

INSPECTION REPORT

BARROW HALL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Sankey, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111234

Headteacher: Mr Geoffrey Bowles

Reporting inspector: Tony Painter
21512

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 198987

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:	4–11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barrow Hall Lane Great Sankey Warrington
Postcode:	WA5 3AA
Telephone number:	01925 728197
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Eric Day
Date of previous inspection:	15 th September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tony Painter 21512	Registered inspector	Music Religious education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What kind of school is it? The school's results and achievements What should the school do to improve further?
Margaret Manning 8943	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?
Eileen Scott 21639	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
Carole Jarvis 27276	Team inspector	English Art and design	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Robert Battey 2866	Team inspector	Geography History Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
Mohindar Galowalia 20832	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an above average sized community primary school in Great Sankey for pupils between 4 and 11 years. It has expanded considerably over recent years and there are now 482 pupils on roll with slightly more boys than girls. Most pupils come from the residential area around the school. The proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals, at 2.9 per cent, is below average. The attainment of children joining the school is in line with that expected of children of their age. Most pupils come from white backgrounds but a small proportion come from families where English is an additional language. Very few are at an early stage of learning English. Forty-eight pupils, representing around 10 per cent of the school, are on the register of special educational needs, which is below average. Four of these have a Statement of Special Educational Need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Good management is helping the headteacher, senior staff and governors to identify and tackle the needs of the expanding school. This has maintained the good quality of education despite substantial staffing changes. Standards in English have improved and there are signs of further improvements in other subjects. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching is improving standards, particularly in English.
- Excellent relationships create a very positive atmosphere for learning and promote pupils' very good attitudes to the school.
- Good management, involving effective teamwork and very strong financial management, responds well to changes.
- A secure moral framework helps pupils to behave well and take responsibility.
- A very good range of out-of-school activities contributes to pupils' social development.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and science are not as high as those achieved in English.
- Subject co-ordinators do not monitor teaching and standards enough.
- Assessment systems are not rigorous enough to identify clearly what pupils need to learn next.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in September 1997, when weaknesses were identified in the provision for weaker readers, equal opportunities and management roles. It has made good improvements since that time in all identified areas. Despite substantial staff changes as the school has expanded, it has maintained the good quality of teaching. This is leading to better standards in English and some improvements in the number of pupils achieving the national standards in science. There is also evidence of rising standards in other subjects such as information and communication technology, history and geography. The school now pays more attention to developing pupils' spiritual awareness, which is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	A	A	C
Mathematics	C	C	D	E
Science	C	C	C	D

Key

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

Pupils' results in these tests have kept pace with national trends although improved attainment in English reflects the good attention that the school has paid to the subject. Standards in reading, for example, are well above average. Writing is not as strong but has improved. In mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard is average. However, relatively low proportions of pupils achieve higher levels of attainment and this reduces the overall standards. In science, the results are average although they are below those found in similar schools. The mathematics results fell in 2000 and are below national averages and well below those of similar schools. However, this group of pupils showed weaker mathematical skills through the school. Comparisons are made with schools having similar low levels of free school meals. However, although levels of employment are high, the local area has average socio-economic indicators. If the school's results were compared with average schools, English would be well above average and science average, although mathematics would still be below average. Inspectors confirm the results of the tests and find signs that standards are improving. This is a result of new curriculum guidance including effective use of national advice.

Children's attainment on entering the school is average and they learn effectively throughout the school. Observation of lessons shows signs of improving standards in many subjects. By the time pupils begin the National Curriculum, most achieve the nationally expected levels with particular strengths in personal, creative and physical development. By the age of 7, standards are above average in English although in science and mathematics they are still average. Standards are maintained in the junior classes and the attainment of pupils in their final year at school is average in mathematics and science and well above average in English. Pupils achieve average standards in most other subjects of the curriculum although attainment in physical education is good at the ages of 7 and 11 years. The school is beginning to analyse pupils' results more thoroughly and is setting ambitious but attainable targets for pupils' attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are very keen to come to school and take part in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well and the school has good systems to tackle any incidents that might occur.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent relationships have been established that contribute effectively to pupils' personal development.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is good and above the national average.

Excellent relationships and very good attitudes are significant strengths of the school. They form the foundation of the school's work and help to promote higher standards.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 99 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in one lesson. In 34 per cent of lessons, it was very good or better. The consistency and quality of teaching have been maintained since the last inspection. Teaching is good in all parts of the school and meets the needs of all pupils, although higher-attaining pupils are not challenged enough in science and mathematics. Teaching in English and mathematics has improved through good attention to national advice including the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to develop literacy skills through writing in subjects such as religious education. Pupils use numeracy skills in other subjects but do not have enough chances to develop their own strategies for solving problems.

Excellent relationships, high expectations of behaviour and very good management of lessons remove distractions and create a good pace of learning. Lessons are well structured: they include clear statements of what pupils will learn and opportunities to check their learning at the end of lessons. This helps pupils to be aware of how quickly they are learning. Teachers introduce new concepts thoroughly with confident and clear explanations that help pupils to understand. Skilful questioning further probes pupils' thinking and extends their learning. Resources are used successfully to motivate pupils and give practical experiences. Teachers do not use detailed assessments, however, to plan work that is closely matched to the different groups of pupils. They are less successful in developing pupils' independence; for example, in planning their own scientific investigations.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad range of experiences that meet the needs of all pupils. A lack of effective monitoring leads to uneven delivery in some subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to learn effectively alongside their fellow pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision is made for the very few pupils at an early stage of learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good attention is paid to pupils' personal development. Particular strengths in developing moral and social awareness create an effective atmosphere for learning with strong development of values and respect. Provision for spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety. The school's systems for recording and monitoring absences are unsatisfactory.

New curriculum guidance is improving the work of the school but it does not monitor carefully enough how teachers interpret the guidance. As a result, there are weaknesses in the coverage in some subjects. Parents feel very positive about the school, which contributes to very effective links. The school provides good quality information and welcomes and encourages parents to take a full part in the life of the school. Although attendance is good, the school's systems for recording this do not permit clear analysis of patterns of absences.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Management is good and has established good systems to enable all staff to contribute to decision-making. This leads to a very positive shared commitment to succeed. Good monitoring of teaching by senior staff has maintained good standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors discharge their responsibilities well and are increasingly effectively involved in decision-making.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Subject co-ordinators do not have sufficient overview of the standards in their subjects and are therefore not clear about the priorities needed for raising standards of provision and attainment.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses all its resources well.

Good management has maintained standards of teaching and improved attainment in a rapidly expanding school. It has established a very positive team approach to change and improvement. However, the role of the subject co-ordinators in monitoring the quality of what is taught has not been fully developed. The school makes good efforts to get value from its expenditure and its financial management is very good. The levels of staffing, accommodation and resources are good. Some areas of the school are crowded although the current building work is expanding the school further.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Before the inspection, 38 parents attended a meeting. There were 210 replies to a questionnaire sent to all parents. A number of interviews with parents were held during the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour is good.• Friendly and supportive staff have high expectations of children.• Children are helped to become mature.• Children like school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons.• The information given about how well pupils are getting on.

The inspection team agrees with the positive points raised but cannot support the negative issues. Extra-curricular activities are very good and help pupils' personal development. The information given to parents is good and reports include much useful information on pupils' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' overall standards are in line with national averages by the time they leave the school, similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils' results are not consistent in the different subjects. In the most recent National Curriculum tests, the schools' results for 7-year-olds in reading were well above average. Pupils' writing is a little weaker than their reading in the infants, but still above the national average and in line with that found in similar schools. Good attention has been paid to promoting writing throughout the school and standards are rising. The results in English for 11-year-olds are well above average. Results in mathematics in 2000 for 7 and 11-year-olds were below average and well below those of schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. However, both groups of pupils showed consistently weaker than average mathematical skills through the school. In science, the schools' results are average for 7 and 11-year-olds. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standards in mathematics and science is at least average, performance at higher levels is below average. This has particular impact when comparing results with those of similar schools. The results in mathematics are well below these and in science they are below. However, the school is not located in a highly affluent area and although employment rates are high, most other socio-economic factors indicate an area that is average. If comparisons are made with average schools, the results are below average for mathematics, average for science and well above average for English.
2. Results have kept pace with the rising national trends and there are signs of improvement in pupils' standards in school now. These improvements are the result of improved arrangements for the curriculum. The school is making more detailed and effective analysis of its results in order to focus developments in teaching and the curriculum. As a result of the analysis, the school is setting challenging targets to improve pupils' attainment. These measures are effective and are beginning to show in the improving standards seen in the inspection.
3. Children enter the reception class with a wide range of attainment that is similar to that found nationally. Good attention is paid to developing children's skills in all the areas of learning¹ and by the time they begin Year 1, children achieve overall standards that are above those expected nationally. There are particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in some aspects of creative development. These findings are similar to those shown in the last report.
4. The inspection finds overall standards in English that are above average at age 7 and well above average by the time pupils are 11. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Reading standards are well above average at 7 and 11, although standards of writing are not as good. Most pupils read fluently and with understanding from different types of books by the age of 7 years. They understand ways that authors set the scene and make their points in stories. Juniors improve their levels of expression while they read. By the time they leave the school, pupils read a wide range of books confidently and with good understanding. Their skills in finding information from books in a library are not so well developed, which restricts their independent research skills. Seven-year-olds have above average standards of writing with good knowledge of punctuation and good spelling. Writing in the junior classes is improving as a result of a greater emphasis on shared writing. Pupils write in a range of styles using expressive words to describe feelings and build tension. They use simple and more complex sentences according to the effect they are trying to achieve. Punctuation is accurate and many pupils are beginning to use paragraphs. The standard of handwriting throughout the school is inconsistent. Although many pupils in the juniors write in a legible, joined script, some still print and their work is untidy. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills and are keen and confident to enter discussions. Planned discussions deepen pupils' understanding and provide opportunities for them to express their ideas.

