

INSPECTION REPORT

Worthington Primary School

Sale, Greater Manchester

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106300

Headteacher: Mr C. Searle

Reporting inspector: Mr P. M. Allen
17531

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th January 2002

Inspection number: 196213

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant and Junior |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 – 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Worthington Road Sale Greater Manchester |
| Postcode: | M33 2JJ |
| Telephone number: | 0161 973 3504 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Ms L. Tatham |
| Date of previous inspection: | 14 th July 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 17531 | Mr P. Allen | Registered inspector | Music Religious education Foundation Stage | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 11474 | Mr P. Berry | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 17310 | Mrs A. McAskie | Team inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology History | How well are pupils taught? |
| 29381 | Mrs A. Brangan | Team inspector | Science Geography Physical Education Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 29686 | Mr S. Lord | Team inspector | English Art and design Design and technology | How well is the school led and managed? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Worthington Primary school is an average sized primary school serving the Sale Moor area of Greater Manchester which has a mixed range of housing. Half of the school's population is from its own catchment area, with just over a third from the neighbouring catchment area. The vast majority of the children benefit from having attended the Nursery that caters for up to 26 children in its morning and afternoon sessions, all on a part time basis. Of the 277 pupils on roll in the main school, there are a similar number of boys and girls overall, although in some year groups there is an imbalance. The vast majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin. There are eight children with English as an additional language although none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are nine full time classes, five of them containing split year groups. Thirty-three pupils are on the special educational needs register, this proportion being below the national average. The proportion of pupils actually taking free school meals (rather than those who may be entitled to them) is well below the national average. Although it varies from year to year, attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with what could be expected. The school has set priorities for the future, most notably the raising of standards at Key Stage 1.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with a caring, community ethos where each child is valued. The headteacher, very well supported by the staff, governors and parents, provides good leadership. The quality of teaching is mainly very good in the Foundation Stage (the time spent in the Nursery and Reception year) and in the latter part of Key Stage 2 it is consistently very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 and in the earlier part of Key Stage 2, where pupils' progress is less marked, is satisfactory overall. Standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory in the main. Standards at the end of Year 6 are good and above national averages. Overall the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- ◆ The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that the children make a very positive start to school life.
- ◆ The very good teaching in the latter part of Key Stage 2 leads to the very good progress and the good standards achieved by the pupils.
- ◆ The quality of the headteacher's leadership impacts very positively on the very good relationships which underpin the school's caring, community ethos.
- ◆ The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress.
- ◆ The provision for moral and social development is very good.
- ◆ There is a very good partnership between the school and the parents who hold the school in very high regard.

What could be improved

- ◆ Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- ◆ Consistency in the quality of teaching across the school.
- ◆ The music curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a good improvement since its previous inspection in July 1997 and the issues from that report have been addressed. Standards have risen significantly in design and technology and in information and communication technology resources have been well developed. Teachers' confidence and competence have grown in assessing attainment and progress and lesson planning has improved. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Improvements in the school include better communication and parental links and improved governing body involvement in the life of the school. There is a strong, shared commitment to further improvement and a shared capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | Key |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 | |
| English | A* | B | A | A | very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E |
| Mathematics | B | A* | B | B | |
| Science | A | A* | B | B | |

The youngest children are in line to meet the nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and a significant minority are likely to exceed them. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages in reading and mathematics and below in writing. These overall evaluations are affected by the significant number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 group. Standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are good and above national averages. Although results at Key Stage 1 show improvement in writing and especially in mathematics, national performance data indicates that standards in recent years have been consistently higher at the end of Key Stage 2 than they have been at Key Stage 1. This is the main issue for the school to address. Standards in information and communication technology are sound across the school. Standards in religious education are sound and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. While standards in the other subjects are mainly satisfactory, standards in music are unsatisfactory because pupils do not currently have sufficient access to all the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|-------------------------|--|
| Attitudes to the school | The pupils have very positive attitudes with a lot of enthusiasm for school. Most children, especially in the oldest classes, work hard to achieve their best. |
| Behaviour, in and out | Behaviour is usually very good and sometimes, especially with the oldest pupils, it is exemplary. Older pupils are supportive and |

of classrooms

protective towards the younger ones.

| | |
|--|---|
| Personal development and relationships | Personal development is very good. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with all the adults in school. |
| Attendance | Attendance is good, although a small minority of pupils are late on a regular basis. |

The pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour have a very positive impact on the quality of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery & Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | very good | satisfactory | very 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.

Although the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, it is variable across the school. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is mainly very good. The quality in the oldest three classes is consistently very good and in a small number of lessons observed it was excellent. The quality of teaching and learning in the other classes, where there are a number of staff relatively new to teaching, although satisfactory and sometimes good, is less effective overall; this affects the progress pupils make. The skills of literacy and numeracy are better taught in the oldest classes where pupils' needs are more successfully met. The teaching caters well for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those pupils with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | With the exception of music, the curriculum is broad and balanced with a number of good features, including the provision for extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is inclusive for all pupils. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils are well supported by the school and this, together with the external help provided, enables them to make very good progress. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Provision is good and this is reflected in the good progress being made by the pupils. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The provision for spiritual development is good and the provision for moral and social development is very good. The provision for cultural development, including multicultural education is sound. |

| | |
|--|--|
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school looks after its pupils well within its strong, caring community ethos. There are sound arrangements for the monitoring of attainment and progress in basic skills with plans to further develop assessments in the Foundation Stage and across all subjects of the National Curriculum. |
|--|--|

The school is aware of and beginning to address the pupils' entitlement to an appropriate music curriculum. There is a very good partnership between the school and the parents. Parents are very supportive of the school and hold it in high esteem. The pastoral care of pupils is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher's enthusiasm and commitment to the school permeate its life. His charismatic leadership ensures that the school is a welcoming, vibrant place to be. He is well supported by the senior management team and all the adults. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governing body, well led by its chairperson, is effective in fulfilling its statutory duties. Increasingly governors are helping to shape the direction of the school as they continue to gain understanding of the school's areas for development. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Although the school has made a good start in self-evaluation, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is insufficiently focused and rigorous. |
| The strategic use of resources | There is good strategic use of resources. Surplus income is being accumulated for future improvements to the premises. |

Overall the accommodation is adequate. As part of a rolling programme for improvement, there are plans to significantly develop one of the classrooms. Teacher staffing is adequate and the school has valuably increased the level of classroom support. The school is well resourced across all the areas of the curriculum. Good use is made of time except that teaching time at both key stages is below national recommendations. The school is prudent in its spending with good consideration being given to 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 children like school, behave well, make good progress and are helped to become responsible. ◆ The teaching is good with the expectation that children will work hard. ◆ The school is well led and managed and works closely with parents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Some parents would appreciate clearer guidance and consistency on homework. ◆ Some would value more extra-curricular activities. |

The judgement of the inspection team is that the policy for homework is very clear. Nevertheless, the headteacher has firm plans to review homework provision. The amount of extra-curricular activity is judged to be appropriate and at least as good as most schools of a

similar size. The inspection team endorses parents' positive views about the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The judgement of the inspection team is that standards at the end of Year 2, which are satisfactory in the main, are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 were judged to be good and above national averages. These good standards have been maintained partly due to the very good teaching the pupils receive.
2. A strength of the school is the very good teaching in the Foundation Stage which ensures that children make a very positive start to school life. Assessments undertaken soon after children enter the Reception year indicate that, although there is a wide range of attainment which varies from year to year, overall attainment is broadly in line with what could be expected. In the Nursery and in the Reception year children achieve well relative to their abilities. This progress and the standards the children attain are an improvement on those described in the previous report.
3. In the areas of personal, social and emotional development and in knowledge and understanding of the world, the vast majority are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year and around a third are likely to exceed them. In communication, language and literacy, although the vast majority are likely to meet most of the goals, fewer will meet the higher level competencies relating to reading and writing. Around a quarter of the pupils are likely to exceed the goals. In the area of mathematical development, the vast majority will meet the goals. In the physical area, virtually all are likely to achieve the goals with a quarter exceeding them, whilst in the creative area all the children will meet the goals, with a third likely to exceed them.
4. Results vary from year to year, largely through the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs which affects the overall evaluations. This is the case with the current Year 2 pupils where a significant minority of pupils have learning difficulties in the basic skills. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages in reading and mathematics, but below in writing. Standards in science are broadly in line with what could be expected. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests the pupils were in line with national averages in reading and writing but below those for similar schools.
5. National performance data indicates that taking the three years from 1999 to 2001 together, the performance of pupils in reading was broadly in line with the national average but the performance in writing and in mathematics fell below the national averages. Nevertheless, in writing and especially in mathematics, there has been an improvement in standards achieved, year on year, during that time.
6. Standards in recent years have been consistently higher at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Year 6 are good and above national averages in English, mathematics and science. This pattern of attainment is reflected in the 2001 results in mathematics and science where standards were good and above national averages. In the 2001 results in English, standards were very good and well above the national average and that for similar schools. The school meets its Key Stage 2 targets. Taking the four years from 1997 to 2001 together, the performance of pupils exceeded the national average for their year group by a significant margin, most notably in English. Over the last three years, there have been times when the National Curriculum results have been in the top five per cent nationally.

7. During the first half term of Year 6 the pupils take the locally administered tests to determine selection for grammar school. A significant minority have access to private tuition and most spend significant time on work to prepare them for the tests. This has a positive impact on levels of attainment and ultimately on National Curriculum test results. The key factor is that the very good teaching in the oldest three classes leads to the very good progress and good standards achieved by the pupils.

8. National performance and other data all indicate that over recent years the standards are relatively higher at the end of Key Stage 2 than they are at Key Stage 1. The school recognises that this is its main area to address. Although there have been some improvements recently in writing and mathematics, much more remains to be done to raise standards at Key Stage 1. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and good and sometimes very good progress in the oldest three Key Stage 2 classes; it was in these areas that most of the very good teaching was observed. In the other classes, most of which are taken by relatively inexperienced teachers, progress is not as marked. Expectations are not as high and pupils are not as productive, achieving less in their work. There is no evidence of significant variation in the performance of boys compared with the performance of girls.

9. The previous report was critical of the standards in design and technology. These have now improved and are in line with national expectations. Standards in information and communication technology are sound across the school with indications that they are set to rise, aided by the developments in hardware and the full use of the relatively new computer suite. Standards in religious education are satisfactory and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In virtually every other subject, standards are sound across the school, although in history they are good. Standards in music are unsatisfactory because pupils do not currently have sufficient access to all the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

10. Pupils with special needs are well supported by the school and this, together with the external help provided, enables them to make very good progress. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and this enables them to participate fully in lessons and achieve at appropriate levels. Pupils who are higher attainers are usually well catered for although their needs are best met in the oldest classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Throughout the school the pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They respond enthusiastically to their teachers' questions and listen attentively to information. During a Year 4 and 5 geography lesson, for example, the pupils were observed showing a keen interest in the features of a river and using appropriate adjectives to describe its characteristics. Pupils are able to sustain concentration well. The children in the Nursery enjoy the many activities and participate with excitement. In the previous report it was noted that there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and select resources; this issue has now been satisfactorily resolved and will be further improved when the Internet facility is fully available.

12. The standard of behaviour is generally very good and on occasions it is exemplary. There have been no exclusions. Parents are very supportive of the school and indicated that the standard of behaviour has improved in recent years; the percentage agreement in the inspection questionnaire, regarding good behaviour, has risen from 81 per cent at the time of the previous inspection up to 96 per cent. No instances of oppressive behaviour were witnessed during the inspection.

