

INSPECTION REPORT

LONG LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Longford, Warrington.

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 110973

Headteacher: Mr P Stephenson

Reporting inspector: Mr David Carrington
15414

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th February 2002

Inspection number: 208037

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Clough Avenue
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Whelan

Date of previous inspection: 15th – 16th March 2000

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15414	Mr David Carrington	Registered inspector	Music Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught? The partnership with parents
9479	Mrs Chris Field	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for pupils How well the school is led and managed
23866	Mr Steve Hall	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology	
2024	Mr Bob Hart	Team inspector	The special educational needs units	
30144	Mr Edgar Hastings	Team inspector	English Physical education Foundation Stage	
10978	Mr Mike Sullivan	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
15015	Mr Mike Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Long Lane Primary School is situated in the Longford district, which is about two miles north of Warrington town centre, just off the A49. There are 170 boys and 124 girls in school plus 44 pupils who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school roll has been in decline for several years owing to the ageing population locally. Most pupils come from the area around the school but a high proportion of those who attend the three units in school for pupils with statements of special educational needs come from other areas of Warrington. Overall, there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including statements. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds speak English fluently. The entitlement to free school meals is well above average. When children start in the nursery they have well below average levels of skill and knowledge.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils receive acceptable standard of education. Standards are below average by the age of eleven but pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and the school is led and managed soundly. There are several issues that require improvement, including overall standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, the challenge for higher attaining pupils, the achievement of boys, rates of attendance, assessment and the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching. The school is committed to the principles of social and educational inclusion and has good links with its community. Because of the community it serves, the school receives well above average funding. It is clearly breaking down barriers to learning but standards are not high enough, progress is inconsistent and there is under achievement for some groups of pupils. The school is not yet giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get off to a good start in the nursery and reception classes and make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes and the three units are given good support and they make good progress.
- The provision in information and communication technology has improved and standards are average.
- Links with the community are good and this enhances the quality of education provided.
- The school takes good care of pupils' welfare and safety.
- Parents hold positive views of the school and the family literacy sessions are a successful step forward in building a constructive partnership with parents.
- Governors have good understanding of school performance and are influential in bringing improvement.
- There is good shared commitment to improvement and the potential for the future is sound.

What could be improved

- Standards are not high enough, particularly in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education.
- The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is not identifying strengths and weaknesses quickly enough to bring speedy follow-up action.
- Assessment procedures and the use of the information produced to set targets for learning and to track progress are unsatisfactory.
- Higher attaining pupils can achieve much better than they do.
- A number of junior boys lose interest quickly and this affects their learning and slows the progress that they make.
- Attendance rates are well below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In 1998 the school had many serious weaknesses and was placed in special measures. When the school was re-inspected two years later, it was judged to provide an acceptable level of education, though there were still four main areas for improvement. These were the further raising of standards, improvement to teaching quality, enhancing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and the creation of an early years unit

with good quality education. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since 1998, though staffing difficulties have slowed the good progress made during the first part of this period. The early years unit is now established and provides a good education, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory and standards are gradually improving. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but staffing difficulties have led to inconsistent quality of teaching in some classes.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Similar school are those schools with more than 50% of pupils entitled to free school meals.

This table shows that standards have remained well below the national average during the last three years. It also shows that standards in relation to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The picture is very similar for the achievement of pupils in Year 2, with many E grades, though the pupils attained average standards in relation to those in similar schools in reading and writing in 2001.

In general, the standards found during the current inspection were a bit higher, being below average, rather than well below average. This is the case in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education. Standards are average in the other subjects and are good in the singing aspect of music.

The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs affects the overall results and the proportion of pupils with statements (around 10% each year) is another significant factor in the pattern of standards. Over 40 per cent of pupils have some form of special educational needs, mostly for moderate learning difficulties. Because these pupils are well supported in their learning, they make good progress in school.

Higher attaining pupils do not receive the same focus in planning and direct support in learning and the work set for them is often very similar to that for the other attainment groups. This does not provide enough challenge and so, higher attaining pupils under achieve.

Boys do not do as well as girls in the SATs and in school; some older boys in particular quickly lose interest in their work. This slows their progress and the amounts of work completed. However, setting in English and mathematics in junior classes is a positive feature in raising standards across the attainment and gender groups.

The high levels of absence in school also affect standards because the significant proportion of pupils involved miss much of their education and find it difficult to catch up. A significant proportion of pupils joins or leave the school part way through their education. This also impacts on the progress that they make and the ultimate standards achieved by pupils in school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils like school and work successfully, though some pupils are disaffected and this slows the progress they make.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. In general, most pupils behave well but there are some challenging pupils who sometimes make learning difficult for other pupils in the class. There were eight temporary exclusions in the last full school year.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships are harmonious in the main. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to show responsibility and independence in learning or to find out things for themselves.
Attendance	Poor. The level of absence is high. This affects the progress of pupils who are absent regularly. A minority of families place a low value on education and do not support the school by ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive punctually for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in school. There have been a number of staffing difficulties in the last two years and some classes have had several teachers in a short space of time. This has had a negative impact on the quality of learning in those classes and pupils there have made inconsistent progress. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching – five per cent – is better than in 1998 but much of it is found in classes taken by temporary teachers employed on a short-term basis. The recruitment of effective teaching staff has proved difficult over the last few years and is a serious concern for management. The level of expectation of what pupils can achieve is not high enough and some sessions are too leisurely. However, there is some effective teaching in school, particularly in nursery and reception classes, Year 2, 5 and 6. Learning follows a similar pattern. The good start in school is generally maintained until the pupils are seven but the building of skills and knowledge slows in Years 3 and 4. It picks up again in Years 5 and 6 with some helpful boosts to progress at the end of the junior years. The school's monitoring systems have not been quick enough to identify and remedy this inconsistent pattern.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The curriculum for children in reception and nursery classes and for pupils with special educational needs is effective. However, the provision for higher attainers is not good enough. Good links with the community add value to pupils' learning experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils with statements in the three special educational needs units and those with learning difficulties in mainstream classes are well supported. The work is well matched to their individual education programmes.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds speak English fluently and make the same progress as the other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The school ensures that pupils have knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural elements of life and that they take part in activities to raise their awareness of what is special, attractive and important in their own and other people's traditions. Assemblies do not always conform to the statutory requirements for acts of collective worship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school looks after the pupils well. Appropriate procedures are in place to encourage satisfactory behaviour and personal development. The completion of registers is irregular and not monitored effectively. Assessment procedures and the use of the information produced are unsatisfactory because planning and educational provision are not influenced enough by the outcomes of assessment.
The partnership with parents	Satisfactory. The school has developed some good links with parents, including the family literacy scheme and the quality of information about pupils' progress has some strengths. Volunteers and some parents play a valuable role in supporting learning in school. Whilst the school works hard to encourage all parents to become involved in their children's education, not all of them take a full role.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has developed a system of management that is based on partnership with the staff and agreement about what needs to be done. This has led to sound provision for the personal development of pupils. There is good shared direction to bring improvement and the potential for this is sound. However, systems and procedures to ensure that standards and progress are consistent, and at least satisfactory, are not cohesive and too many decisions are left to individual teachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are a well-informed and influential group who know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. They have the drive for improvement and work hard to bring success. They make sure the school meets most statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The priorities of the school are appropriate, but there are too many of them. Managers know how well the school achieving its plans but the setting of targets for individual pupils and the tracking of progress made towards them is at a very early stage of development.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. There are no shortages of staff or learning resources and the accommodation is good. Finance is well managed and the additional funding, for example for pupils with special educational needs, boosting standards and staff development in information and communication technology is used well. The school intends to use the funds carried forward into next year to maintain the current level of staffing and to improve provision in information and communication technology. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like coming to school.• Pupils are given an effective education and make appropriate progress.• The information they receive about the work completed is helpful.• They find the headteacher and staff easy to approach if they have concerns.• Their children are developing into sensible and mature people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are not enough activities outside lessons.• Homework levels are inconsistent.

Inspectors' judgements are similar to the positive impressions of parents. However, inspectors judge that the programme of activities outside lessons and the level of homework are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make steady progress.
- The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school and children make good progress.
- The setting of junior classes for English and mathematics is having a good impact on standards.
- Good improvement has been made to information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are average.
- Overall standards are not high enough, especially in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education.
- Pupils make satisfactory gains in learning from the time they join the nursery to the time they leave Year 6, but progress is inconsistent and there is a significant dip in the first two years of the juniors.
- Higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough.
- Boys do not work as well as girls and are much more easily disaffected in learning. This means they do not achieve enough.

1. At the time of the 1998 inspection, standards were reported as low in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. In addition, when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, overall standards were below average. The school did not provide sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils at that time. The work for pupils with special educational needs was not rooted firmly enough in their individual education plans and so progress, whilst satisfactory overall, was not as brisk as it could have been. In all, the school was judged to be failing to provide a satisfactory standard of education and this led to much under achievement. The school was, therefore, placed in special measures.
2. Two years later, at the time of the school's next inspection, standards were reported as having improved well. Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools charted overall improvement in writing and in English generally, as well as in mathematics and science. The 2000 inspection report portrayed standards as well below average when pupils started school but rising to below average by the age of eleven, thus demonstrating satisfactory progress.
3. This year, the overall picture is very similar to that in 2000 and it is clear that the good improvement to standards in the years between the two previous inspections has slowed down. This slackening of improvement has largely been due to staffing difficulties. Senior managers have had to focus on keeping classes staffed properly and, consequently, the anticipated improvements to procedures and systems to raise standards have taken too long to become established effectively.
4. The results of the 2001 SATs at the ages of seven and eleven show little change from earlier years. Pupils' performance was well below the national average (E grade) in all subjects except writing in Year 2, where standards were low (E*). This was hardly different from the SATs results in both 1998 and 1999. Improvement had clearly stalled.
5. The picture on paper does not, however, portray the full facts. To some degree, the comparisons with similar schools are a closer indication of the successes and weaknesses of standards at Long Lane Primary School. In 2001, seven-year-old pupils achieved at average levels compared to pupils in schools with more than half the pupils entitled to free school meals. However, standards were below average in mathematics and also in the science teacher assessments. Year 6 pupils did not do as well as the younger pupils in last year's SATs on this similar schools comparison. Standards at the end of the junior years were well below the similar schools' average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The pattern in Year 2 and 6 is thus inconsistent, with respectable standards in some areas and under performance in others.
6. Even the similar schools' comparison does not tell the complete story. A significant element in the above results is the well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in school. About 43

per cent of pupils fall into this category, mostly because they have moderate learning difficulties, which affects their final standard of work. Additionally, there are three units for pupils with statements of special educational needs and these pupils account for almost ten per cent of the total number of pupils in the school. This clearly affects the percentages reaching the expected level in the Year 2 and 6 SATs. These pupils, whether in mainstream classes or in the three special educational needs units, are taught well and they make steady progress. Indeed, when such pupils have additional support in lessons or are withdrawn for work, their progress is good; such is the good quality of their support. Their progress slows, however, when they work in their own classes with no additional non-teaching support.

7. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority families and all these pupils speak English fluently. In general, ethnic minority pupils show the same level of progress as the other pupils in school and are included in all attainment groups.
8. The standards achieved in school, whether in the SATs or in general work in all subjects, are also influenced strongly by under achievement of higher attaining pupils. There is a well below average proportion of attainment at level 3 in Year 2 in reading, a below average proportion in writing and mathematics, and an average proportion in science. In Year 6, a well below average proportion of pupils achieves level 5 in all three subjects. Lesson planning does not clearly identify the extra demands to be made of higher attaining pupils in that the expected level of their learning is not recorded and so teachers have nothing to check their achievement against. Instead, the general learning objective for all pupils is used to check progress and the work completed by higher attaining pupils is often identical to that of the other attainment groups. The strengths of support for pupils with special educational needs have not been extended consistently to the higher attainers.
9. Another factor in the pattern of standards in school is the achievement of boys. In the 2001 Year 2 SATs, there was significant underachievement by boys in all three tested subjects and the same held in Year 6. The headteacher identified this pattern soon after the results were published and boys' under achievement is a priority for improvement this year. During the inspection, there were a number of occasions when boys were observed to be disaffected in school. This happened in assemblies and registration periods as well as in lessons and is clearly an issue for the school to tackle. On some occasions, staff did not take effective enough action to stem the distraction and the progress made by these boys faltered and often halted completely. It also slowed the progress made by other pupils.
10. Attendance patterns and the mobility of pupils are two other significant factors in the progress and standards achieved by pupils. The rate of attendance is well below average and some pupils regularly miss school or are late because their parents do not value education highly. This reduces the progress made by these pupils because they miss large amounts of work. The school does not monitor the impact of such attendance patterns on learning. A high proportion of pupils join or leave school part way through their primary education. Again, the school does not monitor this for impact on learning and standards, and has not identified the patterns that may exist in relation to the mobility of pupils.
11. The school has introduced some successful initiatives to improve standards. The setting of pupils in junior classes for English and mathematics is one such example. There are some differences in the setting arrangements between the two subjects, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Overall, setting is having rather more beneficial effect on progress and standards in mathematics than it is in English. This is because the mixed Year 5 and 6 sets in mathematics are encouraging Year 5 pupils to work at a higher level than when taught as a single age group. The standards currently achieved by Year 5 pupils in mathematics are little different from the average found elsewhere. Setting is having a positive impact in English, though the sets are arranged by age and so the impact of mixed age setting in mathematics is not apparent in English.
12. The literacy and numeracy strategies are assisting the improvement of standards soundly and additional classes to boost standards are also successful. This, again, is often due to the well-structured work provided and the good quality support provided by non-teaching staff.
13. The final part of this report, starting on page 32 charts the pattern of standards and progress in the eleven subjects of the curriculum. The following table summarises the judgements made there.