¹ These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

5. Pupils' standards seen in mathematics lessons by the ages of 7 and 11 are in line with national averages and there are signs of improvements. Pupils learn effectively in lessons in the infant classes. They show interest and enthusiasm for number and count with increasing accuracy. By the age of 7, many calculate the answers to simple problems in their heads and begin to tackle these using multiplication and division. They collect and display information in graphs and begin to interpret these. In the junior classes, pupils maintain a good rate of learning. They improve their mental arithmetic skills and explain their thinking increasingly clearly. Pupils understand fractions and use them in calculations. They use protractors confidently to measure and draw angles, using correct terminology. Teachers' use of national guidance is helping to raise standards. By the end of the key stage, the attainment of a high proportion of pupils reaches the nationally expected levels. However, few currently show consistent achievement at higher levels. Teachers do not use rigorous assessment to accurately identify the skills that pupils need to achieve these levels. For example, higher-attaining pupils lack skills in choosing strategies to approach problems.
6. Pupils aged 7 and 11 years achieve standards in science that are average, similar to those found in the last report. Infant pupils plan and carry out investigations with the teachers' help, for example when comparing the distance travelled by a toy car to the force applied on it. Higher-attaining pupils begin to identify factors that will help to make the tests fair. Pupils know many properties of materials and how these can be used. They know conditions that sustain plant growth and some effects of exercise on the body. By the time they are 7, pupils have knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of science. Junior pupils develop more detailed knowledge and understanding, for example of states of materials such as solids, liquids and gases. They recognise that sound is vibration and needs air to travel. By the age of 11, they have a more systematic approach to recording their observations and findings to investigations. However, few show sustained evidence of higher-level skills. They do not, for example, plan experiments independently or select apparatus for a range of tasks.
7. Attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Most infant pupils have sound skills with keyboard and mouse and use the word processor to improve the quality of their written work. They create pictures and draw graphs, saving and retrieving their information confidently. They begin to use databases, CD-ROMs and the Internet to gather information. Junior pupils gain greater confidence with the programs and use a wider range of tools when making patterns. By the time they are 11, some pupils compile multimedia presentations of good quality, using text and animated pictures. Most show good levels of confidence when searching CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils set out information in tables and spreadsheets but have less understanding of the use of sensors to monitor events.
8. By the ages of 7 and 11 years, standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Infant pupils learn stories from the major religions and retell the stories of Christmas, Diwali and Purim with sound detail and understanding. They have good recall of a visit to a church and describe many artefacts and their uses. Written work uses specialist vocabulary correctly and higher-attaining Year 2 pupils write extended pieces of work of good quality. Junior pupils study a range of other faiths and beliefs with increasing detail. Work on Hinduism is effectively linked with their study of India in geography. By the age of 11, pupils consider concepts such as 'temptation' and 'forgiveness' and how these relate to their own lives. They read and comment on quotations from the Bible with developing insight.
9. Pupils' standards in physical education are above expectations by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Aspects of the subject, such as gymnastics and games, are developed effectively through the use of a specialist coach and a very good range of extra-curricular sports. The school takes part in a good range of competitive sports. Infant pupils use good movements to respond to music, using accurate names for body parts. Junior pupils work together well to refine control and balance while practising a variety of gymnastics. All pupils achieve the required standards in swimming and many exceed them.
10. Pupils' attainment in all other subjects is in line with that found nationally. Successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is giving teachers a clearer structure and helping them to plan to develop skills effectively in literacy lessons. Pupils have some good opportunities to improve their literacy skills in subjects such as religious education. Infant pupils, for example, discuss what they saw when visiting a church and retell stories relating to artefacts. They give

detailed and accurate accounts of their research into 'The Fire of London' in history. Junior pupils produce extended pieces of writing detailing their understanding of the Easter story. However, teachers do not always give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects. In some lessons, such as science, worksheets are not sufficiently demanding of literacy skills. Pupils' numeracy skills are improving as a result of satisfactory implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In particular, teachers have focused effectively on improving pupils' mental arithmetic skills. Pupils have some opportunities to use their developing skills in other subjects. They improve their measuring and recording skills in subjects such as design and technology and science. In information and communication technology lessons, pupils apply mathematical methods to applications such as spreadsheets.

11. There are no significant differences in the achievement of pupils of different background or gender. Boys and girls play equally active parts in lessons and the school uses its analysis of results to monitor relative attainment. The few pupils with English as an additional language are given any necessary support to ensure their full participation in the life of the school. These pupils are welcomed into the school and make good progress, achieving levels of attainment in line with their capabilities.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. Pupils receive good levels of assistance in their classes from teaching and support staff. There is an emphasis on improving the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils with special educational needs. Good attention is given to supporting and improving the pupils' attitudes towards their tasks.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to school remain very good as described in the last report and contribute effectively to their learning. Pupils are very keen to come to school and enjoy taking part in all activities. Parents feel that their children are happy in school and that their behaviour is good. Their attitudes and behaviour in lessons are particularly good in the junior school and it is very rare for behaviour to be unsatisfactory. They are very willing to make contributions in lessons and their questions are very relevant to the lesson, for example in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on collecting and interpreting data. They settle down very quickly to independent work in their groups as was seen in a Year 4 English lesson on changing statements into questions. Pupils in the infants also organise themselves well and settle quickly to work, beginning to write their own stories.
14. Behaviour around school is very good and the school has not excluded any pupils. Whether in the playground, the dining hall or assemblies, pupils' behaviour is good and they are pleasant, friendly and polite to visitors in school. Older pupils are rightly trusted to stay in school at lunchtime with minimal supervision while eating their packed lunches. Younger juniors organise their own games very sociably, some sitting at the picnic table provided outside while others run around and play. Pupils know what they are allowed to do at playtime when it is raining and behave very sensibly. The younger children follow teachers' instructions very well and are not easily distracted by the occasional misbehaviour of other children.
15. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to show responsibility and their personal development is very good. For example, class representatives on the school council take their responsibilities very seriously and behave with considerable maturity for their age. At lunchtime, volunteers willingly answer the telephone in the main office under the direction of staff and pass on messages. Excellent relationships are built up between staff and pupils and all boys and girls work extremely well in groups. In a Year 2 personal and social education lesson when all the pupils in the year were taught together, the pupils showed an exceptional ability to co-operate and listen to each other. Pupils in Year 5 collaborated very well and worked with enjoyment in a lesson on performance poetry based on 'A Smuggler's Song' by Rudyard Kipling, needing little supervision by the teacher.
16. Attendance at school is good in comparison with primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is a little higher than the school reports but it is difficult to compare with national figures because the school's records are unclear. Parents do take their children away in term time but rarely over the permitted two weeks. There is a little lateness to school but

not to an extent that disrupts lessons and pupils are keen to get to school on time. Lessons always start very promptly after registration.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The strengths in the teaching have been sustained since the previous inspection despite quite a significant change in staffing. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Teaching is at least satisfactory in 99 per cent of lessons, in 69 per cent the teaching is good or better and in 34 per cent, very good or better. Good and better teaching is found throughout the school. The unsatisfactory teaching was in one lesson where the teacher did not insist on high standards of behaviour. As a result, pupils' output of work was not high enough.
18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and leads to effective learning. Seventy per cent of the teaching was good or better and 30 per cent very good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in these classes. Teachers work together effectively to provide a consistent experience across all three classes. There is good understanding of the needs of these young children. This is translated into interesting and varied activities that involve the children in the use of all their senses. Skilled management of pupils ensures a secure and safe environment. A calm, respectful approach is sustained by all adults and praise is used to foster children's self-esteem and sense of community. Methods used to promote literacy are particularly effective in promoting basic knowledge of letters and sounds. Children are given plenty of opportunities to use their imagination, try new things and become confident learners. For example, they confidently write their own sentence and are happy to work out spellings for themselves. Resources are used well to give pupils practical experiences. Children use plastic letters to find simple three-letter rhyming words. Teaching was weaker when methods did not effectively ensure that all children were thinking and challenged during whole-class sessions such as in numeracy lessons.
19. In both key stages the planning of lessons is good. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a strong impact on the organisation and use of resources to help pupils' understanding. The sequence of activities leads pupils step by step to an understanding of the main idea of the lesson. This was demonstrated well in a lesson where pupils were comparing the style of two authors. The teacher's effective questioning encouraged careful analysis and identification of how the writing conveyed its meaning. The teacher used pupils' new understanding to generate ideas and support pupils' skills in structuring their own writing. Teachers are particularly skilled at asking questions to involve pupils and encourage explanations of their thinking. Instructions are clear so that pupils understand what they have to do and what they are learning. A particular noteworthy feature in both key stages is the effective way lessons begin and end. Learning was consistently promoted well at these points in lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson the teacher extended pupils' learning by sharing their work on character writing and exploring a spelling chart completed by another group. However, in numeracy, pupils are not challenged to develop their own strategies during the main part of the lesson. Teachers often use the discussion at the end of lessons to set homework challenges. For example, pupils were set the task of finding the area and perimeter of objects at home. This was based on the previous week's work. Staff adhere to the school policy and homework is used to extend pupils' learning.
20. The excellent relationships evident throughout the school promote a good atmosphere for learning. Polite, but firm management of pupils stops distractions and promotes good pace in lessons. In infant classes, praise is used well to extend and reinforce learning and develops pupils' confidence. Throughout the school, routines are established and consistently applied. This provides a good framework to support the pace of learning, particularly when pupils are changing activities within lessons. Junior teachers' expectations of behaviour and strategies to manage pupils are very good. In the very good lessons, for example, teachers carefully plan the classroom environment, resources and seating layout to support their skilful management of pupils. This has a good impact on pupils' concentration and interest. The team structure for teaching in Key Stage 2 has a positive impact on behaviour and attitudes by providing an excellent model of co-operative working skills. A brisk start to lessons and sharing the purpose for lessons creates an eager response from pupils. Their anticipation of enjoyment fosters good levels of motivation. This was demonstrated well in lessons in information and communication technology and physical education.