13. In lessons and generally around the school, the pupils know what is expected of them. They know and understand the school's rules and behave accordingly. Movement is very orderly, which enables the school to function efficiently; this is particularly important in view of the long routes taken by some classes and the necessity to sometimes walk through the hall whilst other classes are being taught there.

14. Relationships between pupils and adults and between the pupils themselves are very good. Pupils of all ages and both sexes work and play well together. They collaborate well in the group activities and take turns when sharing resources; this was apparent during a Reception and Year 1 lesson when several pupils jointly constructed a large building using the wooden blocks. The pupils generally show suitable respect for property and for the feelings of others.

15. The personal development of pupils is very good. The older pupils take various responsibilities, such as road safety representatives, door and lunch table monitors and helping to supervise their younger friends. The Year 5 pupils benefit from a well-organised residential visit to Winmarleigh Hall. The younger pupils are given tasks such as tidying up the classroom. In the Nursery the 'special' child each day helps the teacher with responsibilities such as feeding Poppy, the class pet rabbit. The educational visits, the extra-curricular activities and the excellent charity work, such as the collection for the NSPCC, further enhance the pupils' personal development. The pupils are polite, holding doors open for others, and they have good manners.

16. The level of attendance is good being consistently above the national average for primary schools. There is virtually no unauthorised absence. The attendance in the Nursery is relatively good in comparison to other similar establishments. The majority of pupils are punctual. Despite the school's best efforts, there are a small number of pupils who are habitually late.

17. Within the school's caring ethos, the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development make a significant contribution to the quality of education provided.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Although the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, it is variable across the school. Overall the quality of teaching is good. It was excellent or very good in two fifths of lessons seen, good in one third and satisfactory in virtually all the rest. The quality of teaching by teachers and nursery nurses in the Foundation Stage is mainly very good, enabling pupils to make a good start to their learning. The teaching in the oldest three classes, where the excellent teaching was seen, is of a consistently high standard. The quality of teaching in the other classes, where there are a number of staff relatively new to teaching, although satisfactory and sometimes good, is less effective overall and this affects the progress pupils make. The skills of literacy and numeracy are better taught in the oldest classes where pupils' needs are more successfully met. The teaching caters well for pupils with English as an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs.

19. There are many strengths in teaching and the issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed. Lesson planning now meets the needs of the older, higher attaining pupils. Teachers are more confident and competent in assessing pupils' attainment and progress accurately and consistently. Confidence has grown in information and

communication technology and although good use is made of computer software to support learning in many areas of the curriculum, there are plans to develop this further. Better teaching in design and technology has helped to raise standards. There are good procedures in place for dealing with behavioural issues. Occasional instances of poor behaviour still occur when teachers do not insist on pupils conforming to expected behaviour.

20. Teachers plan lessons in detail and identify what pupils are expected to learn in good quality introductions to lessons, which often include a thorough revision of work done previously. Where planning is most effective, teachers show good understanding of subjects and provide challenging activities which help pupils to make progress. Weaknesses occur where planning fails to take sufficient account of the pupils' various stages of learning. In these instances, there is too little difference in the level of challenge of work set for the various abilities.

21. Planning for literacy and numeracy lessons is thorough. Lessons are organised to allow most pupils to keep up with the work and to complete the tasks in the time available. In mathematics, pupils are becoming very skilled in using a range of strategies for solving mental calculations. Where teaching is particularly good the teachers' own enthusiasm makes pupils interested and excited, so that they are eager to learn. In a class of older pupils, the use of mathematical games and competitions reinforced the concept of decimals, increased the speed of calculation and kept pupils focused on their work. In literacy lessons, appropriate attention is given to grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting. Teachers use a variety of interesting texts which pupils enjoy. Literacy skills are applied to other subjects to reinforce understanding. In some classes, although some opportunities are provided, these could be further developed in subjects such as science, history and geography. In the oldest three classes a stimulating range of writing opportunities is provided and presentation of work is of a consistently high standard.

22. Teachers know their pupils well and carefully group them according to their needs. In most lessons instruction is effective. Teachers generally use questions effectively to find out what pupils know and to make them think. In most lessons, teachers ensure that pupils understand what they have to do and good routines help them to gain independence in their learning. Classrooms are well organised and resources readily available. Teachers ensure lessons are inclusive to all pupils and provide very good support for children with special educational needs, so that they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. In the best lessons a stimulating range of activities captures the interests of the children, teachers ensure that time targets given for completing work are met, the pace is brisk and teachers have high expectations of both the amount and the quality of work produced. Where expectations are high, pupils rise to the challenge, think independently and work well. Where teaching is less successful, the teacher's expectations of the amount and level of written work done is insufficiently high.

23. Teachers make good use of plenary sessions at the end of lessons to consolidate learning and celebrate pupils' successes. In a Year 2 history lesson the teacher used questions posed by pupils from a study of a picture of Florence Nightingale working in a hospital and other pupils tried to give answers based on information they had gathered from the lesson and from a video shown. It demonstrated how well the pupils had listened.

24. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally very good and in most lessons teachers effectively manage the behaviour of pupils, who generally respond with good co-operation and enthusiasm. Pupils who do not behave well are usually dealt with fairly but firmly. The classroom behaviour of the oldest pupils is exemplary and this reflects the quality of

teaching. Pupils are very interested and involved in their work. The very good relationships are a strength of the school and contribute significantly to the pupils' learning. Teachers know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their needs. They create a climate where pupils are confident in answering questions or offering opinions knowing that whatever their reply it will be accepted with encouragement. This is especially important for the lower attaining pupils.

25. Work is marked regularly and teachers' comments are helpful in giving pupils encouragement and guidance on how they can improve. Although teachers make informal day-to-day evaluation of lessons, this needs to become a more consistent and formal process. Homework is used well to extend learning and parents are very supportive. The classroom assistants provide very valuable support for the teachers. The teaching and learning policy contains useful guidance for teachers on providing a high quality curriculum. The staff work very well as a team and are committed to the school and its pupils. They provide good pastoral support for pupils on an individual basis.

26. During the inspection the quality of teaching varied from just satisfactory to excellent. The school has clear aspirations to benefit all its pupils from the best teaching possible. The focused monitoring of teaching, linked with the aim of raising standards at Key Stage 1 can provide targets for improvement; it can support and guide effective practice which can enhance teacher performance, thus impacting on pupil attainment and progress. In this way this effective school can be made more effective.

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

27. The quality and range of the curriculum provided for all pupils is mainly good. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There is a clear emphasis on the basic skills and the school has been awarded the national Quality Mark for the teaching of basic skills. With the exception of music, the curriculum is broad and relevant to the needs and interests of the pupils. Standards in music are unsatisfactory because the pupils do not have sufficient access to all the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Religious education follows the new locally agreed syllabus and the daily act of worship meets requirements. Teaching time at both key stages is less than the nationally recommended guidelines. There has been a good improvement in the provision of design and technology since the previous inspection. A recently created computer suite is improving the learning opportunities for information and communication technology. Health education, including sex education and drugs awareness, is appropriately provided.

28. In the Foundation Stage the teachers and other adults working in the Nursery and Reception classes have created an effective learning environment for the children in their care. The children make very good academic and personal progress in all the areas of learning prescribed for this age range. The school plans the transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 with a great deal of care.

29. The quality of curriculum planning is generally good with clear learning objectives identified. Long term planning ensures good coverage with medium term planning monitored by the co-ordinators. The school has adapted the nationally produced schemes of work to guide the work in most subjects. The curriculum is planned as a two year cycle to accommodate the mixed age classes. Although the mixed year groups in each class follow a similar curriculum, teachers provide extension materials appropriate for the older and higher

attaining pupils. Formal monitoring of lessons is at the early stages of development. The staff are keen to review the way subjects are taught and meet regularly to discuss curriculum matters and improve their expertise.

30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has clear plans to manage the changes ahead; the school understands its role and responsibilities in relation to the revised Code of Practice, including its duties and the legal requirements made upon it. Pupils make very good progress, guided by helpful individual education plans which focus on the pupils' specific needs. Detailed records are kept and parents are fully involved in the process. The plans are reviewed every half term with new targets being set if appropriate. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are not included in this planning.

31. There are firm plans for the headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator to attend a relevant training course on the introduction of the new orders for pupils with special educational needs. The school intends to review its systems and inform parents of the new procedures. There is good provision for pupils who have English as an additional language and these pupils make good progress. Talented and gifted pupils are suitably provided for and as a result they make good progress. There is no policy for gifted pupils but extension work is provided in most classes enabling these pupils to fulfil their potential in the national tests at Key Stage 2 but less so at Key Stage 1.

32. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have both been fully implemented and are contributing positively to the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers use the strategy frameworks well to plan the work. Numeracy skills are improving through the daily mental mathematics introduction to lessons and the stimulating mathematics games used reinforce the fun and enjoyment element of the subject for the pupils. In the wider context, pupils have many opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects; for example, in geography they write travel brochures advertising Egypt in a persuasive style.

33. All staff provide very good role models for pupils to follow and most lessons proceed in a harmonious atmosphere where all pupils' efforts are appreciated and respected. The development of good relationships and consideration for others are deeply embedded in the life and work of the school. Pupils learn to respect the values and beliefs of others. This provision for social education is enhanced by a range of educational visits including a residential weekend for Year 5 pupils, during which they learn a variety of social skills such as working together and caring for others. The pupils are given responsibilities from the time they enter school and this has a positive effect on their personal development. They act as monitors and in Year 6 have special responsibility for the younger pupils at break times. Overall provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school is aware that a more structured approach needs to be adopted and a policy and scheme of work is to be developed in the near future. This will ensure that all classes are timetabled to have opportunities to take part in personal and social activities such as 'circle time'.

34. An improvement since the previous inspection is the good provision for extra-curricular activities offered to the pupils. There is a wide variety of clubs which include netball, football, lacrosse, recorder playing, guitar playing, choir, school band, art, science, computer, French and Judo. Fully qualified instructors take lacrosse and Judo and parents pay a small fee for these two activities. The guitar club started a few years ago and 25 pupils play regularly. The Judo club was so popular last year that it was over subscribed and so ran twice. The football and lacrosse teams have enjoyed success in local competitions. The school also gives the pupils opportunity to take part in a range of educational visits which enrich the

curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences, such as the field trip to the River Mersey.

35. The quality of the curriculum is enhanced by good links with the community, making a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. Local artists and authors work with the pupils to develop their skills across a range of areas. Older people who reside in the almshouses opposite the school are invited into school to celebrate major festivals. For example, on May Day a maypole is erected on the field and pupils dance around it and the oldest resident of the almshouses crowns the May Queen. The pupils are actively involved in raising money for a variety of charities. Last November £1,300 was raised for the NSPCC, £379 for Meningitis Trust in December and pupils regularly support Lifeshare, a charity for the homeless. Within these activities the pupils gain a good understanding of the needs of others. The local high school makes a very good contribution to the school with teachers from the high school occasionally teaching science, design and technology and information and communication technology to the older pupils in Key Stage 2.

36. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. All staff value pupils' ideas and encourage the development of an insight into the values and beliefs of others. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective through activities such as prayer and personal writing. In a Year 3 religious education lesson, pupils had to carry out tasks pretending to be disabled and then they described their feelings; this lesson also reinforced the school's aims in demonstrating how important it is to help one another.