Standards and progress made by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6.

	At the end of Year 2		At the end of Year 6	
	Attainment	Progress	Attainment	Progress
English	below average	satisfactory	below average	satisfactory
mathematics	below average	satisfactory	below average	satisfactory
science	below average	satisfactory	below average	satisfactory
art and design	average	satisfactory	average	satisfactory
DT	average	satisfactory	average	satisfactory
geography	below average	satisfactory	below average	satisfactory
history	average	satisfactory	below average	unsatisfactory
ICT	average	good	average	good
music	average	good	average	good
PE	average	satisfactory	average	satisfactory
RE	average	satisfactory	below average	unsatisfactory

14. As in 1998 and 2000, children start school with well below average levels of skill, they make good progress in nursery and reception classes, but because there is so much ground to make up, the standards achieved are still well below average as they join Year 1. The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. It is well organised with a good curriculum, teaching and learning quality are good and progress is consistent. The quality of planning and assessment are also good. These strengths are not found consistently in other stages in school, but they provide good models for the school to use in its bid to raise standards elsewhere.
15. Progress is held at satisfactory levels through infant classes, but is erratic thereafter. In the first two years of the junior school, progress wavers, occasionally pupils accomplish little extra over long periods and standards are the lowest in the school. This pattern is the result of staffing difficulties in these two years. Some pupils have had a succession of temporary teachers and much of the unsatisfactory teaching in school was observed in these years. The school has not yet established good enough teaching in some classes in Years 3 and 4 to drive up standards and quicken progress.
16. The picture changes again in Years 5 and 6. Some of the best teaching is found in these two years and learning is accelerated because of the higher demands placed upon the pupils. Much ground is made up, but the effects of the dip in some classes in Years 3 and 4 is not fully outweighed and so, overall standards are not as high as they should be by the age of eleven.
17. The headteacher recognises the pattern of standards and progress portrayed here. There is good, shared commitment to improvement. It is the task of management to build on the potential shown by staff in the coordination of their subjects in order to forge ahead. The need for systems to ensure full consistency in provision is a key issue of this inspection that is focused squarely on the improvement of standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- Most pupils have positive attitudes to work; however a small but significant proportion of junior-age boys show disrespectful attitudes to adults and their classmates.
- Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall, though a handful of pupils persistently seek attention and some are disruptive in lessons.
- Relationships are generally positive and the school is a racially tolerant community. The headteacher keeps a close check on racist incidents, such as name-calling, and takes swift action to combat this.
- Pupils take on roles of responsibility, for example when fund-raising for charities. Their personal development is hindered by the limited opportunities for them to manage appropriate aspects of their learning.
- Attendance in the school is currently well below average but is improving. Punctuality is an issue that the school has not given sufficient attention to.

18. Since 1998 there has been some improvement to improving behaviour. The introduction of the positive approach to behaviour management has resulted in pupils being much more aware of the impact that their actions have on others. The school has maintained the positive behaviour reported by HMI in 2000. The majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire that inspectors sent out feel that the school helps their child become mature and responsible, and almost all felt that their children are happy to come to school.
19. In the nursery and reception, the children are happy and generally well settled. The very youngest show a great deal of immaturity and the team of staff are very sensitive in the way they make the children feel safe and free from anxiety. The good routines in the nursery are assisting the children in becoming confident learners but there is a lot of work to be done to support their personal and social development. As the children grow in confidence they show good attitudes and behaviour because of the good attention given to these important aspects of their development. By the end of the Foundation Stage the children are confident and have high self-esteem. They have developed good work habits and are ready for their next stage of education.
20. Pupils of all ages are generally positive about their learning, most are keen and enthusiastic in all their activities and say that they like school. Their attitudes to school and work are sound overall, but there is a variation. In infant classes and in the majority of junior classes there is consistently good responses from pupils. At best, for example in a Year 1 literacy lesson, following the shared reading of a story the pupils were very willing to describe the features of the bear that had gone missing to produce a *wanted poster* that would help with its capture. Every hand shot up when the teachers asked a question and there was no shouting out, even though they were very keen to answer. For thirty minutes the pupils were stimulated and sustained a high level of concentration because of the teacher's clear expectations and well-chosen methods and resources.
21. However in some lessons, a handful of pupils, usually boys show disaffected behaviour and become restless and switched off to learning. Sometimes this is because the teacher spends too long giving instructions and the pupils concerned become bored and distracted. At other times, inner anxieties just burst out and result in low level confrontational behaviour that adversely affects other pupils' learning. Such occasions are not always well managed. More rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning would aid school managers in evaluating how well different pupils are responding to different methods and styles of teaching and what impact the structure of the timetable has on promoting positive behaviours.
22. Relationships between pupils are satisfactory; most are respectful and tolerant as shown in the positive way that newcomers to school are welcomed and helped to settle in. Anti-bullying work, which takes place in personal and social education lessons, is proving effective. Most pupils are confident in the school's ability to deal with instances that arise. Occasionally, there are racist incidents that compromise the quality of relationships; this is usually name-calling and is often between pupils of mixed race origins. The headteacher keeps a close check on such instances and takes swift action to combat this and seek reparation from those involved.
23. Pupils generally show a respect for the resources they use. They collect them in carefully at the end of each lesson, and act as monitors for registers, lunchboxes, and the overhead projector used in assemblies. The front covers of their workbooks are usually graffiti-free and well presented. The school building is well cared for, though litter dropping is a problem despite bins being available. Pupils show a good level of responsibility in their willingness to act as monitors and most respond well to the assertive discipline policy. The school gives awards for positive behaviour or effort, and uses sanctions appropriately. Pupil's self-esteem is raised by the stickers and certificates, which are presented in assemblies. There have been eight fixed-term exclusions in the past year and this is well above average. The school regards exclusion as very much a last resort, and strives to minimise the exclusions as far as possible. When set against some of challenging behaviour that the school is helping pupils to manage well, its record on exclusions is reasonable, and demonstrates its strong commitment to inclusion.
24. Behaviour in the playground and around school is largely good-natured. Pupils make the most of the rather bare playground environment. Most have a good rapport with teachers, though there are

exceptions and this is evident in those classes that have had a large number of supply staff. During the occasional times when pupils from the Unit classes are integrated into mainstream lessons, they are well received by others. This was notable in a PE lesson in Year 4 when pupils worked very co-operatively in mixed pairings to sequence and balance movements. Older pupils are given roles of responsibility; for example, they are heavily involved in charitable fund-raising and this widens their views about the circumstances of other less fortunate people. Last year a mock election was organised in which pupils had to vote for the party of their choice, some had to campaign and others ran the ballot. This sort of experience is very valuable in helping pupils prepare for their future as responsible citizens. Pupils are given the chance to develop leadership skills when they go on an outdoor education visit to North Wales, for example. A weakness in provision for pupils' personal development lies in the lack of opportunity for older pupils to manage appropriate aspects of their own learning.

25. Pupils who have special educational needs are developing a positive self-image as the teachers and support assistants strive to help them to achieve success in their work. The pupils with the most severe difficulties keep up their interest and concentration because of the cheerful encouragement from their support assistants. Pupils and adults have established close bonds of trust and friendship, so that they display improving behaviour. On occasion, some pupils who do not have the level of support required display inappropriate behaviour and attitude.
26. Attendance in the school is currently poor but improving. It is well below the national average. The attendance and poor punctuality of a handful of pupils causes concern as both affects their achievements. The school has rewards to support good attendance but more could be done to target improvement. There are a few parents who give their child's attendance at school a low priority and the school is working hard in conjunction with the Educational Welfare Service to tackle this.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- Teaching and learning quality is satisfactory overall.
- It is good for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to make steady progress.
- The non-teaching staff are effective in their work.
- There is too much variation and inconsistency in teaching and learning in the first two years of the juniors.
- Planning, everyday assessment, the use of time and some aspects of behaviour management require improvement.
- Boys and higher attaining pupils do not learn fast enough.

27. The inspection judgements recorded in the 1998 report point to an inconsistent quality of teaching, especially in junior classes. Nearly a quarter of all teaching was unsatisfactory and clearly a serious weakness that contributed much to the decision to place the school in special measures. Less than ten per cent of teaching was very good or better, a proportion that was down on the average figure for that time.
28. The 2000 inspection report by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools indicated that improvement had been made to teaching. Overall, there was satisfactory teaching with almost a quarter of the 17 lessons observed showing good teaching. The report that year judged that lessons were well planned, non-teaching staff gave good support, pupils were keen to learn and responded with interest and fairly high levels of concentration and there were sound relationships in lessons. However, the report stated that there were still weaknesses in teaching for the school to address.
29. This time, teaching is again satisfactory overall, but within this picture there is variation and inconsistency. Inspectors observed 92 lessons during the current inspection. Of these, five per cent were of unsatisfactory or poor teaching quality, a much-reduced figure over 1998. The proportion of good or better teaching was 45 percent, and the proportion of very good or better teaching was seven per cent. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed a similar pattern of teaching.
30. Teaching quality is good for nursery and reception children and this enables them to make good progress. There is also some good teaching in infant classes, particularly Year 2, but overall the quality

is satisfactory. In junior years, there are big differences in quality. Across this phase, teaching is satisfactory because of the good quality found in Years 5 and 6. This impacts well on progress and standards are given a much needed boost. However, in some classes in Years 3 and 4 there are significant weaknesses in teaching and pupils make little headway in their learning. Much of this is due to the difficulties that the school has had in staffing these classes. Some pupils have had a succession of supply teachers and their learning has become disjointed because of this. School managers have not been able to establish a regular staffing pattern in these two years that is of the necessary quality to ensure that pupils move on consistently in their learning.

31. There are four aspects of teaching that require attention:
- Teachers' expectations of behaviour are not high enough. Some pupils have individual behaviour plans to assist the establishment of good conduct. Teachers largely manage their pupils satisfactorily, though there are times when disaffected boys are not brought back into active learning quickly enough. This affects their progress and boys generally do not do as well as the girls in lessons and in the SATs.
 - Lesson planning is of inconsistent quality. Whilst it is detailed enough, not all of it identifies the specific skills and knowledge to be learned by the pupils. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils and results in work being set that differs little from that for the other attainment groups. The higher attainers are then not well challenged and they under achieve.
 - Time is not used well in some lessons. The first session in the morning does not give a brisk enough start to work and in number of lessons, teachers take too long to introduce the work, so some pupils, particularly boys become disaffected.
 - Ongoing assessment of pupils' work is another aspect for improvement. Marking does not focus enough in showing pupils how they are achieving against their targets for learning and does not indicate what is needed next to improve the work. The sharing of lesson objectives is inconsistent and often relates to what the teacher will do, rather than what the pupils will learn. The evaluation of lesson objectives *by the pupils* at the end of lessons is rare and so pupils are not as well informed about their own progress as they could be.
32. There are some strengths in teaching across the school. The work of non-teaching staff to support pupils with special educational needs is of good quality. Nearly 45 per cent of all pupils have some form of special educational needs, particularly for moderate learning difficulties. There are also about ten percent of pupils with statements of special educational needs; this is a high proportion. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection, and is always satisfactory and often good. All class teachers are involved in drawing up the pupils' individual work plans, with the advice of the special needs teacher and the coordinator. Teachers consult continuously with the class assistants to ensure that pupils get the maximum benefit. The school has organised a wide range of support programmes to meet the range of needs identified. Class teachers draw in the weaker pupils by thoughtful questioning, giving them many opportunities to experience success in front of their peers.
33. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory overall. It is good in music and has improved considerably in ICT. In both of these subjects, learning is good and progress is at an accelerated rate in relation to other subjects. There are strengths in the provision for music and ICT that the school could apply to other subjects in a bid to improve teaching quality.
34. Basic skills are taught soundly. The literacy and numeracy strategies are having the intended impact on learning because they are tightly structured to develop skills and knowledge. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Also, the setting of pupils in these two subjects is having a positive impact on progress, especially in mathematics in Years 5 and 6 where the younger pupils are spurred to better attainment by the achievements of the older ones.
35. Teachers generally apply an appropriate range of teaching strategies and methods in lessons, though measures to improve pupils' independence and responsibility in learning could be enhanced. There is

sometimes too much teacher talk or over use of worksheets in lessons and this slows the rate at which pupils build the skills of self-enquiry, research, investigation and problem solving.

36. The level of homework set throughout the school is appropriate overall, though there are some discrepancies, again, particularly in some classes in Years 3 and 4. Resources are used soundly and the non-teaching staff show clearly the good quality support they give to the pupils in their charge.
37. Learning follows a very similar pattern to teaching. Skills, knowledge and understanding are built satisfactorily, though at different rates in different classes. Most pupils work hard in lessons and the output of work is satisfactory overall, with the exception of Year 3 and 4. Boys and higher attainers could produce more work, as identified earlier. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress. The building of skills and knowledge amongst the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is little different from that of other pupils.
38. This portrayal of teaching and learning reflects what inspectors saw over four days and also the results of the scrutiny of work completed since last September. The school has yet to establish an effective, systematic and rigorous procedure for the direct monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning that would identify and remedy deficiencies quickly enough. Individual teachers work hard and are committed to improvement. Without a structure to help identify what works well, and what does not, and encourages the sharing of strengths, measures to improve teaching and learning further will not be as effective as they could be.