21. One of the strengths in teaching is the thorough way new concepts are introduced. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to clearly outline what needs to be taught. As a result, teachers give confident and clear explanations. They also use questions skilfully to involve all pupils and promote the appropriate vocabulary. For example, in a science lesson, focused questioning successfully promoted understanding of the concept of habitat. In the very good planning, key teaching points were also indicated. In these lessons, pupils' rate of learning was promoted well. This is particularly successful in English and helps to promote a good rate of learning for the average and lower-attaining pupils. Teachers are less effective at providing opportunities for pupils to plan their own test or choose the most efficient strategy or right formulae to solve a problem or carry out an investigation. This is particularly relevant to mathematics and science teaching.
22. Effective resources including visits, photos and video, capture pupils' attention. Resources are used effectively in all subject areas to develop pupils' understanding well. In numeracy there is good use of resources to help pupils create a visual image of the concept being taught. Well chosen books or text are used well to illustrate and demonstrate the concept being explored in literacy lessons. Support staff are deployed effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils or to monitor learning during whole-class sessions. They are very well briefed and make a strong contribution to the learning atmosphere.
23. Teachers carefully modify teaching methods and resources for pupils with special educational needs. They make effective use of the good levels of assistance from support staff. As a result of this good support, pupils with special educational needs learn effectively alongside their fellow pupils. These pupils have good opportunities for small group or individual work. For example, younger pupils with learning difficulties in literacy gain understanding and accuracy when discussing how to complete a well planned worksheet. This support enables them to complete similar work to the rest of the pupils in the class who are able to write sentences unaided.
24. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and are beginning to set targets for learning. These are very similar across the year group and not tailored sufficiently to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teachers reflect on their lessons and consider what the pupils have learned. Information gathered from assessment is not used effectively enough to ensure planning is amended to challenge all groups of pupils. Assessment is not used rigorously to ensure that teaching is sufficiently closely matched to the needs of different groups of pupils.

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

25. The school provides a broad range of experiences that meet the needs of all pupils and enable them to learn. The curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, the Early Learning Goals for children under five and religious education. However, there are weaknesses in the coverage of some aspects of some subjects, other than English and mathematics. For example, pupils do not have opportunities to experience three-dimensional clay or papier-mâché work in art and design or to cover all the key elements in history. The school has successfully implemented nationally available advice to guide the planning of subjects of the curriculum. However, the teachers individually interpret the time required for units of work. This leads to variations in the emphasis placed on different aspects of subjects. Timetables do not always clearly indicate which subjects are to be taught. At present, there are no systems in place to make sure that teachers provide full coverage of all aspects of all subjects.
26. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy very effectively and this contributes to the high standards achieved in English throughout the school. The sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy provides a firm structure for teaching and contributes to the improving standards in mathematics. Teachers make some links between subjects, for example the use of information and communication technology in art and design and to draft and word-process writing in English. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use research skills and mathematics in other subjects.
27. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum and other learning opportunities. Pupils are no longer withdrawn from lessons for musical tuition or extra work in other subjects. Pupils with English as an additional language are soundly supported to ensure they have full access to the

curriculum. Teachers often pay good attention to teaching useful vocabulary to those few pupils at an early stage of English ensuring that they understand the tasks they are given. Sometimes, however, teachers do not give other pupils enough time to respond.

28. The weaknesses in the provision for pupils with special educational needs identified in the last report have been effectively addressed. The school offers good levels of support and provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school. It provides pupils with an appropriately modified curriculum, mainly within their classes, and fully meets the requirements of the nationally agreed Code of Practice². Individual education plans express pupils' needs well. All class teachers and support staff follow them closely to ensure that pupils are effectively supported. These individual education plans are regularly reviewed with good levels of input from parents and specialists from agencies outside the school.
29. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a wide range of sports clubs, such as netball, rugby, cricket and gymnastics. They benefit from coaching by staff, professionals and parents. Pupils in sports teams compete against other schools, in netball, football, cricket, swimming and rugby. Residential visits for pupils from Year 2 upwards, contribute to their social development and enable pupils to experience a wider range of curriculum activities.
30. Links with the community and partner institutions are good. Local visits and links with schools in Ireland help pupils become aware of the wider community. Opportunities to carry out extra projects in school, such as designing and building benches for the school playground, are funded and supported by national businesses. Pupils from Year 6 join pupils from other Warrington schools on a residential visit to the Conwy Centre. Through this and visits to use facilities at Great Sankey High School, pupils are well prepared for their transition to secondary education. The staff visit all the local nursery providers and invite new pupils into school so that children under five have a smooth start to school. Students from local schools and colleges regularly work alongside teachers and a number of parents use the school to further their own qualifications.
31. Provision for pupils' personal development is good and helps them to become more mature and caring as they move through the school. Pupils have regular opportunities to discuss relevant personal issues in a sensitive and supportive atmosphere. They are able to raise issues pertinent to the whole school through the school council. Health education and the dangers of drug misuse form part of the science curriculum. A more focused programme for Year 6 pupils enables them to consider their own feelings about smoking and alcohol abuse. Secondary school pupils present a play to warn them further about the dangers of drug misuse. Visits by the school nurse and science lessons provide pupils with a sound programme of sex education.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social and moral development and good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The quality of provision for spiritual development has improved since the last inspection from satisfactory to good. In other areas, the same quality of provision has been maintained. The school meets its requirements of a daily act of collective worship.
33. A high priority is given to promoting pupils' moral development. Pupils are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong within a secure moral framework. Pupils are asked to think carefully about the moral issues in life. The school's moral framework is based on consideration of principles such as self-respect, self-discipline, fairness, truthfulness, honesty, consideration and tolerance. Pupils are asked to reflect and, on occasions, write about issues such as cheating and moral issues arising from subjects such as history. The school values individual achievement and the weekly award system is used effectively to regularly reinforce the core values of the school that are captured in its mission statement: 'I am here to feel secure, to be valued and to learn'. Personal and social education lessons are also used effectively for pupils' moral development.
34. The school provides ample opportunities for pupils' social development. The school council is highly effective in helping pupils to express their ideas to promote a good atmosphere in the school. The teachers serve as good role models and do very well to foster mutual respect. Pupils are expected

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

to share resources and show a spirit of co-operation and support for each other; for example, when using computers or conducting scientific enquiry. The pupils are given the opportunity to use the dining hall at dinner times for social interaction. Here, they are expected to exercise self-control to keep order and control the level of noise. Games and sports activities, including a strong range of extra-curricular activities, also provide an effective avenue for pupils to learn the value of rules and respect for each other while holding an element of challenge and competition.

35. Opportunities for spiritual development are good. The daily acts of collective worship and prayers in classrooms provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on spiritual aspects of life. Religious education makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development, for example watching the performance of various ceremonies such as christening a baby. Pupils willingly and openly express their admiration and enjoyment in music, art, science, and information and communication technology lessons. Opportunities are provided for them to reflect on their place in the world and beyond. Pupils are often asked to think about the needs of others and make contributions to appropriate charities.
36. Pupils' cultural development is effectively promoted through productions. Visitors from a range of backgrounds are invited into school and these bring positive role models. Music and musical instruments from other cultures help pupils to make mental links with their own culture and the present diversity of British life. Geography, history and religious education provide good exposure to people, faiths and cultures locally and in other places near and far. The school's links with three Irish schools are very effective in promoting good mutual understanding between the two countries.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel happy and secure and are well supported in school life. This creates a positive and supportive environment in which pupils are able to learn. Parents agree that their children are happy to come to school.
38. The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety, maintaining the high standards shown in the last report. High priority is given to child protection and three teachers have had full, up-to-date training. All members of staff are made aware of child protection procedures, including newly qualified teachers and non-teaching staff. There are no health and safety issues in school. Proper attention is paid to first aid and, as well as staff being trained first-aiders, lunchtime supervisors have also had basic Red Cross training in how to deal with bumps and bruises.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and discouraging unacceptable behaviour are very good. Pupils are involved in setting their own class rules, within the framework of the school's policy. These include sanctions, including exclusion, as well as rewards. Pupils value being recognised for their personal achievements in 'Star' assemblies that raise their self-esteem. The support pupils get during personal and social education lessons gives pupils the confidence to express worries they may have within their groups. As a result, pupils learn to be considerate and thoughtful and to value good behaviour. In the school council, representatives of each junior class review progress towards targets that all Key Stage 2 pupils have made; for example, they consider how polite they are and how well they listen to each other. Representatives report back to their classes on this progress and targets are graphically displayed in the hall for everyone to see.
40. Although attendance is good, procedures for monitoring and promoting it are unsatisfactory. The school is not sufficiently rigorous in recording reasons for absence using the codes required in the registers. Telephone messages from parents about pupils who are absent are recorded in the office. The staff are clearly notified about them in each staffroom but not all teachers are aware that they should transfer the information to their registers. Registers are scrutinised for patterns of absence and lateness and the educational welfare officer follows up any problems that the school identifies. The school relies on its personal knowledge of pupils to decide which absences are unauthorised when

compiling its official statistics and these do not correlate with the registers. Parents are reminded that their children should come to school on time, but they are not discouraged from taking them away on holiday during term time. They are not expected to ask for permission for this but just to notify the school.

