skills. In a Year 4 English lesson, the teacher uses pace and a range of relevant and searching questions to stimulate and challenge pupils of varying attainments. Humour, an excellent reading style and good use of the classroom assistant, encourage all pupils to think about the characters in the story they have read and then develop their own character sketches. In a good Year 2 lesson concerned with developing the sound unit 'ai' and reading the story 'The Pig in the Pond', good use is made of hand puppets and careful attention is paid to the different level of skills when each group comes to sequence story strips re-creating the story. A good Year 5 lesson, with lower attaining pupils, sees the teacher explaining how the openings of stories vary. She uses very good reading skills to bring the story alive, uses a range of grammatical vocabulary to help the group understand parts of speech and keeps a running notebook to record comments and difficulties of individual pupils. In general, teacher expectations are appropriately high. However, some lessons at Key Stage 2 demonstrate limitations placed on pupils' time for thinking through and developing detailed stories and accounts. This means that higher attaining pupils do not always use their learned skills to produce long and more complex forms of plays, poems and stories. Only a few teachers use day-to-day assessments of pupils' English skills, although this is growing slowly. Overall, teachers keep enough detail concerning the assessment of reading skills, but this is not the same with speaking, listening and writing skills. In particular, teachers do not keep pieces of work and compare them within the class or between years. This means that progress is not always identified accurately and this affects the setting of tasks, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. Literacy hour records, reading diaries and free writing are not used to the full to ensure that all pupils receive adequate challenges. This remains an area that has not developed sufficiently since the last inspection.

81. Management within the subject is good. The two co-ordinators are both skilled practitioners and set a good example to pupils and colleagues alike. They have a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses within their subject and a clear programme of development for raising standards still further. They are well supported in this by the governor with responsibility for literacy. They have ensured that the literacy hour has been well implemented, staff have received good training and resources have been enhanced in libraries and classrooms. Their contribution to the school development plan includes strategies to develop writing, spelling and the monitoring of both teaching and work. At present they do not have the opportunity to support colleagues or visit classrooms as they would wish. They now feel ready to develop more sharing and discussion concerning classroom practice.

MATHEMATICS

82. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds showed that the pupils' attainment in mathematics was well above national standards, and well above those for similar schools. Tests for eleven-year-olds showed attainment to be in line with national standards and well below those for similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 1, the number of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above was close to the national average but the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 was well above national averages. At the end of Key Stage 2 the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was in line with national averages, as was the number achieving the higher Level 5. Provisional results from the 2000 national tests suggest that standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and have improved at Key Stage 2, for both Level 4 and Level 5, in comparison with national averages and similar schools.
83. For the last three years standards in Key Stage 1 have risen year on year. The same is true for Key Stage 2 except for a dip in 1998. Standards rose to the school's agreed target levels for 1999. The scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and

observations in classrooms suggest that the good standards of teaching and learning seen are supporting well the continuing upward trend.

84. The previous inspection reported that standards of attainment for both key stages met national expectations. However, this report also identified a significant number of Year 2 pupils, including some higher attainers, relied on counting on in ones to solve problems and their progress towards competence in mental strategies for computation was unsatisfactory. The previous report also indicated that, in Year 6 pupils were unable to recall number facts expected for this age, and skills in mental calculation were weak. The last inspection also showed that the teaching of mathematics was usually satisfactory and sometimes good but there were some unsatisfactory lessons observed, in which pupils were not sufficiently challenged because the pace was slow and the work unchallenging.
85. Evidence from the current inspection shows that changes to planning, assessment procedures and curriculum practice are having a positive effect on the mathematics curriculum and levels of attainment, which are now above average, at both key stages. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and this is providing a good structure to lessons and is improving continuity and progression for pupils' learning. Pupils of all abilities have the valuable opportunity to develop mental arithmetic capability and basic computational skills, in the oral introductory session. Rapid recall of learned basic skills to promote mental acuity is not consistent in these sessions and some pupils are slow in their thinking. Some teachers encourage speed and accuracy but others miss the opportunity to accelerate learning.
86. Clearly identified learning objectives are helping pupils to appreciate their achievements in learning. These are often successfully highlighted in plenary sessions. Teachers work consistently together to improve the pupils' mathematical vocabulary. In lessons, they relate words to concepts very well and from this pupils' technical vocabulary is seen to be good. This helps them to think clearly and share ideas in group learning. Pupils are benefiting from the ability grouping in lessons but most teachers are not yet setting sufficiently challenging tasks for the higher attaining pupils. Too few examples of open-ended investigative problems were seen to be set to challenge pupils, especially the more able. However, where this does happen in Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils share ideas and use their mathematical skills to solve problems well. For example, Year 6 pupils made an informed guess at the sum of the internal angles of a quadrilateral, knowing that those in a triangle sum to 180 degrees. They were able to generalise, from the resulting investigation, the results for higher order polygons. Extended tasks of this nature were also observed in a Year 4 lesson. The lower achieving pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school. Teachers follow the national numeracy framework closely and this promotes good continuity and progression, and coverage of the Programmes of Study for most pupils. The opportunity for pupils to use and apply mathematics is less well developed. The school has recognised this and is now beginning to focus on this area. The use of assessment to measure mathematical performance is well developed but this is not true for assessment that informs planning for the lesson or the teacher's intervention with individual pupils. Assessment is not used sufficiently to match the content of the teaching programmes to pupils' abilities.
87. Towards the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are gaining a secure knowledge and understanding of number. Most pupils add and subtract to ten and count in two's, three's and ten's, some to a hundred. They appreciate a digit's place value. When the pupils deduce missing numbers in an algorithm they demonstrate good progress in operating with numbers and gains in vocabulary and handling notation. The more able pupils see that addition is the inverse of subtraction and that repeated additions lead to multiplication. A Year 2 class partitioned two-digit numbers, and was able to use the learning on pattern, from Year 1, to work out the unit equivalents for any number of tens