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

- The curriculum is broad and balanced, meets legal requirements and is relevant to pupils' needs.
- Planning shows coverage for the full National Curriculum and Religious Education
- There is good curriculum provision in place for the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs.
- Satisfactory attention is paid to promoting pupils' moral development but more effort is needed to improve pupils' cultural and spiritual development.
- Time at the start of the day is not always well used.
- Assemblies do not always meet statutory requirements.
- Visitors and educational visits make a useful contribution to pupils' learning

39. The curriculum of the school is satisfactory overall and is consistently good for the youngest children in school and those who have special needs. The curriculum meets legal requirements for all subjects including RE.
40. At the time when the school was taken out of special measures in March 2000 the pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural education was receiving too little attention. Since that time the situation has improved. The school has established reward systems for good behaviour, assemblies have an emphasis on moral development and there are positive steps to widen the pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures through the use of visits and visitors. These are steps in the right direction though the spiritual dimension of the curriculum is still weak as there are too few planned opportunities for promoting this to a consistently good level of provision.
41. School managers have maintained the gains made in the curriculum reported in 2000 and have made some important improvements particularly in mathematics where the National Numeracy Strategy has provided a strong framework for teaching and learning. Other improvements to the curriculum include English where the structure of the National Literacy Strategy has had a similar effect to that of the numeracy strategy and in ICT where the facilities available in the computer suite have been put to good use in strengthening curriculum provision. However, there remain aspects of the curriculum that require sharper focus so that all pupils, especially potentially higher-attainers, are enabled to maximise achievements in their time at school.
42. The curriculum provision for the Foundation Stage is good with pupils receiving appropriate learning based on the Early Learning Goals for children of this age. This is an improvement on the situation at the school's first inspection, when the education of the youngest children was a key issue.

43. The school's strategies of setting pupils by attainment for numeracy and literacy across Years 5 and 6 are having a positive impact on standards. In general, the literacy and numeracy strategies are successfully established, though provision for these aspects of the curriculum is not as strong in Year 4 due to staffing issues. Basic skills are also promoted effectively in ICT and this is beginning to have an impact on other areas of the curriculum, particularly with the data handling aspects of mathematics. Effective cross-curricular links are also present in English, history and geography.
44. Planning and target setting are not sharp enough to ensure appropriate progress particularly for higher ability pupils. The strategy of withdrawing some pupils from lessons has benefits in developing core skills, however the current lack of monitoring means that it is not clear what impact this has on other areas of their development. The school is not as successful in its bid to be educationally inclusive in its provision for higher attaining pupils as it is in other aspects of its work.
45. The curriculum for pupils who have special educational needs is well adapted to their needs by individual education plans. The targets in these plans are detailed and precise and are accompanied by useful statements of work programmes, by which teachers and classroom assistants can promote the pupils' progress. In contrast to provision for the higher attaining pupils, This aspect of inclusion is a strength of the school. In the best lessons teachers match the tasks given to these pupils well to their abilities so that they are achievable but stimulating. The support is given both in class and in special sessions outside the classroom. The balance between these two strategies is about right.
46. Teachers' planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum. However, there are inconsistencies in timetabling and the use of time. An example is the use of time at the beginning of the school day. At best this time is used for well-paced handwriting and spelling activities but on too many occasions activities proceed at a too leisurely pace without a clear sense of purpose and setting the wrong tone for the start of the day.
47. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is sound. Time is allocated for personal and social education in almost all junior classes and in a Year 6 lesson in personal and social education pupils had formed their own parties for a "mock election". They presented their policies on school improvements and sensibly discussed issues such as whether pupils should be allowed to bring mobile telephones to school. They spoke with confidence, listened carefully and discussed alternative views politely. This is sound practice that is developing self-esteem and self-confidence. There are satisfactory policies concerning sex education and drug abuse that support the effective provision made for Year 6 pupils. The provision of a Breakfast Club is a positive indicator of the school's concern for the well being of its pupils.
48. Pupils' moral and social development are satisfactory. Throughout the school pupils learn to tell right from wrong. Pupils are given clear moral direction as teachers consistently encourage good behaviour and respect for others. From an early age children play and co-operate with one another. Pupils generally take turns, appreciate each other's contributions and praise success. The praise element is reinforced in assemblies where good work and effort are rewarded. Pupils are given trust, for example where real money is used for mathematics activities in infant classrooms and the trust given is respected. The school creates a climate for pupils to work together and provides opportunities for them to form effective relationships. These include the residential visits for Year 5 pupils away from home at the Menai Centre in Anglesey. The pupils' awareness of a wider social responsibility is also cultivated and the school has an established tradition for working for good causes including fundraising for leprosy relief, and UNICEF.
49. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory although planned opportunities across the curriculum for this aspect are few. Inspectors observed a few "special moments" during the week, such as when in a history lesson pupils gasped in wonder as a teacher gradually extinguished a light, accompanied by a lowering of voice. However, there are too few opportunities taken to arouse pupils' interest in such things as an artist's use of light in a painting or the shape and beauty of a flower. Spiritual awareness is not planned enough for pupils' curiosity and wonder to be stimulated. Not all assemblies are well-developed spiritual activities. Some of these lacked a spiritual dimension; failing to meet statutory requirements. Pupils, in general, do not know how to worship though there are occasions, as in a RE lesson, where worthwhile

comparisons are made between Christian and Islamic prayer. Even though well-selected music is used in assemblies, the qualities within the music are not drawn to the pupils' attention.

50. Provision for cultural development is improving and is satisfactory overall. Pupils are helped to become aware of their cultural heritage and to appreciate European and non-European cultures through the programme of visits and visitors. During the present term visitors from Nepal worked with older pupils to give them an understanding of their culture. In the past year pupils have made visits to the Lowry Centre, The Peace Centre in Warrington, the theatre and other places of interest. These visits and visitors enhance learning and broaden the curriculum. There is some work in classrooms and corridors that celebrate cultural diversity. This is a worthwhile feature but there is room for further work on developing knowledge of the multi-cultural nature of our society.
51. There are well-established links to the secondary school and a local secondary head is an active member of the school's governing body. In addition, the school builds well on its links with the community. Visitors to school bring worthwhile experience, which is shared well with the pupils. These links enhance the quality of education by their diversity and relevance to the curriculum.
52. The range of extra-curricular activities offered is rather narrow at present with after-school football and the guitar club being the main features. These are both valuable and the purchase of ten guitars and the provision of free lunchtime lessons is a good feature. During the past year members of the Warrington Wolves Rugby Football Club have provided coaching at the school. This is a good use of visitors to support the development of sports.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- The school is particularly successful at breaking down the barriers to learning that many pupils have; staff are supportive and show genuine care for individual needs.
- The school has an effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures for first aid, fire, accidents and medicines.
- The school has no agreed policy for child protection.
- There are generally good procedures in place for promoting behaviour and taking appropriate action if bullying or racism occurs.
- The school has a comprehensive attendance and lateness policy; however it is not consistently implemented. In particular, there is a need for some teachers to improve the completion of registers and for improvement strategies to be developed.

53. The good attention to health, welfare and safety, and the caring atmosphere created that were reported on by the 1998 inspection have all been sustained. The school makes effective arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. The school pays good attention to social inclusion and is welcoming to any pupils who join the school; since the start of the school year there has been sixteen pupils arrive and nineteen leave. This is a high level of mobility and reflects the nature of the community the school serves.⁷
54. Sound procedures are in place to encourage satisfactory behaviour and personal development. The staff know the pupils well and are responsive to individual needs. The school follows the guidelines of the local area child protection committee and a member of staff has received appropriate training as the designated person for child protection matters. Staff are vigilant and aware of the correct procedures to be followed if they have concerns, however the school has no agreed policy for child protection beyond a very early draft. This requires urgent attention in view of the very significant proportion of pupils who the school believes may be at risk. The school has an effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures for first aid, fire, accidents and medicines.
55. The school undertakes useful assessments when children first enter school. These help inform teaching groups, and enables early identification of any special needs. Teachers regularly use information from on-going assessment to feed forward into their planning and adapt the activities accordingly. The system here to *plan, do and review* is a positive feature and one that is supporting children of all abilities make good progress in nursery and reception.

56. Assessment practice elsewhere in school is patchy. At best, usually in English and mathematics, it is used to target different pupils and assist in the planning of appropriate work, typically those who need extra support with literacy or numeracy. The use of assessment to ensure that higher attaining pupils are given consistent challenge in their studies is not systematic. In Years 4, 5 and 6 assessments are used productively to help compose learning sets that are assisting pupils of different abilities to learn successfully. Elsewhere some teachers carry out useful assessments. However, the lack of a rigorous and comprehensive whole school system results in efforts being diluted in terms of its use for tracking and target setting. Pupils' work in some subjects, for example in PE, geography and history is not consistently assessed and school managers therefore cannot assess how well skills are being developed from reception to Year 6. Governors are considering investing in a computer system to assist in the handling of assessment data and to support the tracking and targeting of specific groups, for example boys and high attaining pupils as well as individual pupils. This would be a timely investment.
57. The identification of pupils who are likely to experience learning difficulties is good. Teachers identify pupils at an early stage, and monitor their progress regularly. The school has good relationships with many specialist agencies, which help with the more precise testing of pupils who reach the higher stages of the special needs register.
58. The school has an effective health and safety policy, with appropriate procedures for first aid, fire, accidents and medicines. Effective risk assessments and safety audits are carried out by the headteacher. Pupils feel safe at school and well looked after. Bullying is discussed with pupils in personal and social education lessons and in assemblies, and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they are concerned about bullying, racism or sexism. Pupils say that they feel confident that any member of staff would deal effectively with an occurrence of this nature. They say they like school, and feel confident in the security it offers.
59. There are sound procedures in place for promoting positive behaviour that are supported by a clear and effective behaviour policy which is generally well implemented. This policy has clear rules of good conduct published in every classroom. Pupils know these rules, and negotiate class rules each year. Some pupils have challenging behaviour and the school is exploring various strategies that can support them in managing this. There are very clear strategies for encouraging acceptable behaviour via the reward system. Pupils particularly like the raffle tickets given out by staff to reward good behaviour and the holder of the winning ticket in the week's draw receives a prize of sweets. Pupils with good or improved behaviour have the opportunity to gain certificates that are displayed on the wall of achievement or in the silver and gold books. Pupils were observed to receive these awards with great pride.
60. Any incidents of bad behaviour, including bullying are recorded in the green card system; currently ten per cent of pupils are being monitored in this way. Exclusion is used only as a last resort and there have been eight temporary exclusions in the last school year. One boy was excluded for ten days during the week of inspection and two others returned to school on the second day. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are effective. The headteacher logs incidents of a racist nature, usually name-calling, and asks the culprit to make amends by writing to the person they have upset. Parents have been called into school to help combat racist behaviour. The school is aware of its duties to promote racial awareness and stamp out prejudice.
61. The school pays very good attention to social inclusion. A large proportion of pupils has special educational needs and they are well supported. The school gives good attention to identifying specific needs early and establishing well-focused individual education plans that are regularly reviewed. Learning assistants and specialist staff are effective in their roles and assist these pupils in making good progress in their studies.
62. The school has a comprehensive attendance and lateness policy; however it is not consistently implemented. An infant teacher together with the administrative assistant have taken the lead in trying to bring improvement and are meeting with success.
63. The rate of unauthorised absence is around 1.2%, which is well above the average in most primary schools, but is within the targets set by the local education authority. Some parents are not giving the

school the support it needs by ensuring their children attend regularly and on time. The Educational Welfare Service has fortnightly contact and sees the school's needs for its service as requiring high status support. Some ten per cent of pupils are typically referred to the school's Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) each year. As a last resort, the school has asked the EWO to take out a prosecution against a small number of families who give serious concern, but this is proving to be a lengthy and protracted process. Poor punctuality is significant, with a handful of pupils late each morning. The school logs this well enough but has not established strategies to make improvement. The monitoring of attendance and absence is satisfactory overall but could be improved by tightening up on registration procedures and looking more closely at the impact that some pupils' lengthy absences have on their achievements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- Parents have positive views of the school and the inspection team supports most of these.
- The information provided for parents is effective in keeping them in touch with how well their children are progressing.
- The Family Literacy Scheme is a successful initiative to build a positive partnership with parents.
- Parents and other volunteers play a valuable role in supporting learning in school.
- Not all parents are as involved in the school's work as is desirable but the school maintains its efforts to increase the proportion of parents who are.