37. Collective worship meets the statutory requirements. The pupils sing enthusiastically and repeat the School Prayer with suitable reverence. Although no spiritual focal points are used, the assemblies are well planned and actively promote the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, emphasising celebrations and providing very good guidance. The pupils listened attentively to a talk of the meaning of 'precious'; a daffodil bulb was used to demonstrate a life cycle. The school also uses wall displays, often enhanced by drapes, to reinforce messages, such as the colourful rainbow collage of Noah's Ark as 'God's promise to the world'.

38. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school teaches the principles that distinguish right from wrong. Pupils know the school's rules and respond accordingly. In the Nursery the children respond quickly to instructions, in the Key Stage 1 playground the pupils do not cross over the 'Stop' line and in Key Stage 2 the behaviour and attitudes in several lessons was noted as exemplary. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. The school has a very good positive behaviour policy, which concentrates on celebration of good work or achievements; there are suitable sanctions should the need arise.

39. The parents praised improvements in their children's behaviour and attitudes. Pupils of all ages play and work together well. Older pupils are encouraged to help the younger ones; for example, through shared reading. Pupils show suitable respect for each other and for property. Politeness and good manners are evident; for example, young pupils were heard to say, "Excuse me", as they moved through a tight space between chairs. At doorways the pupils invariably hold the door for adults and for other pupils to pass.

40. Although the school's provision for pupils' social development is very good, the curricular provision for personal and social education should become more consistent when the policy has been reviewed and the provision formalised. There are many activities in which the pupils gain an understanding of working together and giving support and encouragement to

others. Through the extra-curricular work, the community involvement, the Year 5 residential trip and especially through the school's excellent charity work, the pupils gain a knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The school is constantly trying new initiatives to enhance the pupils' interest in their surroundings. A Parliamentary election was held with the resultant Prime Minister and his Cabinet helping to run the school for a day. A school Eco Council is being formed with a remit to look particularly at environmental concerns.

41. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Culture is promoted through the pupils' work in art, history, music and religious education. Recent examples of work include the art displays in the style of Picasso and the Dutch graphic artist, Escher. Through use of their own environment and through talks from older citizens as part of the Intergen project, they gain good knowledge of their own local heritage. In history and geography lessons pupils gain knowledge of other times and other places. Two classrooms had travel agency mock-ups where the pupils look at the characteristics of other countries and study tourism. The Year 6 class have made an in depth study of Ancient Egypt; the pupils' project books demonstrate a very high standard of work, with excellent presentation. The school is developing links with a region in Nicaragua and has already provided a collection of pencils and sharpeners to help an under-resourced primary school.

42. Whilst the pupils gain some opportunities to learn of other religions, such as Judaism and Islam, there could be further development to give deeper insights into the customs and festivals of a variety of faiths. The level of cultural resources and artefacts is satisfactory. There is a caring, community ethos, which promotes clear values. This plays an important role in preparing pupils for the responsibilities, opportunities and experiences of life in the diverse society in which they are growing up.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school has a strong commitment to raising standards and considerable work has been done to address issues about assessment raised at the previous inspection, although assessment in foundation subjects is still underdeveloped. A useful policy now guides the work which includes a useful month by month guide of assessments to be done and records to be kept. Teachers are now more confident and competent in assessing pupils' attainment and progress accurately and consistently. A new system has been created within the last year; although its usefulness is still to be tested it appears to be thorough and workable. At present teachers choose how they organise much of the information gathered and this makes it difficult to access for making school comparisons and to check for consistency of standards. There is a need for a whole school approach to the organisation of this information.

44. Good procedures are in place for assessing attainment in the Nursery in all the required areas of learning. Recording systems in the Reception year although thorough, do not cover all the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. The two systems need review in order to ensure continuity. Assessments are made on entry and at the end of the Foundation Stage using guidelines provided by the local education authority. These ensure that pupils receive any necessary extra support at an early stage. Assessment is well used in planning to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.

45. Throughout the school procedures for assessing and recording of attainment in English, mathematics and science are good and are used effectively to inform planning. Information is collected from pupils' achievements in standardised and national tests and these are

documented in individual records, which track the pupil's progress and alert the teacher to pupils who will need additional help. Pupils also have a record of achievement which contains samples of their work. Although teachers monitor progress during lessons,

there is no whole school system for producing written evaluations to aid future planning. Marking is consistent across the school. Arrangements for reporting to parents are satisfactory.

46. The school has recently become more focused on the collection of data and useful analyses are being done of pupils' attainment in national tests. Information from the analysis of results is used to help in setting teaching objectives when producing the staff development plan and subject action plans. It has highlighted differences in attainment between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science have recently become responsible for the analysis of national tests in their subject. Individual tracking and targeting of pupils is being piloted in Year 5 and Year 6 to more closely monitor their progress.

47. The school provides a very happy, caring atmosphere for its pupils. There are many good procedures and policies in place to underpin the practical provision and to ensure that pastoral matters are dealt with promptly. All pupils, including the children in the separate Nursery area, are welcomed into a warm, cheerful and secure environment. The staff know the pupils well and cater appropriately for their needs. The parents spoke highly of this aspect of the school's provision and those with young children said that the children settled in very well under the school's induction procedures.

48. There is a good staff handbook and staff are fully aware of the school's procedures. Good supervision is given, although the midday staff can sometimes be stretched in the Key Stage 2 playground, where pupils can congregate out of their sight. The school has good procedures for child protection and staff are appropriately trained. First aid training is minimal, but the school has good procedures for dealing with sick or injured pupils. There is good support from external agencies, especially that provided for special educational needs pupils. The school covers social inclusion matters very well. There are appropriate procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and for promoting better attendance.

49. The school has recently appointed a co-ordinator for developing the provision of personal, health and social education. The current policy defines the aims but does not give guidance on how they are to be delivered and hence provision is inconsistent, being at the teachers' discretion. The school has started an audit and a review of the policy will shortly be completed. There is evidence of existing good provision of many aspects, for example, road safety and social and moral development. Older pupils visit the 'Crucial Crew' event which promotes personal safety. The school is developing interesting initiatives, such as the Eco Council, to further enhance the pupils' education. The school's provision for, and monitoring of, pupils' personal development is judged to be good overall.

50. The school has greatly improved its management of behaviour since the previous report, by the introduction of a whole-school positive discipline policy. There are now very good procedures, which are appropriately applied, for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The headteacher maintains a detailed logbook of incidents of misbehaviour but the number of entries is insignificant when compared with the record celebrating pupils' good work and their good achievements. The school celebrates success in various ways including assemblies, stickers and 'Searle's Stars', but mainly through the regular use of teachers' praise within the classrooms. The midday staff supervisor awards points for good behaviour at

the lunch table and house points are given in Key Stage 2. For the younger pupils and in the Nursery, 'special' pupils wear a medal and a purple sash.

51. The conscientious site manager and his staff maintain the school well ensuring that it is clean and tidy. The school has a good health and safety policy. Regular inspections are undertaken and a member of the teaching staff has designated responsibility. During the inspection, no obvious safety problems were evident.

52. The high levels of care for pupils' well being enhance their self-confidence and their self-esteem and make a significant contribution to the standards that are achieved. Based on its caring community ethos, the school meets its aims in providing good support and guidance to its pupils. The individual needs of the pupils are well met, including those who have special educational needs. The school's motto 'We Only Reach for The Highest' (WORTH) is an accurate reflection of its aspirations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has a very good partnership with its parents, who hold the school in high esteem; this is a strength of the school. The percentage agreements to the statements in the inspection questionnaire were generally much higher than in the previous report. In discussions many parents praised the significant recent improvements such as the school's accessibility for parents. In most cases the improvements were attributed to the headteacher's open approach and the welcoming environment of the school overall.

54. There are many parents who give valuable help within the school, assisting in classrooms, particularly with the younger classes, and outside the classroom, such as helping the site manager to paint the scenery for school productions. The school has developed a very good Parent Teacher Association, which has provided funds for additional resources and building improvements. There is a good home-school agreement in place. The school has regularly consulted parents with regard to the development of its policies.

55. Parents benefit from good communications with the school. The school makes a determined effort to ensure that parents are made aware of the positive aspects of their children's education; for example, pupils are encouraged to bring their parents into school to look at their names highlighted on the 'Searle's Stars' board. Parents receive a wealth of good quality information about the school, such as the 'Starting School' booklet, the prospectus and through the well-attended curricular presentations. There is a very good, detailed annual report by the governing body.

56. There are two formal parent consultation evenings each year, which attract 100 per cent representation, plus an opportunity to discuss the pupils' end of year reports. Informal opportunities are available to speak to teachers whenever parents have any concerns or queries. The pupils' reports contain good, detailed information about work in all the subjects, including personal, social and health education and targets for the pupil's development. The reports could be further improved by more information on the individual pupil's progress through the year and the standards being reached.

57. The school has a well-detailed homework policy. A small number of parents suggested that this is not always applied consistently throughout the school. In response to this, the headteacher has firm plans to review arrangements. Some parents would like to see more

extra-curricular activities, perhaps for the younger children; the inspection team judged the current provision to be appropriate for the age groups.

58. The school's effective partnership with parents enhances the success of school. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is very good and it has a positive impact on the standard of education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Through their good leadership and management, the headteacher and governing body have successfully addressed the issues raised. Learning resources for information and communication technology have improved to enable full delivery of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The performance management procedures now in place ensure that all teachers are subject to a regular review of their teaching. The school is well placed to make further improvements in order to make it more effective.

60. The headteacher's enthusiasm and commitment provide charismatic leadership for the school, which ensures that it is a welcoming place to be. He works closely with the deputy headteacher and senior management team and together they are a good team. They lead by their good example, focusing and steering the work of the staff and governors to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The headteacher has the support of staff, governors and parents. There is clear educational direction, which is rooted in the raising of standards. The headteacher has successfully created a sense of teamwork amongst the staff.

61. The personal commitment of the headteacher and his staff to the needs of the pupils is very good. He has promoted positive relationships with colleagues, governors, parents and pupils and has their full confidence. The roles of the members of the senior management team are clearly defined and carried out effectively. Each member of the team co-ordinates a phase within the school, such as the Foundation Stage. In this way their responsibilities are clearly designated so that they inform and improve the school's work.

62. The governing body has a clear committee structure to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities. Regular meetings of the governing body and its committees have clear agendas and are well minuted. The headteacher prepares thorough reports to be presented at governors' meetings and members of staff with specific responsibilities contribute when necessary, presenting a school policy, for example.

63. The governing body, well led by its chair of governors, is effective in fulfilling its statutory duties. Increasingly, governors are helping to shape the direction of the school as they continue to gain understanding of the school's areas for development. The governors with specific responsibilities have a good level of involvement. For example, the literacy and numeracy governors have observed lessons and give feedback on their findings. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs takes a keen interest in overseeing this area and another governor has monitored the effectiveness of the behaviour policy. The chair of governors acts as a critical friend, meets with the headteacher on a weekly basis and, along with other members of the governing body, takes an active role in monitoring the quality of education. The headteacher and governors monitor standards through the National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They recognise that the

raising of standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 is the main issue for the school and that, although a start has been made, much remains to be done.

64. The school development plan is used effectively to steer the work of the school. The process leading up to the production of the school development plan involves all the staff and governors and is put together by the senior management team when deciding priorities for school improvement. Subject co-ordinators prepare audits and action plans so that it is clear what is needed and what priorities need to be established before committing resources. The school development plan involves regular evaluations with clear descriptions of who is checking progress against clear criteria for measured improvement and these relate to raising achievement and standards across the curriculum.