under the same partition. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils progress well in tabulating data and constructing bar charts to illustrate and interpret data, from early pictorial representation in year reception.

88. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in developing their mental calculation skills. Scrutiny of work shows that, by the end of the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of the four rules of number and of the multiplication tables. They use a range of mental and written methods to solve problems accurately, building on previous knowledge when they use inverses to check results. A good standard of work was seen in co-ordinates and in shape. Pupils' good levels of attainment in fractions, decimals and percentages indicate that the adoption of the numeracy strategy is beginning to have a positive effect on this aspect of the pupils' learning.
89. The mathematics curriculum is generally broad and balanced but pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop independence and the higher attaining pupils are often insufficiently challenged, for example by investigative work. Opportunities to widen and extend learning by using mathematical skills in other subjects are missed. For instance, by using graphs and tables in science to display results. A rare, but good, example of good practice, was the use by Year 5 pupils of line graphs to compare temperatures in two contrasting countries. The use of computers to support learning in mathematics is unsatisfactory. Insufficient use for data-handling and graphical representation was seen.
90. Pupils, in both key stages, have very good attitudes to learning in mathematics. They settle quickly to learning at the beginning of lessons and their response is usually good or very good and never less than satisfactory. Pupils listen very carefully to teachers and the good response of the pupils stems from the standard of teaching. Teaching is never less than satisfactory, in both key stages, and is good or very good in seven out of the ten lessons seen. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good. Pupils' ability to calculate mentally is extended during an oral introduction but there is sometimes insufficient challenge to encourage a quick and accurate response. The pupils work with enthusiasm on the main activity, enjoy the lesson and work well in pairs or groups, when sharing tasks and equipment. Year 5 pupils say that their favourite lesson is mathematics and this reflects all the teachers' determination to motivate pupils by making the subject enjoyable. The most successful lessons end with a well-planned plenary session to assess and consolidate learning. In less effective lessons the slow pace restricts time for this activity. The best lessons are characterised by detailed planning based on assessment and a brisk pace. Careful assessment is made to identify learning and to plan for the next progressive steps. Teachers organise teaching support well and this promotes good learning, but it is rare to see support staff monitoring pupils' learning in support of short term assessment when, for instance, they are not needed because the teacher is doing oral work with the whole class. The use of homework is effective in supporting pupils' learning of basic skills. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Some of the work scrutinised was unmarked. Most marking did not direct pupils to the next step in learning with an evaluative comment, however, a minority of teachers did this well.
91. The curriculum meets national requirements but very little work on time and analogue and digital equivalence was found. Pupils have equal access to learning and teaching. Pupils with special educational needs are working on areas within the Programmes of Study that are appropriate to their needs. Achievement for these pupils is good.
92. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has secured the support and confidence of staff in introducing the National Numeracy Strategy. This is improving standards. His organisation of new resources for the initiative has been very effective in promoting better learning throughout the school in the skills of mental calculation. There is a clear

policy of action for improvement but he is currently unable to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms, but the school development plan has measures in hand to make this possible. Short-term assessment to improve planning for individual learning needs is beginning.

