

INSPECTION REPORT

Worsley Mesnes Community Primary School

Worsley Mesnes, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106404

Headteacher: Mrs B C Szwandt

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret Lewis
22787

Dates of inspection: 4th –7th December 2000

Inspection number: 224406

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kipling Avenue Worsley Mesnes Wigan
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor W Rotherham
Date of previous inspection:	5-6 November 1997 & 15-18 January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margaret J Lewis 22787	Registered inspector	English Music English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Judi Bedawi 19322	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How good does the school work in partnership with parents?
Bharathi Kutty 24027	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Staffing
John Collings 20752	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Assessment
Martyn Williams 31838	Team inspector	Science History Religious education	How well the school cultivates pupils' personal development – including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Worsley Mesnes Community Primary School is an average sized primary school with 254 pupils, made up of 131 boys and 123 girls aged between four and 11. The school is smaller than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Most children join the school after attending the Worsley Mesnes pre-school on a part-time basis. This is a new addition and under the management of the headteacher. Strong educational links exist between the pre-school and the reception classes. The school serves an area of mixed, privately owned and local authority owned housing. The proportion of pupils registered for free school meals is 23 per cent. This is above the average of 20 per cent and has more than doubled since the time of the previous inspection. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority groups and three pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has 67 pupils (26.5 per cent) on its register of special educational needs. This is above the average for schools nationally. There are four pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, (1.6 per cent) which is about average. The general attainment of pupils by the end of their reception year is what is expected for children of this age. In the infants there is one class for Year 2 pupils and three mixed-aged classes. Two are for reception and Year 1 children and one class is for Year 1 and 2 children. At the beginning of the juniors, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are taught in separate classes. Older pupils from both Years 5 and 6 are grouped into three mixed-age classes. These pupils are taught in ability sets of Year 5 and Year 6 for English and mathematics. The Department for Education has allocated funds for a new school to be built on the present site with expected completion in 2002-2003. The standard intake number for the new school is expected to be 30 pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has many good features. Pupils at 11 achieve appropriately in the subjects of English, mathematics and science against schools nationally. When results are compared with similar schools, attainment is good. Results in English are above those of similar schools and standards in mathematics are much higher. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2. The headteacher's very good leadership and management have been major factors in the school's progress from requiring special measures in 1996 to now being a good school. Although school maintenance costs contribute to a high level of spending for each pupil, taking all factors into consideration the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in the national tests for 11 year olds are higher than in similar schools in English. They are much higher in mathematics.
- Teaching is good at Key Stage 2. As a result pupils' learning is good. A very good check is made on how pupils are getting on in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- All pupils have good opportunities for learning.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils respond well to this in lessons and have good attitudes to their learning.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and she has very good support from the deputy headteacher and governors.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough by the age of 11.
- The over-boisterous behaviour of pupils in the playground.
- Attendance rates which are well below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has been transformed since the last full inspection early in 1996. Following a further inspection towards the end of 1997, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of schools judged that the school no longer required special measures. Since then it has continued to make strides and to improve in almost all aspects of its work, although levels of attendance and punctuality have declined. All the key issues for action have been dealt with from the 1996 and 1997 inspections, and progress has been good in all areas. Progress has also been made in areas that were not identified as key issues. Overall, improvement since the previous full inspection has been very good and the school is well placed to carry out further improvements. Since 1996, trends in test results for English, mathematics and science at the age of 11 have risen broadly the same as those found in other schools nationally. Although results in English and science have varied over these years, in mathematics the standard has been consistently above the national average. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is now good overall at Key Stage 2 and is satisfactory overall elsewhere in the school. The quality of learning opportunities in the curriculum is now good and the school plans very carefully what pupils should be taught. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The leadership and the management of the school are greatly improved. They are now very good. The governors play a significant role in the development of the school and fulfil their responsibilities well. Financial management is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	C	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	A	C	A	
Science	C	C	D	C	

Taking all three subjects together, pupils aged 11 achieved average standards in the national tests in 2000. Compared with similar schools they achieved above average standards overall. The most recent test results are above average in English and well above average in mathematics. Standards in science are average. In comparison with schools nationally, pupils achieved results in line with the national average in English and mathematics but below the average in science. Standards of the present Year 6 pupils are similar to those of last year. The school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics last year. It has set

challenging targets for the present year and higher targets still for 2002. Pupils make good progress in their reading and standards are above average by Year 6. Since the last full inspection when the school was put into special measures, results in English, mathematics and science have shown variations. They have risen overall in line with the national trend apart from science results for the Year 2000 which were below average. Inspection findings show that since the previous inspection standards at 11 have improved in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art, music and religious education. Standards in information technology have improved by the age of seven and in Key Stage 2, but they are still below the national expectation for pupils aged 11. A significant number of pupils at the end of the juniors attain above the national expectation for art. Children in the reception year are on course to reach the early learning goals in all areas for this stage of their education. Many children are likely to exceed the required goals for their age in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In comparison with similar schools, results in 2000 for seven year olds show that pupils achieve close to the average for reading, above the average in writing and well above the average for mathematics. Against national standards pupils attain at the average in writing and mathematics but below the average in reading. Pupils in Worsley Mesnes are making steady progress overall and standards are likely to rise over the coming year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes and work hard in their lessons. They know what they are expected to learn. They are interested and involved in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	In lessons behaviour is good. Pupils show good co-operation and collaborate well together. Despite efforts made by teachers, behaviour outside in the playground is often over-boisterous and rough games by a significant number of boys and girls of all ages prevent some pupils from enjoying their play.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory in lessons. Pupils show initiative and take their responsibilities seriously.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Rates of attendance are well below the national average and have fallen since the previous year. The percentage of pupils taking unauthorised absence is above the national average. Many pupils take extra family holidays during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Sixty seven lessons were seen overall. Ninety six per cent of lessons was at least satisfactory. Thirty nine per cent was good and 12 per cent was very good. There was four per cent of unsatisfactory lessons. The majority of very good teaching is found at the end of

Key Stage 2. Good teaching is at all key stages and there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The school has set appropriate and challenging targets for improvement in pupils' results over the next two years. It is making good progress towards them. The quality of teaching in English is always at least satisfactory and more than 75 per cent is good or better. In mathematics the quality of teaching is good or very good in half the lessons seen and satisfactory in almost all the rest. The skills of reading and writing and numeracy are taught well throughout the school but not all teachers have the necessary skills and expertise for the teaching of information technology. Strengths in teaching include the planning of interesting lessons in literacy and numeracy and the careful matching of work to pupils' ability in these lessons. Teachers check what pupils have learnt in lessons for English, mathematics and science very well and test their knowledge frequently. This enables teachers to know how well the pupils learn. Teachers manage pupils well and maintain good relationships in lessons. In some lessons the pace is too slow and on a few rare occasions work is not matched to the curriculum for pupils' age. Occasionally tasks do not stretch pupils well enough or help them to use their time the most productively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum offers a good range of learning opportunities in the infants and juniors. It is planned and checked very well in English, mathematics and science. The school has begun to use recommended schemes of work for other subjects but all these are not fully in place. The curriculum in the reception classes is satisfactory overall although there are limitations in the provision for children's physical development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is good. Pupils are well supported in lessons by teachers and assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils are identified early by specialist teachers. They are well supported and integrated into lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Moral and social development is good. Pupils have a clear idea of right and wrong and work together co-operatively in lessons. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Whole-school assemblies contribute well to pupils' spiritual development although class assemblies have less spiritual quality. The school is beginning to develop opportunities for pupils to explore the cultures of people of different ethnic backgrounds from their own.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The school provides good support and cares well for its pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and checking their attainment and progress are very good. Not all staff implement the school behaviour policy in the playground consistently.