65. Although the school has made a good start in self-evaluation, the monitoring of teaching and learning is insufficiently focused, lacking the necessary rigour to assist in clear evaluation in order to set targets to raise standards of classroom practice. Classroom observations in the last two years have focused appropriately on literacy and numeracy and have involved the senior management team, the curriculum co-ordinators and the local education authority's link adviser. Individual feedback is given to staff and general issues are raised at senior management team meetings and at whole school level. The action taken to raise the quality of teaching and learning as a result of the monitoring is too informal and is not having a significant impact where there are areas to address. Targets for improvement are not set on a formal basis and this is an area for development. This area is particularly important given the significant proportion of relatively inexperienced and new teachers on the staff.

66. In other subjects, the co-ordinators carefully monitor teachers' planning and sample pupils' work to ensure consistency and continuity in learning and to inform the action plans for each subject. The school does provide demonstration lessons to share good practice in numeracy, for example, having the benefit of a leading local education authority's mathematics teacher on the staff. The school has recently purchased guidance for co-ordinators in monitoring their subjects.

67. The headteacher has systems in place to enable him to evaluate the school's performance. Entry profiles, baseline assessments and statutory and non-statutory tests results provide information to make predictions about the attainment of children at the end of each key stage and as they move through the school. The school's analysis of its National Curriculum test results has confirmed its need to raise standards at Key Stage 1.

68. The current staffing of the school provides a good balance between experienced and well-established staff and those comparatively new to teaching. The school has adequate numbers of staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and religious education. There are suitably qualified staff to support those pupils with special educational needs; these include the co-ordinator and classroom support assistants. All staff have clear job descriptions which refer to their subject and managerial responsibilities. There is a staff development policy and the school has gained the Investors In People Award, which indicates the value placed on the development of all staff employed in the school. Very good working relationships exist between staff, with teachers in mixed age classes jointly planning their work and monitoring how well pupils are doing. The school currently has two newly qualified teachers and there are sound induction arrangements to support them in their first year of teaching. Teachers are well supported by classroom assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Administrative staff, the site manager and the cleaning staff make a very good contribution to the efficient running of the school.

69. The school's finances are very well managed. There are efficient and effective procedures to track spending and determine priorities for resources in the school's management plan. The school is prudent in its spending with good consideration being given to the principles of best value and to the impact of spending. The new information and communication technology room, for example, is very well equipped and the school hopes that this will have a greater impact than previous practice on raising standards in information and communication technology across the school. Accommodation is satisfactory and there is a rolling programme of expenditure not only to maintain the fabric of the building but also to improve the facilities. This has already been seen in the conversion of a room into the information and communication technology suite. A major planned expense is on roof repairs. Surplus income has been accumulated to extend and significantly improve the Year 1 and 2 classroom. Pupils have access to adequate hard surface areas and there is a very good-sized field.

70. The site manager and staff ensure that the school is clean and well maintained. Work on display in classrooms and in corridors contributes positively to the quality of the learning environment. There are good learning resources for all subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There is a good range of information books available to pupils and these are used well to support pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Good use is made of time, except that teaching time at both key stages is below national recommendations.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed.

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

- ◆ Raise standards at Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - *raising expectations of what all pupils, including those who are higher attainers, can achieve;*
 - *setting clear targets for improvement, especially in reading, writing and numeracy;*
 - *continuing to develop the special educational needs support;*
 - *involving as much support as possible to increase opportunities to hear readers;*
 - *making maximum use of the skills of the classroom support assistants;*
 - *reviewing the literacy and numeracy hours to determine what works best;*
 - *the further development of writing across the curriculum;*

(paragraphs 6, 8, 63, 67, 89, 96, 104 and 106)

- ◆ Address the inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school through:
 - *the introduction of structured monitoring of teaching and learning which includes target setting and review, considering the use of help in this process;*
 - *developing opportunities for systematic observation of experienced staff who can model very high quality teaching, this being particular useful to the teaching staff who are relatively new to the school;*

(paragraphs 18, 22, 26, 65, 100, 102, 104, 111, 114 and 121)

- ◆ Improve the provision for music by:
 - *developing a new scheme of work to guide the work;*
 - *staff training to increase confidence in teaching music;*
 - *the review of the timing and frequency of lessons;*
 - *making fuller use of the music expertise within the staff;*
 - *monitoring to check that pupils receive full access to all the programmes of study.*

(paragraphs 9, 150, 152 and 154)

In addition to the above areas, the following less critical areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 27, 43, 44, 70, 73, 139, 145, 149 and 162:

- ◆ The further development of assessing and recording in the Foundation Stage and in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum;
- ◆ Teaching time at both key stages.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 65 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 37 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 3 | 22 | 22 | 17 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 5 | 34 | 34 | 25 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 22 | 277 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0 | 16 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 42 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0 | 0 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 8 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 3 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 1 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.3 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2001 | 14 | 25 | 39 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 13 | 12 | 14 |
| | Girls | 21 | 22 | 22 |
| | Total | 34 | 34 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 87 (81) | 87 (89) | 92 (92) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 13 | 14 | 13 |
| | Girls | 22 | 22 | 22 |
| | Total | 35 | 36 | 35 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 90 (83) | 92 (90) | 90 (83) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88) | 89 (88) |

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

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

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2001 | 23 | 20 | 43 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 20 | 16 | 23 |
| | Girls | 20 | 19 | 20 |
| | Total | 40 | 35 | 43 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 93 (88) | 81 (95) | 100 (98) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72) | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 19 | 19 | 22 |
| | Girls | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| | Total | 39 | 39 | 42 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 91 (86) | 91 (91) | 98 (100) |
| | National | 72 (70) | 74 (72) | 82 (79) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 6 |
| Black – African heritage | 1 |
| Black – other | 2 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 261 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 5 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|----------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 10 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 27.7 : 1 |
| Average class size | 30.8 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 100 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|--------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22 : 1 |
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 35 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 11 : 1 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2000/01 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 552,917 |
| Total expenditure | 520,730 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,725 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 38,214 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | *70,401 |

* Surplus income is being accumulated for future improvements to the premises.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 3 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |
|--|---|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 317 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 100 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 69 | 27 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 61 | 36 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 56 | 40 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 38 | 46 | 9 | 2 | 5 |
| The teaching is good. | 65 | 34 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 50 | 41 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 85 | 14 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 73 | 22 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 59 | 35 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 80 | 18 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 76 | 22 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 46 | 28 | 11 | 5 | 10 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

71. The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that the children make a very positive start to school life. This is one of the school's many strengths. Children begin Nursery at the beginning of the school year in which they reach four years of age, attending part time for one year prior to starting in the Reception class. They transfer to the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they reach five. There are very good links between the Nursery and the Reception class and this makes for very effective transition. The previous report identified the positive start to school life provided by the Nursery and this is still very much the case.

72. The quality of teaching has a very positive impact, enabling the children to make good progress over the Nursery year. Although levels of attainment vary from year to year, assessments made soon after the start of the Reception year indicate that standards are broadly in line with what could be expected. The quality of education in Reception is good in spite of the less spacious accommodation and the less advantageous adult support. The Reception class, like the Nursery, benefits from the very good support of a full time nursery nurse. A feature of the teaching in the Nursery and the Reception class is the excellent partnership of the teachers and the nursery nurses, providing opportunities for children to learn well through structured activities, with high expectations, thus enabling children to achieve well relative to their abilities. The nursery nurses have used the experienced teachers as role models and this makes for a consistent approach.

73. A lot of thought and co-operation goes into planning the work which makes good use of the very good range of resources which support all the areas of learning. The school very effectively includes the outdoor environment in its planning making wide use of this valuable resource. Children throughout the Foundation Stage benefit from the hard work and sensitivity of the teachers and the support staff. All staff are warm and caring and value the children as individuals. The supportive relationships enable the children to feel happy during their introduction to the Nursery and to the main school. All the parents spoken to were very appreciative of this. Self-esteem is promoted all the time, with the words 'Well done' being heard throughout the sessions. This has a strong impact on the children's attitudes to learning. Although a lot of informal assessments are undertaken in literacy and numeracy, there is more done in the Nursery across all the areas of learning than in Reception and the staff recognise the need to ensure that practice is more consistent with a clearer structure.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. If the current rate of progress continues, the vast majority of the children will meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning and around a third are likely to exceed them. Success in this area is mainly due to the very good teaching which the children receive. At the time of the inspection, just over a term into the start of the school year, the children had settled well, adapting to new routines.

75. The area of personal and social development is seen as a priority and children progress well in this area both in the Nursery and in the Reception year. In the Nursery, children are gaining confidence in a range of familiar and new situations; they establish

effective relationships with adults. All children are eager to explore new learning situations and their enthusiasm is clear to see. They learn to select and use activities and resources independently; for example, when making choices from water and sand play, role-play, construction, painting and writing. Children in Nursery learn to share and take turns such as when dressing up in the Cinderella role-play.

76. This good progress continues into the Reception classes, where children are given good opportunities to work, play and learn together well. They share equipment without difficulty, are kind to one another and learn to co-operate well. The staff's expectations are high. The children are enthusiastic about their learning and become well engaged. They listen attentively to stories such as favourite ones like 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The adults provide good role models and treat the children with respect and friendliness. They encourage the children to become independent so that they become confident in making choices and making decisions.

Communication, language and literacy

77. In this area of learning the vast majority of children will meet the Early Learning Goals but fewer will meet the higher level competencies in reading and writing. Around a third are likely to exceed the goals. In Nursery children listen attentively in a large group. They enjoy stories such as 'The Fish who could wish' and 'Each Peach, Pear, Plum'. The children show good listening skills, enjoying the story of 'Alfie's Feet' at the listening station. They are learning to follow instructions; for example, when playing letter recognition games. They have a growing vocabulary which shows progress as children move through the Nursery. They take part in imaginative play in 'Mother Hubbard's Café' and the 'building site'. Although they enjoy sharing and choosing books from the excellent selection they only have the opportunity to take a book home once a week.

78. The teaching in 'circle time' makes an important contribution to speaking and listening as do the many opportunities for working with small groups. In one such time observed, the children were helped to consider size and appropriateness of footwear and to explore the idea of 'a pair'. Most listen to one another and are learning not to 'call out'.

79. Children in the Reception year are given good opportunities to further develop speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively in assemblies. They enjoy playing together and talking together in the 'cottage' role-play area which is used for exploring stories such as 'Cinderella', 'The Three Bears' and 'The Three Little Pigs'. The children show good understanding of what is said to them in response to the teacher's questions and explanations. They copy adults' writing, sometimes off the black board and start to write independently, such as in letters to Santa Claus at Christmas. They enjoy books and, increasingly, they are showing word recognition skills. A sound range of information and communication technology software helps the children to reinforce and practise their skills; during the inspection, the program used helped to practise and recognise rhyming sounds. There are plans to further develop the amount of software. The quality of teaching in this area in the Nursery and in Reception is good and often very good.

Mathematical development

80. In this area of learning, the vast majority will probably meet the Early Learning Goals and around a quarter will exceed them. Children in Nursery are beginning to use mathematical language. Most show confidence in counting to nine and some can count beyond that. They

join in number rhymes, counting games and begin to learn to write numbers. During the inspection, children were helped to consider the shape of shoes and to identify pairs. They learn to sequence events such as the times of the day and are beginning to sequence days of the week. Children enjoy games which involve matching, sorting and sequencing. A good range of mathematical experiences is given to children, including practical activities which promote discussions using the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting. Children were helped to consider the weight of ingredients when, with parental help, they made jam tarts.