64. The school is keen to extend its links with parents and to forge an effective partnership with them. A minority of parents is actively involved in the school and its work, but many others do not have the confidence to join the school in a shared approach to their children's learning.
65. Parents showed generally positive views of the school in response to the questionnaire sent out by inspectors and at the meeting held for parents. More than 90 per cent of those responding recorded positive views on nine of the eleven items on the questionnaire. Parents say that their children like coming to school and they believe the school provides an effective education for the pupils and that they make appropriate progress. Further, parents state that the information they receive about their children's work helpful and they find the headteacher and staff easy to approach if they have concerns. Finally, parents think that their children are developing into sensible and mature people. On the whole, the inspection team agrees with these positive judgements made by the parents.
66. Parents do have a couple of concerns about the school. They drew attention to differences in practice between teachers in school and a sizeable proportion of those answering had concerns about inconsistencies in homework and the level of provision of activities outside lessons. The inspection team found a number of inconsistencies throughout the school that affect pupils' progress and so they agree with parents on this issue. However, homework and the provision for activities outside lessons are both satisfactory.
67. The school has put in place a number of initiatives to encourage parents to play a full role in the education of their children. It issues helpful printed information for parents of the youngest children when they start school to assist the process of settling in. Meetings for parents to discuss the achievements of their children are a regular feature of the school year and parents find these useful. The quality of written reports sent to parents is good because they identify clearly what skills and knowledge have been achieved and what is required next for improvement. The prospectus sets out the necessary details that parents need to know, but it is not presented in as parent-friendly a style as in some schools. The governors' annual report to parents has some omissions.
68. The school prides itself on its close involvement with the parents of pupils who have special educational needs. They are fully involved in the procedures at every stage, and are kept well informed of their children's progress. Most of them attend the important annual review meetings. Parents overall are pleased with the school's approach to inclusion, its readiness to help, and with their children's progress.
69. One strength of the partnership with parents is the Family Literacy Scheme. Whilst the take up for this is not large, the families involved get a good deal from the scheme. The parents taking part have good opportunities to find out more about their children's education and this enables them to give good support to learning at home. These parents accompany their children on educational visits, which also strengthens learning. There are a number of parent, grandparent and other volunteers who assist in school and their work is much appreciated and successful in helping pupils to make progress with reading, for example.
70. Parents give positive support to the social and fund raising events hosted by the parents and friends association. As in some other aspects of the work with parents, the organisation of these events is in the hands of a very small group of parents. Parents also support concerts and other events involving their children effectively.

71. Overall, the partnership between parents and the school is satisfactory and is of benefit to pupils' education. The minority of parents who are regularly involved in school values this partnership. The school maintains its effort to draw other parents into the partnership but is often only partially successful because some parents are either not receptive or do not have the confidence to join in.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- The school's aims are properly reflected in its work and this results in a happy, caring environment; however the lack of rigour in monitoring is slowing down the pace at which the school is able to make improvements.
- The headteacher provides clear educational direction and has the full confidence of staff, parents and governors to lead the school.
- The senior management team has a shared determination to raise standards and is ready for the challenges that lie ahead. Between them they have many strengths but have little time available to play a full role in identifying and promoting best practice in teaching and learning.
- Subject co-ordinators are committed and enthusiastic but most have only partial insights into the school's strengths and weaknesses, and this inhibits the full impact of their role.
- Teachers are a hardworking team; recruitment problems are a serious concern for management and shortfalls in high quality supply cover are having an adverse impact on overall quality in teaching and learning.
- Governors are a good force for school improvement and they ensure that the school applies the principles of best value properly.
- Specific funding for example that provided to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs is efficiently used.
- A reasonable start has been made in tracking different pupils' attainments and in targeting advancement; however this needs to move up a gear if all pupils, particularly boys and those who are capable of achieving at high levels, are to be given full opportunity to succeed.
- The school's strong commitment to social inclusion is a very positive feature and pupils with particular difficulties tend to do well at Long Lane.
- The quality of education for other pupils, such as those in Year 4 or higher attaining pupils is not consistent.
- Because the school receives a much higher amount of money than most primary schools and in view of the fact that there are shortcomings in standards, teaching, learning and management, the school is judged to provide unsatisfactory value for money.

72. The school has made satisfactory, if inconsistent, improvement since its previous inspection in 1998 in addressing the serious key issues that required special measures. Over the last eighteen months the headteacher's attention has been diverted to significant staffing issues, including a high turnover and the need to recruit and integrate new staff and manage substantial supply cover. This has had a negative impact on other management tasks. For example, the progress in establishing whole school systems and structures that are crucial to supporting a concerted drive for raising standards has been too slow. The school draws heavily on a range of initiatives to support its improvement strategies. There are pockets of some very good practice at Long Lane, for example the boost that setting arrangements are giving to teaching and learning in the upper school, the focus on boys' achievements in Year 6 which is having a good impact and the personal targets being set in Year 5 that are assisting pupils' self knowledge about how well they are achieving, and helping them to improve on personal best. These and a variety of others are positive features but are not widespread enough.
73. Whilst the school has set appropriate targets for improved standards, the data collected to track the progress made is imperfect. Too often, the progress made is evaluated after the event rather than as it unfolds. Assessment procedures are not tied into the targets enough, so they do not keep track of what is being learned in relation to the goal. There is, thus, little really useful data that can be used to plan the next step in learning. Weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation result in individual staff sometimes working in a vacuum, and others having too much discretion in choosing what to take on board.

74. The school has many strengths in the pastoral aspects of its work and provides a secure and caring environment. It is especially effective in providing a good education for some pupils who come from very difficult home backgrounds and those with special educational and behavioural needs. The procedures in place to support the tracking and targeting of these pupils' academic and social development is comprehensive and well co-ordinated. The school shows strong commitment to social inclusion and welcomes all newcomers. This approach brings many challenges and opportunities for management but the headteacher and staff team show good commitment to these pupils and work hard on their behalf. The next step is to ensure that the same close attention is paid to meeting the needs of other groups, for example those who are potentially high achieving.
75. The headteacher provides clear educational direction and has the full confidence of staff, parents and governors to lead the school. The school's aims are reflected in its work and the school is outward looking and is successful in tapping into community and local authority resources. He is keen to give teachers the right tools to do the job and is successful in making the school environment a pleasant place. He has established a robust school development planning process and the development plan includes the right targets for the future. It is, however, packed with priorities and does not bring the most important targets, those concerned with raising academic standards, to the fore. He and the deputy have a good working relationship and between them have made strides forward in curriculum planning and assessment. For example, all teachers now maintain a set of folders that include the same agreed contents on planning and assessments. There is more to be done on planning and assessment however, to ensure that the best quality practice in both is identified and promoted.
76. The senior management team has shared determination to raise standards and is ready for the challenges that lie ahead. Between them they have many strengths but have little time available to play a full role in identifying and promoting best practice in teaching and learning. They lead from the front in their own teaching and have much to offer as good role models to others.
77. Subject co-ordinators are committed and enthusiastic; their role has been greatest in supporting improvements in English, mathematics, science, ICT and music. Others, however, have a limited sphere of influence in comparison with colleagues in many other primary schools. Their knowledge of standards and progress in all classes in school is limited; some do not manage their own budgets. Nonetheless, they work hard and are enthusiastic and determined. The ingredients for successful subject management, as opposed to subject minding, are in place. Whilst some staff co-ordinate their subjects well, job descriptions for co-ordinators are not focused enough on the key priorities for each subject and, whilst performance management systems are bedding in satisfactorily, staff require greater direction in order to bring concerted improvement.
78. The management of special educational needs is good. The coordinator has established an ethos of teamwork with a commitment to high standards of provision and care for pupils in keeping with the school's aims. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The coordinator organises the training of the support staff well, and is raising their expertise to a high level. Careful timetabling ensures that this expertise is in the right place at the right time, ready to begin interacting with pupils from the start of lessons. However, the effect of withdrawing pupils from lessons is not monitored, and at times pupils miss valuable activities. The school is already preparing for the requirements of the new code of practice. Staff training is planned. Key staff are already considering the necessary reduction of the total number on the register, and the writing of individual education plans that would apply more efficiently to groups of pupils. The existing policy does not reflect the level of good practice, and will need review in the lights of forthcoming changes.
79. The governors are a strong influence on the growing successes of school management. Governors track school performance well and are quick to identify where action to bring improvement is tardy. They set clear targets for development and monitor these carefully. They are willing to appropriately challenge and question management in an endeavour to put rigour into their decision-making framework. Governors generally fulfil their statutory duties properly and publish all the necessary information each year. The requirements in respect of daily acts of collective worship are not fully met and governors have yet to agree a child protection policy. These are omissions that require immediate attention. The school follows the principles of best value satisfactorily, very much as a result of the governors' comparison of school performance with other schools nationally, locally and those with a similar intake of pupils. They are

aware of the shortfall in targets at the end of Year 6 and have resolved to make better use of data in their analysis of the value the school adds to pupils' education.

80. Finance is managed prudently and resources are used effectively. The funds available to the school, including additional monies for pupils with special educational needs or to boost standards for low attainers by the age of eleven, are used well and benefit these pupils considerably. Financial planning is done carefully and day-to-day systems to manage finance, including cheque book accountancy, and for the administration of the school are good. The large carry forward in last year's budget was retained as planned savings to support ICT development and this is appropriate. In the light of the school's declining roll, governors are keen to ensure that staffing levels are maintained at current levels and have identified a cushion for this in the finances. The one item in a budget that has required adjustment whilst other items have remained on track over twelve months is the high cost of supply cover. There has been virement from other budget heads to meet the escalating costs to cover staff absence. The situation next year looks to be more stable at this point but governors will need to keep expenditure under close review.
81. There is a good level of teaching and non-teaching staff. As the key resource in school, they are generally used effectively and they share good commitment to improvement. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology in its management and administration systems but is looking to improve this. For example, the computer-assisted management of assessment data is a current priority. The level and quality of learning resources are satisfactory overall and the accommodation is of good quality. Because the school receives a much higher amount of money than most primary schools and in view of the fact that there are shortcomings in standards, teaching, learning and management the school is judged to provide unsatisfactory value for money, though its prospects to improve this situation are within sight.
82. Thus, school management and leadership are the sum of many parts, some of which are not yet welded together, though it is clear that the team spirit is good and there is a willingness to move forward. Overall, leadership and management works in the interests of the pupils and the school provides a sound education for its pupils. That it could be even more effective is evident. The number one priority of standards as the driving force behind all that managers do has yet to be established clearly enough. The school has some strengths to build on in this quest, and success is within reach.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

83. The school has made a number of improvements over the last four years but the rate of progress has not been as rapid as is desirable. This is in part due to the difficulty of appointing effective staff to some classes. Nonetheless, there is good determination to succeed and there is potential amongst the staff to work effectively to meet the school's priorities. The next step for managers is to tap this potential and to share and spread good practice more effectively. With this in mind, the headteacher, governors and staff should work together to:

1. Continue to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education.

By:

Developing and improving the quality and range of writing in English and across the curriculum.

Improving pupils' speaking and listening skills systematically, including the development of an enhanced vocabulary in subjects such as religious education.

Eliminating the variability of teaching, especially in English, mathematics and science.

Raising the expectation of what higher attaining pupils can achieve.

Ensuring boys do as well as the girls in their learning.

Promoting scientific investigation, enquiry and prediction more consistently.

Developing the role of subject coordinators in supporting and improving their subjects.

Improving the underlying mathematics skills and knowledge required for effective mastery of geography and history.

Improving pupils' knowledge of their own learning.

Paragraphs: 8, 11, 15, 29-31, 34, 112-3, 116, 118-9, 122-3, 127, 131-3, 140, 147, 150, 152-4, 157-8, 163, 170, 178-80 and 182.

2. Introduce a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system to identify strengths and shortcomings in teaching, learning, standards and progress and ensure that the follow-up is speedy.

By

Implementing a well-planned cycle of monitoring that is related firmly to the school's priorities for improvement. Ensuring that the progress of pupils with special needs in the units and across the school is monitored rigorously.

Involving the senior management team and all coordinators in the direct monitoring and evaluation process.

Setting rigorous criteria against which the quality of teaching and learning can be evaluated.

Evaluating and sharing the outcomes of monitoring effectively.

Ensuring that changes made following evaluation are implemented consistently.

Paragraphs: 10, 17, 21, 38, 44, 63, 73, 78, 123, 131, 140, 150, 154, 158, 163, 170, 178 and 182.

3. Improve assessment procedures and the use of the information produced in order to create a target setting and tracking system that identifies strengths and weaknesses in progress of all individual pupils quickly enough.

By

Creating a rigorous system of assessment for all subjects that is implemented consistently.

Using the outcomes of assessment to set rigorous and separate learning outcomes for all attainment groups.

Sharing the targets for learning consistently with pupils in lessons.

Ensuring that pupils evaluate their own learning at the end of sessions.

Revising the targets for learning shared in lessons regularly and upward as necessary.

Evaluating the outcomes of assessment by gender, age, ethnicity, attendance patterns and the turnover of pupils.

Paragraphs: 14, 31, 56, 73, 75, 81, 118, 123, 130, 132, 135, 140, 154, 158, 162 and 178.

4. Make sure that higher attaining pupils achieve at appropriate levels.

By

Raising expectations of what they can achieve.

Providing staff training to help identify the different ways that higher attaining pupils learn.

Giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning.

Ensuring that planning identifies the expectations staff have of their learning.

Making sure that the activities are taxing enough.

Paragraphs: 8, 31, 37, 44-5, 56, 111, 113, 116, 119, 126, 132-3, 139-40, 157, 162, 179 and 182.

5. Take effective steps to ensure that boys do as well as the girls.

By

Identifying the causes of boys' underachievement.

Eliminating practices that reinforce boys' negative attitudes to learning.

Making sure that resources and activities are equally attractive to boys and girls.

Paragraphs: 9, 21, 31, 37, 72, 102, 112, 119, 125-6, 131-2, 133, 139-40, 145, 157, 162, 175 and 176.

6. Improve the rates of attendance.

By

Continuing to work with parents and appropriate external agencies to improve attendance.