The school has satisfactory links with its parents. It provides them with good information about their child's progress and what is happening in the school. They are enabled to help

and make a contribution to their child's learning. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong and effective leadership and a clear sense of purpose for the school. She shares with and involves staff, pupils and governors in her vision for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively and are committed to their involvement in the school and its improvement. They are well informed about the school and support the headteacher and staff well. They share in its life and work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school evaluates very well how pupils are doing, the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the curriculum. The three year school development plan is a very good document to guide the school's work.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial management is good. Funds are used for priorities to support and improve the pupils' education and the school evaluates the effectiveness of the decisions it makes. The school seeks good value for money in all its spending. Resources are well organised and readily available. They are used well by staff and pupils in lessons.

The school is fully staffed with teachers and support staff. Through unavoidable circumstances the school has recently lost the services temporarily of two of its full-time teachers. Another has gained promotion very recently and left the school. During the inspection three newly qualified teachers were on temporary contracts. All other teachers and support staff are experienced and well qualified. The fabric of the school is in poor condition and deteriorating rapidly. Staff succeed in creating a positive learning environment with displays and well-organised classrooms. Government funding has been secured to build a new school in the next two years.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects their child to work hard. • Their child likes school and makes good progress. • They feel comfortable to approach the school with questions and problems. • The teaching is good. • The school helps their child to become mature. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • How closely the school works with parents. • Information about how their child is getting on. • A small number of parents say their child is bullied in the playground.

This table takes account of the views of six parents who attended a meeting held with the registered inspector before the inspection and those expressed in 73 of the returned questionnaires. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. It considers that there is a sufficient range of activities outside of lessons. The school works sufficiently closely with parents who are kept well informed by the school. The inspection team agrees that behaviour in the playground is over-boisterous. The school deals quickly with any incidents of bullying should they arise.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children arriving in the reception classes at age four have skills in personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and literacy, and mathematical development which are broadly at the level expected for their age. This is due to the good provision and teaching in the pre-school. By the end of the reception class the majority are on course to attain the early learning goals in all areas for this stage of their education. They achieve well in the areas of knowledge and understanding and in personal, social and emotional development and many children are on course to exceed the required goals in these areas.
2. Current inspection findings show that throughout the school, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in almost all subjects. Standards are now as expected for their ages at seven and 11 in all subjects apart from ICT. Standards in this subject are still below those expected nationally at the age of 11. Due to insufficient evidence it was not possible to make a judgement on attainment in geography for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2.
3. These standards of attainment are an improvement since the previous full inspection when there was underachievement for pupils in mathematics and weaknesses in science. Other subjects, for example, music at the age of seven, art, design and technology and information technology at both seven and 11 were below expectations for pupils nationally. Pupils did not reach the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There was also insufficient evidence during the previous inspection to judge pupils' attainment at 11 in geography.
4. Since the previous full inspection standards have risen in line with schools nationally for English, mathematics and science. The school came out of special measures in 1997. By then results had already started to rise rapidly in English and mathematics at the age of 11, although this was not the case for science where standards dropped due to the emphasis on English and mathematics. Due to singular differences in ability between two cohorts in 1998 and 1999 there was a wide variation in results. Standards have continued to rise for 1999 and 2000 apart from a drop in science in 2000. The school attributes this to unsatisfactory specialist teaching of science by temporary staff at Year 6 at the beginning of the last summer term. This has now improved.
5. Pupils achieve well at the age of 11 in comparison with similar schools. These are schools across the country where between 20 per cent and 35 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Taking all three subjects together the school's performance at the age of 11 was close to the national average but in comparison with similar schools it was above average. It was not possible to make a reliable judgement on achievement in comparison with Year 6 pupils' prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 due to problems with the reliability of the school's data for previous years. In the 2000 results of national tests at the age of 11 pupils achieved above average in comparison with similar schools for English, well above average for mathematics and close to the average for science.

6. In comparison with schools nationally, results at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics were close to the average and in science they were below the average.
7. At the age of seven results in the national tests for 2000 show that in comparison with similar schools, pupils achieved close to the average for reading, above the average in writing, and well above the average in mathematics. Against national standards pupils achieved at the average in writing and mathematics but below the average in reading. The school's performance in science as assessed by teachers was above the national average.
8. The improvement in standards at both key stages has been brought about by better teaching and improved relationships between teachers and their pupils, an improved curriculum, and the effective introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies which has impacted effectively on teaching in other subjects. The setting of pupils in ability groups in Years 5 and 6 contributes well to pupils' attainment. Work is well planned to ensure that pupils cover similar work within their sets and this is then matched further to pupils' different levels of ability for English and mathematics.
9. The school keeps a careful watch for the differences of the attainment between boys and girls. It is taking part in the local education authority's writing and achievement project this year and is addressing the under performance of boys. Over the past three years boys' attainment at the age of seven in reading and writing has been slightly behind that of girls by about one term. The gap closes by the time pupils are 11 and there is no significant difference in English. In mathematics there is no significant difference at either seven or 11 in boys' and girls' performance.
10. The school exceeded its targets for the year 2000 in English and mathematics at aged 11 and should achieve those in place for the current year. These targets are challenging for the current cohort of pupils in English and mathematics based on their results over the last years since the school began to test pupils using the recommended national tests. Higher targets again have been set for pupils for the year 2002.
11. In English and mathematics the standards seen during the inspection are similar to results of the national tests last year. In science standards are higher than those achieved against national figures last year. This is as a result of good specialist teaching. The science co-ordinator now teaches Year 6 pupils in set ability groups
12. At the age of seven writing and mathematics standards are similar to those achieved last year against the national average but reading standards are higher than those achieved in 2000. This improvement is due to the focussed teaching of reading skills from the reception class onwards.
13. Standards in English are in line with national averages over all aspects of English at both key stages. Pupils display strengths in their speaking and listening skills through the school. They listen well to their teachers and follow instructions accurately. By the time they reach Year 6 about a third of pupils have above average skills in speaking and listening. Pupils' reading is satisfactory at the age of seven. They make good progress in their reading and by 11 standards are good. Writing standards are below average at the age of seven and average by 11.
14. Mathematics standards are average at the end of both key stages in all areas of mathematics. Pupils have a sound understanding of number and in both key stages

they are able to apply their knowledge to problems. They use their different ways of calculating in their heads to solve problems and show good mental ability.

15. In science pupils' attainment is broadly average at the end of both key stages. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a sound knowledge of living things and physical science. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils understand physical forces such as gravity and friction well. They focus and discover through scientific enquiry, for instance, the processes of electricity. The practical area of science is a strong feature for pupils who enjoy these lessons and learn well.
16. The standards attained by pupils in religious education at both key stages are as expected by the locally agreed syllabus. A significant number of pupils at the end of the juniors show high levels of attainment in their artwork. There has been a good improvement in both these subject areas since the first inspection.
17. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and they make sound progress based on their previous learning. Pupils are identified early and their progress is monitored regularly by the co-ordinator. She checks pupils' individual educational plans and discusses these with teachers regularly. The three pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress in their learning and their attainment is at least satisfactory and at times good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. The children and pupils have good attitudes to learning and enjoy their lessons. The quality of pupils' personal development and relationships are generally satisfactory. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. Behaviour in lessons has improved since the last inspection and is usually good. However some pupils behaviour in the playground is often unacceptable because of the rough and over-boisterous play and actions that show no regard for others. Attendance is unsatisfactory and declining. It is well below the attendance achieved by most other schools in the country.
19. The youngest children in the foundation stage reception classes are happily settled into school life and routines. Generally they participate well in lessons, for example, in literacy, remembering that 'the dark writing' (bold print) is read in a louder voice in the story of Goldilocks. They are eager to learn and enjoy new experiences, sharing and helping each other well, for instance when making healthy sandwiches. The children are sensible and trusted to be careful, when, under close supervision, they learn how to grate cheese or slice hardboiled eggs. This trust and encouragement of independence and decision-making provides good personal development and raises children's self-esteem. Staff provide positive and gentle reminders of behaviour and attitudes when children call out to answer, or forget to listen to their teacher.
20. Older pupils also have good attitudes to learning. This is most evident in the oldest pupils who approach their work with maturity and commitment and work hard to achieve their best. Pupils are enthusiastic and persevere well and are highly motivated by many lessons, for instance in science and art. Pupils work well together co-operatively and collaboratively. The oldest pupils settle to work quickly and often work exceedingly quietly. There are times, though, when pupils are noisy, particularly when changing activities within a lesson. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is often good and has significantly improved since the last inspection. There is a good quality behaviour policy that is consistently followed by staff in lessons with pupils responding

well to praise and the 'star' reward system. Pupils show a good level of respect for others' views and contributions, they listen carefully to different opinions.