81. In Reception, the skills are consolidated and further developed. Children sing songs such as 'Number one, touch my tongue' and 'One, two, buckle my shoe'. Some children are able to match and recognise, numbers to 20. Children are encouraged to recognise and use mathematical and positional language confidently; for example, words like 'bigger', 'smaller', 'above', 'below' and 'behind'. Their paintings reflect the relative sizes of the three bears they can work out one more or one less than a number from one to 10 and, in practical activities and discussion, they begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting. They are given a good range of mathematical experiences and opportunities to practise these skills. Very good teaching was observed in this area of development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. In this area of learning the vast majority will meet the goals and around a third will exceed them. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, the children are given a good range of experiences to help them to find out about the world and they make good progress working towards the required competencies. In Nursery, they learn about their position in the family through booklets where they record information on their families and homes. They paint pictures of their houses to form part of a map. They learn about their own area, partly through walks to the pond, a farm and some stables. In considering 'people who help', they enjoy meeting visitors such as members of the emergency services. Visits further a field include ones to 'Gulliver's World' and 'Animal World'. They enjoy baking and designing and making very imaginative 'Fish who Wish' using a variety of materials.

83. Many of these valuable experiences continue in the Reception year, although walks around the locality to learn about their own world are relatively underdeveloped. Journeys to places further afield are undertaken such as those to Tatton Park and Chester Zoo. Children experiment with magnets and mirrors. They enjoy planting seeds and monitoring their growth. They enjoy using the computers independently and show appropriate levels of skill in controlling the mouse to play sorting games. They begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and about those of other people partly through learning about festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. The quality of the teaching in this area is good.

Physical development

84. Although the children attain better in gross motor skills compared with fine motor skills, virtually all will attain the goals for this area of learning, with about a quarter likely to exceed them. Children enter the Nursery with a wide range of physical abilities. In the case of many children, there is greater competency with large physical skills than there is with fine control. In the Nursery children learn to write their name and have good control of scissors. They learn to hold a pencil, control a paintbrush effectively and can join pieces of construction kits. Fine motor skills are developed through a range of activities such as cutting, sticking and modelling. Children in the Nursery have access to a very good outdoor play area which is well resourced. They use bikes and large toys gaining a lot of pleasure from playing outside whilst at the same

time developing their social skills. During the inspection, they were observed practising many skills on a 'building site'. Wearing hard hats and singing 'Bob the Builder', they manipulated large construction materials and used hammers and nails and buckets and spades.

85. Children in the Reception year are given regular opportunities to practise skills such as cutting and manipulating mouldable materials and, as a result, most begin to control their fingers and hands well. They handle tools, objects and materials safely. They use the computer mouse with increasing control. Children gain valuable experience in physical education lessons in the school hall where they develop their early gymnastic skills. The school could consider making more use of the very good outside play area of the Nursery for the Reception children. The quality of teaching observed in physical development, such as when the nursery nurse supervised the building site, was very good.

Creative development

86. All the children are likely to achieve the goals with around a third exceeding them. Children enjoy the creative area of learning which is well taught and well provided for in the Nursery. They paint and experiment with a good range of resources. They can recognise the primary colours red, blue and yellow and they use crayons and felt tips to create increasingly colourful drawings. During the inspection they were helped to do good observational drawings of shoes. Photographic records show interesting collage work, fish mobiles and sea pictures. They enjoy singing and playing musical instruments, showing much enthusiasm whilst doing so.

87. This work is continued in the Reception class when children start to use their imagination in art, dance, imaginative play and role-play involving traditional fairy stories. They sing simple songs from memory, begin to recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns and match movements to music. They enjoy playing a range of percussion instruments with everyone having the use of an instrument. They sing a good range of number rhymes, action songs and nursery rhymes. The quality of imaginative play is generally good and children enjoy playing in the role-play area. The provision for the creative area of learning offers a good variety of experiences and is well taught, being an important part of the provision for the Foundation Stage. The teachers and nursery nurses are very committed to the children. The very good relationships underpin the teaching and the learning. The children respond well to the high expectations made of them, enabling them to make good progress.

ENGLISH

88. The judgement of the inspection team is that standards across Key Stage 1 are broadly similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' standards in reading are in line with those expected nationally of pupils at age 7 but below expectation in writing. Results are adversely affected by the significant minority of pupils in the current Year 2 who have special educational needs. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are well above those expected of pupils aged 11. The standards they reach are better than at the time of the last inspection. The most recent national test results reflect this improvement.

89. Overall, Key Stage 1 standards in reading and writing are gradually improving and the most recent tests in 2001 are better than the previous year. This improvement needs to continue as part of the main issue for the school to address which is raising standards. The very good and sometimes excellent teaching in the three older Key Stage 2 classes and the

very positive attitudes pupils show towards their work make a significant impact on the standards pupils achieve. The effective way in which the school has implemented and resourced the National Literacy Strategy has also contributed to the school's success in raising standards at Key Stage 2.

90. The pupils reach good standards in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 1. They listen very carefully to their teachers and to other adults in the classroom. The pupils are keen to answer questions and to participate in class discussions. The majority of pupils speak clearly and express themselves well. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are very good listeners. They concentrate well in lessons and show how well they have listened by making thoughtful responses to the teacher's questions. Quite often pupils ask interesting questions during the lessons to help further their understanding and that of others. They follow instructions carefully and listen politely to the contributions of other pupils. The pupils speak clearly and politely in well-formed sentences. Their discussions in literacy lessons are often animated, thoughtful, constructive and good humoured.

91. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils achieve satisfactory standards in reading and, by the time they are ready to transfer to Key Stage 2, they achieve standards that are in line with those expected of pupils aged 7. The pupils read a satisfactory range of texts that includes stories, poems and information books. They enjoy choosing books and listening to stories, particularly traditional tales. Through reading in the literacy hour they gain confidence and begin to develop expression as they read. When they read aloud they use their voices very well to express the mood of the text and to convey something of the different characters. They are effectively taught how to read unfamiliar or difficult words and the majority use effectively the technique of sounding out letters and reading the surrounding text to help them.

92. Lower attaining pupils read mechanically and lack fluency and use illustrations to help them with understanding new words. Higher attaining pupils make sensible predictions from the text and read with greater fluency. They also understand that writers use plots, characters and use descriptions to keep the interest of the reader. The higher attaining pupils are able to make predictions about how characters will act and how the plot will unfold. Most pupils make satisfactory use of information books in a number of subjects to help them learn more about the topics they study. Most pupils, for example, know how to use a simple index to locate specific information. The pupils regularly take books home to read and many have access to a selection of books at home.

93. The pupils make very good progress in reading throughout Key Stage 2. They read a good range of texts that includes novels, anthologies of poetry, play scripts, reference books such as encyclopaedias and dictionaries and information books. Pupils speak with pleasure about the books they enjoy and form clear preferences for certain authors and types of novel. They enjoy J. K. Rowling, Dick King Smith, Roald Dahl, Enid Blyton and Jacqueline Wilson.

94. Nearly all of the pupils read regularly for pleasure at school as well as at home. Many of the pupils read information books at home to extend what they learn at school and develop sound research skills. Some pupils read adult newspapers and magazines, as well as popular children's comics. Most of the pupils know where the public library is and some use it on a regular basis. The school ensures that pupils learn to use and respond to a good range of texts in literacy lessons, including stories, poems, plays and texts that support learning across the curriculum. The pupils are introduced to biographies and autobiographies and know, for example, the main features that distinguish biographical writing from autobiographical writing.

95. The school library is an attractive area and welcomes the pupils with the sign 'The Worthington Wizard Welcomes You to the Magical World of Reading'. It contains an excellent range of fiction and non-fiction books which are colour coded and catalogued with a classification index. The books are well ordered and displayed, in good condition, and reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Through this the library is able to support the full curriculum and the interests of the pupils.

96. By the end of Year 2, pupils do not reach the expected standard in written work. There is a significant minority of pupils in Year 2 who have poor writing skills. These lower attaining pupils need much guidance through adult support and writing frames to enable them to write a simple sentence. Their work shows weaknesses in spelling and presentation. The middle and higher attaining pupils are beginning to write in a range of forms. Their writing includes humorous stories, personal accounts and writing that gives instructions and information. Some of their best work is from personal experiences and retelling well-known stories, such as 'Little Red Riding Hood'. The pupils write independently in simple sentences that are sometimes punctuated with full stops.

97. Most pupils know that sentences and people's names begin with a capital letter. The pupils are beginning to use connectives to make their sentences more interesting. Higher attaining pupils use interesting words to make their writing livelier and make some use of speech marks. The higher attaining pupils accurately spell common, simple words and have a satisfactory knowledge of common irregular words such as 'said' and 'was'. They are beginning to recognise common letter strings that are spelled differently but which sound the same such as 'ear' in bear. The pupils' work is legible and the letters are formed correctly, but there is little evidence of pupils using joined script.

98. The standards reached in writing by pupils at the end of Year 6 are well above national expectations of pupils aged 11. The pupils attempt a range of forms including recounts of personal experiences, explanations and writing in which they express opinions or give instructions to the reader. They know how to take notes and make drafts and are able to edit their work to improve the quality of the final piece of work. The pupils have a good understanding of, and use effectively, basic grammar. In their writing they use adjectives very well to qualify nouns and adverbs to qualify verbs. They use complex sentences with confidence and punctuate well. Sentences are structured into paragraphs. They use commas in lists, apostrophes, question marks, speech marks and exclamation marks for emphasis.

99. The pupils spell regular, common words accurately and have a good knowledge of common letter strings such as '-sion' as in television and '-tion' as in direction. Words are chosen imaginatively and used well. They convey feelings through careful choice of words to show empathy; for example, one pupil, when writing as if she was the soldier in 'What Does It Feel Like?' by Michael Morpurgo wrote, 'Today I witnessed something I will never forget...ever. I have entered the darkest moment of my life'. The pupils have a good awareness of when it is appropriate to write in the past tense and when it is better to use the present tense. The pupils' handwriting is joined, legible and fluent which makes their work a pleasure to pick up and read.

100. The quality of teaching is variable across the school. The teaching of pupils aged five to 7 is satisfactory and sometimes good. The teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 is very good in the three classes with the oldest pupils with some teaching identified as excellent. In the other Key Stage 2 classes the teaching is satisfactory. This varied picture impacts on the rate of progress pupils' make through the school. All teachers use their secure knowledge of English and the National Literacy Strategy to plan well. Good direct teaching of the correct grammatical conventions enhances the pupils' ability to structure their work in speaking and

listening and writing and helps them to understand better what they read. In the very good teaching, teachers build well on pupils' prior learning to ensure that their progress is continuous. They help their pupils to understand their own learning and to take an appropriate measure of responsibility for it; for example, the teachers share with their pupils what it is they should know and be able to do by the end of the lesson. This encourages pupils to work hard and to reflect on how well they have learned what is expected of them.

101. Very good and excellent teaching challenges and inspires pupils. Teachers set very high expectations of what pupils are likely to achieve. Lessons are very well paced and maintain pupils' interest and involvement in learning. Challenging, effective and demanding questions are skilfully used and adapted to meet the pupils' different levels of prior attainment and to ensure that all pupils are enabled to participate effectively in oral sessions. Demonstrations are carefully thought out to give pupils a clear insight of how to improve; for example, in a Year 4 and 5 lesson the teacher demonstrated how she would write an explanation of the water cycle. She made pupils aware of what was going through her mind as she wrote on the flip chart. The pupils were eager to help her find alternative words and phrases as she edited her work. This inspired the pupils to use similar strategies in their approach to their work.