Setting targets for attendance for individual pupils.
Introducing a system of meaningful awards for attendance.
Ensuring that there is a sharp start to school sessions, registration periods and lessons.

Paragraphs: 10, 26, 46 and 62-3.

Lesser issues for the governors to include in their action plan.

Ensure that the statutory requirements for collective worship are met.

Paragraphs: 49 and 79

Put in place an agreed policy for child protection.

Paragraphs: 54 and 79.

Evaluate the use of time across the day and make improvements to ensure lessons are of appropriate length, timetables are consistent and staff use time efficiently.

Paragraphs: 21, 31, 46, 122, 125 and 180.

THE UNITS FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- Pupils make good progress in developing their literacy skills.
- Individual education plans are clearly focused on the learning needs of the pupils and the targets are linked to the pupils' statements.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress and setting targets for further achievement is a strength.
- The rate of progress in the unit for pupils aged nine to eleven slows compared to that in the other two units.
- There are insufficient opportunities of pupils in the unit to work alongside pupils in the main school.
- There is not enough monitoring of the teaching of pupils with special needs in the units and across the school.

84. The school makes provision in three units for pupils with statements of educational need related to moderate learning difficulties. These pupils come from the whole of Warrington. One unit caters for pupils up to the age of seven, referred to as the Development Centre. Another includes pupils between the ages of seven and nine and the third accommodates pupils aged nine to eleven. The unit classrooms are spread throughout the school, close to mainstream classes housing pupils of a similar age. For much of the time the pupils in the units are taught separately, though there are occasions, such as in music, where they join the activities provided for pupils of a similar age. The three units are staffed by qualified teachers and support staff.
85. Since the previous report the school has continued to develop the unit provision for pupils with special educational needs. The specific targets within the individual education plans are good and closely linked to the pupils' statements. The school has good procedures for monitoring the progress of the special needs pupils and setting targets for further achievement. The establishment of the Development Centre, to replace early years moderate learning difficulty provision, has progressed well. The centre provides good education for pupils with a complex range of additional learning needs.
86. It would be inappropriate to judge the attainment of the unit pupils against national expectations or norms. The progress of the pupils is good overall. This good progress is evident in the Development Centre and in Years 3 and 4 in their unit. In the unit for Years 5 and 6 the pupils continue to make progress but do not maintain the same rate of learning as in the previous two years. In the Development Centre, for example, reception children develop the skill of exploring materials by cutting, folding and sticking. The work of Year 1 pupils builds on this knowledge and they are beginning to use materials to

build objects. By Year 2, pupils can identify what they wish to make and select appropriate materials for the task.

87. Pupils in the units make good progress in developing literacy skills. In the unit for Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils build up words from their sounds and recognise familiar words in simple reading material. By Year 6, the best readers do so easily and accurately. A strength of the unit provision is the development of writing skills. In the Year 3 and 4 unit, pupils are beginning to acquire pencil control skills and some pupils can produce legible sentences. By Year 6, the majority of pupils can write clearly produced and positioned letters. Some pupils are writing legibly with joined letters.
88. The teaching of pupils in the special needs units is good. The use of time and support staff is good. The close collaboration between classroom assistants and teachers is a strength of the provision and has a positive effect on the pupils' rate of learning. For example, in a numeracy lesson, following the introduction by the class teacher, the pupils divided into two groups. The classroom assistant helped one group to consolidate number recognition while the teacher worked with a group on simple addition.
89. Teachers' expectations are high and this is very evident in the skill of handwriting achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6. The management of pupils is good. A number of pupils, in addition to their difficulties in learning, have problems of behaviour. Skilled classroom management ensures that this does not disrupt the teaching. The planning and teaching methods used are good and are matched to the pupils' level of attainment.
90. External support agencies make a good contribution to the quality of teaching. The speech and language service, for example, works with individual pupils and within the classroom. This good support helps pupils to progress in language and literacy.
91. The attitude and behaviour of pupils is good and they are interested and involved in the activities. Where the majority of pupils require teacher direction and support to remain on task, older pupils are beginning to develop the skill of working co-operatively without teacher support.
92. The accommodation for pupils with moderate learning difficulties is good. There is a good range of resources but access to computers and appropriate software in the unit rooms is poor. Assessment and record keeping is a strength of the provision and ensures that the teaching can be directed to meet specific learning needs. The provision in the units is managed soundly but there is a need for further monitoring of the work across the school. The pupils have full access to the National Curriculum but apart from physical education, music and social activities, they are taught within the unit classes. Opportunities for unit pupils to be taught alongside mainstream pupils are in need of further development in order to ensure effective educational inclusion by providing pupils from the units with the full range of learning opportunities given to other pupils.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	92
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	38	42	4	1	0
Percentage	0	8	41	46	4	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15.5	294
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		125

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	30
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	120

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	17	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	33	33	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (65)	73 (61)	78 (69)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	17
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	33	34	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (65)	76 (69)	71 (67)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	28	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	18
	Girls	19	15	26
	Total	32	27	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (59)	48 (60)	79 (69)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	15
	Girls	18	17	22
	Total	29	27	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (56)	48 (58)	66 (71)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	310
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	8	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.2
Average class size	19.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	242

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	1
Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	899 938
Total expenditure	892 856
Expenditure per pupil	2 473
Balance brought forward from previous year	55 649
Balance carried forward to next year	62 728

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	325
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	24	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	74	26	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	35	6	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	22	17	0	8
The teaching is good.	81	19	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	30	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	18	7	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	38	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	64	30	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	24	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	30	18	2	0

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

- The school has improved the provision for the youngest pupils and the Foundation Stage is now well established and is a strength of the school.
- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall.
- Children make good progress when taking their well below average starting point into consideration.
- Only about half of the children will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.

93. The provision for children in the foundation stage is now much improved since the last inspection. It was reported that in order to improve the quality of education the school needed to develop the nursery provision within an early years unit. This has been accomplished and the provision is now organised as a co-ordinated early years unit combining both the nursery and reception classes. The refurbishment programme has enhanced the facilities and created a separate identity for the foundation stage within the school. The quality of education provided is also improved, and this is having a positive impact upon children's learning. This is due in part to the good quality of teaching children receive, and the appointment of an experienced co-ordinator who now oversees curriculum planning for the nursery and reception age children.
94. In the Foundation Stage there is provision for part-time places in the nursery and full-time places in the reception class. Twenty-three children attend the nursery in the morning and twenty-one attend the afternoon session. In addition thirty full-time children attend the reception class. Children are eligible for admission to the nursery from the beginning of the term after their third birthday, and transfer to the reception class during the school year in which they are five. The overall level of skill and knowledge is well below average when children join the nursery. There is a high percentage of children with special educational needs in the Foundation Stage; this amounts to one third of the reception class. Several children are receiving speech therapy. The Development Centre caters for children with statements of special educational needs and currently includes three full-time reception children.
95. The provision for children in the nursery and reception is good, and the teaching is good. Of the ten lessons observed the majority of the teaching was of good quality. The children are well cared for and feel secure whilst enjoying the good range of activities and experiences provided for them by the experienced team of adults. This enables them to develop and build their skills well and to make good progress. Children with special educational needs learn at a steady pace and also make good progress. Many of the children enter the nursery with well below average skills in speaking and listening, number, and personal and social development, and this is confirmed by the informal observations and assessments carried out by the nursery staff. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 the majority of the children will attain the early learning goals in personal and social education. Half the children will achieve the expected level in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, and creative development. The children's progress is assisted by the effectiveness of the teamwork of staff, and the good quality of relationships between staff and children. Time and resources including support staff are used well, and the use of regular assessment to tailor the curriculum for all children is particularly effective.
96. The school has created a bright and lively learning environment for children in the nursery and reception classes. A good range of well organised and cared for resources is available to support children's learning. There is an appropriate supply of equipment and toys for use in the outdoor play area.

Personal, social and emotional development

97. Nearly all the children enter the nursery with immature skills in personal and social development. They require assistance from the teaching and support staff in learning to play and to share with others through a range of well-planned and balanced activities. They learn to work in pairs or small groups and often with an adult. They show enjoyment at their involvement in activities. They are encouraged and enabled to develop self-confidence in their achievements by skilful staff who reward their successes.

Over time they develop well, so that when they are ready to leave the reception class most are achieving the early learning goals in this area.

98. At the start of sessions when names are called only some of the nursery children respond, but in the reception class all children respond clearly with “Good morning” or “Good afternoon”. As they develop their independence grows as they are able to dress and undress themselves for physical activities. In reception children learn to develop an awareness of their own needs as well as those of others, and are able to articulate what it is that makes them sad or happy, and how they can make other children happy. During snack time children learn to share out biscuits and milk so that all are included. Individual children are chosen to give them out and most of the older children remember to say “Thank you”. The staff make effective use of this time usefully and milk cartons are placed on mats so that it becomes a matching activity. Children learn to sit together for a short period and talk together and are encouraged to share their news with the class. As their confidence grows more children want to participate. At the end of activities children in both classes tidy up and put all the equipment away together carefully.

Communication, language and literacy

99. Since the children have well below average levels of skills in all these areas staff ensure that appropriate activities are provided to ensure they are developed adequately. Through good planning and teaching these activities are often linked to the other areas of learning and children make steady progress in both nursery and reception classes. By the time they are ready to enter Year 1 about half of the children will have achieved the early learning goals.
100. In both the nursery and reception classes children enjoy listening to stories, and have regular opportunities to share books with each other and with adults. All adults are skilful at reading expressively to make the text come alive, and consequently ensure that children find stories an enjoyable experience and develop their skills as listeners. Children listen carefully to the teacher’s questions about the books she is reading to them but their responses are not always given in full sentences.
101. Most reception children hold books the right way and start at the beginning and turn the pages. They know that print is read from left to right. Only the most able can read any of the words, but others are able to tell the story in detail and answer questions accurately on the content. In the nursery children use the role-play area of the three bears house to re-enact the story, and to talk on the telephone and make marks on the notepad. They are well supported in this activity by the skilful interventions of adults who join in with them. Children use paint to make lines on paper whilst another group play robots and follow instructions in making writing patterns with a coloured pen. In reception children practice their handwriting skills and letter formation, and carry out a range of pencil control exercises. Some are able to write their names in well-formed letters, and write captions for their animal pictures using their knowledge of letter sounds. The reception class teacher uses the Literacy Strategy well to support reading. This is helping to develop children’s phonic skills through stories and rhymes, in word and sentence level work. These skills are extended and developed further through the use of a published phonics-teaching programme.

Mathematical development

102. The children’s number skills in counting are developing well due to the good quality of the teaching they receive, and taking their well below average starting point into account. Teachers use every opportunity to reinforce number concepts.
103. In the nursery children sort groups of objects into sets, matching the objects to the numeral. They use apparatus to create patterns and lines of colours involving the numeral two. They sort by shape the basic two-dimensional shapes and use the names ‘square’ ‘triangle’ ‘circle’ and ‘rectangle’.
104. During snack time reception children count out straws for the milk cartons, and the slices of apples as they are cut up. They sing number songs about “Five Little Speckled Frogs”. Appropriate activities using play dough, dice, cards, and cars to measure the distance travelled, help children to use mathematical vocabulary like ‘longer’ and ‘shorter’. Most of the reception class can count to ten and many well

beyond. Just over half the children will have achieved the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

105. Many of the children enter the nursery with very little knowledge and understanding of the world beyond their own immediate environment. They are presented with many practical opportunities to make good progress in this area. About half of the children will achieve the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.
106. In reception children investigate the forces of push and pull through organised play using toy trains, and car mats. This is extended to include an effective real life problem-solving situation by finding ways of moving Cinderella's coach made from a large box, up and down the school corridor. The younger children explore the effect of adding water to icing sugar to see how it changes when it is stirred, and how they are then able to spread it onto a biscuit. They observe well the effect of blowing through a straw on each other's hair, and on a ping-pong ball. When the teacher uses a hairdryer they are amazed that the ball appears to hover unsupported in the air. Planting cress seeds enables the children to observe them growing at first hand. Children investigate static electricity using balloons, and light sources using torches. A topic on the ice-cream van provides good opportunities to examine melting and freezing, and children make their own ice-cubes and measure how long they take to melt.
107. All children have good opportunities to investigate construction materials and join them together to make towers and garages. Children also have regular and effective opportunities to develop early computer skills by pressing buttons or using the mouse to match sounds and pictures for example. Children develop confidence through the good range of activities and experiences provided for them.

Physical development

108. The outdoor play area is used well to help the children make good progress in the development of their physical skills. A range of equipment is used to provide variety of opportunities to experience bicycles, scooters, and other wheeled toys to develop control and use of space. However, not all the children will achieve the early learning goals by the time they reach the end of their time in reception even though they receive effective teaching and progress is good. This is because their starting level is well below average and there is much ground to make up. The nursery children begin to learn to work together to control the parachute and develop co-ordination at the same time through the manoeuvring of a variety of different sized balls into the hole in the middle. They observe the differences in the way each ball moves and how this affects their control. In the reception class children understand the health reasons why they change their clothes for physical activities. They are developing a secure and safe awareness of using space and use it imaginatively during a movement lesson. They listen to the 'Toy Box' tape and pretend to be robots and follow instructions modelling the actions carefully. Teachers also teach skills such cutting, sewing, and threading to develop control of finer movements.