21. However, pupils' playground behaviour is in sharp contrast to the well-ordered, positive learning environment found in lessons. Pupils of all ages, boys and girls, forget to respect others. They are over-boisterous and play very roughly. There is much body contact with pushing and pulling so that initial rough play too often leads to children and pupils becoming upset, and unable to enjoy their break and lunch times. Football is played aggressively. It intrudes on all playground areas including the designated quieter skittle ball zone and prevents pupils from enjoying themselves quietly. There are recorded instances of inappropriate behaviour including hitting, kicking and fighting. The school responds and deals with parents' concerns of inappropriate behaviour quickly. There have been two fixed-term exclusions in the last year for unacceptable behaviour, including bullying. The school is aware that playground behaviour requires improvement and tries different methods of rewards and sanctions to deal with it. It has a planned initiative for training Year 5 pupils as play leaders next term. Parents are very pleased with the improved quality of behaviour in lessons but some parents expressed concerns about inappropriate behaviour outside lessons. These concerns are justified.
22. The quality of relationships is satisfactory, being considerably better between pupils in class, than at play. Staff provide good quality role models of positive attitudes and expectations of behaviour to which pupils can aspire. This has been met successfully in class. Pupils are polite and helpful, opening doors or offering directions to the classrooms.
23. Pupils are encouraged to develop personal responsibility and independence. The youngest children undertake simple duties such as returning the register to the school office or helping to tidy the classroom. Older pupils act responsibly in undertaking their library and computer monitor duties. Many good individual examples of initiative were seen during inspection. For instance, wedging open a class door so pupils could pass easily; setting out art or physical education equipment for lessons and offering other pupils advice when using the computers. Currently there is no school council or forum for pupils to be part of the school decision-making process. Pupils are encouraged to develop independent study skills by finding out about individual topics.
24. The levels of attendance and pupils' punctuality are unsatisfactory. Attendance has fallen further in the last year. A significant factor is the large number of holidays taken in term time by families. Term time holidays were also mentioned at the last inspection. Holiday permission is entirely at the discretion of the headteacher in exceptional circumstances only, and can be refused. Many pupils are late in the morning missing part, or sometimes all, of the first lesson. Very late pupils receive an unauthorised absence mark. This partly accounts for the higher than average unauthorised absence in the school. The failure of parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time has a negative impact on the quality and quantity of learning for all pupils. This is because late arrivals interrupt the class and work has to be repeated for absent pupils. This slows progress for all.
25. Due to recent staff changes and frequent use of supply teachers, some registers are not well kept. They have not been sufficiently checked. Some pupil marks are missed, non-standard marks are used and changes to marks are not explained. Some pupil data is not given and some entries are made in pencil. Unauthorised absence is not always recorded as such, for example, for holidays lasting over two

weeks. School numbers on roll have reduced considerably over the last four years since the previous inspection. There are surplus places in other schools in the area.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

26. Based on the previous inspection report of 1996 there has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching. It has also improved since the 1997 report. This is due to improved practice in the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills as a result of in-service training and the national initiatives. The need for more training in the teaching of information technology skills is recognised by the school.
27. Good monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteachers, particularly of literacy and numeracy has also made a good contribution to the improvement in teaching. At the time of the inspection, the recent stable team of teachers had partly disintegrated due to a promotion, a maternity leave and a serious illness. Three newly qualified teachers were new to the school in temporary posts as replacements for these long-serving and experienced staff.
28. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Fifty one per cent is good or very good and of the remainder, 46 per cent is satisfactory and four per cent is unsatisfactory. Teaching is good overall in the juniors. The best teaching is at the end of the key stage in Years 5 and 6 where a significant proportion of the teaching is good or very good. There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching at the beginning of the juniors. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in the infants is satisfactory overall.
29. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall. It is good in mathematics, science, English, art, physical education and religious education. Insufficient lessons were seen in design and technology and geography in Key Stage 2 to enable a judgement to be made on teaching. With ICT, teachers are less secure in using it effectively across all subjects of the curriculum and for some teachers there are weaknesses in subject knowledge of music and history. Music lessons seen at the end of the juniors are repetitive and lack pace. They are not planned to include a sufficient range of work and varied activities. This results in some restlessness for some groups of pupils who find it difficult to sustain their interest to the end of the lesson. No history was observed in the infants but in lessons for the juniors, teachers' subject knowledge varied. It was good in the upper juniors.
30. The teaching of the youngest pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall with some good features. For instance, it is good for promoting children's personal, social and emotional development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. In whole-class discussions for literacy and numeracy it is also good although in group activities work is often over-directed. For instance when tasks develop methods of recording rather than ensuring children are working on their understanding of new ideas.
31. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. It is variable between the infants and the juniors. It is satisfactory overall in the foundation key stage and the infants, and good overall in the juniors with some very good teaching in the Year 5 and 6 classes. The organisation of all literacy and numeracy lessons ensures that pupils of all abilities are able to make the progress they need in the majority of lessons. Pupils who are in set groups at Years 5 and 6 are particularly well catered for as they are then grouped according to their ability within the set classes. This enables them to keep up with their work and complete their tasks within the sessions. However, teachers in the infant classes do not always plan sufficient activities in mathematics and English to stretch the higher attaining pupils or to make the best use of the time available. In English, right through the school, the subject content is well matched to pupils' age groups and to the National Literacy

Strategy. Books for shared and guided reading are well chosen and the use of a clear programme of literature prevents any overlapping of texts and provides well for pupils' interest levels. There is sound teaching of the skills of reading in the infants and in the juniors. The current thrust on the teaching of writing through the school is beginning to have an effect on improving pupils' work. Teachers use clear explanations and demonstrations and involve all pupils. In the infants some teachers are inexperienced in the best use and planning of time. For instance, literacy sessions are sometimes planned to follow on directly from a numeracy session. This happens when the numeracy session is extended after the pupils' morning break. It decreases pupils' motivation because they sit for a long time listening to the teacher. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge overall. However, at the upper end of Key Stage 2, teaching is very well planned in both literacy and numeracy and teachers have very good subject knowledge. They use their resources well and make lessons interesting and stimulating for pupils to extend their learning. In numeracy lessons, throughout the school, teachers have clear ideas of what they want pupils to learn and work towards them. Mental sessions at the beginning of lessons have a good pace, and are challenging making demands on pupils to think and answer quickly. Teachers make good use of mathematical vocabulary and technical vocabulary in English and science.

32. Teaching and planning in literacy, numeracy and science are monitored closely by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators. This is good practice. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had monitored and supported the teaching of all the temporary newly qualified staff.
33. Teachers plan their lessons together in teams. This contributes well to maintaining standards in teaching. Teachers' planning is effective overall. It is most effective in the juniors. Throughout the school, planning meetings are held each week and this ensures that pupils in all classes, including those in mixed age groups, have the same experiences. For instance, all pupils from the three classes in Years 5 and 6 were learning about the meaning of *Hannukah* in religious education and all Year 2 pupils from two classes learn how to *feel* and *walk the beat* in their music lessons. The term and weekly planning is very thorough. Teachers assess pupils' work in English, mathematics and science carefully. They keep a good check and records on what pupils know and can do as well as using frequent tests for spellings and tables. Assessment in other subjects of the curriculum is just beginning with the use of the newly recommended schemes from the Qualifications and Curricular Authority. (QCA). Teachers mark pupils' work consistently. In the juniors this is done well and is useful in moving pupils on in their learning. Marking in the older infant classes is encouraging. However, in English Key Stage 1 pupils do not have books and work on loose paper and printed worksheets. Although these sheets are kept well by teachers, this is a weakness as it does not enable pupils to take responsibility for their own books, the presentation in them or to look back over their past work to learn from what they have already done.
34. Teachers make good use of resources and displays as an aid for learning. Pupils' work is valued and displayed imaginatively throughout the school. For instance, in a Year 5 and 6 class a very good display of pupils' writing on 'The Hobbit', encouraged the use of correct punctuation and reviews of poetry by pupils. From the infants onwards teachers carefully keep portfolios of pupils' individual work. These serve as a good record of the pupils' progress.