102. In the very good and excellent teaching there was evidence of regular assessment of pupils' learning and targets set for improvement. Marking informs pupils of the progress they are making and encourages pupils to do their best. Praise is given for achievements and there is an indication of how the work could be improved. For example, when asked about the comments the teacher had written at the end of a piece of writing, one Year 5 pupil commented, 'It tells me how well I've done and how to improve'. Because relationships are very good, behaviour is very good. In lessons there are few interruptions to the teaching and learning. The pupils therefore achieve well.

103. Teachers make very good use of support staff, deploying them very effectively to work with specific groups of pupils. The teaching ensures that lessons are inclusive for all pupils. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make very good progress towards the clear targets set in their individual education plans. There is good provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Appropriate homework is set and helps consolidate the work pupils do in class.

104. The subject co-ordinator is new to her role but knows her subject well and is able to offer good support to her colleagues. She is well aware that there is a need to further raise standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1. The monitoring of the teaching of literacy hours has been insufficiently focused on creating targets for improvement. There is a need to improve the consistency of the quality of teaching in English by developing more rigorous and focused monitoring practices. Opportunities can be developed for the systematic observation of experienced staff who can model very high quality teaching for less experienced colleagues. A Literacy Action Plan for 2001-02, which includes improvements in teaching and learning, has been prepared. There are good practices for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. The school uses the outcomes of the national tests to adapt the English curriculum to address specific weaknesses, for example, in writing at Key Stage 1. As a result, extra time has been dedicated to extended writing in the literacy hour. There is a good range of high quality resources and they are well used throughout the school.

MATHEMATICS

105. It is the judgement of the inspection team that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are sound and in line with national averages. This year's standards reflect the high number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2. Standards are comparable to those found in similar schools. At the end of Year 6, standards are good and above what might be expected for pupils of that age. These judgements are reflected in the National Curriculum results of 2001.

106. The school is aware of the need to raise standards at Key Stage 1 and there has been some improvement over the past 2 years. The raising of attainment is a priority in the school improvement plan. The targets set for improvement need to reflect higher expectations of the amount and level of work set for higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress.

107. Young pupils make a positive start to their learning through very good teaching in the Reception class. In Years 1 and 2 they develop a good grasp of number. They learn to count and order numbers reliably and, with the help of a number line, begin to do simple addition and subtraction calculations. They can make comparisons between objects of different length and weight. They know the value of basic coins and can match prices with the correct number of coins. By the end of Year 2, numeracy skills are developing well. Most pupils have a good understanding of number facts to 20. They are confident in doing mental calculations and are developing strategies for quick recall and use their knowledge of number bonds to solve simple problems. They are developing an understanding of place value to 100 which they apply to calculations involving money. The higher attainers have some understanding of numbers to 1000 but cannot yet solve problems with such large numbers.

108. Pupils know the properties of some two and three-dimensional shapes. They use appropriate language to describe the shape and size of solid and flat shapes. They collect information and, with help, construct graphs. One class made a graph of information on class members which included boys, girls, adults and pets. By the end of Key Stage 1, numeracy skills are satisfactory. Most pupils use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20 in order to solve problems. They are beginning to see the relationships between numbers. They have good recall of two, five and ten times tables and are developing an understanding of place value.

109. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on knowledge gained in Years 1 and 2. They develop strategies for quick recall of numbers and become skilled at seeing patterns in numbers. They can make accurate predictions and estimates and explain clearly the reasons for their choices. They interpret the data from graphs on such subjects as favourite puddings. In the oldest three classes, progress is accelerated by the very high quality of teaching. Pupils compute with large numbers and understand the relationship between fractions and decimals. In work on shape, they develop an understanding of various kinds of symmetry. They become more independent in analysing data and use their findings to create block and line graphs, choosing appropriate scales. They use measuring instruments with accuracy.

110. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are able to manipulate large numbers with ease and are developing their own methods of solving problems and applying them in practical tasks. They use decimals, vulgar fractions and percentages in a variety of contexts, accurately and confidently. They understand negative numbers and can work out complex number patterns and use this knowledge to make predictions. They draw and interpret complicated graphs of discrete data and understand probability. The attainment of the higher attainers in using and

applying mathematics is at a particularly high level; they have developed a very good logical approach to solving complicated questions. Most of them talk confidently about their mathematics and can explain clearly how they found the answer. Some suggest alternative methods which could have been used. Oral skills are good and pupils give clear explanations of their methods and reasoning, using appropriate mathematical language.

111. Teaching in the first six classes is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. In the three oldest classes it is consistently very good. In one lesson seen it was excellent. The teaching impacts on the rate of progress made by the pupils. Where teaching is most effective there are very high expectations of the amount, quality and level of work produced, lessons move at a brisk pace and the plenary session is used very effectively to move pupils on to the next stage of learning. In some lessons the pace is too slow and although work is planned for differing abilities, the differences in level are not always sufficient and higher attainers could tackle more challenging activities.

112. Across the school lessons are well planned with clear objectives which are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lessons and in the best lessons revisited in the plenary session. Pupils gradually become competent mathematicians, taking pleasure in a broad range of interesting mathematical activities provided. Good use is made of mathematical games to develop quick recall and to give pupils confidence in manipulating numbers. In these sessions pupils usually join in enthusiastically and focus well on the challenges given. They work sensibly on their own and co-operate well with one another.

113. Effective whole class instruction and skilful questioning help to raise the quality of pupils' thinking. Teachers encourage pupils to find economical ways of doing simple calculations. They rightly place emphasis on the use of the correct mathematical vocabulary. Teachers use the time available during independent working sessions effectively to monitor progress and help individuals. Work is marked regularly and includes helpful comments. Opportunities are provided to use mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as science and geography. Lessons in these subjects provide valuable opportunities to collect and interpret data. Younger pupils look at hair and eye colour of pupils or the transport used to come to school. Older pupils interpret information collected about temperature. They compare the climates in various parts of the world and note seasonal changes. Pupils use information and communication technology to support their learning. Work in mathematics is reinforced by regular homework.

114. The monitoring of teaching in mathematics has been insufficiently focused and rigorous on creating targets for improvements and review. More structured monitoring can help the school to address the inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school. The co-ordinator is very well informed and has produced a policy and clear plans for the development of mathematics across the school. Her role needs extending so that other staff can more easily benefit from her expertise. She has produced series of useful pamphlets for parents which informs them about what the pupils are learning and gives guidance on how they can help at home. The curriculum is inclusive for all pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are good. The school has a good range of resources and materials.

SCIENCE

115. Attainment across the school is similar to that at the time of the previous inspection. Inspection findings are that standards are in line with nationally expected levels at the end of

Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 are good and above national averages. Pupils' achievements at Key Stage 2 over the past few years are very creditable. In national tests the percentage of pupils in Year 6 reaching the higher level 5 has been above average both nationally and in comparison to similar schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. The science curriculum is inclusive for all pupils.

116. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about life cycles, can identify the properties of a range of materials and can describe how some materials are changed by heating. They know that sounds vary in volume, how a circuit is needed before electricity can flow and that forces can change the shape of objects as well as producing movements. The investigational skills seen were at an appropriate level, with many pupils able to predict and test outcomes accurately. The concept of fair test is emerging. Some higher level work was evident in Year 2 with pupils exploring reversible and irreversible changes. For food technology they made bread and observed how the ingredients changed in the process of chopping, mixing, cooking and cooling; through this pupils develop an understanding of reversible and irreversible changes. There are examples of good cross-curricular links. Year 1 pupils link their study of the human eye with a mathematical pictogram showing eye colours. Year 2 link their study of materials with art by very impressive collages of 'In the Park'.

117. At Key Stage 2, pupils build steadily on the knowledge acquired earlier, so that by the end of the key stage they have good understanding of the human skeleton, the main organs and the effects of exercise on heart rate. They have very good knowledge of the need for a healthy lifestyle, the effects of the misuse of drugs and the lifecycle of plants and animals, including humans. Pupils know the three states of solid, liquid and gas and how water can be changed from one to another. Year 3 pupils understand, in their study of electricity, that a complete circuit is needed for a device to work; they draw the necessary components to make a complete circuit. By Year 5 good progression in the topic of electricity is clear through a scrutiny of pupils' written work. For example, they investigate and reason with appropriate illustrations why lights do not work. Year 4 and 5 pupils confidently and with enthusiasm discuss the difference between liquids, solids and gases.

118. A huge leap in progress in Year 6 is evidenced by the very good work produced. The pupils record much independent writing about healthy lifestyles. Pupils are very familiar with what constitutes fair testing. They demonstrate by experimenting with sugar, how to alter one variable without affecting the others. Across Key Stage 2 there is much evidence of science linked to other subjects. Year 5 and 6 pupils use their investigative knowledge of electricity to devise lunch box alarms as part of their design and technology lessons. Year 4 and 5 pupils use knowledge and understanding of circuits to create electric quiz boards; they write instructions on how to make quizzes as part of a literacy lesson. Year 6 pupils test the pulse rate of all their peers using fair testing criteria and record by tally chart and frequency. This information is transferred to bar charts and line graphs developing their mathematical skills.

119. Teaching is generally good with very good teaching seen in the oldest three classes. Lessons are well planned and prepared with good clear learning objectives; they are well structured with plenty of practical work, often in groups. Older pupils have many opportunities to pose their own questions and devise experiments to test them out. Older pupils are trained to analyse graphs, identify patterns and explain why particular results have occurred. Most teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils are encouraged to use scientific vocabulary using the teachers' language as guidance. Year 4 and 5 pupils talk about atoms and particles. Year 6 pupils use scientific vocabulary with understanding; for

example, 'variable' and 'calibration'. Good demonstration was seen by Year 1 and 2 pupils of how a circuit works by four pupils holding hands and representing the bulb, battery and two wires. They demonstrated to the class how electricity travels and lights the bulb but when two pupils break hands the circuit is also broken.

120. A Year 6 teacher displayed excellent organisational skills when making experimental and investigative science a reality. Most teachers use challenging questions to consolidate, extend and verify what pupils know and understand. The marking of pupils' work is thorough. Teachers invariably mark pupils' work and offer positive and encouraging comments. Pupils co-operate well in the practical work, sharing tasks fairly and handling equipment sensibly. Where the teaching is very good, teachers have high expectations and pupils rise to the challenges, think independently and work well. Most pupils across both key stages apply themselves well to the work and show enjoyment.

121. The teaching is well supported by a good scheme of work based on nationally published material, which has been well adapted to suit the needs of the school's mixed age classes. The previous report found there was a lack of precise learning targets in the short term plans. This deficiency has been addressed. Good assessment procedures are in place that record individual pupil's ongoing attainment. Because of the two-year cycle scheme of work certain pupils miss some of the topics. Upper Key Stage 2 teachers are aware of this and these gaps are plugged by differentiated tasks. Assessment sheets are ticked when learning objectives are achieved and this information is passed on to the relevant teacher at the end of the academic year. The subject co-ordinator was on maternity leave at the time of the inspection and the temporary co-ordinator is managing the subject well. Teachers' planning is monitored and classroom observations are at an early stage of development; all classes have not been seen yet. The school is well resourced for the subject. Future plans include focusing on the Foundation Stage, writing a suitable scheme of work and analysing national test results across both key stages to further improve pupils' results.

ART AND DESIGN

122. In art and design the pupils achieve the expected standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. At the previous inspection standards were judged to be above those expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because they are well supported in their work.