Creative development

109. About half the children will achieve the early learning goals in this area, The others will not do so because of their very low level of skill when they enter the nursery. Teachers provide them with a good range of creative experiences using paints and crayons to produce their own pictures. The higher attaining children make effective designs using straws to blow the paint across the paper, and linked to their science investigation on air. Play dough is used to make model snowmen, and it is rolled into lengths linked to mathematics to show 'longer' and 'shorter'. Older children mix colours and produce their own shade cards. Puppets are made through links with the Family Literacy group, and are used by the children to tell or retell well-known stories like *Cinderella*.

ENGLISH

- The good progress made in the infants is due to good teaching overall.
- Pupils also make good progress in Years 5 and 6 because of the good teaching they receive.
- The subject co-ordinators are committed to raising standards.
- Speaking and listening skills are weak and are slowing pupils' rate of progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils' writing skills are weak.
- There is underachievement by the higher attaining pupils.
- There is considerable underachievement by boys in English.

110. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection although standards have remained well below the national average for seven and 11 year olds. Results in the 2001 national tests show that standards at age 11 were well below average when compared with those attained in similar schools. At age seven pupils improved scores meant they were attaining average standards in line with similar schools in reading and writing. During the inspection overall standards were found to have risen slightly and are now below average, rather than well below average. The school is now making satisfactory improvement.
111. Girls achieve higher standards than the boys do, and there is underachievement amongst the higher attaining pupils because they are set the same work as the average pupils. The support for the very high proportion (around ten per cent) of pupils with special educational needs is effective and this enables them to make good progress, though they achieve well below average standards. This has a profound effect on the overall standards achieved.
112. When pupils enter the school many have quite limited speaking skills and their listening skills are poorly developed. Very few have any reading skills or pencil control to enable them to write. As they move through the school they make sound and at times good progress, but due to their low starting point, they do not manage to achieve by the age of 11 standards that are typical for their age.
113. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average. The school does not provide enough planned opportunities in lessons to develop these aspects of English. There are some examples of good teaching of speaking and listening, but this is not consistent and is not shared effectively enough. During the literacy hour some effective opportunities are created for the development of speaking through discussion. In a Year 6 lesson pupils tried to define the term 'discussion'. Due to their rather limited range of vocabulary they found this difficult. They also considered "Should mobile phones be barred in schools?" They learned effectively how to identify the key facts that can be used to summarise the argument. When presenting their arguments they did so with confidence whilst the other pupils listened carefully. Such good progress is not always apparent, for example in a Year 4 lesson pupils responded hesitantly and with single word answers to the teacher's questions about *Peter Rabbit*. Whilst the higher attaining pupils replied with greater assurance, suggesting some possible explanations for events in the story, the teacher did not seek to extend pupils' weak speaking skills when they responded in monosyllabic ways.
114. Considering pupils' low starting point on entry to school pupils make good progress to attain satisfactory standards in reading by Year 2. The higher attaining pupils read fluently and with confidence, and talk enthusiastically about the story they are reading. They ably demonstrate their ability to accurately sound out unfamiliar polysyllabic words. The average and below average pupils also enjoy reading and use their knowledge of sounds to tackle unfamiliar words. The older pupils show a fluctuating pattern of development in their reading skills and their limited range of vocabulary restricts their progress so that by the age of 11 overall standards are below average. This is due to inconsistent quality of teaching, especially in lower junior classes. For example, when a Year 5 pupil is reading quite a challenging text on *Great Disasters* the meaning of words like 'billowing' and 'midst' cause some difficulty.
115. Many pupils like to read stories by favourite authors but have little knowledge of many of the books written by well-known children's authors. The oldest pupils know how to use the index in the non-fiction section of the library. The higher attaining and average pupils read expressively and talk knowledgeably

about the plot and the characters, and their reading skills enable them to cope reasonably well with most texts. The systematic teaching of phonics, booster classes, and the Additional Literacy Strategy provides effective support for lower attaining pupils, though they have difficulty when reading texts in other subjects.

116. Attainment in writing is below average across the school. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are supported soundly in the development of their writing but the quality of this is below average with weak spelling and untidy writing. The low level of achievement in writing for the below average pupils also detrimentally affects the standards they reach in other subjects, including science, geography, history and religious education. Average pupils' writing is not as imaginative as similar pupils' work in other schools. However, these pupils are belatedly beginning to join their handwriting and to pay appropriate attention to punctuation. In Year 6, pupils of all abilities write for a range of different audiences, including play scripts, newspaper articles, biographical writing and fictional stories. The higher attaining and average writers develop interesting ideas with appropriate vocabulary to create effect. Their writing has story lines that show some imagination, punctuation that is used fairly accurately, and handwriting that is legibly formed and joined. However, this level of skill is average in comparison to standards in other schools because higher attaining pupils only complete the same work that is set for the other attainment groups.
117. Most pupils show a positive attitude towards learning, but on occasions a few of them quickly lose interest and this can have an adverse effect upon their progress. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory generally, but some challenging behaviour at times has a detrimental effect upon the learning of others. However, relationships between staff and pupils are usually positive.
118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In the lessons seen teachers showed a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy that is now established practise in school. Lessons are planned appropriately but there is a tendency to plan the same level of work for the average and above average pupils and consequently there is some underachievement. Learning objectives are not always clearly identified. Basic skills are taught satisfactorily and pupils are systematically taught letter sounds, common spelling patterns and basic handwriting skills. There is some sound practise in the management of pupils. Lessons are mostly taught at an appropriate pace and resources and artefacts are used well to support learning. Work is generally marked regularly with comments to help pupils improve their work further. There is developing practise in the use of assessment of pupils' work against National Curriculum levels, and the setting of individual targets as a result to help pupils improve their standards of work. Staffing difficulties and the succession of temporary teachers in some of the lower junior classes has had the effect of slowing progress for this group of pupils.
119. There have been considerable staffing difficulties in lower junior classes that have impacted profoundly on progress and standards. Some classes have had a succession of teachers and the work provided in the sample for inspectors showed clearly the effect of changes in teachers. Differing levels of expectation are shown by fragmented curriculum coverage and lurches in progress.
120. The setting of pupils in older junior classes is having positive impact on progress and standards because the work is more effectively targeted at the different attainment groups. However, the total impact has not been as great in English as it has in mathematics, where pupils in Years 5 and 6 are mixed together in the sets. Thus, in English, the Year 5 pupils do not consistently get the additional challenge that working with Year 6 pupils brings in mathematics. In other respects, the teaching of English for Year 5 and 6 pupils is much more effective than that for pupils in Year 3 and 4.
121. Progress in the infants is good because of the effectiveness of the teaching, and because teachers have high expectations of the pupils and give them constant reinforcement. In the juniors most pupils acquire skills and learn at a steady pace, but there are a few who have not yet developed a learning habit, are slow at completing their work and consequently their progress is limited. Boys are less productive than girls are, allow their interest to wander, and in some cases are not able to take responsibility for their own learning. Girls interact more in the classroom and concentrate well on their work.

122. The English curriculum is now based appropriately upon the National Literacy Strategy, with additional time set aside for the development of writing skills. Regular spelling lists are given for pupils to learn, often as a part of their homework. A new handwriting scheme has been introduced and pupils are given regular practice. Good quality reading books have been banded to ensure pupils are reading at the right level. These aspects of provision make a sound contribution to the development of skills and knowledge. However, the school has not yet developed a programme to ensure the systematic development of speaking and listening skills, which is currently an area of weakness. Drama is used occasionally to extend and develop pupils' speaking skills, but the school has not developed a regular timetable for this aspect in order that all pupils might benefit equally.
123. The subject coordinators work effectively to manage the subject though their involvement in rigorous, direct monitoring of standard, teaching and learning is not great. However, they monitor teachers' planning effectively and analyse test data to assess progress in reading and writing. Following this they share the strengths and weaknesses with the whole staff on a regular basis. The coordinators have put in place a number of initiatives to raise standards, some of them with good potential for the future. These include the assessment of writing across the school, the setting of individual targets for pupils, the provision of good quality fiction and non-fiction books, and well-organised libraries for both infants and juniors. The organisation of theatre workshops also provides valuable experiences for pupils, as do the visits of a local author who comes in to read his stories. There are good links with parents and the Family Literacy Scheme has a positive impact on progress by fostering relationships and understanding with parents.

MATHEMATICS

- The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced satisfactorily.
- Standards are below those expected for seven and eleven years.
- The quality of teaching is too inconsistent and this has a serious impact on pupils' progress.
- Time given to the teaching of mathematics is appropriate but some mathematics lessons are overlong.
- Wall displays and other materials in classrooms make them mathematically stimulating places
- In many year groups the work for higher attaining pupils is not challenging enough.

124. Since the time that the school was in Special Measures the quality of teaching in mathematics has improved. The driving force for this has been the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy at Long Lane. The strategy and its related training gives the school a secure framework for planning and assessment, and the training has lifted the quality of teaching of permanent members of staff. Other government led initiatives such as funding the boosting of standards of older pupils have been readily embraced by the school and these are making a positive impact.
125. Standards of attainment for seven and eleven-year-olds are below average. This is confirmed by test results and the observations made by inspectors. In the SATs for eleven-year-olds in the summer of 2001 the standards achieved were well below the national average and this has been the situation for a number of years. When compared with similar schools, attainment in mathematics was again well below average. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in school and their results impact significantly on the overall standards achieved in the SATs each year. The performance of the seven-year-olds in the national tests in the summer of 2001 was also well below the national and similar school averages and this too has been the situation for some considerable time. The gap between school and national performance has remained steady and the challenge is to increase the rate of improvement so the gap begins to be closed.
126. Compared to others, the children start school with well below average levels of mathematical skills and knowledge. The school does well to develop these skills at the foundation stage but standards dip in Year 1, they pick up at Year 2 and fall back at Year 3 and 4, accelerating again at Year 5 and 6. This roller coaster ride is unsatisfactory and largely accounted for by inconsistencies in teaching and the difficulties that the school has had in providing stable and good quality teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4.

127. About a third of the Year 2 pupils already have a fair knowledge of place value to 100, manage simple addition and subtraction, can halve numbers, can count in 10s and 2s, identify number patterns on 100 squares. They can halve and double numbers name simple shapes and fractions and also produce bar charts based on information that they have gathered. However the majority of pupils are working from a very low base line and are operating at a knowledge and skills base more appropriate for pupils twelve months younger.
128. By the age of eleven, just over half the pupils can recall multiplication bonds and do other calculations in their heads with an acceptable degree of accuracy and speed. The higher attainers can, by using various written methods, multiply two digit numbers by two digit numbers, divide four digit numbers by a single digit, calculate percentages and carry out calculations involving fractions. They also name and identify the properties of common regular shapes, plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants and use and interpret a variety of graphs and diagrams. Standards are below average overall because not enough pupils attain this level of competence and the proportion of pupils completing level 5 work is below that found in most other primary schools.
129. The overall quality of teaching mathematics is satisfactory. One lesson observed was of unsatisfactory teaching quality and the scrutiny of pupils' work shows clearly the inconsistencies in teaching. Good teaching is clustered in particular classes, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
130. A little of the teaching of mathematics is very good but the strengths of this are often unrecognised because of weaknesses in the school's monitoring procedures. Such strengths are therefore not shared enough and opportunities are missed to improve the overall quality of teaching. A delightful Year 1 lesson on money is an example of very good teaching. Here, the pupils were playing the role of customers purchasing cakes from a baker's shop. The class teacher played the role of the shopkeeper and the pupils were bright eyed and bubbling with excitement and anticipation as they scanned the price list, discussed what they could buy, what change they would have and the additional items they could afford. The teacher carefully recorded the key language used. The work was followed up with closely matched and well-prepared work sheets that reinforced the knowledge gained and took the learning on further. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm flowed through the lesson, the pupils' interest was fully engaged, they enjoyed the tasks and they couldn't help but make good progress as the activity was so well matched to their interest, knowledge and experience. In contrast the work in a parallel class on the same topic lacked the sparkle, pace and impact on learning, though it was good to see that pupils used real as well as plastic token coins in their work.
131. The scrutiny of work shows that there is an extensive use of worksheets throughout the school and that in some year groups these have been used indiscriminately. In general completed work sheets are not dated and do not chart pupils' progress adequately. The pupils' workbooks are generally neat and well looked after showing a pride in achievement
132. At Year 6 where pupils are set by ability a class of the ablest pupils were seen at work in a lesson on co-ordinates. The pupils worked with enthusiasm and interest at demanding tasks appropriate for their age. The good teaching ensured that the pace of learning was good and at the end of the lesson the teacher gathered the pupils together to effectively emphasise the essential features covered. The setting of Year 5 and 6 pupils by ability is effective and this is particularly so for the Year 5 pupils where their standards are pulled along in the slipstream of those in Year 6.
133. In general, classrooms are mathematically stimulating places. Mathematics discovery tables, puzzles, attractive displays of investigation and important facts and figures to reinforce learning and capture interest are present. This is a good feature of mathematics in the school.
134. The trend in the performance of boys is much lower than that of girls in the SATs at seven and at eleven in the 2001 SATs. A major factor in this difference is that too many boys have short attention spans and become easily distracted during lessons. Some mathematics lessons are overlong and above the time recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. A number of pupils flag towards the end - being unable to sustain pace, interest and concentration. In addition, a number of boys display disruptive and unacceptable behaviour. Timetabling adjustments are possible to provide shorter lessons yet maintain

the generous time allocation given to mathematics. Where teaching is weak and the work uninspiring, boys in particular lose interest, behaviour suffers and progress slows.