35. Teachers give homework according to the school policy and pupils in the juniors are supplied with attractive diaries. These assist them in keeping a good record of what they are expected to do and inform parents of what their child is learning.
36. The management of pupils in lessons is good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning in lessons. These promote pupils' learning and good behaviour very well. Most teachers use their questioning skills very effectively to direct pupils' thinking and encourage their responses. This results in confident speaking by pupils who willingly express their own ideas. Teachers maintain good relationships with pupils and show a good understanding of their different needs. They direct their questions carefully to all and ensure that everyone is included in the class discussions. In some subjects such as English, science and mathematics teachers have a lively approach. In the best mathematics lessons they use practical apparatus such as *angle estimators* effectively and in English *dice games* are used well for teaching prefixes. In science lessons at Key Stage 1, teachers provide challenging questions and opportunities to make pupils consider which food is the healthiest, such as making and choosing fillings for their own sandwiches. Science lessons in the juniors are planned well to include good opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of scientific processes, such as the load on an electric circuit and the need for a *fair test* when conducting experiments with different materials for insulation.
37. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work in pairs or small groups as well as working independently. The school also sets aside *Yellow Sessions* for the personal, social and health education programme which has been introduced recently. This makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
38. Pupils with special educational needs who do not learn as quickly as others are suitably provided for and this enables them to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their learning. They learn the best when teachers or support assistants are clear about their specific needs and intervene appropriately. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson with the support teacher, pupils were encouraged to use their previous knowledge about different types of writing well to help them identify confidently the new type of non-chronological writing that they were learning about. Teachers do not always identify the outcomes and targets for individuals and groups of pupils with special educational needs in their planning.

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

39. Standards in provision of curricular opportunities have significantly improved since the last inspection. The curriculum now meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. Effective strategies have been developed for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects based largely on the national recommended schemes of work from the QCA.
40. A strength of the curriculum is the very clear planning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, including good use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to meet the assessed needs of pupils. There is very good teacher co-operation to plan and evaluate the effectiveness of lessons through scheduled planning meetings organised by team leaders and key stage managers. As a result standards are rising. However, there are some subject areas still requiring improvement. These are ICT, design and technology and geography. The schemes

- of work for these subjects are not fully in place throughout the school. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently across the curriculum and this is having a significant effect on pupils' attainment at Key Stage 2 where pupils do not achieve the expectation for all areas of the subject in the National Curriculum.
41. The length of the school day meets the nationally recommended minimum in both key stages, although in some lessons time is not always used efficiently. Some subjects have very long sessions in the afternoon and it is often difficult, particularly for the pupils in the younger classes, to sustain their interest.
 42. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is a considerable improvement since the previous full inspection when it was considered to be unsatisfactory. Much of the improvement has been achieved under the leadership of the current co-ordinator who took over the post recently. There are good established systems and procedures to identify and support pupils with special educational needs. These have a good effect on the quality of learning. Pupils with a formal Statement of Special Educational Need are supported very well both in groups and in their classes. Teachers have a good knowledge of their individual needs. However, teachers' knowledge about pupils on stages 1 - 4 of the register for special needs is varied. Although the individual education plans have clear targets, the outcomes of the work that they do are not always clearly identified for individuals and groups of pupils. The quality of support provided by the support staff is almost always good.
 43. A sound range of extra-curricular activities such as football, skittle ball and rugby enhances the curriculum. Wigan rugby club provides training sessions in the school. There is a school judo club and opportunities to learn the keyboard. Pupils also have opportunities for visits, for example, to *'Johnny Ball'* to stimulate their interest in mathematics, and the *'Soccer Dome'* to develop football skills. A residential visit for upper Key Stage 2 pupils to the Lake District helps to develop skills in art, science, geography and history. It gives a good opportunity to develop outdoor adventurous skills such as canoeing and developing stamina for hiking and walking. Visits out of school make a good contribution to the personal, social and health education of pupils. Pupils visit the Art Education centre at Drumcoon as an aspect of the art curriculum. Pupils visit art centres and exhibitions. They benefit from the input of artists in residence such as a New Zealand artist. This enabled them to take part in workshops and gain new skills. The school has a homework policy and parents and pupils are aware of what the school expects pupils to do for homework although no facilities are available in school for those who find it difficult to study at home.
 44. The school ensures there is equality of access and opportunities for all pupils. This is good in classrooms where pupils work productively in groups regardless of race or gender. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils collaborate in mixed aged and gender groups to develop dance sequences in physical education. However, in the playground boisterous play by a significant number of boys and girls restricts the opportunity for others to take part in less physical activities. Pupils with English as an additional language, and pupils with special educational needs, make sound progress. There is good provision for these pupils, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, where setting in the core subjects of English and mathematics ensures they receive a curriculum that matches their needs.
 45. The school makes satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education. The development of a policy is underway and is part of the current year's school development plan. Lessons are on the regular timetable and special time known in the school as *Yellow Sessions* are set aside for these. The provision of sex education is being reviewed by the governing body, the headteacher and teachers. It

is taught mainly through science. The school's prospectus indicates to parents their right to withdraw their child from sex education, assemblies and religious education. The school has a policy for teaching about the mis-use of drugs and recently a *Life Education Caravan* visited the school to inform pupils of important matters such as the misuse of drugs.

46. The quality of the school's links with the community is satisfactory. There are strengths in their association with local churches of different denominations. Since the school hall is too small to hold events for all pupils and families comfortably, the headteacher has approached the local Roman Catholic priest for support. Large school events are now held in the Roman Catholic church including a whole-school and community carol service. Links with the Church of England are also strong. The local vicar takes school assemblies regularly. This contribution to pupils' spiritual development is greatly appreciated by the school. The school also has links with the local Methodist church where it has been invited to help set up a Mother and Toddler group.
47. There is a well-established educational working relationship with the pre-school group, which shares part of the school's accommodation and is under the management of the headteacher. It fulfils a gap for pre-school education in the local community. The opening of this nursery was the result of hard work and negotiation by the school and governors with the local education authority. Governors promote the work of the school in the local community, for instance, the chair of governors holds councillor surgeries in the school and represents the interests of the school.
48. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, and the school is particularly good in supporting both moral and social development.
49. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its strong emphasis on pupils' moral development. Its positive motto and just code of conduct, coupled with the good role-models provided by all staff, give pupils a clear set of values by which to live. Through the personal, social and health education programme, and both whole-school and class assemblies, the concept of right and wrong is firmly established. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils showed clear ideas of the right thing to do in situations of conflict, especially in standing up for a friend in need. The school's tradition of giving to charities is undiminished, with pupils involved in recent fund-raising for local and national charities such as the Wigan Hospice or Children in Need.
50. Provision for pupils' social development is good overall. During lessons pupils are regularly encouraged to work together in pairs or groups. They learn to help each other accomplish tasks, without too much adult intervention. Some of the more outgoing junior pupils took the initiative to draw out less confident classmates when working in pairs. Their patience and courtesy reflected the examples of their teachers. Pupils take on roles as class monitors and in physical education lessons, for example, pupils take responsibility for getting out equipment and keeping the store cupboard in order. Extra-curricular clubs and sport, residential visits to Winmarleigh Hall and Hinning House help pupils to relate to others in a less formal context.
51. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils regularly sing a variety of folk and local popular Beatles' songs often with vigour, and have opportunities for extra-curricular instrumental tuition. They engage in drama within school and have visited theatres in both Wigan and St Helens. They visit local art galleries and museums. A recent visit to the studio of artist Margaret Jackson has

had a powerful impact on their creativity. Their cultural development is largely rooted in the Western European tradition. Through work on different faiths in religious education, pupils have discovered the culture of the Indian sub-continent and from families in the school they have learned about Chinese celebrations. Provision for pupils to explore cultural diversity has increased since the last inspection, with the introduction of appropriate books to the library and in some subject areas. The school is beginning to develop this area for pupils with success. However, no planned programme of opportunities for awareness in all subjects is in place.

52. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Although there is no systematic approach to pupils' spiritual development throughout the school, there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to reflect and ponder the deeper things of life. Whole-school assemblies are broadly Christian, but are careful to identify aspects shared by other faiths. There are links with local churches, such as the school carol service at St Jude's. A strong spiritual element was apparent on the first morning of the inspection week as the story of the Nativity was linked to the Crucifixion. Pupils responded reverently. Class assemblies, whilst generally including a social or moral message, miss the opportunity to contribute fully to pupils' spiritual development. They are often brief and hurried without sufficient time for a period of quiet reflection. Some indications of reflection on the theme of 'Light', shared with religious education lessons, were observed in pupils' work in science but there was little in other subjects. In religious education lessons, opportunities to reflect are frequent and effective. A lesson for a class of Year 5 and 6 pupils, about Hanukkah ended movingly as a pupil shared a spontaneous, simple prayer of thanks for freedom of worship.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

53. The overall quality of care, welfare and guidance that pupils receive is satisfactory although there are significant strengths within it. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' attainment, progress and academic work are very good and much improved since the last report. Awareness of child protection is very good. There are good procedures in place for promoting positive behaviour and for pupils' personal development. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. There are some weaknesses in applying the school's behaviour policy consistently by all members of staff.
54. The school has a very comprehensive range of assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science. These are instrumental in promoting rising standards of attainment. Pupils' work is checked and tested regularly by teachers, for example, in spelling and mental arithmetic. There are tests each half term on aspects of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies using materials supplied by the local education authority. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 also take the non-statutory tests in English and mathematics set by the Qualification and Curricular Authority. Through very good analysis of these test results, targets for individual pupils are set in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These are used to group pupils by attainment in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 to ensure pupils receive a curriculum suited to their needs. Pupils' attainment is reviewed frequently to ensure pupils are making the expected progress towards their core subject targets. If necessary the curriculum is modified to increase challenge or support as appropriate. Procedures in the remaining non-core subjects and religious education are less secure. Where available, the majority of subject co-ordinators are following the example of science, where national recommended guidelines are being developed for measuring and recording pupils' achievements. However, this is not developed and

has yet to be effective in planning work based on what pupils already know and can do. This is particularly significant in ICT in Key Stage 2 where standards are below average.

55. The provision of support for pupils needing additional help for special educational needs or with behavioural difficulties is good. It ensures that the identified needs of the pupils are met and addressed through, for instance, focussed one-to-one work with pupils who have behaviour difficulties and/or low self-esteem.
56. Teachers' monitoring of pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. It is supported by a good quality behaviour policy. This has had a positive impact on the quality of behaviour in lessons. So too has the recent appointment by the school of a qualified part-time teacher for individual pupils having ongoing difficulties in managing their behaviour in class. Pupils are aware of their class rules and abide by them. They enjoy the opportunity to be '*star of the day*' and '*star of the week*', and display their badges proudly. Pupils receive certificates for good behaviour and attitudes. They accumulate points during the week with the most successful class proudly displaying the small trophy for the next week. There is a weekly celebration assembly.
57. Although the school has successfully improved class behaviour, playground behaviour is over-boisterous and procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour are not consistently applied by all staff. The behaviour policy and strategies including playground rules are largely ineffective or inconsistently used to reduce the significant number of unsatisfactory incidents that occur at break and lunchtimes. At break times there are generally too few adults outside. The policy states that only softballs are allowed in the playgrounds, but hard balls were much in evidence and used aggressively in intrusive football games. Boys and girls of all ages are involved in incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour. Many pupils become involved purely through being innocent bystanders. The midday supervisors have received training about supervising play but there is little organised play, apart from the designated area for skittle ball. This area is ignored by those playing football. There is very little small games equipment, apart from a few skipping ropes. These are not always played with sensibly. Playground markings have worn away. The youngest children have no separate play area and tend to keep close to the supervisors. The playgrounds and field are large and have a number of hidden areas, where pupils can congregate, although they know it is not allowed. Midday supervisors keep individual notebooks and carefully detail inappropriate incidents, also noting any minor injuries and first aid required. The headteacher checks the books each week. Some strategies have been tried to address the unsatisfactory behaviour, for instance, lunchtime play has been reduced for the junior age pupils. However, this and other strategies have not yet brought about a happy playground atmosphere for all children.
58. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Sound procedures are in place. The educational welfare officer visits each fortnight identifying families having difficulties, and offering support through home visits, if needed. Letters are sent to parents about attendance and punctuality concerns. All parents are expected to inform the school about their child's absence. The school requests the completion of holiday forms, with advice not to take holidays in term time. Parents are reminded of this in school documents such as the governors' annual report. Despite this, many holidays are still taken and there has been no effective reduction. Currently the school authorises holidays, even when they last longer than two school weeks, and a minority of holidays last much longer. Holidays taken by parents are having a detrimental impact on the school's attendance and as a consequence of the standards achieved. Pupil punctuality is another area of concern with many pupils across the school arriving

very late in the morning. Inconsistencies in the keeping of some registers hinder the school's monitoring procedures. Too many parents are not fulfilling their responsibility to get their children to school regularly and on time. This is not helping the school to improve its rates of attendance and punctuality.

59. The monitoring of personal development is good. Formal and informal opportunities are used well to provide reinforcement of the school's expectations for pupils. Outside visitors are invited to speak on topics such as 'keeping safe' and a *life education caravan* recently visited the school, enabling pupils to use the facilities and discuss their experiences in follow up lessons. The staff know their pupils very well and encourage them to understand their weaknesses and build on their strengths. There is good evidence of this in the pupils' annual reports in the teachers' summaries of pupils' development, and in the written contribution made by pupils about their progress over the year.
60. The procedure and practice of child protection are very good. The school policy is based on local authority guidance. The designated person undertakes regular training and passes information on to school staff. Good practice is seen in the keeping of an initial concerns log, and the school continues to monitor pupils who are taken off the 'at risk register'. There are very good relationships with external services. Informal advice is available if required. It has been agreed that care meetings can be held at the school to provide a known environment for families. Sensitive records are securely kept with limited access to protect confidentiality.
61. Daily procedures are satisfactory. There are two staff trained in first aid. Minor accident books are properly kept and records of more serious accidents are also kept. Pupils who have a cooked meal eat in the hall, together with the younger pupils who have a packed lunch. The older pupils eat their packed lunches in the Year 6 classrooms. They are well supervised, but eating in the classroom is not an ideal situation. The midday supervisors work hard at lunchtime doing their best to supervise the large playground and manage the many behavioural incidents. Children and pupils feel able to approach the supervisors easily.
62. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy, based on local authority guidance. Fire exits are marked although not in the recommended way. A number of health and safety issues were noted during the inspection. There is a lack of hot water in parts of the school. The school has been informed of other issues.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

63. The school has a sound partnership with its parents and families who are generally positive about the standard of education that their children receive. Parents feel that there has been a significant improvement in involving them in school life and that they now have a more effective working relationship with the school than at the time of the previous full inspection. This was a key issue in the last inspection report.
64. The school is working to maintain and build on its positive relationship with parents and has written 'open door' and 'helpers in school' policies, stating aims and intentions clearly and offering guidance to parents. A small number of parents help during the school day and others are involved with the parents association through organising or attending fundraising events such as the Christmas Fair and raffle.