41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. Insufficient use is made of portfolios of accurately assessed work to make sure that teachers judge pupils' attainment correctly. Teachers use their assessments in mathematics, English and science to predict pupils' performance but there are weaknesses in the present system. Teachers record their predictions on 'tracking cards' along with the results of statutory and other tests. Predictions are recorded twice a year though teachers meet more regularly to discuss attainment at both key stages. These cards and the process of regular monitoring have great potential. However, at present the assessments are not sufficiently rigorous. For example, there is too little accurately assessed work to justify the predictions made. Although some teachers do have their individual good records, this is not done consistently enough throughout the school to make the ultimate judgements reliable. The school is aware of these weaknesses and has plans to develop and improve the assessment process and its use for planning the curriculum. For example, new teaching groups are planned in Key Stage 2 that make use of current procedures to allow better planning in English and mathematics.
42. Pupils' annual reports set targets to help them to improve their work. They involve pupils in the process by recording what they enjoy and what they could do better. The school has identified groups of pupils who would benefit from extra tuition in 'booster' classes. For example, one such session has been held to give help to a particular group in their English work on poetry. Pupils with special educational needs are well-supported in classes through the school's effective systems. The school has good procedures to recognise and provide for these pupils. The monitoring and assessment of progress of these pupils is satisfactory. The school effectively uses test results, target setting and concerns expressed by class teachers to decide where extra support should be introduced. Good use is made of specialist support from outside the school to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents have very positive views of the school, as they did at the time of the last inspection. They particularly feel that the school has high expectations of their children and that they are making good progress. Some parents feel they are not well enough informed about the progress their children are making and a small number expressed concern about the amount of homework. More feel that the school does not provide a sufficiently wide range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team found that there are plenty of opportunities for these; for example, even pupils in Year 2 go on residential visits.
44. The school provides good quality information to parents, both formal and informal. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents contain all that is required except that the progress on the action plan since the last inspection is not reported. Parents receive regular, well-written newsletters and also have plenty of information on the curriculum, such as topics in mathematics, through meetings in school and documentation sent out. In addition to the well-attended parents' evenings that are held twice a year, teachers are willing to talk informally to parents after school about any concerns they may have. Parents feel that their children's reports give a true picture of them; they do give a good description of what their children are doing in English, mathematics and science and are very thorough in describing personal development. Parents of pre-school children are given very good opportunities to look around the school and find out about it. At the same time, the nursery nurses get to know the children and help to settle them in. Parents of children with special educational needs are well informed of their progress. They can make

contact with teachers at any time they wish. Termly reviews of individual education plans and the yearly reviews of statements give further comprehensive information.

45. A particularly good aspect of the partnership with parents is the way they are welcomed and encouraged to take part in the life of the school. The school keeps a list of voluntary helpers, many of whom work regularly in both infant and junior classrooms. Many give help around the site to improve the environment. Parents are regularly invited to assemblies when their children's classes are putting on presentations and a good number attend. When the school is arranging trips, it provides sociable meetings for parents to find out what their children will be doing and what they can do to help. Many parents are welcomed into the infant school; for example, once a week at the end of the day to help their children choose games from the toy library that they can take home on loan. The parent-teacher association is effective in raising funds through their social events and these are used for the benefit of the children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership and give the school clear educational direction. The headteacher, governors and staff have maintained a good rate of improvement since the last inspection in September 1997. They have effectively addressed the main recommendations made in the last report and are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is a good focus on supporting and developing a strong team of teachers who effectively meet the aims of the school and deliver a good quality of teaching across all subjects. This approach has been successful in maintaining the quality of teaching despite substantial staff changes since the last inspection. The good leadership and management in the school produce a very good, shared commitment amongst all staff to improve and a very good capacity to succeed.
47. The school has a very good system to debate change and development. This effectively involves all staff in decision making through an effective team structure. However, within this structure, the role of the subject co-ordinators is not developed enough. They do not have enough time to see that what is planned is actually taught. Staff changes have led to recent reallocation of subject responsibilities amongst subject co-ordinators. Action plans and targets are drawn up for their subjects but some of these targets are still being worked on. Most teachers have undergone training for their role as a subject co-ordinator, but the concentration on raising teachers' skills in the classroom has meant that subject management has assumed secondary importance.
48. The headteacher and senior staff have carried out a successful programme of lesson observations, which has had a positive impact in raising teaching skills. Teachers manage their classes very well and make good use of time, support staff and resources. Recent developments in literacy have been successful in raising standards and the school has now identified numeracy as its main priority. The school is aware that developments remain to be completed in other subjects, but has not established a clear priority for their development. Support for newly qualified teachers and teachers in training is good. Whole-school developments are well planned and arise out of discussions involving all staff and governors. These are costed with realistic times set for their completion.
49. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements and responsibilities thoroughly. Governors make good use of training to acquaint themselves with what they should do. They are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses and take an active part in shaping its future direction. They make formal and informal contact with staff, parents and pupils. Many visit the school frequently and provide in-class support. With this input and their work in committees, governors monitor the work of the school effectively. They and the headteacher recognise appropriate educational policies, which are supported by the school's good financial planning. They are closely involved in financial planning and have established good systems for ensuring that the school obtains best value in its spending. The current surplus has developed from additional funding that has been given to the school as it has expanded. It is allocated to partly finance the substantial building work that has just begun. Technology is used well to manage finances and communication. Funding obtained from specific grants is effectively used. The school's administrative staff are very efficient and help to ensure the smooth running of the school. They manage the day-to-day financial

administration of the school well. A good response has been made to the last audit of the school, which raised few items for improvement.

50. There is a good match of teachers with a good range of subject knowledge to teach the National Curriculum. Systems for implementing performance management are well developed and staff appraisal interviews are effectively organised. These support the identification of the training needs of all staff. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have clear job descriptions and, where appropriate, have been set targets for development. Newly qualified teachers are supported well by senior staff and also have a personal mentor to turn to for advice. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the number of classroom assistants, which is now at a good level throughout the school. Their good awareness of the pupils' needs means that classroom assistants play a significant role in classes. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. Teachers and classroom assistants have a good awareness of these pupils' needs and support the good progress they make.
51. Accommodation is currently satisfactory but will be improved with the completion of the new building work about to start in the junior school. This will enable the school to organise the teaching groups more evenly for the numbers of children on roll. Accommodation in the infant school has been given some thought since the last inspection although this has not prevented noise from affecting adjacent classes in the semi-open plan teaching area. Children cannot always hear what the teacher is saying in lessons and so it affects their learning. The junior building is also semi-open plan and, although pupils behave very well in lessons, noise from adjacent classes can be distracting.
52. Resources for teaching are good except in the provision of library books that is inadequate even though it is supplemented by topic books on loan from the local library service. This restricts pupils' opportunities to develop skills in finding information.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. The school has maintained the quality of provision despite rapid expansion and made improvements, particularly in the standards in English. In order to further improve standards, the headteacher, staff and governing body should now:
- (1) raise standards of attainment in mathematics and science, particularly of higher-attaining pupils, by placing greater emphasis on developing independent aspects of pupils' learning such as developing strategies in mathematics and investigational skills in science; (paragraphs 1, 5-6, 21, 26, 59, 72-8, 79-83)
 - (2) give subject co-ordinators sufficient opportunities to monitor the standards of achievement and teaching in their subjects to ensure balance and delivery of the curriculum at challenging levels for all pupils; (paragraphs 25, 47-48, 78, 83-84, 88, 92, 96, 100, 104, 108, 112, 117)
 - (3) improve assessment systems so that regular rigorous assessments with closer links to National Curriculum levels can accurately identify what targets will help groups of pupils to raise their attainment. (paragraphs 24, 41, 70, 72, 75, 79, 96, 100)

The following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- (a) improve systems for recording attendance and monitoring pupils' absences. (paragraphs 16, 40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3	31	35	30	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	482
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	48
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	34	30	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	29	32
	Girls	30	30	29
	Total	60	59	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (97)	92 (97)	95 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	25	30
	Girls	30	27	30
	Total	60	52	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (95)	81 (95)	94 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	29	36	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	24	29
	Girls	33	23	32
	Total	61	47	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (98)	72 (74)	94 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	22	19
	Girls	27	25	25
	Total	50	47	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (68)	72 (68)	68 (74)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	5
White	389
Any other minority ethnic group	9

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	189

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	750,100
Total expenditure	730,466
Expenditure per pupil	1,561
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,579
Balance carried forward to next year	60,213

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 43.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	482
Number of questionnaires returned	210

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	42	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	53	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	54	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	58	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	47	49	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	54	16	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	44	2	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	50	11	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	42	43	8	3	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	49	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	43	18	4	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. Children enter school with average levels of achievement. They make good gains in all areas of learning and most children reach the expected level by the end of their reception year. There are particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in some aspects of creative development. The school is sustaining the good teaching identified in the previous inspection. It has built on this strength and now provides a good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. This success has been achieved in the context of a school that is now admitting 75 children compared with 60 at the time of the previous inspection. There is a well-established structure of three classes into which the children enter at the beginning of the year they are five. Children come from a diverse range of at least ten pre-school settings. The school ensures all children have a smooth start by inviting parents and children to weekly sessions in the summer term. At this early stage, children who have special educational needs are identified and resources are used to liaise with other agencies so that the school can plan to meet their needs.
55. Children receive a rich range of experiences that are consistent for children across the three classes. Teachers promote understanding well by creating effective links between different areas of learning. For example, children explore materials from which teddies are made but also develop descriptive vocabulary. Observing and drawing the teddy with pastels, pencils and other materials develop creative skills. Children write letters to the teddies, which Year 4 pupils answer. In this way, good opportunities are provided for children to practise and apply basic skills in communication, reading and writing as well as developing knowledge and understanding of the world.
56. Teaching and learning are good in all the areas of learning. Because teachers know the Foundation Stage very well, they plan rigorously and sequence interesting experiences carefully. Children listen well during lessons and the practical activities motivate them to take part and try hard. The management of children by teachers and support staff is very skilled. It is characterised by the respect and value consistently shown to each child. As a result, children are secure and willing to take risks and they behave well. They are enthusiastic about school and share their ideas confidently with each other and adults. The classroom environment is vibrant and full of opportunities for children to consolidate their reading and writing skills. For example, self-portraits and speech bubbles promote the important words the children need to learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development exceeds the goals expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. Expectations are high and supported effectively by regular and predictable routines. As a result of good teaching, children are well motivated and not easily distracted or influenced by other children. This self-control and confidence was demonstrated well during a physical development lesson. The children were able to give each other space and change their clothes without prompting or reminding. Each child took responsibility for their own clothes and ensured they were in a tidy pile. Teachers are sensitive and determined in their praise of positive responses. This consistency in practice and approach by all the adults has a good impact on children's attitudes and values. Every opportunity is taken to model tolerance, good relationships and valuing one another. As a result, children are confident and have the self-esteem to listen to the ideas of others and celebrate their successes. They work together in harmony and are able to wait their turn. This was demonstrated well at the end of lessons and when sharing resources such as in the computer suite. Children can work without adult support because staff give clear explanations and provide suitable resources. Those children with more challenging behaviour are managed skilfully and motivated by a strong desire to be part of the community.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Good teaching helps children to build successfully on their early communication, language and literacy skills and to achieve well. Nearly all the children are in line to meet the expected goals by the time they leave the reception class. Emphasis is put on extending children's vocabulary through