135. There are attempts to cater for the needs and capabilities of the higher attaining pupils particularly through setting and booster work at Year 5 and 6 but this is too late to make a really significant impact. Higher attaining pupils don't do as well as they should because their work is often identical to that set for other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, make steady progress in mathematics because of the effective support that they are given that assists them in achieving their personal targets.
136. Homework is set for pupils and that seen for Year 6 is completed regularly. Most of this is practice of numeracy skills. This is important but the opportunity to set investigative work and engaging the involvement of parents is not fully developed.
137. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning for both junior and infant pupils is developing well and satisfactory examples of work using spreadsheets and databases were seen. The potential for the use of computers to extend pupil's skills is recognised and is being extended soundly. However, there is under-use of mathematical skills and knowledge in subjects such as geography and history.
138. There is good use of classroom assistants to support learning by helping individuals, including statemented pupils and groups. In the best examples these assistants are involved in the planning, keep useful records and provide pupils with support and, when appropriate, also gave them opportunity to exercise independence.
139. Systems of tracking pupil progress and target setting in the past have not been good enough. New systems introduced in September are still at the stage of bedding in. The use of marking to support pupils' progress towards their targets and to identify ways to improve the work is inconsistent. There is not much self-evaluation of learning and progress by the pupils themselves.
140. The management of mathematics is satisfactory; the curriculum post holder's leadership in developing resources and training is effective. Monitoring of teaching has taken place and information gathered but evaluation and action have been limited; for example, the underachievement of groups of boys has been identified but effective strategies to address this problem are not yet in place. The monitoring of the work of supply teachers is below standard. The coordinator is committed to improvement and works hard to develop the subject. There is the capacity to correct the weaknesses and build on strengths in the subject, given rigorous management procedures to identify and evaluate provision and standards.

SCIENCE

- There has been sustained improvement in pupils' attainment by the age of eleven over the last five years.
- The school's Science Week has had a significant positive impact on pupils' and parents' attitudes to the subject.
- Pupils at the end of both infants' and juniors' stages make accelerated progress.
- There is a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching of the subject throughout the school.
- Assessment needs to be used more consistently and rigorously to inform pupils' future learning needs.
- Planning processes need to be improved to ensure that teachers' expectations are raised for all pupils, particularly boys and more able pupils.

141. During the last inspection a high percentage of teaching in science was found to be unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case although inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain and affect the pupils' rates of progress in some year groups. Rates of progress are no longer unsatisfactory but lack consistency. This can still be attributed in part, however, to pupils' previous experience not being sufficiently built upon due to a lack of detailed assessments. With the exception of Years 2 and 6, higher attaining pupils are still insufficiently challenged.
142. Pupils' opportunities to experiment and investigate have also improved since the last inspection and are no longer unsatisfactory. This still needs to be developed more consistently however in order to both

extend the learning of higher achieving pupils and to provide opportunities for boys to integrate more with girls, raise their aspirations and to see themselves as learners.

143. Standards at the end of both infant and junior stages are below average. The school's results in National Curriculum tests however are adversely affected by the inclusion of the results of pupils from the special needs unit. These results can reduce the overall proportion of pupils achieving national average levels by as much as ten per cent. The school's efforts to make improvements are proving productive in raising standards; for example in Year 6, a higher percentage of pupils are being targeted to achieve at the higher level 5. In Year 2 similarly, the percentage being targeted to achieve at the higher level 3 is above the national average.
144. Progress over time is not yet as good as it could be; for example the school is not yet setting targets for the subject in each year group and assessments are not sufficiently focused to secure teachers' understanding of how much progress is being achieved. Marking for example is used inconsistently as a means of informing individual pupils how scientific skills and knowledge might be improved in the future. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and make satisfactory progress.
145. Teaching in infant classes is satisfactory overall with some good features. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use a range of suitable resources. In better lessons good questioning techniques allow pupils to learn through being confident about making their own decisions; pupils support one another's learning through discussion and opportunities are given for pupils to apply their own investigative skills.
146. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good understanding of light and dark and how sources of light can be distinguished and categorised. They are able to conduct simple experiments to investigate to what extent people can see in the dark. Pupils can distinguish between forces that push and pull and can use results to make comparisons.
147. Teaching in the juniors is satisfactory with some examples of good teaching in later year groups. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and vocabulary is used to support pupils' literacy skills and extend their learning. Teaching styles in some classes in Years 3 and 4 tend to be prescriptive, limiting opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas and relying too heavily on the use of worksheets. Junior pupils describe accurately the experiments they have observed or conducted. They can produce relevant diagrams and express results in both table and graph forms. However they do not consistently interpret their results in order to draw appropriate conclusions and their learning is therefore limited.
148. Not enough pupils in Years 3 and 4 can explain the properties of magnets and which materials they attract. Neither can all conduct simple experiments to test the comparative strengths of magnets and can apply fair testing techniques to their investigations. Standards later in school show improvement, though they are still below average overall because pupils have much ground to make up. Pupils in Year 5 have good knowledge of electrical components and what part each plays in electrical circuits. Pupils in Year 6 understand life processes; for example most can explain the effect of exercise on pulse rate and the heart putting forward reasoned arguments and drawing conclusions from results of experiments. Pupils in these classes can also conduct experiments to demonstrate the importance of taking repeated measurements for accuracy. They are able to extend their learning when given the opportunity to devise tests of their own and discuss the results. This practice is not sufficiently widespread however and restricts the attainment of higher attaining pupils. Pupils in both Years 5 and 6 can supplement their learning by accessing material on the Internet but the use of ICT in general to support pupil's learning in science is under-developed.
149. The enthusiastic subject co-ordinator has been able to monitor attainment throughout the school but has not been able to develop a sustained impact on the quality of teaching of science in all classes. This is because there have been too few opportunities to check and evaluate teaching and learning elsewhere in school. The lack of such monitoring has meant that lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils and inconsistencies in the way in which assessment data is used in the target setting process have not been identified quickly enough. The coordinator has, however correctly identified that the use of ICT to support and extend pupils' learning in science needs to be developed further.

150. The Science Week organised by the co-ordinator has produced good quality work from pupils throughout the school, raising the profile of the subject with pupils and parents and providing opportunities for pupils' to support one another's learning and to extend their subject knowledge and investigative skills. Work by pupils in Years 1 and 2 on fingerprints show how they can discern between composite, arch, whorl and loop types. The work generated by this event also reinforces the cross-curricular links that have been developed between science and other subjects of the curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- Standards are in line with levels expected for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds with better attainment towards the end of both infant and junior stages.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some examples of good and very good teaching.
- Pupils' work is valued through the use of imaginative and stimulating displays.
- Pupils' evaluation of their own work needs to be more consistently applied.
- The use of both sketch and design books to record pupils' ideas, evaluations and constructive comments for future improvement needs to be developed.

151. Although lessons were observed in design and technology, no art and design lessons were seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made therefore on evidence collected through a scrutiny of pupils' past and present work, displays in corridors and classrooms, teachers' planning and through discussions with pupils about their work.
152. Overall standards are average in both subjects at the ages of seven and eleven. There is evidence of higher attainment by pupils in Years 2 and 6, where progress also accelerates. As reported at the time of the previous inspection, the range, quality and amount of resources available to pupils are good. Pupils and teachers benefit from detailed schemes of work and pupils are able to select from a variety of materials using appropriate criteria to judge fitness for purpose.
153. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with evidence of good or very good teaching towards the end of the infant and junior years. In lessons where teaching is better, questioning techniques are good and are used effectively to secure and extend pupils' learning. Similarly, in better lessons pupils are given more opportunities to make decisions for themselves. Where teaching is less effective pupils work to prescriptive guidelines with little opportunity for them to take any responsibility for their own learning.
154. Imaginative use of display is made to support pupils' learning in both subjects. In one instance, the teacher made positive references to the display of good quality art work achieved by pupils in a parallel class as a means of setting high expectations. When given the opportunity, pupils work effectively together to solve problems and in so doing support one another's learning. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 class where mixed groups of boys and girls worked together more effectively than single gender groups. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and also make satisfactory progress.
155. By the age of eleven pupils demonstrate a wide range of construction techniques, such as the use of construction kits in modelling moving toys, and an understanding of design development as in the good standard of work on pneumatics showing progress from original ideas. Although a good example was observed of pupils in Year 5 using a 'Paint' program to design an ideal playground, the use of ICT in both subjects is generally weak.
156. There is some evidence of pupils evaluating their own work; for example in a Year 5 class pupils evaluated their own designs for a suspension bridge in order to effect future improvements and then offered suggestions to one another as to how their designs might be improved. This practice is not sufficiently widespread however and the process of writing down these evaluations tends to be overlooked, missing an opportunity to support pupils' writing skills. Even where pupils do write evaluations of their work, the quality of the writing accepted by teachers is poor. Similarly marking is not being used to support pupils' literacy skills. In some year groups, marking is being used to inform future learning and improvement but the practice lacks consistency throughout the school.
157. Pupils' work is linked as appropriate to cross-curricular themes and where this occurs, skills and knowledge gained are applied effectively. For example a recent Year 6 project on shops used 'Diagon Alley' from the Harry Potter books as a stimulus, providing valuable cross-curricular links with literacy.
158. Pupils behave well during lessons displaying a positive attitude. They enjoy the practical nature of both subjects and use their time effectively to also develop personal and social skills.

159. The co-ordinator has a strong interest and wealth of experience in both subjects. When needed he is available to support teachers' work in the classroom and is prepared to offer advice, though there is little direct monitoring of art and design in the classroom. The resources are plentiful and well organised so that they are accessed easily and he has retained examples of pupils' work for purposes of setting standards and raising teachers' expectations. Pupils' work in junior classes shows secure design processes; for example in the use of paper mock-ups in the development of cube structures during the manufacture of containers. These containers are subsequently developed to produce larger and more sophisticated containers designed according to fitness for purpose requirements.
160. The art and design curriculum has particularly benefited from the use of a one-week residential course for pupils at the Menai Centre in North Wales. Pupils use cross-curricular themes to explore a wide range of media in which to work and this extends and enriches the curricular experiences they enjoy in school. A group of parent volunteers has also added an additional dimension to the work of the school in creative subjects and has led to the development of wall friezes created through the use of an artist in residence.

GEOGRAPHY

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new structured planning scheme builds pupils' learning in small steps.• There is improved level of pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject.• There is good potential in the new management and action planning for the subject.• Standards are not high enough.• Writing skills are weak in the technical style and vocabulary of geography.• Mathematics skills are not put to good use in geography. |
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161. Standards are below the average expected for the pupils' ages by the ages of seven and eleven. This is mainly because pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in the past. However, provision has improved since the previous inspection. The adoption of a new structured planning scheme means that teachers work to clearer lesson objectives, enabling pupils to make sound progress in lessons. The teachers and classroom assistants give good support to pupils who have special educational needs. In general, pupils' geographical knowledge is built satisfactorily but weaknesses in the quality of writing reduce pupils' capability to record their knowledge effectively.
162. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good lessons. In these lessons teachers get the pupils excited and interested in the world around them. For instance, because of the teacher's lively introduction, a Year 1 class was bubbling with ideas about the leisure facilities in the Orford area, and why they were needed. By showing pupils of different abilities various ways to record their ideas the quicker ones were able to write short sentences, others could label their plans or draw suitable diagrams. Based on the teacher's good subject knowledge, Year 5 pupils have become interested in the travels of solo rowers and sailors. They collect newspaper accounts and follow the televised news stories. This is an important first step in framing questions of a geographical nature.
163. The older pupils are more comfortable in discussions, where they can express their ideas in speech. This was a strong feature in the Year 5 lesson because the teacher had taken care to match the level of the work to the pupils' attainment levels. Thus the work was challenging for all. The lower attaining pupils felt as much a sense of accomplishment as the higher attainers, and all learned well because they were finding things out for themselves, using and developing their literacy skills in the process. When speaking their knowledge ranges much further than when they write down reports or ideas. Generally the older pupils do not use the technical words sufficiently and their mathematics skills for mapping and direction lag behind. Teachers do not make enough use of the school's good software for these purposes. Although there has been little direct monitoring of the curriculum, the coordinator has begun a stringent review of the subject. She is wisely focusing on a simple but effective system of assessing pupils' attainment. This will establish in the future what standards need to be in each year, to ensure that pupils move from making satisfactory to good progress.

HISTORY

- Standards are average in the infants.
- Standards in the juniors require improvement, raising pupils' awareness of their own learning.
- The new structured planning scheme builds pupils' learning in small steps
- There is good potential in the new management and action planning for the subject.
- Improvements are required in pupils' writing in history.
- The learning of the higher attaining pupils is not brisk enough.