123. Pupils at Key Stage 1 handle tools confidently. They can mix and name colours and use them to represent people and places. In Year 1 the pupils use natural objects to print attractive patterns. They can record their ideas confidently; for example, when sketching their toys and drawing the face of a friend. They explore pattern and colour by observing and recording pictures in the style of African art. The pupils use a range of materials and processes; for example, Year 2 pupils make large masks by covering party balloons with plaster or papier-mâché to create interesting textures. They add paint and a variety of materials such as raffia, wool, beads and feathers to produce imaginative effects. They develop an awareness of pattern in the natural world. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the pupils observed patterns around the school and recorded brick and metal grid patterns by making a wax rubbing. Other pupils, with the help of the classroom assistant, used a digital camera to capture pattern images in print.

124. Pupils at Key Stage 2 show increasing control over a range of tools and techniques and use the work of famous artists to inspire their work. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 look at the work of Escher, the Dutch graphic artist, to develop shading techniques using special pencils. They apply the skills they have practised when observing a chair and record what they see using charcoal and pastels. The pupils in Year 5 and 6 are inspired by the work of Picasso when they carefully cut coloured card and position the pieces to make an abstract image of a face. In Year 6, pupils investigate the visual and tactile qualities of materials; for example, they learn about the work of Arcimboldo and use his paintings as a starting point for their own exploration of facial expressions. They create a large collage of a face using fruit and vegetables and record the result with a digital camera. At the last inspection aspects of painting were judged to be well above those expected nationally. This element of the art curriculum is currently not well developed for pupils aged 7 to 11, where older pupils could benefit from more opportunities to practise their painting skills.

125. Although only a few lessons were seen during the inspection, the evidence is that teaching is good. The teachers have good subject knowledge and the lessons are well planned. The teachers' very effective intervention, probing questioning and sensitive suggestions keep pupils working hard because they are very clear about how well they are doing and what they needed to do to improve. The constant reinforcement of the need to use the correct terminology extends pupils' vocabulary well. Lessons benefit from the quality of the classroom assistant and parental help. Art and design makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development as they learn how, for example, artists in different times and cultures used their art to represent the beauty of the world around them. Pupils take very good care of the materials and equipment they use and respect the work and opinions of others in their class when evaluating their work. This helps them to improve their own work and gain a deeper understanding of art.

126. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator knows her subject well and provides good support to her colleagues. She has developed an action plan to improve the teaching and learning of the art and design curriculum. This includes staff training on the range of techniques and skills that could be used with pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. Only limited evidence was available to make reliable judgements about the quality of the pupils' work at Key Stage 1. During the inspection no design and technology lessons were seen for pupils aged five to 7. The evidence for this age group is therefore based on the scrutiny of books, work on display and discussions with pupils and staff.

128. In design and technology the standards of work seen match national expectations for pupils aged 7 and 11. There has been a good improvement in design and technology at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection when standards were judged to be below expectation for pupils aged 11. The issues raised then have been addressed. The school has increased the opportunities for pupils at Key Stage 2 to be involved in focused practical tasks, designing and making assignments and to investigate, disassemble and evaluate products. There is now a good emphasis on progression through a range of skills. The school is making good use of the nationally prescribed guidelines and benefits from the very strong links with the local technology college that provides specialist teaching and resourcing for the older pupils.

129. In all classes, pupils produce appropriate designs and plans before they make things for themselves. In Year 2, pupils have the opportunity to design and make different types of bread and chocolate crispy cakes in food technology. In Year 4, ideas are built upon

when pupils design and make a Christmas biscuit. They investigate the shape of biscuits and what materials and qualities are needed to make the biscuit appealing. They produce detailed drawings, which consider shape, size and decoration, label the materials they will need and write a recipe. They make an evaluation of the finished product, for example, one pupil wrote, 'I would improve my biscuit by making it thicker and the icing sugar less sticky'. Before pupils design and make things for themselves, the teachers ensure that they have the chance to study similar products made by other people. In Year 5, for example, pupils investigate the range of fabric and fastenings used on a collection of purses and wallets. This ensures that the pupils have a good understanding of the purpose and function of the product before they design and make one for themselves.

130. Throughout the school, a wide range of appropriate skills is taught well. The teachers follow a common approach to the way they teach the subject. This helps to ensure that the pupils' learning is continuous as the work builds on pupils' previous experiences. Pupils learn to sew, to join using different media, to cut, measure and score. In Year 3, pupils practise sewing skills on open weave fabrics using running stitch, backstitch and cross-stitch which make attractive patterns for a calendar. In Year 5, the pupils develop their sewing skills to join pieces of fabric together when they make a money container. In Year 6, the pupils reinforce the core skills of measuring, cutting and joining and use triangulation to add rigidity and stability to frameworks. This is seen when they construct a shelter using square section pine and straws. They use glue to join the pieces of wood to enable them to construct a small cuboid frame. They make the framework rigid by fixing triangular supports to the corners. They construct a roof for the framework using straws, which are joined together using a variety of joining methods practised in the previous lesson. These are good learning experiences for the pupils and develop their knowledge and skills and in a sequenced way and ensure that there is very good progress in lessons and over time.

131. Where pupils have been provided with opportunities to work together they do so positively. This was seen in a lesson for the oldest class where they worked in small groups to construct the framework for a shelter. In the introductory discussion pupils are attentive to the teacher and each other. The pupils listen carefully to each other's ideas, co-operate and share resources, waiting patiently for what they need. These very good attitudes, combined with very good behaviour, contribute positively to their good achievement in the subject. Pupils often work in mixed ability groups and pupils with special educational needs receive good support. The pupils in Year 6 benefit from the in class support of a specialist design and technology teacher from the local technology college. This initiative is having a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve.

132. In the two lessons seen, in Year 5 and 6 and Year 6, the quality of teaching was very good and excellent. The teachers have excellent subject knowledge, are very well prepared and use the appropriate technical language when they explain to pupils what it is they will be doing and how they will achieve success. They use demonstration to good effect; for example, the Year 5 and 6 teacher ensured that all the pupils could see at very close range as she demonstrated different stitches. This has a positive impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding of their work. Lessons are challenging and have a very good pace with the teacher keeping pupils' focused throughout the lesson on the tasks set. Higher attaining pupils

are allowed to progress at a faster rate and take some responsibility for their own learning. This was seen in the Year 6 lesson when the higher attaining pupils read instructions to move their progress on in the construction of the framework for a shelter. There are high expectations of the quality of the finished product and pupils

respond positively to this expectation. Because of the consistency in the quality of the work through the school, it is possible to identify good progression in pupils' learning. As pupils move through the school, they study a variety of topics. These topics give pupils a good range of experiences, which enable them to work with many different types of materials.

133. The subject is well led and managed by a very enthusiastic co-ordinator. There is clear guidance as to what should be taught and when. The co-ordinator oversees teachers' planning to ensure that teachers follow a common approach because this significantly influences the pupils' good achievements. The school has a good range of resources that are used well to teach the subject. There is good evidence of the use of literacy, with pupils being encouraged to produce a plan and write evaluations on their projects. Additionally numeracy skills are used in measuring.

GEOGRAPHY

134. Two lessons, one at each key stage, were seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of the pupils' work, together with discussions with pupils and a study of the teachers' plans, show that standards across both key stages are similar to those expected nationally for pupils of the same age. Standards are not as high as those described in the previous report. Progress is satisfactory across both key stages for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

135. At Key Stage 1, pupils successfully identify physical features of places, such as roads and houses. They undertake fieldwork in the local area, and have successfully written about how to make it safer. They learn about the hazards of a busy town and how traffic lights help motorists and pedestrians. When discussing maps and plans many pupils are confident in using expressions such as 'left', 'right', 'near' and 'far'. Year 2 pupils write about land use in Sale Moor. There is little evidence in pupils' written work that they have much awareness of the localities beyond their own. Pupils in Year 2 have studied African art and culture. There are plans to introduce 'Barnaby Bear' and his world travels into the curriculum; this can raise pupils' awareness of places around the world. Year 2 pupils enjoy a Travel Agent's role-play area. Tourist rates of exchange for money are listed on a poster giving good links with numeracy. Pupils writing about their homes after visiting the local area link literacy to the subject.

136. At Key Stage 2, pupils acquire satisfactory understanding of the factors relating to development and to land use. They have a sound knowledge of their local area and of the countries and physical features of the United Kingdom. The study of Kenya provides a stark comparison between their own area and that of a developing country. Pupils are beginning to appreciate the importance of climate and physical features in determining the development of agriculture, towns and industries. Year 3 and 4 pupils successfully describe what they consider to be attractive and unattractive features of the locality. Year 5 and 6 pupils undertake an in depth study of rivers introduced by the journey of the River Mersey; this leads to a study of the River Severn as part of the topic 'Settlements'. They use terms like 'erosion' and 'deposition'

with ease. Pupils have detailed and informative records about their fieldtrip to the River Mersey. This work is well presented.

137. Meaningful cross-curricular links are established in Year 6 between history and geography. An example is the topic relating to Egypt, which helps pupils to understand how the development of Ancient Egypt has been influenced by geographical factors. The pupils highlight the importance of the River Nile, the ten flags of the countries through which the river runs and the modern Aswan Dam, contrasting it with the shadufs previously used for raising water to irrigate the land. Cross-curricular links are also seen in the shadufs designed and made as part of the pupils' design and technology opportunities.

138. The teaching seen was satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 the tasks set for the pupils need to be more challenging. Too little work is completed at Key Stage 1 and there is little evidence of differentiation for pupils with special educational needs. All appropriate aspects of work are covered at Key Stage 2 and the range of fieldwork provided helps the pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. Most work across both key stages is well planned and teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. The pupils take care with their work, and make every effort to complete the tasks set.

139. The policy was reviewed and updated in April 2001. The school has adopted national guidance for geography and this ensures a reasonable range of topics and themes are covered, but if standards are to rise, more time will need to be spent on the subject. The co-ordinator monitors medium term planning but no monitoring of teaching is in place. No formal assessment is recorded. Resources are satisfactory. The co-ordinator plans to improve resources and local resources such as maps.

HISTORY

140. Standards in history are good as they were at the time of the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are introduced to the idea of 'then' and 'now'. The youngest pupils compare the toys they have now with those of Victorian children. They learn to use photographs and pictures to help them make comparisons. They have some understanding of the lives of important people from the past; for example, Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. By the end of Year 2, through stories and pictures from the past, pupils are beginning to realise how and why things change. In a lesson about Florence Nightingale, pupils were able to compare the conditions in her hospital with those they have visited. In the picture used, they were able to pick out the features which were unsatisfactory and say why conditions had to change.

141. At Key Stage 2, through a study of the Roman, Saxon and Viking invaders, pupils learn about different lifestyles and especially the differences between the lives of the people in charge and those who have been conquered. In one class, pupils compared a Roman villa with their own home and assumed the role of an estate agent, producing an advertisement for a villa for sale. Pupils learn to use books, pictures and artefacts as sources of information. In a Year 3 lesson on the Vikings, one group of pupils studied maps to find out which villages and towns had Viking names and then had to decide why the Vikings had settled in these particular places. A Year 5 group learned about primary and secondary sources and had to use pictures and text to make comparisons between the lives of rich and poor children in Victorian times.

142. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the reasons for changes which have taken place in history. They have learned why people built settlements in particular places. They have had the opportunity to study ancient civilisations such as the Egyptians. They have translated hieroglyphics into English, are aware that some buildings and structures from that time still stand and that life for some people in Egypt has changed very little. The oldest pupils study beliefs about life after death and the reason for the building of the pyramids. They were required to consider what happened when a king such as Tutankhamun died suddenly.