stories and exploration of the world around them. For instance, they composed imaginative sentences to go with artwork that explored shades of red, blue etc. A visit to the post office inspired play activities such as writing, sorting and playing the part of customer and counter clerk. Teachers make good use of the literacy framework and supplementary advice to promote basic skills in reading and writing. The children greatly enjoyed a button game where they were working out the letters at the end and beginning of three-letter rhyming words. Children rapidly extend their knowledge of letter sounds. During a writing session, all six children in the group were able to structure an interesting sentence using their knowledge of letter sounds to make recognisable attempts at quite difficult words. Teachers regularly share a good range of large books with the children. Teachers are clear about what they want children to learn. They provide carefully graded books that challenge the higher attaining children. Children are confident in reading simple text and can retell the story accurately. The provision of writing and reading areas enables the children to have a rich literacy environment and encourages them to see themselves as readers and writers. For example, teachers expect children to make their own labels for their models. Whiteboards and markers are used extensively throughout lessons in all areas of learning to give good opportunities for children to experiment with their skills in recording key ideas and to organise their thinking.

Mathematical development

59. Children are in line to meet the goals for mathematical development at the end of the Foundation Stage. Good teaching is thorough and effectively promotes and consolidates children's counting skills and understanding of language such as 'more than' or 'less than'. Children absorb mathematical language through the provision of interesting activities. For example, the children were intrigued when exploring symmetry. They made patterns with all sorts of materials such as shapes, bricks, beads and wallpaper patterns. They enjoyed exploring their patterns for symmetry. They sort objects well according to shape, colour or size. Many children count to at least 20. They are less confident at writing the numbers. Teachers use a range of materials such as magnetic boards to motivate and interest children. At the beginning of lessons a wide range of activities challenge children's abilities to use their knowledge. The most successful involve all the children in thinking and working out the answers, developing their mental skills. However, teachers are less effective in planning activities to challenge the higher attaining children and increase their rate of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Good teaching and a carefully planned curriculum ensure children receive a balance of experiences and this is reflected in the classroom environment. Children are in line to meet the goals in knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Foundation Stage. A range of construction materials, sand, water and computer programs enable the children to design and make models. There are opportunities to develop their knowledge of the environment. Children went on a sound walk and used their sense of hearing to identify the sounds they heard from inside and outside the school building. A visit to the post office was further explored in school by the setting up of a role-play area. Children are encouraged to talk about and justify their observations. For example, a child explains, 'The teddy is old because it has a hole in it.' They use their sense of touch to explore different types of materials. Teachers are thorough about developing a good range of vocabulary to enable children to describe what they see, hear and touch more accurately. There is a good balance between activities children choose for themselves and those that adults direct them towards, which meets the needs of the children well. Children explore a range of topics throughout the year and teachers use play effectively to make these experiences relevant and meaningful to the children.

Physical development

61. Physical development is an area of learning where children attain beyond the goals expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. The very good teaching enables children to develop a competent awareness of space that they sustain throughout the lesson without any reminders. Children understand and recognise the importance of exercise to warm up and stretch their muscles as an important part of keeping healthy. Manipulative skills are well developed. The children use scissors competently and safely, use glue and manage pens and pencils successfully. They manipulate soft materials such as dough and pieces of jigsaws, and play with construction kits and objects in domestic play activities. They show a good level of skill and control when using items such as balls

and hoops to throw, catch and balance. The teacher inspires the children to use their imagination to find many different ways to balance throw and twirl a quoit. Children have an endless repertoire of ideas that involve many parts of their bodies and require a high level of control and co-ordination. They are eager to challenge themselves and as a result achieve highly. The school has plans to provide an easily supervised outdoor area in their new building works that will further enhance children's opportunities for physical development.

Creative development

62. Children are in line to meet the goals in creative development that are expected by the end of the Foundation Stage, as a result of effective teaching. There is particularly good achievement in art, which is displayed well to show children that it is valued. Good activities allow the children to express themselves creatively through imaginative play and music. Art is strong because of the good range of materials that children experience. Natural materials are used well to help the children to notice similarities and differences in colours and patterns. They make pictures using a good range of different techniques. For example, the teacher created a number line by using the children's exploration of different materials. This is a good link with mathematical development and supports the learning of basic skills. They enjoy well-known stories and show great sympathy for the bear in the story that is surrounded by noise and craves some peace. They join in enthusiastically and use their voices to create the sounds. They are less able to control the sounds to represent long or short sounds.

ENGLISH

63. Standards in English are above those expected of pupils of 7 years old and well above average by the time pupils are 11 years. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the good attention paid to the subject by the school. Standards have improved in all aspects of the subject and good progress has been made on the issues raised in the last report. Results in the 2000 national tests for 7-year-olds show that standards in reading were well above other schools nationally and above similar schools. The results for 7-year-olds in writing were above other schools nationally and in line with similar schools. Results of pupils at 11 years old are well above average when compared with schools nationally and in line with similar schools. The school is actually doing better than these comparisons suggest because, despite the low level of free school meals, most other socio-economic factors indicate an area that is average. Standards have been rising slightly more than the national trend over recent years. The school exceeded its targets in 2000 and is on course to meet them this year. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
64. Pupils' achievements are good overall. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress as they move through the school. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively, which has improved their subject expertise particularly in reading, a weakness identified in the juniors in the last inspection. Standards in reading are consistently high and the greater emphasis on the teaching and learning of writing has raised standards in writing. Pupils' spelling and grammatical skills are good although handwriting is inconsistent with variable standards throughout the school. Effective classroom support and detailed individual education plans contribute to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
65. Standards in speaking and listening are high by the time pupils leave the school. They listen carefully and speak confidently and articulately. Teachers explain and reinforce new words in different subjects so pupils use them correctly. For example, Year 3 pupils use the word 'alliteration' when describing poetry and Year 6 pupils confidently compare and contrast characters from books by different authors. Pupils have opportunities to deepen their understanding through giving explanations and asking questions. Group tasks, such as planning a collage in art and design, provide opportunities to share ideas and collaborate effectively. Teachers ask challenging questions and give pupils time to organise their thoughts and speak at length. However, the large classes in Year 3 limit the opportunities for all pupils to answer and some contribute little to discussions. When opportunities for speaking activities are provided when a group of Year 1 pupils use puppets to retell the story *Suddenly*, they join in eagerly, each adding further detail. Planned discussions deepen pupils' understanding and provide opportunities for them to express their ideas. For example, Year 4 pupils confidently offer their opinions when discussing the dilemma of cheating, the theme of their text.
66. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks to develop pupils' reading skills. For example, Year 1 pupils write what they think will happen to 'Preston Pig' next to extend their prediction skills. Interesting texts and teachers' lively reading successfully stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for reading. Pupils extend their range of strategies to help them to read new texts and develop expressive reading through their understanding of punctuation and different types of print. They are eager to be chosen to read aloud and do so with increasing fluency and expression. Effective questioning and carefully planned discussions deepen pupils' comprehension of texts. For example, Year 5 pupils explain the meaning of Rudyard Kipling's poem 'A Smuggler's Song', by describing the colloquial language in modern day terms. Pupils increasingly refer to language structure or selected sentences to justify their views about a text. Most pupils search for information in books through using the contents and index pages. Many have developed quick ways of looking for information on the page. However, most pupils are unable to find books successfully in the library. For example, opportunities to reinforce learning by using the contents page in a Year 4 lesson are missed. Teachers do not plan sufficient activities for pupils to improve their skills at finding information. Consequently, pupils' research skills do not reach the high standard achieved in other types of reading. Very effective support by teachers and classroom assistants enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress with their reading. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
67. The standards in writing have been identified by the school as a weakness compared with other aspects of English. In-service training for teachers and monitoring by the co-ordinators has helped

to improve teachers' expertise. A greater emphasis on shared writing contributes to pupils' high standards. Pupils learn spellings, punctuation and effective language through teachers' good examples and through use in their own writing. Imaginative tasks, such as using speech when writing poetry in Year 3, reinforce grammar and punctuation in a lively activity. Pupils in Year 6 write in a range of styles using words expressively, such as, 'a chill ran down my back' and 'a hideous ghost', to describe feelings and build up tension in stories. They use simple and more complex sentences according to the effect they are trying to achieve. Punctuation is accurate and many pupils are beginning to use paragraphs. When teachers indicate, through marking, how pupils can improve, they use this and their individual targets to adapt their work. However, teachers' marking does not always show pupils how they could improve the quality of their writing. The standard of handwriting is inconsistent. Although many pupils in the juniors write in a legible, joined script, some still print and their work is untidy. The school has recognised this and is working towards a more consistent approach to teaching handwriting.