SCIENCE

93. No science was available for observation during the inspection in Key Stage 1 or in Years 3 and 4 of Key Stage 2. However, work from the previous year was examined and conversations held with pupils. A lesson was seen in both Years 5 and 6. On the basis of this evidence, attainment is judged to be above average for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. This maintains the position identified in the last inspection.
94. In 1999, National Curriculum teacher assessments for pupils aged seven were broadly in line with the national average for those attaining the expected Level 2. However, at the higher Level 3, results were well above average. When compared with similar schools nationally, the teacher assessments show well below performance for Level 2 but well above average results at the higher level. Provisional results for 2000, from a group of pupils with a wider spread of ability, show a broadly similar, but slightly lower overall level of performance.
95. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests, for pupils aged eleven, indicate overall performance, at Level 4, that is broadly in line with the national average. Those pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was also close to the national average. However, when compared with the performance of schools in similar contexts, results are below average mainly because of the results at the higher level. The 2000 provisional results, however, indicate an improvement in overall performance to above average against similar schools. Against the national average, 95 per cent of pupils attain the expected level. There is also a significant improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5.
96. There are too few opportunities provided, throughout the school, for the pupils to carry out practical science investigations. This reflects a similar position in the last inspection. However, when the opportunity is given, the pupils' enthusiastic approach and very positive attitudes to their learning, lead to a good standard of work. In Year 2, for example, an effective investigation is carried out to show that plants absorb water, whilst Year 1 pupils improve their knowledge of materials when deciding the most appropriate ones for building the little pigs' house. This work on materials is successfully built upon in Year 3. The pupils carry out effective experiments on different materials as insulators, which include evidence of an early understanding of the notion of prediction. Motivation of the pupils' interest by the teachers is well illustrated by the use of a visiting dental nurse, when the pupils carry out an investigation to show how teeth decay. Such imaginative use of alternative resources is an example of the generally good range of teaching methods that are employed. However, evidence from the pupils' previous work indicates that a good deal is copied and insufficient opportunities are provided, for example, for higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking by undertaking more open-ended tasks or investigations.
97. The teachers have high expectations for the use of appropriate technical language throughout the school, for example, Year 4 work illustrates correct use of such terms as 'photosynthesis' and 'carbon dioxide'. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils correctly use and understand terms such as 'synthetic' and the 'rigidity' of materials. This has a positive impact on the pupils' motivation and extends the learning, particularly of the higher attaining pupils. The high expectations the teachers have for the pupils' behaviour, together with their very good classroom management skills, ensure that any practical investigations are effectively carried out. For example, a Year 5 class, despite being very large, undertook a successful investigation into shadows, with appropriate

precision in setting up a fair test. Higher attaining pupils in the class clearly understood the need to verify results by repeating the process and they had a well-developed notion of prediction as opposed to a guess. The pupils' learning, in both the observed Key Stage 2 lessons, was greatly assisted by the clear objectives set by the teachers. The positive response of the pupils to the learning opportunities offered by their teachers, is well illustrated by the fact that very little of the pupils' previous work in their books is incomplete. The standard of the presentation of work is generally good, also reflecting well the teachers' high expectations.

98. The planning of the teachers is systematic, ensuring satisfactory progress by the pupils in the basic skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, the tasks carried out by the pupils are not always well matched to their needs, resulting in undemanding tasks for higher attainers and the frustration of below average pupils. For example, in work observed on materials, some of the lower attaining pupils had some difficulty in writing down a range of liquids, whilst others, engaged upon the same task, had an early understanding of the states of matter.
99. A notable feature of the good overall quality of teaching is the teachers' very effective use of the time available. Lessons proceed at a good pace, support staff are used well, for example a volunteer helper with information and communication technology skills assisted a group of Year 5 children on work related to their work on light, and resources are made readily available. The pupils respond well to the teachers' demands and very little lesson time is unproductive, greatly assisting the overall good quality of learning in science. Whilst the teachers seek every opportunity to extend the pupils' scientific language, there are currently too few opportunities for extended writing and the use of mathematical skills, such as the graphical representation of the results of investigations. The teachers, as they know their pupils well, make satisfactory day-to-day evaluations of their needs. They also mark work regularly, but the indication of future targets as a result of the marking is inconsistent through the school. There are procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, for example a recently introduced 'overview' sheet for end of topic or year assessments. Its use is currently inconsistent, which therefore reduces the whole-school effectiveness of the procedure. There is also no whole-school approach to the long-term modification of the science curriculum in the light of experience. This is an unsatisfactory situation.
100. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has worked hard to establish an effective scheme of work and systematic and structured approaches to investigative skills. Whilst teachers use the clearly identified learning objectives from the scheme of work, the assessment of investigative skills is not yet consistently undertaken. The co-ordinator monitors standards in science by collecting in sets of books. This is an important procedure but she has no formal and structured opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching. This is an unsatisfactory situation. The co-ordinator organises the resources well and seeks effectively to stimulate interest in the subject by, for example, arranging 'science theatre' visits.