65. The quality of information provided to parents is good. Parents of children just starting school are provided with a comprehensive, good quality information pack about the Foundation Stage of education. Although the school holds a meeting with parents prior to children starting in the reception classes and pre-school pupils are invited into school frequently, there is no systematic induction programme of regular visits into classes for the children. Regular newsletters are provided. This too is an improvement since the last inspection. These give information about school events and important dates such as parents' meetings. General letters are sent frequently, for example, about school clubs and costs, or the school photograph. The school prospectus has all the required and much other useful information. The governors' annual report is an exciting and colourful document, extremely readable and friendly. It contains much very useful information. However, it does not comply fully with the requirements because several necessary items are missing. These include details of the governors' status; their term of office and arrangements for the next parent-governor election; training undertaken by staff; and full details of test results and comparisons with schools nationally.
66. The annual pupil reports received by parents are of very good quality. All subjects are reported and it is clearly stated what the pupil can or cannot do, with relevant detail given. Targets for improvement are given in English and mathematics and sometimes for personal development. Pupils write comments about their view of the progress they have made during the school year, often saying where they need to do better and what they do best. Teachers provide a good overview of the pupils' personal development. There is space for parents to make comments if they wish. Parents with special educational needs are fully involved and consulted and are invited to attend their child's annual reviews. All parents have the opportunity to meet staff formally twice a year to discuss their child's progress. They are able to make appointments at other times if they need to speak to staff at the school.
67. Parents are encouraged to be aware and contribute to their child's learning. The majority make a satisfactory contribution. A home-school agreement is established, reminding parents, about attendance and the need to support homework. There is a homework policy and homework diaries have been introduced for the junior pupils. These are appreciated and can be used as a means of communication with parents and carers. Parents also have access to their child's reading record book although there is little available space for parents to be able to make comment. Parents are provided with leaflets such as the Department for Education's 'Learning Journey' and they receive information about current curriculum topics. From time to time pupils have an opportunity to buy books to support learning at home.
68. Many parents appreciate the new 'openness' and the impact the headteacher has made. The school is continuing to develop this important area.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management for the school. The headteacher has dealt with both the action plans from the full inspection and those identified in the 1997 inspection.
70. She has a very clear sense of educational direction. She is committed to ongoing improvements in standards and in the quality of the opportunities the school provides for its pupils. Since the last full inspection she has succeeded in leading and implementing very effective changes in the atmosphere and management of the school during an unsettled time. She has built a stable team of teachers and secured

their commitment to high standards in their teaching and in management of subjects. She has not shrunk from taking the appropriate action for under-performing staff. Several good teachers have recently moved on in their careers and been lost to the school. During the inspection the good attitudes and commitment of all staff, several of whom were temporary at the time of the inspection, were strongly in evidence. She supports and motivates staff very well. Under her guidance the school has addressed the key issues raised during the last inspection and forged ahead in many other areas. This work has contributed to raising the standards of pupils' achievements, the quality of teaching and improvements in curriculum provision. The school is poised to move further ahead as is shown by the school improvement action plan covering a period of three years. Along with the governors and the support from the local education authority the headteacher has shown good vision in many areas. She has been responsible for setting up a separate nursery which is under her management and works closely with the school. The good teaching in the nursery contributes well to the sound levels of attainment that pupils have by the time they reach the end of their reception year. The Department of Education has recently awarded £1.5 million for a new school and nursery to be built on the existing site by the end of 2003. This is as a result of successful working together and constant lobbying by the school and local education authority over a long period of time. The three year school improvement plan is an impressive document that evaluates previous work and details future plans, priorities and targets for continued improvement. It links targets carefully to the action to be taken, the time, cost of the listed resources to be used and gives clear criteria by which it is to be judged.

71. The governing body fulfils the majority of its statutory duties well and conducts its business through a well-established group of committees. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the leadership of the school by the governors was considered weak and there was no effective working relationship with the staff. A number of governors, but not all, have been replaced since the last inspection and there is currently one vacancy for a parent governor. The positions for numeracy, literacy, staff and special needs governors are all filled. Since the previous inspection the governing body has worked hard and successfully with increased commitment to improve the school. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and how it needs to improve. They support the headteacher and staff well. This is a two way process and governors are kept fully informed of all that is happening in the school and of developments on a regular and frequent basis during meetings. For many governors this information is supplemented by first-hand experiences of the school's day to day work. Several governors are frequent visitors into school. For instance, the Chair of Governors visits on an almost daily basis and is always available should problems occur. He has a close and effective working partnership with the headteacher and staff. The special needs governor and parent governors are frequent visitors. Governors meetings are well attended with an almost full complement of members and regular meetings of sub-committees are also well attended. Staff present new policies to the governors and the special needs co-ordinator reports regularly to governors on the progress of the special educational needs action plan. Through its meetings, the governing body is involved in planning the way forward for the school and the results of its work are included in the school improvement plan. The governors, alongside the headteacher and local education authority have worked hard in representing the needs of the community to the Department of Education for a new school.
72. The deputy headteacher is strongly committed to the school and supports the headteacher very well. They work together as a resolute team and make a very effective contribution in all areas of the school's development, for example, developing

and supporting staff. This has been needed particularly in recent months when, through a succession of events beyond the control of the school, there have been significant staff changes. This has resulted in a climate of uncertainty, with a number of temporary teachers and the temporary short-term appointments of three newly qualified staff. Since her appointment the deputy headteacher has made a strong contribution to a complete overhaul of the curriculum and assessment as well as leading the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in her role as English co-ordinator and, more recently, assessment co-ordinator. She is non-classed based and has a 75 per cent teaching timetable for the upper juniors. This enables her to undertake her management role and to contribute directly to the monitoring and evaluation of the school's effectiveness. She manages both the standards fund and staff development effectively as well as being a school governor. Other key staff, such as the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the managers for each key stage, help towards steering a firm direction to the work in the school.

73. All teachers usually carry responsibility for leading and managing work in one or more subjects. The quality of this subject leadership and its effectiveness in raising standards is variable, but, taken overall, it is good with very good leadership in mathematics, science, English and special educational needs. Leadership of geography has been unsatisfactory. Due to the current staff absences and fluid temporary situation, arrangements have been made for the headteacher and curriculum teams to oversee some important subjects such as mathematics and information technology. This is effective in implementing the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator for mathematics and ICT, who was on maternity leave at the time of the inspection, is also a school governor. She showed a strong level of support and commitment to the school prior to and during the inspection week and visited frequently to discuss aspects of the school's development with inspectors.
74. The development of the role of subject co-ordinators is an area that the school has identified in its current year's improvement plan. Although the monitoring of teachers' planning and work in areas of the curriculum other than English, mathematics and science is underway, the co-ordinators have not yet had the opportunity to work alongside teachers in lessons to monitor the development of their subjects. The most effective subject co-ordinators of the main subjects have very good knowledge of the standards pupils achieve throughout the school as well as in national tests. They use this knowledge well to prioritise areas for development in their subjects. This work is just beginning for other subjects and no assessment is yet in place. This makes it difficult for managers to identify areas for improvement and to have a clear understanding of the standards achieved in their subject. Subject co-ordinators generally advise colleagues and ensure that sufficient resources are available to support teaching and learning.
75. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are significant strengths of the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. At the time of the inspection although some temporary staff had only been in the school a short time, all had been seen teaching as well as having their planning monitored regularly. Monitoring records are well kept and staff are given useful feedback.
76. There is now good management of the school budget, which is managed by a knowledgeable visiting bursar. The issues raised in the previous audit in December 1999 have been addressed and the school has very clear financial procedures. The governing body and the headteacher work together closely to identify the needs of the school and plan the budget accordingly. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Financial planning is now firmly linked to the priorities identified in the

development plan, and the school evaluates the effectiveness of the major decisions it makes. The school makes good use of new technology to inform the finance committee regularly on the state of the budget. The finance committee now plays a major part in the school's financial affairs. It analyses these carefully to make what are often difficult decisions based on the school's changing circumstances, for example, falling roles. Resources are used effectively and the best value is sought for all purchases. The good collaboration between the bursar and the school administrative officer ensures that all day-to-day procedures run very smoothly and the headteacher and governors are kept well informed. The standards fund budget is managed well by the deputy headteacher who is also a member of the governing body's finance committee.