68. Pupils use information and communication technology to draft and word-process their writing at times. This provides opportunities to present work in unusual and interesting ways. Successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is giving teachers a clearer structure and helping them to plan to develop skills effectively in literacy lessons. Some good opportunities are given for pupils to improve their literacy skills in subjects such as religious education. Infant pupils, for example, discuss what they see when visiting a church and retell stories relating to artefacts. They give detailed and accurate accounts of their research into The Fire of London in history. Junior pupils produce extended pieces of writing detailing their understanding of the Easter story. Valuable opportunities, such as using newspaper reports to write information in history, extend pupils' writing skills successfully. In some lessons, such as science, worksheets are not sufficiently demanding of literacy skills. However, there are too few opportunities to use and extend pupils' writing skills across the curriculum.
69. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, with examples of very good teaching in Years 5, 6, and some classes in all other years. Teachers use introductory sessions very effectively to reinforce and extend pupils' learning and to promote interest and enthusiasm. Explanations are clear and teachers set good examples when reading and writing. When space is limited and classes are very large, pupils behave very well. Good relationships between staff and pupils ensure they listen carefully and concentrate effectively on their learning. The effective use of praise makes pupils more confident that they can achieve. Most teachers give firm reminders of time to keep pupils engaged on their tasks and ensure work is completed. However, in some lessons in Years 1, 2 and 4, teachers did not give pupils specific times to complete activities. As a result, the pace of the lesson slowed and some work was incomplete. Teachers plan effectively for the literacy hour, providing challenging, well-focused activities. They have high expectations of standards of work, which encourages pupils to read and write confidently. Teachers sensitively share pupils' work with others to extend and reinforce learning and to build self-esteem. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, sharing character descriptions helps to explain them to others. Very effective use of support staff for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs enables them to make good progress.
70. Assessment systems are not sufficiently rigorous or accurate. Teachers make their own judgements of how well pupils are doing but these are not regular or systematic enough. The assessments do not provide detailed information about what pupils can and cannot do. Although the school has collected a portfolio of pupils' work, the assessments do not have enough information to guide teachers in making assessments in their classes. The result is that teachers are not always clear about the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. The differences between teacher assessments at the end of the juniors and the results of statutory tests confirm this.
71. Leadership and management of English are effective. Monitoring of teaching has helped identify strengths and remedy weaknesses in teaching and learning. This has contributed to the high standards overall and the rise in standards in writing. Resources are good, particularly for class and shared reading, an improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

72. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain the standards expected for their ages in all areas of mathematics. There is good attainment in shape, space and measures in Years 5 and 6. When comparing the

school with standards nationally, the school's performance is close to or above the national average in terms of the number of pupils reaching the expected standard at ages 7 and 11 years. However, performance at the higher levels was below the national average. The 2000 results at the higher levels are well below average when compared with similar schools. This has an impact when comparing average scores. Here, the school's performance falls below the national average and well below that of schools in a similar context. Standards are not as high as they should be and this is borne out by comparing the school's performance in mathematics with their performance in English and science. Teachers are not rigorous enough with their assessments to ensure lessons meet the learning needs of the higher attaining pupils.

73. By the age of 7, pupils add and subtract 10 from two-digit numbers and use this information to work out missing numbers on a number square. They have a secure understanding of tens and units, which they apply to put numbers in order. They are less secure in identifying connections to help them to solve problems. For example, they can double 27 but struggle to calculate a half of 56. They sort and classify information with increasing confidence and understanding. In a whole-class session, pupils find information and record this on a graph to find out the two flavours of crisps to buy for a party. They interpret a simple graph where one measure represents one unit. They begin to grapple with the idea of more complex interpretations of graphs by asking questions that do not rely on the most and the least quantities for answers.
74. By the age of 11, pupils have a secure understanding of equivalent fractions. They recognise that $\frac{2}{8}$ is the same as $\frac{1}{4}$ and understand the relationship between the size of the denominator and fraction. Pupils are less secure at identifying when an answer is incorrect. For example, pupils subtracting using three digits did not recognise that answers did not make sense, such as 287 minus 71 is 286. They use protractors to measure and draw angles accurately. Year 5 pupils are confident with the language and measurement of angles. They use a formula to work out the radius of a circle but lack secure understanding of when to choose this to solve a problem.
75. Teaching and learning are good overall. The strength in the teaching is the thorough way teachers introduce new concepts to pupils. They carefully plan the stages of lessons to help pupils to develop their understanding. For example, when a teacher introduces pupils to using a protractor, clear instructions help them to grasp the use quickly and use it accurately. Teachers use good management skills to foster good behaviour and attitudes. This has a strong impact on the learning of the average and lower attainers. However, the good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2 is concentrated in Years 5 and 6 and at Key Stage 1 it is in Year 2. Teachers do not place enough emphasis on amending planning and matching tasks to the abilities of pupils across the year groups. The school does not use the results of assessment effectively to plan work that will challenge all pupils. As a result, both teaching groups in some Key Stage 2 groups are following the same objectives despite differences in the attainment of pupils. In Years 3 and 5, the number of pupils in the teaching group is very large. This restricts pupils' opportunities to answer questions and discuss their thinking.
76. In the good and very good lessons, teachers make good use of the school and national guidance to plan their work. Questioning probes pupils' understanding and encourages them to explain their answers. For example, when Year 2 pupils were learning about ordering numbers they had to think hard about the strategies they use for their game and explain them to others. Teachers sensitively explore pupils' mistakes to help the clarity of their understanding. A strong feature throughout the school is the use of resources to give pupils good visual models. Teachers use these in classroom displays and refer to them consistently in explanations and questions. Very good use is made of support staff to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
77. Pupils' numeracy skills are improving as a result of satisfactory implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In particular, teachers have focused effectively on improving pupils' mental arithmetic skills. Most teachers are confident with the mental and oral part of the lesson and use a range of methods including practical activities. For example, in Year 3, each group developed counting, addition and estimation skills when working with an envelope of money. This and the final part of the lesson are strong features of the numeracy lessons. During the main part of the lesson there are not enough suitable challenges for all pupils. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their skills in choosing the most effective strategies to solve problems. Good mathematics teaching uses computers to help pupils to achieve more effectively. For example, in a younger class, the teacher challenged pupils to find numbers on a 100 square, hidden

by Monty the caterpillar. The pupils developed very good strategies to discover the orientation of the square before using their knowledge of adding and subtracting to identify the hidden numbers. Pupils have some opportunities to use their developing skills in other subjects. They improve their measuring and recording skills in subjects such as design and technology and science.

78. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and is well placed to continue to improve. Monitoring of teaching has resulted in the introduction of a new scheme that is effectively supporting teachers in their planning. A recently introduced weekly test is beginning to build up a picture of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. This information can help teachers refine their plans so that the needs of different groups of pupils are more closely matched. There is a useful portfolio of assessed work to enhance teachers' skills in assessing pupils' learning. The school is due for intensive support from the local numeracy consultant and a new co-ordinator is in place to maintain improvement during staffing changes. The role of the co-ordinator does not place sufficient emphasis on monitoring the success of developments and encouraging the spread of good practice in the school.

SCIENCE

79. The standards of work seen in both Key Stages 1 and 2 are in line with the national average and similar to those found in the last inspection. The 2000 teacher assessments of 7-year-olds show that their standards of attainment are consistent with the national average. However, their attainment in comparison with similar schools is below average. Since 1998, 11-year-olds have attained standards that are in line with the national averages. An above-average proportion of pupils attained the National Curriculum Level 4 in 2000. However, the proportion of pupils achieving at higher levels has remained low. The present proportion is below the national average for all schools and well below the average for similar schools. Pupils' work and lesson observations show that teachers do not teach enough of the elements of higher-level study, particularly in scientific enquiry. As a consequence, many higher-attaining pupils continue to underachieve. At age 11, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Effective use of questioning and support staff helps pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. Overall satisfactory teaching and learning and pupils' positive attitude to science produce satisfactory achievement in both Key Stages 1 and 2.
80. By the age of 7, pupils have sound knowledge, skills and understanding of all areas of science. For example, they plan and carry out investigations with teachers' help. They use simple equipment and record evidence in a variety of ways. They know conditions that sustain plant growth and some effects of exercise on the body. They know the properties of materials and use some of these to make familiar things such as shoes, a chair and a ruler. They understand that push and pull are examples of forces and that the distance a toy car travels depends upon the amount of force applied. Higher attainers have a greater understanding of fair testing; for example, keeping the time constant when finding the warmest place in the classroom using ice cubes.
81. By the age of 11, pupils understand that the arrangements of molecules determine the state of materials; for example, solid, liquid or gas. Their understanding of reversible change is better than irreversible change. For example, they know that melting and solidification of chocolate, wax and ice are examples of reversible change but think that mixing lemon juice and sugar cause an irreversible change. They know that sound travels through the air. Higher-attaining pupils understand that sound causes vibrations that need air to travel and cannot travel through airless space. Pupils do not always use scientific vocabulary correctly. For example, there is some confusion between the process of burning and the process of boiling of water and the use of the terms, evaporation and condensation. Standards of higher attainers in scientific enquiry do not always reflect the skills necessary to reach Level 5; for example, they do not identify key factors or consider fair testing when carrying out investigations such as comparing rates of evaporation of different substances. They do not make accurate measurements and are not sure which type of graph to use when looking for a pattern or correlation. They do not plan experiments independently or select apparatus for a range of tasks.
82. The quality of teaching and learning in science in the school overall and in each key stage is satisfactory. It contributes to satisfactory achievement. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and learning in science in the school. Good lessons, particularly in infant classes, motivate pupils and develop skills in scientific enquiry. These skills are used effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. For example, in a Year 2 class, pupils handle a very good range of toys. Prompted by the teacher, they thought about whether the force they applied was a push or a pull and whether the amount of force applied to toy cars was reflected in the distance that the cars travel. Effective discussion developed good understanding of the positive relationship between the amount of force and the distance that a car travelled. Teachers' clear and confident explanations reflect secure subject knowledge and combined with skilful use of questioning, the explanations effectively promote pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of science. Good management of pupils and effective lesson planning contribute to good ethos and productive learning. However, Key Stage 2 teachers do not focus enough on stretching higher attainers, especially in the Level 5 elements of scientific enquiry.
83. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory although there are some weaknesses. Although there is some monitoring of teaching, it is not extensive enough to make sure that there is real

challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers plan together in year groups but there is not enough monitoring of what is taught to ensure that the whole curriculum is covered in enough depth. Pupils' past work shows some gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding in both key stages. For example, properties of materials in a Year 2 class and some aspects of scientific enquiry. Some worksheets are poorly designed and develop confused learning; for example, the title, 'parts of a flower' instead of 'parts of a plant' is confusing. Application of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills make satisfactory contributions to pupils' learning in science. Some worksheets, however, give pupils limited opportunities to develop literacy skills.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Standards of attainment in art and design are above average for 7-year-olds. They are average by the time pupils are 11, which is lower than they were at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils in the juniors reach high standards in the work they complete. However, teachers do not cover some aspects of the subject. For example, pupils miss opportunities to create three-dimensional work in clay or papier-mâché. Teachers interpret the allocation of time for units of work individually and the co-ordinator is unable to monitor curriculum coverage effectively. This creates gaps in pupils' learning in the juniors and lowers the standards.
85. Drawing is of a high standard throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 observe objects carefully and begin to indicate shape and texture through shading. Using a viewfinder to outline what is being drawn and learning about perspective extends pupils' skills very effectively. They make good use of sketchbooks. In Year 6, pupils create their own still life composition and make a series of detailed observational drawings showing an awareness of proportion, shade, texture and tone. In these lessons, teachers provide a range of artefacts from which pupils select. This enables pupils to explore and develop their own ideas of representation and composition effectively.
86. Year 1 pupils benefit from working with a visiting artist. Pupils produce weavings of a high standard using natural materials. Collage and textiles are successfully developed throughout the school. Year 4 design their own crossstitch patterns, which they make into samplers. Years 5 and 6 pupils work collaboratively to design and create fabric collages to tell a story, based on the Bayeux tapestry. Pupils gain increasing knowledge and understanding of art and artists. In Year 6, pupils talk confidently about the pointillism style of Seurat and the abstract paintings by Picasso. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about the styles, approaches and purposes of different artists and designers from other cultures and times. However, this sometimes limits the time pupils have to investigate materials and create artwork of their own.
87. As only two lessons were observed, no judgement is made about teaching. However, from the lessons seen and the high standard of work produced, teachers have good knowledge and understanding of art and design. Pupils enjoy the subject and talk about it enthusiastically. The pleasing results on display in the school show the interest and perseverance encouraged by teachers. Government guidance supports teachers' planning effectively.
88. Resources are good and the co-ordinator manages the budget allocation effectively. However, there are weaknesses in management. The co-ordinator has had little opportunity to monitor any aspect of the subject in the juniors. This has resulted in the lack of full curriculum coverage and lowering of standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. Standards are average by the ages of 7 and 11, similar to those identified in the last report. The teachers in both key stages provide satisfactory opportunities for designing and making a sound range of products. The two lessons observed, both in mixed age Year 5 and 6 classes, and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that boys and girls take similar interest and attain similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support, which enables them to make sound progress.
90. By the age of 7, pupils design and make pop-up cards and weave using a good range of fabric strips, wool, ribbon and decorative paper. This work is of average standard. By the age of 11, pupils design, make, and evaluate a satisfactory range of products. For example, they design and

weave bookmarks, design and make fairground rides, moving toys and food products such as biscuits. In making these products, they develop average knowledge, skills and understanding in the use of a range of materials, tools and techniques. Their evaluation of some of their products reflects good interest and understanding, for example how the positioning of a cam and accurate measurements and cutting would improve the quality of their moving toys. Pupils display good imagination in their choices of figures for these toys.

91. The overall quality of teaching, learning and achievement is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of questioning to develop pupils' ideas. Clear instructions and explanations contribute to productive learning. Teachers' challenge develops pupils' understanding of the need to be aware of what consumers want and design and make products that conform to given design specifications. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills make a sound contribution to the subject. For example, pupils write about their models and explain how they have constructed them. They use measurements accurately when drawing parts.
92. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. However, the way that the teaching is monitored does not ensure a consistent quality of learning. This is a weakness. There are weaknesses in the assessment procedures and subsequent use of this information to guide curriculum planning. These are restricting the quality of the taught curriculum and pupils' learning of a wider range of skills in the use of tools, materials and techniques.

GEOGRAPHY

93. Standards across the school at Key Stages 1 and 2 remain at average levels, as they were at the last inspection.
94. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of local places. This is supported by good teaching, which strongly emphasises fieldwork around the local area of the school. Satisfactory standards are seen in pupils' work arising from visits in the locality. By the end of Year 2, pupils are competent at using an atlas, map of the world and a globe to name countries and the main towns in Great Britain. Here, the teaching is good at supporting the pupils' expression of their views on the peoples living in the places, but does not sufficiently develop an awareness of environmental differences.
95. Pupils in the junior classes satisfactorily continue in more depth with their studies on the locality and places in various parts of the world. Contrasting local village life with a village in India allows pupils to make relevant comparisons. Very good standards of teaching were seen in a Year 3 and 4 class. Here the teacher supported pupils very effectively in the use of information and communication technology. Pupils accessed the Internet to look at the weather site to compare the temperature in India with their own area. Using a world map the teacher explained the physical and environmental reasons for the contrast clearly and effectively. The pupils successfully completed a very well prepared worksheet, recording their collected data. Pupils responded with enthusiasm and high levels of motivation to the subject.
96. At both key stages, teaching in lessons is good. The co-ordinator has prepared a good outline of what should be taught, supported by a scheme that guides teachers' planning. Pupils' knowledge within this planned scheme is sometimes restricted. This is due to teachers changing the themes they wish to teach from that planned. They are too flexible with the time and content they give to the subject. As the subject is usually timetabled against a number of others, it sometimes does not get the overall 6 per cent of planned time across a year. The co-ordinator has no time to see what is actually taught and how evenly the policy and scheme are delivered. This leads to some repetition across the key stages, in particular in the study of the local area. Pupils do not have sufficient time for investigations into environments and their changes across the world. They do not always have suitable geographic questions for study through their own independent and collaborative research. Pupils are given too few opportunities to select their own resources to gain information. Teachers do not assess pupils' growing skills with sufficient accuracy and rigour and use this information to set targets for groups of pupils.

HISTORY

97. The last time the school was inspected, standards in history were average for both the infants and juniors at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards remain average at both key stages. No taught lessons were seen up to Year 2 during the inspection.
98. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have developed good knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past. For example, they show, good understanding of The Fire of London and the lives of people living at the time, such as Samuel Pepys. They present the findings of their research effectively in their written work and verbal descriptions. This work is successful because the teacher encourages them to provide detailed, accurate, written descriptions. By age 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some of the key dates and events in British history. They are developing a good awareness of the reasons why people in the past acted as they did. Throughout the school, the pupils' sense of time is satisfactorily developed. In their classes, teachers display timelines showing what happened at particular times in history. They make good use of them to help pupils to see how time and events in the past are related to the present day.
99. Teaching throughout the school is good overall. Very good teaching, for example, was seen in a Years 3 and 4 class. Here, the teacher used a very well prepared outline for the lesson to provide very clear verbal and written descriptions. Her input was supported with the good use of a previously prepared class display, illustrating Henry VIII and his wives. Showing very good subject knowledge through the use of searching questioning and detailed explanations, the teacher successfully explained the marriage of Henry VIII to Catherine and his attempts to produce a male heir to take the throne. Circulating around the class, the teacher supported individual pupils effectively so that they understood what they were learning. The result was that pupils talked about or wrote descriptions that were accurate and detailed. Throughout the school, pupils are highly motivated by the subject and display high levels of interest, working well at their tasks.
100. There is no leadership for the subject at the moment. The school is in the process of appointing a new history co-ordinator. There is no clear priority for the future development of the subject and no secure system of assessment of pupils' developing skills. The content of what is taught and how well the planned content is delivered has not been examined. The present scheme of work provides a satisfactory interpretation of the National Curriculum and a suitable structure that teachers find helpful in their planning. However, teachers do not always suitably manage their time to teach all the planned content. Examples are seen throughout the school of some aspects of the subject not being taught in enough detail.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards of attainment by the ages of 7 and 11 are in line with those expected for their respective ages as they were at the time of last inspection. However, there are clear signs of improving standards. Boys and girls attain similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support and consequently make satisfactory progress.
102. By the age of 7, pupils have sound keyboard, mouse and screen skills. They use these skills to write and amend text, saving and retrieving their information confidently. They match pictures with simple text and use databases, CD-ROMs and the Internet to search for information, for example about London. They use programs to create pictures and program a screen or floor robot, mostly one step at a time. They enter data and make block graphs, for example, of favourite pets. By the age of 9, pupils make good quality patterns for a wrapping paper by selecting, repeating and rotating pictures with attractive background colours. By the age of 11, several pupils attain above average standards in multimedia presentations. For example, a simulated school web site page involving the use of sound, word-processed information and animated pictures in attractive colours. Most pupils search the Internet and CD-ROMs to find and copy information, for example on human body systems or about Mount Everest. Pupils carry out surveys and process information to produce graphs. Pupils write simple programs to control a drawing, for example, for composing a human face. The pupils' standards in the use of sensors to monitor external events such as light, sound and heat are weak because there is not enough necessary equipment. Years 5 and 6 pupils have started to learn to use spreadsheets. Teachers' very secure subject knowledge, pupils' keenness and enthusiasm and weekly timetabled lessons in a good quality computer suite are raising standards effectively. Pupils use their developing skills effectively in other subjects. For example, pupils write and edit their text in English and when reporting their experiments in science. In

geography and history, pupils use information to give detailed and accurate accounts that make good use of their literacy skills. Some work on topics such as graphs is making a substantial contribution to pupils' mathematical skills.

103. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in several lessons. This has contributed to pupils' good achievement. Lesson preparation is thorough. Introductions review past work briefly and describe what pupils are doing in the lesson. These introductions enhance the interest of well-motivated and enthusiastic pupils. Clear explanations and very confident demonstrations are very effective in developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The lessons are effectively planned to give information logically and with good pace. Teachers' watchful monitoring of how pupils are progressing in the lesson and timely interventions ensure highly productive learning for all pupils. At the lesson's end, the teachers are good at making sure pupils know what they have learnt and interest the pupils in the next lesson by describing what they will do then.
104. Enthusiastic leadership is giving clear direction to the subject. However, standards are not monitored effectively and there is little monitoring of teaching. Monitoring will begin when all staff have completed their current professional development training in the subject. The resources are of good quality and quantity and make an effective impact on pupils' learning. However, lack of sensors is a weakness. The size and design of the computer suite hinder learning when pupils cannot see demonstrations because they are too far away from the screens. The completion of building work and use of already purchased projection equipment will provide an effective solution by the forthcoming autumn term. The subject makes good contribution to pupils' spiritual development, for example when they are impressed by experiences such as video clips on the natural world and the human body.

MUSIC

105. Pupils by the ages of 7 and 11, achieve standards that are average. This is below the level of attainment identified in the last report for Year 6 pupils. Since that time, the school has re-scheduled its instrumental tuition in order to ensure that no pupils miss any regular lessons. This has been effective in its aim but has led to declining support for these lessons and reduced the standards achieved. In addition, the school has focused much attention on other parts of the curriculum and this, too, has led to a reduction of emphasis on the subject. However, there are now signs of improving attainment resulting from teachers' use of clearer curriculum guidance. Teaching in both key stages is good.
106. In infant classes, pupils have good opportunities to respond with voice and instruments to themes that are often linked to other parts of the curriculum. For example, songs such as 'Hello Mr Sun' are linked to a topic on growing. Year 1 pupils discuss the animals represented in Saint-Saens' *Carnival of the Animals*. By the age of 7, pupils listen carefully to music and identify a wide range of instruments. They begin to understand aspects of composition, referring, for example, to the 'layering' of sounds in a piece. They create music by using the sounds of their bodies such as clicking tongues and tapping fingers. Good teaching here makes effective use of pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to take part in all activities. Teachers question pupils carefully to develop their understanding. They ensure that contributions are valued and this builds pupils' self-confidence well. Lessons have a quick pace and teachers are good at keeping this pace going to ensure good learning.
107. Younger junior pupils learn well when they listen to a range of simple percussion instruments. The good teaching is well organised and makes effective use of national and school guidance to improve listening skills. Through appropriate games, pupils make good progress in learning to distinguish similar sounds and locate them. They begin to consider ways to develop their own notation and work hard to create original and imaginative diagrams and symbols. By the age of 11, pupils sing tunefully and accompany themselves with simple percussion. Older pupils sing songs in two parts and consider aspects of their performances such as tempo and volume. Teachers effectively identify a number of important factors to improve the singing, such as correct posture and careful listening. Very good relationships establish a supportive atmosphere that helps pupils to perform without embarrassment.

108. The recently appointed, enthusiastic co-ordinator has established a framework for the curriculum that is helping to give teachers confidence in their teaching of the subject. Those teachers with limited personal music skills have useful materials and a secure structure for their planning. This is beginning to bear fruit but the co-ordinator has few opportunities to directly monitor the success of the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. Standards in physical education were strong in the previous inspection and continue to be so. Pupils' knowledge and skills in games, gymnastics, athletics and swimming are above average at age 7 and 11 years. Dance is not as strong. The contribution of the visiting coach or instructor has a strong impact on the standards achieved throughout the school.
110. In dance lessons, pupils in Key Stage 1 devise a good range of simple movements in response to music and the book, *Funnybones*. Pupils use accurate vocabulary to name the body parts and talk about their movement well. The weaker element was the limited amount of physical activity during the lesson. Teaching and learning in athletics at Key Stage 2 and gymnastics and games throughout the school are very good. Pupils are eager and enthusiastic to take part in the lessons. For example, a pupil regretted being unable to join in due to injury. Teachers make good provision for the few pupils unable to take part by planning activities to develop their skills in evaluating performance and judging what techniques are effective. Pupils in Year 6 used these skills well during a gymnastic lesson to refine their control and balance while practising handstands, headstands, and forward and backward rolls. The strengths in the teaching were the clear instructions and management of the class. Very good individual support and encouragement for all levels of ability fostered high levels of motivation. As a result, all pupils achieved well and worked together co-operatively. A similar picture is evident in athletics lessons. The teachers' very good subject knowledge results in excellent planning. This clearly indicates what needs to be taught to support a good rate of learning. The lessons are structured so that the pupils benefit from two teachers. The teamwork provides excellent models for the pupils as well as promoting a challenging pace for lessons. As a result, the level of physical activity is consistently challenging throughout the lesson. For example, good questioning promoted improvement in the pupils' jumping. Questions helped the pupils to understand the link between power and control to improve their landing and take off. Teachers have good strategies to promote good behaviour. Pupils' attitudes are consistently very good. For example, a large group of pupils maintain good attitudes and behaviour while working with a work experience student.
111. Pupils throughout the school learn to swim in the pool on the neighbouring campus. Pupils benefit from skilled swimming instructors and by the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils reach at least the standards required. Many pupils exceed this and the school has had considerable success in the local swimming gala.
112. The co-ordinator ensures the curriculum is enhanced by providing the pupils with a very good range of sports activities such as rugby, football and badminton. Access is carefully monitored so that all pupils are given opportunities. Taster sessions are being planned to introduce the children to different types of activity. Access to equipment at break times has been introduced to encourage healthy exercise and better behaviour. High standards are promoted by seeking expertise in the community to enrich the provision in school and by tapping into the strengths of the staff. There is good knowledge of pupils' out-of-school interests and these are used well in school. The role of the co-ordinator includes the monitoring of quality and standards throughout the school but this has a low priority. As a result, opportunities to share good practice and help decision-making about sustaining and developing all aspects of the subject have been missed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those described in the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the standards identified in the last report. Religious education lessons make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, Year 2 pupils are particularly captivated by a video of a Christening ceremony. Lessons effectively promote enquiry and understanding about important values such as tolerance and respect.
114. In the infant classes, pupils learn stories from the major religions with an emphasis on Christianity. They retell, for example, the stories of Christmas and Purim with sound detail and understanding. They know about the Hindu festival of Diwali and explain some of the associated stories and celebrations. Written work shows good attention to the use of specialist vocabulary and higher-attaining Year 2 pupils write extended pieces of good quality work. Much work builds effectively on pupils' experiences of visiting a church, which often promotes good learning. Pupils are enthused by

this visit and this encourages them to answer questions and give opinions. They behave very well, concentrating hard on the teacher and the activities. By the age of 7, pupils identify many artefacts from the church and give good explanations of their purposes. They recall stories; for example, of the 13th century knight who had the church built. Some higher-attaining pupils relate what they have seen to their growing knowledge of Christianity. They explain, for example, that the altar is used for communion when people have bread and wine.

115. Junior pupils learn a wider range of Bible stories and show understanding of the purpose of parables and the meanings of the stories. Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about Hinduism and this is effectively linked to their geography work about India. They identify some gods and have some detailed knowledge of the Puja rituals, giving good descriptions. Pupils know how to find references in the Bible and begin to identify how Bible stories can illustrate aspects of Jesus' character. This work is an effective contribution to their knowledge and understanding of literature. By the age of 11, pupils consider aspects of their own lives and how they can understand such concepts as 'temptation' and 'forgiveness'. They read and comment on quotations from the Bible, with developing insight. More extended writing shows greater understanding of details and the meaning of the Easter story. Pupils learn about Judaism and the Torah as a holy book 'like the Bible'. They explain how it gives clear rules for life.
116. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and lessons are planned well. Very good relationships ensure that teachers are able to create quiet and reflective atmospheres in which pupils can learn. Teachers make effective use of resources such as photographs and videos to motivate and encourage pupils. They question pupils well to draw out their recollections and understanding of what they have learned. In some lessons, the amount of work planned is too great for the allocated time, or the pace of the lesson is allowed to slow. This requires teachers to finish rapidly or to delay aspects of the lessons, which can lead to imbalance in the curriculum. Good teaching, particularly in the junior classes, is raising the attainment of pupils through good attention to skills of research and analysis. The teacher's secure questioning in a Year 4 lesson, for example, helps pupils to consider the meaning of Bible texts. Very good relationships effectively encourage pupils to share their ideas with confidence. A Year 5 lesson gives pupils very good opportunities to research the Torah using a CD-ROM. Very good attention was paid in these lessons to ensuring that tasks were set at challenging levels for pupils of differing abilities. This ensured good learning.
117. The range of activities offered to pupils has improved through good attention to developing the curriculum. This makes good use of local and national advice and gives a clear framework for teachers' planning. The newly appointed co-ordinator monitors planning but has no opportunities to monitor how the curriculum is taught in the classrooms.