ART and DESIGN

101. In the previous inspection the standards in art were found to be above average in both key stages. Since then the standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 and have improved in Key Stage 2, where pupils consistently show a high level of visual perception and technique in sketching and observational drawing.
102. In Key Stage 1, pupils show a good understanding of form and line in their drawings and painting of people and objects. In the reception year, pupils used line and colour well to produce good observational work of shells, with subsequent good use of colour and texture, and this contributes to the good standard of Year 1 work on the 'Creation' theme where an exceptional coloured drawing of a bird was seen. The pupils use

coloured inks on textiles to draw fruits and make good use of colour for visual effect. In Year 2, pupils demonstrate good skills and understanding in making a self portrait in the style of Van Gogh, with good investigation into the use of line and tone to convey mood and expression. In Key Stage 2, pupils use colour, texture and materials very well to achieve artistic effect and expression that is very good. Year 3 pupils explore the patterns on animal skins and understand well the elements of repeat and contrast, describing them with good technical language. The interpretation and form of some pupils' work on seal skin patterns shows very good use of line, tone, and colour to capture subtlety. The pupils also work in the style of Picasso to learn about the effects of asymmetry and use media and colour for their portraits to achieve high standards in this work. In previous work, they explored texture on polystyrene tiles and print these effects on to cloth to produce an interesting patterned textile. In Year 4, they explore the work of artists in Ancient Egypt and learn about their styles and use of materials in making a chair for Tutankhamun's tomb. High levels of interpretation, use of perspective and drawing skills were evident. In previous work, Year 5 pupils further develop observational and drawing skills to produce very good and excellent portraits. They build on earlier skills to discriminate in their drawing of faces, to convey very good understanding of how to show expression and mood. Very good work by pupils was seen in the sculpting of heads in clay and the use of colour and line in interpreting the style of Modigliani in portraits. In Year 6, pupils are clearly developing an individual style and are imaginative in creating different effects using media, line, and for some, observational flair. They produce very good individual interpretations, for instance, when they create shapes for tessellation patterns they are able to individualise them in a very creative way. Some use geometric forms and line and shade in the style of Maurits Escher to create complex and inventive patterns. In previous work they are very effective in using watercolour and collage in selecting method and material to convey mood and feelings about a storm.

103. The pupils, including those with special needs, make at least good progress as they move through the school. They increase the range of materials they use and their skills in selecting them to create their individual art to give unique impact. The pupils gain a good awareness of colour and line and its importance in creating mood and emphasis. A gifted pupil, in Key Stage 2, is identified by the teacher and given opportunity to further develop their talent. The pupil has reached the finals of a national competition.
104. Pupils' attitudes to art and design are very good and are a significant contributor to the standards attained. They listen carefully and concentrate well, enjoying the lessons and taking great care with all they do. The pupils work very well in collaborative tasks and often become absorbed in the activity. For example, Year 6 pupils work in groups to create a series of pictures to design and make a zoetrope, drawing a sequence of actions to simulate movement. They model for each other, sharing ideas and materials. The pupils are very sensitive and thoughtful when evaluating the work of others and enjoy their own and other's successes.
105. The overall quality of teaching is good and teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Pupils are encouraged to experiment and helped to develop the technical vocabulary they need to be critical of their own efforts and share ideas with others. This helps them to make imaginative decisions for themselves about the use of media and method for imaginative effect, for example, in the Year 6 lesson on sequencing movement. In Year 2, the teacher carefully questioned pupils about their understanding of earlier drawings and texture, and helped them to find successful techniques to continue their learning. Planning is good, identifying clear learning objectives, and resources are well prepared. This ensures a sense of purpose to enhance the pupils' obvious enjoyment of the lessons.
106. The subject is led enthusiastically by the able co-ordinator who discusses the art and design curriculum with other teachers, supports their work and reviews planning.