77. There have been considerable improvements in the provision for pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection in 1996 when the provision was considered to be unsatisfactory, and since the inspection of 1997 when the inspectors identified some weaknesses. Until the relinquishment of the post by the previous manager very little had been accomplished in the area of special educational needs. Since the appointment of the current special educational needs co-ordinator last January, the provision has improved significantly. The management of this area is now good. The school has established good systems and procedures to identify and support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' individual education plans are clearly focussed and meet needs well. This makes a good contribution to the quality of teaching, the support they receive and their learning which is satisfactory. However, the implementation of a rigorous programme to monitor the use of the individual educational plans during lessons is not yet established. Currently this is done through discussions with the class teacher. No time is allocated for the special needs co-ordinator to monitor the implementation of the individual education plans or to support teachers in lessons. The school employs the additional support of a part-time specialist teacher to work with pupils with behavioural difficulties towards the end of the juniors. This helps their concentration and improves their learning. The school also has strong links with the support services within the local education authority. Teachers receive good advice and have a good knowledge about the needs of pupils with formal Statements of Special Educational Need.
78. Within its aims the school promotes equal opportunity for all pupils and its policy complies with requirements. Much has been achieved since the last inspections and the school promotes social inclusion. Although small groups of pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn in some lessons, the school carefully identifies opportunities for pupils of different abilities to work together in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as in other subjects. It actively promotes equality related to gender in lessons such as drama, history and physical education. The raising of awareness of cultural differences and respect for them is done well within subjects and personal and social education and the celebration of different festivals. However, there is a lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures through visits and from visitors into school.
79. The fabric and structure of the collection of buildings that make up the school are poor and deteriorating rapidly. The state of the buildings does not encourage parents to choose the school for their child when there are places available in other schools nearby. The number of pupils on roll has declined since the previous inspection. The buildings are costly to maintain and are checked regularly by governors for aspects of health and safety. Despite the difficulties posed by the building, the staff work hard and successfully to make the interior a positive learning environment for the pupils, with colourful displays of artwork and well-organised classrooms and resources. The

school makes best use of the present accommodation that it can. There are specialist areas for art, ICT separate libraries for infant and junior age pupils and a music room. The interior of the school is clean and tidy. This is a credit to the pupils, staff and caretaker.

80. The procedures for the induction of new staff are in place. Their mentors give newly qualified teachers good support and the systems which are co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher to support the professional development of all staff are clear and effective. The staff development is based on three aspects; staff's self-evaluation; whole-school priorities; and curriculum priorities. Staff have regular meetings with the headteacher on self-evaluation of their needs as well as areas identified through lesson observations. The school is in line with implementing performance management. The procedures are good. It includes both teaching and non-teaching staff. Training and staff meetings are arranged well in advance, taking into consideration both individual's needs and school priorities.
81. Resources are satisfactory overall although there is no separate outdoor secure play area and equipment for the youngest pupils in the reception classes. Resources are generally used well and are readily accessible. In some subjects, such as science, physical education and art, resources are good. Running water is available to the majority of classes although the sinks are very old. This enables pupils to develop and master many technical skills, such as printing. The school has few resources and books of a multicultural nature.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build on the school's improvements since the previous inspections, to raise standards further, and continue to improve on the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards of attainment in information and communication technology by:
 - ensuring that the recently introduced scheme of work is fully implemented;
 - improving and developing teachers' knowledge of the subject in line with the school improvement plan to ensure staff develop their expertise to match that required in the scheme of work and to enable staff and pupils to use ICT effectively across all subjects of the curriculum;
 - ensuring assessment procedures in ICT enable teachers to plan work based on what pupils already know.
(see paragraphs 2, 26, 29, 40, 54, 121, 129, 139, 162 & 166)
- (2) Improve the quality of some pupils' behaviour in the playground by:
 - ensuring that all staff are fully aware of and implement the school behaviour policy consistently;
 - increasing staff vigilance and supervision at break times to eliminate any unacceptable behaviour and to develop further the personal, social and health education in the school;
 - the development of pupils' understanding of the ground rules for play and the provision of playground games to enable all pupils to play harmoniously and happily together.

(see paragraphs 18, 21, 22, 44, 53 & 57)

(3) Improve the rate of pupil attendance and punctuality closer to the national average by:

- continuing to stress the importance of regular and sustained attendance and punctuality to parents and pupils;
- rewarding and appreciating those pupils with good attendance and punctuality.

(see paragraphs 24, 25 & 58)

In addition to these key issues for action, the following less significant weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the provision for the outdoor play of children in the Foundation Stage; introduce a planned programme of induction for the children entering the reception classes.
- Improve the assessment and co-ordinator monitoring of subjects other than English, mathematics and science in line with the school improvement plan.
- Provide increased opportunities and resources for pupils to learn about cultures other than their own.
- Ensure that all the statutory requirements reported to the governing body are met.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12	39	45	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	254
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	67

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.4	School data	1.1
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	21	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	13	14
	Girls	16	21	20
	Total	26	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (72)	97 (67)	97 (83)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	21	20	21
	Total	34	34	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (75)	97 (86)	100 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	22	23	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	18
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	34	35	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (74)	78 (78)	87 (80)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	18
	Girls	19	20	21
	Total	34	34	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (74)	76 (78)	87 (83)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	3
White	251
Any other minority ethnic group	

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	2	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)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97h50m

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	496,325
Total expenditure	504,905
Expenditure per pupil	1,884
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,163
Balance carried forward to next year	33,583

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	253
Number of questionnaires returned	73

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	29	60	10	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	33	56	11	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	56	5	1	15
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	55	16	5	1
The teaching is good.	36	52	10	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	52	16	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	48	5	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	45	4	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	22	55	19	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	30	52	7	3	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	53	7	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	37	27	8	15

Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying in the playground.

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

82. Since the last inspection, the school has achieved a considerable amount in its early year's provision for pupils from the age of three years to the end of reception year. It has done this by setting up a community nursery pre-school setting. Good educational links are established between this unit and the reception classes.
83. Children are admitted to the reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five. At the time of inspection there were 33 pupils in the Foundation Stage. Many start the reception classes with skills in communication, mathematics, personal, social and emotional development broadly in line with those expected of their age. The attainment in lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that many are well on their way to attaining the early learning goals expected by the time they leave the reception classes. They achieve well in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and in personal, social and emotional development. Many pupils are on course to attain beyond the early learning goals in these areas.

Personal, social and emotional development

84. When they enter the reception classes children's personal, social and emotional development is in line with that expected for their age. Provision for children's development is good. This is as a result of the good learning opportunities and role models provided by the teachers and support staff. They are motivated by the rewards of 'stars', show confidence and express their experiences and views freely in class discussions.
85. They can adapt their behaviour to varying situations and take on different roles as the situation demands. For example, while playing in the coffee shop pupils are able to negotiate the roles of the customer, the waiter and the cashier and get into these roles with assurance.
86. The teachers and support staff in the reception classes promote children's independent skills by allowing them to make choices and by ensuring that the resources are put away after use.

Communication, language and literacy

87. Children's attainment in communication, language and literacy is in line with the expectations for their age and many are set to attain most aspects of the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception year. The provision in this area of the curriculum is satisfactory overall.
88. Aspects of the literacy strategy are taught through stories and rhymes. Teachers use good questioning strategies to develop speaking and listening skills. Children begin to identify rhyming words and words that they use most frequently. They develop a good understanding of initial sounds of letters through the actions and characters of a phonic scheme. Many children are beginning to write their names.