164. Standards are likely to be below the average expected for the pupils' age by the end of Year 6. This is mainly because pupils have made unsatisfactory progress during the junior years. However, provision has improved since the previous inspection. The adoption of a new structured planning scheme means that teachers work to clearer lesson objectives, and concentrate more closely on teaching historical skills. This now enables pupils to make sound progress in lessons. The teachers and classroom assistants give good support to pupils who have special educational needs.
165. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good lessons. In these lessons teachers get the pupils interested and thinking about the puzzles put before them. For instance, because of the teacher's careful preparation of materials, the attention of pupils in a Year 6 class was engrossed as they tried to interpret the pictures of Greek weapons. By encouraging discussion well, the teacher extended the pupils' thinking and reasoning powers, prompting them with the questions "why" and "what do you mean?" The pupils began to answer in complex sentences, linking their earlier learning. For example "It can't have been the Spartans, because they hadn't invented those weapons yet." This was an important first step in framing questions of a historical nature. It also enhanced pupils' interest, with several of the special needs pupils bringing their own books from home to use in the lesson. Although pupils are interpreting sources well, they do not know the different kinds of sources, nor are they as clear about the reasons why historical figures acted as they did.
166. The older pupils are more comfortable in discussing than in writing. Teachers are beginning to match the level of the work to the pupils' attainment levels more effectively and the below average attaining pupils are given help to enable them to write their ideas correctly. However, teachers do not expect enough from higher attaining pupils in the way of quantity or depth of ideas. Teachers do not make enough use of the school's good software to enable pupils to finding things out for themselves, independently and on their own initiative. The development and application of mathematical skills and knowledge in history is also a weakness.
167. Most teachers now find suitable artefacts for pupils to study at first hand. This approach is stronger in the infants, and leads to interesting lessons with good learning opportunities. For instance in a Year 2 lesson the pupils could clearly see the development of lighting devices over thousands of years. Study of the various lamps enabled them to speculate why people needed to improve them. The teacher showed the passage of time by drawing a timeline. Pupils need plenty of these, because their sense of chronology is not strong. There has been no direct monitoring of history but the coordinator is ready to start a planned, intensive review of the subject. She is wisely focusing on where standards are and where they need to be at the end of each year. There is also a need to make the assessment of knowledge and skills gained in history more consistent across the school.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- The new structured planning scheme, which builds pupils' learning in small steps is a positive development.
- Staff are determined to get the best value out of the computer suite.
- Pupils are given a wide range of experiences and they build skills effectively.
- The use of assessment information to accelerate the learning of higher attaining pupils could be improved.
- The use of the computer to support learning in a wider range of subjects is not consistent.
- There is not enough software specifically for pupils with special educational needs.

168. Standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The reason for the improvement is the completion of staff training, which has led to increased confidence and expertise and greatly improved resources for the subject. There has been good determination to improve ICT and staff have improved their personal levels of knowledge and confidence in the subject. The curriculum is now focused more consistently on the development of skills and knowledge across the full range of the subject. Because of its central priority, the headteacher and senior managers have made frequent checks on the progress of improvement.
169. Pupils build skills and knowledge in ICT at satisfactory rates through the school. From the simple word processing skills developed in Year 1, they follow a systematic curriculum to learn more about the features of data bases, word processing and spreadsheet software. The oldest pupils use these packages to compile, save, retrieve and edit their work and they are beginning to identify ways in which the computerisation of such work is different from manual processing. Some examples of ICT work in the sample provided to inspectors showed good skills in the formatting and presentation of information.
170. The teaching of ICT throughout the school is satisfactory. Over a third of lessons are good. In these lessons the teachers get the pupils off to a quick start and explain to them how the computer skills will help them in other subjects. For instance, Year 6 pupils saw how their use of spreadsheets could help them in mathematics, by using numbers to keep within a budget. When Year 2 pupils learned the skill of inserting line breaks, they understood how this would be useful in neat presentation of English work. All teachers focus well on the important basic skills. As a result Year 2, pupils are good at word processing and art applications, and Year 6 pupils are getting a good understanding of handling data and making multimedia presentations.
171. The teachers keep a general track of pupils' attainment in ICT, though some improvement is required to produce a consistent process of assessment and evaluation of skills development. However, the use of this information to identify the higher attaining pupils and set them more challenging work is imperfect and this reduces the progress that these pupils make. Pupils with special educational needs, however, get good support in lessons enabling them to make good progress. Teachers apply the skills learnt in the computer suite well to a good range of other subjects. For instance, the 'duck flying' software helps Year 3 pupils to understand the varying of numbers to produce a desired result. Year 4 pupils were successful with the difficult concept of building up a branching data classification tree, a skill linked to mathematics and science. The success was due both to the pupils' perseverance and working together in pairs to solve problems, and to the teachers' subject knowledge helping pupils out of difficulties.
172. Occasionally teachers need to show the whole class a particular point on one computer. This does not work so well because not all the pupils can see the monitor. The room is not yet fitted with a large screen, which would ease this problem. Classroom computers are not used as much as they might be. This means that a wider range of applications, in more subjects, is delayed. It also inhibits the opportunities for pupils to select their own uses for the computer independently. This also delays the extension of literacy through wider research. The enthusiastic new coordinator is driving forward the subject's action plan and further monitoring of the subject is scheduled. A useful bank of portable computers will soon be available for staff and pupils. This means that teachers will be able to plan for whole group rather than just pairs of pupils.

MUSIC

- Teaching and learning quality are both good.
- Standards are average overall.
- The quality of singing is good.
- Music played in assemblies is not promoted well enough.
- Most pupils respond positively, though a few are distracted and are not managed well enough.
- The subject is well managed.

173. The school has sustained the strengths in music since the 1998 inspection. Pupils are given a good grounding in music and by the age of seven and eleven, standards are average.

174. The curriculum for music is well balanced and covers all strands – composing, performing, listening to and appreciating music. The curriculum complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum and the programme of activities outside lessons, including concerts in school and performances elsewhere, makes a good contribution to the quality of education. Because curriculum coverage is consistent across the strands, pupils build skills and knowledge well. Year 2 pupils, for example, work confidently from a music score based on simple symbols. They can clap the rhythms shown and write the symbols under words to show how these would be played. They compose straightforward, but effective pieces for untuned percussion and perform this well.
175. Much of the work observed during the inspection was centred on singing. The quality of singing throughout the school is good; it is enthusiastic, increasingly melodic as pupils move through the school and singing in parts is developed successfully. There is some above average performance in singing. Pupils in junior classes also compose pieces and in Year 3, they follow a colour-coded score successfully, as directed by their conductor, to perform the piece after rehearsal.
176. Music makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but there are missed opportunities in assemblies to think about, talk about and reflect on the music played at the start and end of the session. Pupils' responses are satisfactory overall. In lessons, attitudes, behaviour and relationships tend to be good, but in larger gatherings, such as hymn practice and assembly, a minority of pupils are distracted and are not always managed as successfully as they should be.
177. The quality of teaching is good overall. Most teaching in the junior classes is by a specialist teacher and this has a good effect on standards and progress. Other teachers who take music lessons, do so effectively. Subject knowledge, teaching methods and the development of skills and knowledge are all good.
178. Pupils with special educational needs are as successful in learning music as the other pupils. When pupils with statements from the three special educational needs units join other junior pupils for music, their progress is good and all enjoy each other's company.
179. Music is well managed. The coordinator, who is the specialist teacher too, has good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and firm ideas for future improvement. She has ensured that music is well provided for and that pupils make good progress. This is a model for some other subjects in school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards for seven and eleven year olds broadly in line with those expected. • An appropriate range of activities is provided for pupils. • Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good elements in both junior and infant lessons • The behaviour of a minority of junior boys in some PE lessons is below standard. |
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180. The standards reached in Physical Education (PE) by pupils of seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected nationally and are similar to those seen at the last inspection.
181. The school provides an appropriate range of activities and those observed during the inspection included gymnastics and dance. Older pupils undertake swimming regularly. School records show that all Year 6 pupils are able to swim unaided with 84 per cent able to swim at least 25 metres. This is a very satisfactory situation. The school makes good use of both halls and there is an adequate provision of sports equipment and gymnastics apparatus though some of this has reached the stage where replacements and repairs are needed.
182. Lessons for both juniors and infants are properly planned and linked to the school's scheme to ensure progression. Pupils are set activities matched to their capabilities and in the best lessons good use is made of demonstration to emphasise important teaching points and praise is used selectively. This is not so in all lessons.

183. In general pupils in infant classes work with concentration and imagination in PE trying out ideas independently and in a group. The standards of performance are satisfactory. For example, in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson the pupils were making good progress in developing and remembering sequences of movements containing balances and rolls using the apparatus. In a Year 1 dance and movement lesson pupils mimed the actions of constructing a toy storage box. They listened carefully and then convincingly sawed timber, hammered nails, painted the box and, in pairs, negotiated difficult sets of stairs to carry the completed box to a bedroom. The pupils worked well in pairs. The teacher took every opportunity to use the lesson to extend the pupils' vocabulary including the understanding of the language of position –the pupils needed to reach toys and various tools from behind and above them. There were three special needs pupils from the development centre also taking part. These pupils were fully integrated in the activities and made similar progress to their classmates. The lesson was well supported by a classroom assistant who provided sensible support when needed. Throughout the school those pupils with special needs make the same progress in PE as their classmates
184. The range of pupil performance and the quality of teaching in PE in junior classes varies considerably from good to unsatisfactory. Work on dance in an Year 6 lesson provided an example of good teaching and learning. The main teaching activity was based on listening very carefully to the mood, rhythm and change in pace in a piece of pop music and developing sequences of movement to reflect the music. The lesson was carefully prepared with diagrams, charts and learning objectives for the pupils to follow. The girls' observations of the dance routines of professional pop groups were used to good effect – but this was not a rehearsal of routines picked up parrot fashion from the TV. The teacher had tapped into the pupils' interest and enthusiasm and was harnessing it to take learning and perception further. The boys were making a good effort too. Behaviour was of a high standard and the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson.
185. In less successful lessons the quality of movement is not good, handstands and forward rolls are not well co-ordinated, pupils' interest not fully engaged and the behaviour of too many boys is generally poor. In most junior lessons seen during the inspection there were three or four boys who didn't pay attention and used the PE lesson as an opportunity to "mess about". The less successful lessons tended to be taken by temporary staff. Monitoring of teaching is not rigorous or prompt enough to ensure that these teachers are comfortable in the teaching of this curriculum area. A positive feature of all lessons is the period of vigorous activity particularly in warm-up sessions and firm emphasis placed on the relationship between fitness and good health. All pupils are appropriately dressed for their lessons.
186. Regular visits by the staff of Warrington Wolves Rugby Club are an imaginative means of encouraging interest and developing expertise.
187. The co-ordinator for PE monitors planning, resource provision and is responsible for the purchase of equipment. A little release time has been made available for monitoring teaching but at present the role is not complete. The coordinator is not as well informed about standards in swimming as might be the case because the data based on the assessment of swimming skills has not been shared well enough.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Standards are average in the infants.
- Standards are not high enough in the juniors.
- There is good focus given to the application of RE learning to pupils' daily lives.
- The sense of awe and reverence achieved in the best lessons is good.
- Pupils' writing in RE requires improvement.
- Higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough.

188. Standards are below the average by the end of Year 6. This is mainly because pupils have made unsatisfactory progress during the junior years. However, provision has improved since the previous inspection. The adoption of a new structured planning scheme means that teachers work to clearer lesson objectives, and give an equal emphasis to the attainment targets. This now enables pupils to make sound progress in lessons, both in learning about, and from, religion. Teachers and classroom

assistants give good support to pupils who have special educational needs. They often make good progress because this quality of support enables them to clarify and extend their ideas, and improve their ability to put their thoughts in writing. Such opportunities are not provided for average and higher attaining pupils because their work is usually exactly the same and there are not enough chances for pupils to write about their knowledge and thoughts in their own words and in their own ways.

189. In general, pupils build satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and major world religions as required in the locally agreed syllabus for RE. The work is firmly rooted in this syllabus and pupils show that they have learned as much *from* religion as *about* religion. The development of a clear moral code is a positive feature of RE and pupils show empathy and understanding of the beliefs and religious observances of other people. Much of the time in lessons is devoted to discussions about religion but there is less emphasis on writing and therefore, pupils' skills of formally recounting and interpreting their knowledge is weak.
190. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good, and very good, lessons. In these lessons teachers get the pupils fully involved, and thinking about how the learning applies to their own lives. In the infants this is done in a particularly lively way. For instance, by merging the learning from music, science and technology, the teacher immersed the Year 2 pupils in the experience surrounding David's battle with Goliath. The noise and music of battle, the chanting of slogans, and the action of the shadow puppets all made an indelible impression on the pupils' minds. As a result they were very clear about the difference between the Old and New Testaments, and how David, Goliath and the Philistines felt. Their learning was made stronger because they could apply those feelings to bullying as a feature in their own lives. Their research, used in the choral speaking made a solid contribution to progress in language skills.
191. The teachers of junior pupils approach the best lessons in a thoughtful way. By simple devices, such as the lighting of a candle, they signal to pupils that this is a special time. Even after a day of wet playtimes the pupils settle in a circle calmly, behave well, ready to reflect. The teachers use questioning well to draw out pupils' ideas on sensitive issues. By guiding and expanding the ideas the teachers help pupils to understand gratitude and think of conditions necessary for 'a perfect world'. With lessons like this teachers enable pupils to see the nature of prayer, and make them aware that different religions focus on similar concerns, but express them in different ways. Pupils show by their own questions that they know that these are important issues, and relevant to their own lives. They still express these ideas in simple ways, particularly in writing. Even the higher attaining pupils lack the necessary wider vocabulary of subject specific terms. The teachers tend not to use aids to writing, such as the computer, or the useful mind mapping spider, which they have on display for science. Shortcomings in the monitoring of RE have identified such weaknesses quickly enough. However, the commitment of the coordinator and the staff to make RE especially relevant to pupils makes a strong foundation for the future improvement of the subject, and for spirituality in the school.