However, there is no opportunity for her to monitor teaching and learning and so promote even higher standards in the subject. The links with other subjects such as history, geography, design and technology, English and mathematics provide a good context for pupils' art work. The curriculum is to be revised this year and the valuing of the art of other cultures is to receive greater emphasis. Each pupil has a sketchbook that records individual progress in these skills, but otherwise no records of the individual standards pupils attain are kept to inform teaching. The resources for art and design are satisfactory. There are well-presented and attractive displays that give a clear indication of how the school values this element of the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards in design and technology are in line with the national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Too few lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, during the inspection, to make a judgement about the standards in this key stage. However, evidence gathered through a scrutiny of pupils' work, photographs of past activities and the work shown in assemblies, shows that pupils are making good progress across the school in both key stages, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
108. In Key Stage 1 pupils plan, make and show how their model works. In one lesson, they talk about their first-hand experience of going on swings, slides and roundabouts in the park, draw their own sketches and successfully use the materials available to make good models. One group made a swing with the newspapers and tested it out, with the help of a classroom assistant, by placing a miniature bear on it. Photographic evidence of Years 1 and 2 work shows that pupils successfully work collaboratively to assemble parts from 'Maxi fun' to make a hedge-trimmer, a pair of stilts and a model of the Eiffel Tower.
109. At Key Stage 1, not enough lessons were observed during the inspection to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching across the key stage. However, teaching in the lesson observed was very good in which the effective use of support staff enabled pupils to work at a good pace, in small groups and receive individual attention. Specialist input from the teacher in discussing with pupils which materials were best suited for their designs, enables pupils to think about bending and folding material to get the desired effect.
110. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. Teachers discuss the process of designing, making and evaluating a model and in one lesson observed, pupils concluded that another type of adhesive would join the cube in a better way. Through skilful questioning, pupils are empowered to think aloud and conclude why, for example, 'the paper-tube is weak in one place'. Through practical activities, pupils learn the subject specific words like 'free-standing' and 'disassemble'. Teachers use resources effectively, but there are limited opportunities for pupils to benefit from the use of computers in design and technology. Samples of pupils' work and lesson observations show a lack of differentiation in the activities and the higher attaining pupils are not always given challenging tasks.
111. Pupils have a good attitude towards learning. They work very well in pairs and handle tools, like scissors, with care. They enjoy the practical nature of work and show perseverance in completing their task. They value the work of their peers and always look for ways of improving their product. Boys and girls work well together and there are no significant differences in the achievements of pupils with special educational needs.
112. The subject is satisfactorily managed by the co-ordinator, who has, through good quality resources, helped to improve the standard of design and technology. The subject planning is satisfactory and takes into account recent national advice. However, the policy lacks identified opportunities for using information and communication technology and links with literacy and numeracy. The monitoring and evaluation of the

subject is a weakness and has been identified as a priority in the school development plan.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

113. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment was found to be above average, in both key stages, in history. In geography, it was average with a significant proportion of pupils achieving above this level.
114. In history there was insufficient evidence to give a judgement at the end of Key Stage 2. It was possible to observe only one Key Stage 2 lesson. Scrutiny of work for pupils in Year 5 shows that standards are above average for their age. At the end of Key Stage 1 it was not possible to observe any lessons, but a greater range of pupils' work was available for scrutiny, and standards are judged to be above average. In geography insufficient work was available at the end of Key Stage 2 on which to base firm judgements and no lessons were available for observation. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work in Key Stage 1 indicate that standards of work in geography are above average. Scrutiny of Year 5 work indicates that standards of attainment are above average for pupils of this age.
115. In history, Key Stage 1 pupils are developing an understanding of the differences between then and now, by looking at domestic home life and how changes have taken place. For instance, how the mangle, wash boiler, and dolly tub have been replaced by the automatic washer. They construct time lines of their lives and order events in chronological sequence. They are aware of well-known historical figures such as Beatrix Potter and George Stephenson and his 'Rocket'. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils produce good quality work showing factual knowledge and understanding of life in ancient Egypt. They make good use of a variety of historical sources to collect evidence. The pupils imagine they discover Tutankhamun's tomb and interpret the contents and hieroglyphics to find out about peoples' lives and beliefs. Older pupils produce good quality folders of facts about the Tudor Period and make lists of questions to ask of people of that time to compare with the present. They use books and references effectively to find out about monarchs and power conflicts of the time. The pupils' ability to empathise with historical figures and events is well supported by effective study of Francis Drake's crew when they are starving and ill with scurvy on long voyages of discovery. They have a good understanding of the passage of time and sequences of events.
116. Year 1 pupils can identify geographical features around the school grounds and distinguish between human and physical features. They are able to identify boundaries and know their purposes. Pupils in Year 2 show satisfactory skills in labelling and interpreting simple maps and plans, and can understand how a map relates to a route, at a competent level for their ages. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils show a good understanding of technical geographical language such as source, estuary and tributary, in describing the stages of river development. Older pupils study a contrasting environment to their own in India, and compare and contrast social and physical features, including the effect of climate on people's lives. Some work is of high quality. They show a good understanding of maps and scale and they can use them effectively to deduce information.
117. Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually very good. They work well together in groups and help each other with the work when appropriate, sharing ideas and equipment. They enjoy the lessons and are proud of their efforts.
118. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both subjects. Care is taken by teachers to ensure that pupils produce well-written work. Year 5 pupils construct line graphs comparing seasonal

temperatures in this country and in India, and produce neatly annotated maps and diagrams. Extended writing, such as that exploring the day-to-day problems of people living in an Indian village, consolidates writing skills. However, opportunities for extended writing in both subjects are limited.