143. The limited amount of teaching seen was good overall. Teachers show a good command of the subject and plan interesting lessons which capture the pupils' imagination and enable them to make good progress, systematically building on previous learning. From an early age emphasis is given to investigation and the importance of evidence to find out about the past. Teachers give information in an interesting way, using challenging questions to test understanding and to make pupils think. Consequently pupils show interest in their history lessons and are eager to share their knowledge. They generally co-operate well and share information and ideas. Teachers use history well to develop speaking and listening skills and pupils answer questions confidently and articulately. They ensure that the lessons are inclusive for all pupils. The encouragement offered by teachers helps to give the pupils the confidence to offer suggestions or answer questions and not to worry if they are wrong. In the oldest three classes, there is evidence in written work of pupils using writing skills well to produce good quality, well presented accounts of events from the past. Year 5 pupils wrote letters of protest about Victorian children having to work rather than go to school. In some classes, insufficient use is made of work in history to develop writing skills. Good examples were seen; for example, questions written by younger pupils about the ward of an old army hospital after studying a picture, but generally too few opportunities are provided. Occasionally the use of worksheets unnecessarily restricts writing or provides too little stimulation.

144. Teachers often make links with other subjects; for example, Roman style tile mosaics made by Year 4 pupils and Egyptian sandals made by Year 6 in design and technology lessons. Year 6 pupils also made a study of the importance of the river Nile in ancient times and today. Year 3 pupils used another school's website to access information about the Vikings and used digital cameras to take photographs of Tudor houses which they had made. In some classes attractive displays enhance the work done.

145. Good use is made of the local environment for studying old buildings and the school itself is a valuable resource. Visits further a field include Roman excavations at Chester, an Egyptology exhibition at the local university and various Tudor houses. The co-ordinator has built up an extensive bank of useful resources which are supplemented by some artefacts borrowed from staff, friends and museums. The policy is up to date and the school makes use of nationally prescribed guidelines which ensure continuity and progression. No formal assessments are undertaken.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

146. Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory and in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. They were satisfactory at the previous inspection. The school has worked hard to improve standards in information and communication technology but until recently it has been difficult to meet the standards required by the new curriculum because of inadequate hardware. The recent upgrade of the computer suite in school is beginning to have a significant effect on teaching and learning in

information and communication technology throughout school. Unfortunately teething troubles with the new system limited the number of lessons seen during the inspection week, but when in action, it is enabling some pupils to make good and sometimes very good progress.

147. In lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers were introducing pupils to the new system and the support they were receiving from an educational consultant was having a very positive impact on the teaching and learning. Instruction was clear and most lessons moved at a good pace. Teachers have worked very hard to make themselves competent in teaching information and communication technology skills and they share the enthusiasm of the pupils. The school has adopted a sensible approach to using the new equipment. Each class has a well planned weekly lesson which supports work in other areas of the curriculum. In one Key Stage 2 class, pupils were combining mathematics and artwork by changing size, colour and orientation of three-dimensional shapes to make patterns. In another, the oldest pupils were using their logic and literacy skills to be detectives, solving crimes. Younger pupils were sorting and classifying data about transport used for coming to school and then producing block graphs and pie charts. The youngest pupils were practising keyboard skills by writing sentences about old toys.

148. At present the room is underused and pupils have little opportunity to use information and communication technology during literacy and numeracy lessons. The exception to this is the Year 6 class which has its own well used mini-suite. There are firm plans to extend the use to include these sessions. Examination of pupils' work shows that, despite the limits of the previous equipment, teachers were providing an interesting range of activities to develop computer skills. In addition to work with computers, pupils have used a digital camera for such activities as recording work in design and technology and looking for mathematical patterns in and around the school building. Younger pupils use listening centres. Older pupils have the opportunity to visit and work at a local technology college and Year 5 pupils extend their knowledge of the Internet on an annual week's visit to an activity centre.

149. The school recognises the growing importance of information and communication technology as a core subject and its role in helping to raise standards across the curriculum. There is a good range of attractive resources for use with the computers. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about the work being done and the possibilities that the new suite will create. She has worked very hard to ensure that staff have adequate guidance to develop their own expertise. The link with the independent educational support service has been instrumental in the development of information and communication technology in school. The consultants have helped the school to develop a new policy and a comprehensive action plan for the future. They provide very good technical support. Nationally prescribed guidelines are used to ensure continuity and progression. An assessment system has been produced and is being trialled across the school. Standards are set to rise in this important area.

MUSIC

150. At the time of the previous inspection, progress in music was judged to be satisfactory. This is no longer the case. Standards in music are unsatisfactory across the school because pupils do not currently have sufficient access to all the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. There was no recording on any work in music in any of the pupils' work books.

151. As the national strategies have been implemented and as other subjects such as design and technology and information and communication technology have been significantly

developed, music has been neglected and become marginalised in the school. The headteacher and staff have become aware of the situation and are beginning to address this issue. For example, a good range of percussion instruments has recently been bought to support the work and a staff training day in music is being planned.

152. There are a number of problems. Currently music is taken once a week every other half term. If other activities cut across the music, it is possible that the pupils have four or five lessons in a half term with the problem of no more lessons for perhaps two months. This has a negative impact on continuity and progression. Another problem is that the teachers, most of whom do not have a music background, have insufficient guidance over what to teach. The previous scheme of work is now obsolete and a new one has yet to be written. The way that what is taught becomes somewhat arbitrary is reflected in the teachers' planning. In a practical sense, this means that whilst the pupils have many opportunities for singing, they have significantly fewer to develop their skills in the composition strand of the subject.

153. Two lessons were observed during the inspection and in one lesson the quality of teaching was satisfactory and in the other it was good. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, the pupils enjoyed listening to Saint Saen's 'Carnival of the Animals', subsequent to which they used untuned percussion instruments to represent the animals, working in groups to create simple compositions. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, some use was made of a commercial scheme, with pupils using percussion to create sounds to depict rain using a simple form of graphic notation to record what they had done. This led to sensible appraisals of their work. This lesson involved good teaching and learning, mainly through the musical knowledge of the teacher.

154. In spite of these problems, in many ways pupils are offered good opportunities. For example, a small number of pupils benefit from peripatetic music teaching in flute, cornet and clarinet. There are two recorder groups, a guitar group, a band and a choir which performs every Christmas in Manchester Cathedral and annually at the Bowden festival. This subject is now well resourced and the plans to target improvements in music, including the development of an appropriate scheme of work, show good commitment to addressing this area, so that pupils receive an appropriate curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

155. Games and gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection. Plans show that all requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are met across both key stages. At the time of the previous inspection attainment was similar to that expected nationally for pupils of the same age. This is still the picture. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in the development of skills across the various areas.

156. At Key Stage 1, pupils move confidently around the hall, showing clear awareness of space and other people, although the size of the hall sometimes limits many activities. Pupils successfully travel, both on hands and feet, and perform a good range of jumps and turns. Many are skilful at introducing balances into their work. Year 2 pupils are confidently developing quality in their movements with appropriate landing and stretch shapes.

157. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to improve their skills in gymnastics and games. Many demonstrate sound levels of co-ordination, expression and control in gymnastics. They link their movements appropriately and improve their performance by evaluating, refining and practising. They work individually and with others. In one lesson observed, a small number of pupils did not follow instructions and distracted others which led to some pupils not improving their performance. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 develop awareness of

position and tactics in their games skills. Good lacrosse skills are taught with most pupils developing passing and receiving skills and good control of the ball. All pupils in this age group are improving team spirit and a sense of fair play.

158. Teaching is satisfactory overall across both key stages. In most lessons teachers give clear and relevant instructions. Most teachers stress the importance of safe actions and insist on suitable dress for the lessons. Teachers raise health issues appropriately and all lessons have warming up and cooling down sessions. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and make regular use of demonstrations by pupils to illustrate good practice. In less effective teaching, some pupils display unacceptable behaviour by not listening to the teacher thus preventing effective learning from taking place. Throughout most lessons a good pace of work is maintained and appropriate apparatus provided.

159. Pupils throughout the school enjoy physical education. Most pupils listen attentively, sustain concentration, are keen to explore the tasks set and work successfully in paired or grouped activities.

160. Pupils receive a balance of experiences reflecting all aspects of the subject including provision for swimming in Year 3 and 4. All pupils achieve the required 25 metres in swimming by the end of Year 4 and most exceed this. Pupils with special educational needs are given full access to the broad physical education curriculum and make good progress across the various aspects of the subject.

161. The school provides good extra-curricular activities at Key Stage 2 which are well supported by pupils; these include football, netball, lacrosse and Judo. Fully qualified instructors take lacrosse and Judo and consequently parents pay a small fee for these two sports. Extra-curricular activities enrich the school's curriculum promoting good social and moral values. Pupils from Year 5 experience outdoor and adventurous activities annually at a residential centre, Winmarleigh Hall. This includes abseiling, rope climbing and orienteering.

162. The subject is well co-ordinated. A commercial scheme of work, together with national guidance for physical education, has been adapted to the school's needs. This structured scheme enables less confident teachers of the subject to be more effective in their lessons. Some assessment is in the planning documentation but the school is aware that this needs developing. The school is well resourced and has satisfactory facilities for indoor activities and good facilities for outdoor activities. The hall is limited in space especially as the large apparatus is stored here. Two playgrounds have well marked, imaginative play designs and there is a very large playing field.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

163. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This judgement endorses the findings of the previous report. Several lessons

were observed, across both key stages. Evidence considered included a scrutiny of work on display, pupils' work, teachers' planning and observations of acts of collective worship.

164. Throughout the school pupils gain an understanding of festivals and celebrations in Christian and other major faiths. Pupils learn about Jesus' friends and develop a sound understanding of religious concepts through stories from the Bible such as the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about significant events in the Christian calendar by listening and responding to the stories of Christmas and Easter. They write their own versions of the first Christmas. They create prayers for harvest. Through the telling of a story on 'Wonderful Earth' they gain insights into the Bible's creation story. As an introduction to Judaism, they learn about lighting a candle at the festival of Shabbat. They learn about Diwali and Eid.

165. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn about Hinduism and the Islamic Faith as well as developing their knowledge of Judaism. They study the Bible further understanding its importance to Christians and what makes it so special. They learn about the miracles of Jesus. They are helped to consider birth, baptism and Holy Communion. They consider the concept of a journey, writing about the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. They become aware of the differences between the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The oldest pupils consider rules and responsibilities related to Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They are helped to learn that religions offer guidance on how to live life, so that elements of religion can be applied to their own lives.

166. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop their knowledge of Christianity and other faiths and willingly express their ideas and opinions. In assemblies, pupils listen attentively and are happy to respond to the questions asked. These acts of collective worship contribute effectively to the subject. Pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically. Opportunities for reflection and prayer are encouraged on these occasions.

167. The quality of the teaching observed was satisfactory with some good features, including the good quality of story telling. Very good relationships were clear between the staff and children. Pupils are usually well managed; most are involved, attentive and willing to join in discussions. Teachers show good subject knowledge. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and finding out about world faiths.

168. The enthusiastic new co-ordinator is familiar with the requirements of the new agreed syllabus. At the moment no assessments are undertaken. There are plans to review the amount of time given to the subject. The subject is well resourced and good use is made of religious artefacts from other faiths. The work in religious education and the collective acts of worship both serve to clarify and affirm the values of the school.