119. The overall quality of teaching in the two subjects is good. In the good lessons, teachers identify clear learning objectives and these were shared with pupils. They had good subject knowledge and pupils learned well as a result of effective questioning and carefully prepared resources appropriate to the defined learning goals. For example, the resource sheets and tasks for a lesson on ancient Egypt enabled pupils to be effective in investigating in the role of archaeologists. The very good teaching provided learning material suited to all abilities and especially the higher attaining pupils. The teacher also assessed learning against learning objectives to inform short-term planning. In satisfactory lessons the pace was sometimes too slow to complete all activities, and the important shared review, to consolidate learning, was curtailed. Tasks to undertake at home are set by the teachers and this supports the pupils' learning well. Marking is undertaken regularly but rarely includes targets for future learning.
120. The subject co-ordinator has monitored the work in pupils' books and receives and checks teachers' planning to ensure that it matches the curriculum map. This ensures that all pupils' experience is matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum within the school's topic framework for history and geography. However, he has no opportunity to monitor classroom teaching and improve good practice to support subject improvement. Long-term and medium-term planning are under review to incorporate the nationally published scheme of work. Long-term assessment and tracking of pupils' progress are undertaken by some teachers but the pattern is inconsistent. There is, as yet, no formal procedure for reviewing the curriculum in the light of experience. The school is aware of this deficiency and plans are being developed to address the issue. The learning banks of resources, carefully matched to curriculum needs, are of satisfactory quality and well organised to support learning. The use of information and communication technology is under-utilised. There are few occasions when it is employed by pupils for learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

121. Attainment is below national expectation at the end of both key stages. Although this is lower than standards reported at the last inspection, this must be set in the context of a complete change of computer hardware in the school and a lack of staff training. The school has identified staff training as a high priority, but this will take some while to happen and staff are currently working in a very restricted environment for teaching ICT skills.
122. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are at home with the computer keyboard and mouse. They recognise a range of keys, including 'delete', 'shift', 'space bar' and 'enter', and use the cursor keys and understand their purpose. The pupils compose or copy small pieces of story work or poetry and the higher attaining pupils employ a small range of editing skills. A few pupils develop skills in adding artwork, but this is not an independent skill. The majority of those without computers at home cannot use databases, CD-ROM's or load saved work. There is little development of skills that encourage pupils to control the movement of, say, a 'roamer' or 'turtle' and imaginative work is restricted to a small number of spelling and number practice games. The pupils have not yet developed enough confidence to talk about computers with any degree of understanding.
123. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is also significantly below the national expectation. Pupils develop skills with regard to 'logging on', accessing the Internet and starting very basic spreadsheets. They become more confident in basic word processing, editing and enhancing work by altering font size and colour and adding graphics. They do not have enough access to develop appropriate skills related to handling data in a number of ways, researching reference information or increasing control over data or events. About half of pupils in Year 6 have skills appropriate to Year 3 and those who demonstrate knowledge and skills are often pupils who have developed these skills at home.
124. The quality of teaching is variable and this relates directly to teacher confidence. Good teaching is characterised by a good working knowledge of the hardware, a clear idea of the stages needed to move pupils on and an imaginative grasp of how to explain procedures with very limited hardware. In one very well taught Year 5 lesson, the class teacher reinforces basic keyboard skills. Although the lesson is at the end of the afternoon, the teacher's enthusiasm, her clarity of explanation and the very effective use of a single computer for a class of 36, mean that pupils participate, follow the steps indicated and understand the concept of a spreadsheet and how it can be completed. Imaginatively, the teacher then provides each child with the photocopy of a keyboard for reinforcement. Her lesson planning also includes opportunities for pupils to practise the spreadsheet skills during the coming week. Too many lessons rely on a single computer and pencil and paper follow-up activities. This does not allow pupils to gain confidence or reinforce skills learnt by regular usage. During the inspection, ICT was used by a small number of subject teachers. Where this happened it was imaginative and assisted pupils in developing knowledge of the subject area. Years 1 and 2 pupils have some access to programmes that reinforce addition and subtraction, used well with the support of a classroom assistant. Good use is made of ICT in geography at both key stages. In one good geography lesson in Year 5, pupils access the Internet and collect relevant and detailed information about India as part of their 'contrasting environments' work. Teaching in this subject is well planned with good use of the available resources. However, lack of staff training and the restrictions placed by whole-class teaching mean that progress is very limited for all pupils.
125. Despite limitations, pupils enjoy computer work. They listen attentively when in whole-class demonstrations. They make good use of the little time they have on computers

and show considerable enthusiasm for enhancing work or finding out information. Their willingness and ability to organise themselves allows ICT to be taught in cramped, limited and generally unsatisfactory conditions. Although the school makes effective use of a shared technician, pupils' enthusiasm is unfulfilled by access to appropriately knowledgeable staff or adequate technology.

126. Since the last inspection the school has invested in much new hardware. It is now just adequate to teach ICT to a suitable level. The school has also invested in good software; a small proportion is not licensed appropriately to use it on more than one computer and about half of the computers are not networked. Consequently, teachers and pupils work with resources that are too limited and require better access. The co-ordinator is well qualified in her subject and sets a good example to colleagues. However, she is not able to move forward with her very appropriate plans, for setting up the computers and assisting colleagues within the classroom. This is a time constraint and more progress could be made if problems of access were addressed immediately. Her plans for developing training, using the national guidelines and supporting colleagues in developing their skills, are good and are laying the basis of more effective provision in the future.

MUSIC

127. Standards in music are above those expected of eleven-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 2 and average at the end of Key Stage 1. This shows that standards have improved in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy music and develop their skills as they move through the school, as there is a good range of opportunities to sing and listen to good role models of vocal and instrumental music.
128. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn how sounds can be made in different ways. They describe a sound played on an instrument by using words like 'soft'. They learn to recognise and use a variety of untuned percussion instruments to make sounds to create a mood, for example of tranquillity. The pupils learn to use subject-specific words like 'dynamics' by drawing contrasting pictures of the loud and quiet sea. In one lesson, pupils learnt about 'tempo' by playing an instrument in a fast and slow speed. Higher attaining pupils can interpret the sounds conveyed through the graphic notation, for example, for 'Land of the Master'.
129. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn words like 'ostinato' by playing an instrument in a group, and maintaining their own part to contribute to the overall effect of making a repeated pattern in an orchestra. All pupils have an understanding of pulse and tempo, which they apply in playing an instrument and in singing. In Year 6, pupils explore, choose and organise musical ideas, while analysing the musical structure of an Edvard Munch picture. Pupils also enjoy listening to the solo performances of their peers. For example, in one lesson, one pupil was able to play a melodious tune on the piano. This has a motivating influence on the pupils' interest in music.
130. The overall quality of teaching is good. As reported in the previous inspection, teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 ranges from satisfactory to very good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Where teaching is very good, teachers have secure subject knowledge. They incorporate a balance of vocal and instrumental musical activities and demonstrate abstract concepts, like rhythm, through the visual use of signs and symbols. Teachers plan their lessons by outlining clear learning objectives, which they share with the pupils at the outset of the lesson, which helps them to evaluate their own progress. The planning includes a good range of musical activities that integrate the skills of performing, composing and appraising. For example, in one lesson the class was divided in two halves, with one half as the listeners who appraised the use of a particular instrument, for example the rain maker to create a calm mood.

131. Where lessons are satisfactory, rather than good or very good, the pace is slow and not all pupils have a turn in participating in activities. All teachers make good use of technology, like the compact disc player, to enable the pupils to listen to a wide range of recorded music from other cultures.
132. As in the previous inspection report, the subject co-ordinator makes a very good contribution to the standards attained in music through providing specialist support and advice to teachers. She is responsible for extra-curricular activities in music for Key Stage 2, such as the recorder clubs, the choir and musical productions that prepare pupils to perform in front of an audience. The hymn practice, led by the co-ordinator, contributes to the spiritual development of all pupils and enables them to sing in chorus. The co-ordinator has recently introduced a system for the assessment of learning objectives linked to the nationally available scheme of work adopted by the school. However, monitoring and evaluation of the subject remain a weakness, as reported in the previous inspection, and has been identified as a priority in the current school development plan. The good range of musical resources available in the school has a positive impact on the pupils' learning, as they are used well by the teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. It was not possible to judge the standards attained by the pupils in dance, games or other outdoor activities, as the focus in lessons during the inspection week was on gymnastics. In both key stages, in this aspect of physical education, the standard attained was higher than that normally expected of pupils aged seven and eleven, which represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Good standards were also evident in the one Key Stage 2 swimming lesson observed. The school indicates that it is usual for a minimum of 95 per cent of pupils to achieve the National Curriculum 25 metre swimming target by the time they leave at eleven years of age. The framework for the physical education curriculum indicates that a broad curriculum is provided. This is supplemented, for Key Stage 2 pupils, by some extra-curricular sporting activities, for example netball, tag-rugby and soccer, which are a mix of skills development and competition. This is also true of the annual sports day, where the emphasis is on ensuring involvement by as many pupils as possible. There is a wide spectrum of views amongst the parents of skills development versus competition. The school has achieved an appropriate balance in the provision made for the pupils.
134. The high expectations the teachers have for the pupils' behaviour, and the very good management of their classes, are significant contributors to the overall good quality of teaching in both key stages. It ensures, for example, that the pupils respond immediately to instructions, which leads to lessons being conducted safely, for example in the movement and carrying of any apparatus used. The teachers have a good understanding of the skills to be taught. This aspect of their work has been greatly assisted by the development of an effective and well-structured scheme of work that supports their planning. However, some of the planning, whilst not unsatisfactory, did not provide for an appropriate balance between vigorous activity and skills acquisition, for example a lack of contrast between the warm-up session and the main activity. The teachers are very successful motivators of the pupils, for example by their use of individuals and/or groups to demonstrate their skills. As a result, the pupils show high levels of enthusiasm and work hard throughout the lesson. The good relationships that exist in the lessons encourage all pupils, even those who are not gymnastically confident, to try creative movement, safe in the knowledge that their attempts will not be ridiculed by the teachers or their peers. As a result, most pupils show increasing bodily control, demonstrating well-controlled 2, 3 and 4 point balance progressing into fluent sequences of movement. Progress in the development of skills is greatly helped by the teachers' encouragement of all pupils to evaluate their own and the performance of others. The good behaviour, by virtually all pupils, results in good levels of achievement.

135. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject and is beginning to influence a systematic approach through the school of the development of skills. She has no formal opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching or to work alongside colleagues to assist the raising of standards. This is unsatisfactory. However, the teachers have, for example, welcomed her introduction of a resource to support progress in gymnastics and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop more opportunities for dance. There is no whole-school framework for the assessment of key skills or the modification of the subject's scheme of work in the light of experience. The school is aware of this and the issue forms part of the 2000/2001 school development plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. Standards of attainment in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection and remain satisfactory. They are in line with the expectations for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils, as outlined in the Cheshire Agreed Syllabus that is followed by the school. This is because of the well-planned opportunities for all pupils to listen to stories and real life people, in order to deepen their understanding about Christian beliefs and those beliefs practised, for example, by Hindus and Jews. In both the key stages, pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of the stories from the Bible and other faiths like Judaism and Hinduism.
137. Religious education makes a satisfactory contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in Key Stage 1, pupils reflected on the teachings of Jesus by listening to the story of 'The Lost Sheep' and developed a clear understanding of the notion of forgiveness when people go astray. They develop a social understanding of the harvest festival and pray for those who have no food. There are opportunities for them to learn about the cultures and beliefs of Hindus by working with members of the local Hindu community. The lessons observed, and the evidence of pupils' work, show that there are currently limited opportunities for pupils to discuss the difference between right and wrong, fair and unfair.
138. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about a range of religious beliefs, in addition to their work on Christianity. In one of the lessons observed, pupils could recall the festivals of lights celebrated by Hindus and Jews. Through their drawings and labelling of pictures, pupils demonstrate an understanding of technical vocabulary like 'lectern'. They have covered work on festivals, celebrations like the Hindu wedding and 'special' books for Christians through drawings and writings. They use artefacts such as a Menorah to make observational drawings. Links with literacy are well established through the use of poems of atonement to deepen the pupils' understanding of Ros Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In Key Stage 2, there is insufficient evidence of teaching related to learning from the study of religion.
139. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They listen intently to stories and value the contributions of their peers, while they answer questions related to stories and religious beliefs. Pupils' curiosity in the subject is aroused by the use of relevant artefacts such as ram's horn to describe a 'shofar' used by the Jews.
140. The overall quality of teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. It is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement from the previous inspection in which the quality of teaching was satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 because teachers deepen the pupils' understanding of religions by using a variety of strategies like discussion, listening to stories that arouse the pupils' interest and by having high expectations of pupils in their writings about the subject studied. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 because there is some repetition of the work at the same

level, therefore not always extending, for example, higher attaining pupils and an uneven and insufficient emphasis is placed on the use of writing to record learning in religious education. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory in informing pupils about other religions. However, not enough emphasis is placed on taking into account the individual pupil's response to spiritual and moral issues.

141. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and since the last inspection there has been a marked improvement in the quality of resources, linked to various religions, that are suited to the needs of pupils in both the key stages. The school follows Cheshire's Agreed Syllabus for religious education and the planning is in place to teach to the requirements of the revised syllabus. However, there is insufficient monitoring and the use of assessment to guide curricular planning. There is also a lack of evaluation to improve the school's performance in religious education and insufficient opportunities for co-ordination between the staff who teach the subject. In the policy for religious education, there is an imbalance in the coverage of learning about and from religion. The co-ordinator recognises the need to develop the subject in the area of spiritual awareness.