89. They recognise the difference between pictures and words readily. When sharing a book with pupils it was clear that the children who learn the most quickly were able to use picture clues to answer questions about the text. For example, they were able to answer questions like '*Why was the cat sitting on the mat?*' They can recall accurately the main characters and events of the stories they hear.
90. Opportunities for children to think and act as readers and writers are limited. Many of the activities in writing are based on recognising and using the high frequency words. Good examples such as making the book about '*What I can do*' and taking orders in the coffee shop are too infrequent. Although both classes have clearly identified writing areas, they are not used effectively to develop pupils' early writing ideas or for opportunities to write freely for different purposes.

Mathematical development

91. Children enter the reception classes with an understanding of counting, sorting and recognition of numbers and simple two-dimensional shapes. In whole-class sessions teachers use many different ways to develop pupils' counting skills and mathematical vocabulary. This is good. For example, they use resources such as, the giant dice and the number washing line effectively to engage children's attention to numbers. Children are set to achieve the expected levels of the early learning goals by the end of reception year. The provision in this area of learning is satisfactory.
92. All children count to ten and some count beyond 20 competently. They identify different coins and sort them according to their shape and colour. They use mathematical language with confidence. For example, children answer questions like '*Find a coin that is more than 2p*'. The more able pupils are beginning to exchange 5p using one-penny coins.
93. Teachers use some elements of the numeracy strategy such as the mental and oral mathematics effectively to extend and practise children's mathematical skills. However, in some lessons there is a narrow focus on what they are to learn at the expense of how they learn. There is insufficient adult intervention to extend children's numeracy skills during independent mathematical activities.
94. Opportunities to extend and consolidate mathematical vocabulary through other areas such as physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are good.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

95. The provision for the teaching and learning for children in this area of the curriculum is good. Many will have exceeded the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children develop a good knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Teachers engage children effectively in these sessions by offering them opportunities to state their preferences. For example, when they were making sandwiches they were able to choose to make what they liked to eat the best. Children observe similarities and differences through their work on sorting fruits. They observe the special features of objects and draw them successfully. Teachers give good opportunities for children to learn about people who work in the school, such as the caretaker. They learn how important the caretaker's job is and how it affects them.

96. Children use the computer to draw pictures confidently. They learn how to control the mouse. Those who learn the most quickly are beginning to use the appropriate keys to produce upper and lower case letters.
97. Children learn about the importance of health and safety. For example, they explain what they should do before handling food and what they need to remember when handling tools in their activities.

Physical development

98. Children attain in line with the levels expected of the early learning goals. The provision for this area is satisfactory overall although opportunities to develop children's physical skills through outdoor play are not explored sufficiently. This is partly due to the fact that outside access and resources are restricted. Children use simple manipulative skills well. For example, in building the shape pupils can handle the small tessellating shapes to build structures. Through their physical education lesson pupils demonstrated their skills on how to move around the room in different ways showing an awareness of space and direction. They were able to make different shapes such as 'tall', 'short', 'flat', 'wide', 'high' and 'low' shapes with their body by following teachers' instructions.
99. Opportunities to develop pupils' physical skills through outdoor play are not explored sufficiently. This is partially due to the fact that out access and resources are restricted. The school needs to think about developing this further.
100. Children use basic manipulative skills well. They develop pencil control to write their names and careful control in their use of construction materials. For example, in building a shape they handle the small tessellating shapes to build structures well. In their physical education lessons children demonstrated their abilities and skills when moving around the room in different ways showing an awareness and good use of space and direction. They are able to make different shapes such as 'tall', 'short', 'flat', 'wide', 'high' and 'low' with their body by following teachers' instructions.

Creative development

101. Provision for children's creative development is satisfactory. They enjoy singing and do so enthusiastically. They use their imagination in play and act out the roles in play situations. Children explore the use of different colours in their artwork. In their work with pastels they first observed the features and shape of the toy animal they had chosen to draw. A number of children show an interest in adding details to their drawings. However, in some of the artwork there is an over-direction from adults and this results in restricting children's free expression.
102. Children have opportunities for acting out their play. However, there is a lack of adult interaction in these areas to extend pupils' imagination and creativity.
103. The teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall although there are examples of good and very good teaching. In areas like developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development, it is good. The teaching of whole-class sessions of literacy and numerical strategy are particularly good because teachers use their questioning skills and resources well to engage pupils' interest and extend their learning. In some of the group and independent activities there is an over-emphasis on the fact that children learn rather than on the development of ways of helping them learn. Activities

are too teacher-directed and there is an over-emphasis on recording. For example, in the work on coins, teachers could have extended the use of the coffee shop and other games to enable children to recognise the different shapes, size and value of coins rather than giving a worksheet.

104. Teachers set high expectations of the children and they provide good role models. The quality of provision for those with special educational needs is good. They are supported well in their activities.
105. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is broad and balanced. It provides opportunities for sound achievement for all children. There are opportunities for structured play in the afternoon, but there is less ongoing provision for explorative work in the morning sessions. Opportunities are identified to develop an awareness of other cultures such as Indian and Chinese food on the menu in the coffee shop. The addition of other resources such as kitchen utensils and dressing-up clothes from other countries is limited. The 'buddy project' and other rewards and sanctions enable children to develop a sense of right and wrong and caring for others.
106. The assessment and recording procedures are good. When children start in the reception class the school assesses children according to the local authority's tests and from then on children's progress is checked by teachers twice each term. Children with special educational needs are identified early to offer focussed work.
107. Partnership with parents is satisfactory, overall. Parents are offered the opportunity of an induction meeting before their child starts school. They are provided with information about the school and what their child will be learning. However, there is no planned programme of induction or visits into the school for children. Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom. Useful methods to develop parental skills in supporting their children's learning are less well developed.
108. Much has been achieved during this year to develop an effective foundation stage team. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. There is a team approach where everyone is involved from the planning stage onwards. There is good liaison with staff in the nursery setting. They are involved with the reception teachers in planning meetings and the co-ordinators have worked hard together to create the nursery setting environment. The early years' co-ordinator monitors the planning and is clear about what needs to be done next to build on the good start the school has made in creating an effective Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

109. Pupils attained average standards in the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 tests (SAT's). Compared with similar schools they were above the average. In the tests at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils attained at the national average in writing and below the average standard in reading compared with schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools the results were above the average in writing and at the average in reading. Standards in English tests have risen at both key stages since the previous year (1999).
110. Standards at 11 have improved considerably over the four years since the previous inspection when test results were below the national average and many pupils were underachieving. Since then standards have risen and results have maintained a rise in line with national standards. Results over the four years at the end of Key Stage 1

in reading and writing have shown a fall in standards against the national trend with a dip in standards in 1999. The latest results in 2000 show an improvement and writing results have recovered very well. Inspection findings show that in English pupils' standards of achievement at both key stages are at the national expectation. Some pupils are on line to reach the higher levels (Level 5) in reading and writing. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain levels in line with the national expectation for their age in the areas of speaking and listening, and reading. Attainment in writing is close to the national average for most pupils. No pupils attain at the higher level (Level 3) in either reading or writing.

111. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Booster classes and setting into ability groups at Years 5 and 6, along with good and very good teaching in these year groups, are a key contributory factor to the rise in standards by the end of the juniors.
112. At the age of 11 pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills that are as expected for their age. For about a third of pupils these skills are good. They listen very well and give clear explanations, for instance, on how they will write a newspaper report. They are confident speakers and join in with class discussions willingly and sensibly during the literacy hour and in their lessons in other subjects, such as religious education and personal and social education. For instance, pupils at Years 5 and 6 become involved and enter into discussions on the plight of the Jewish people having to worship in secret. A higher attaining set of Year 6 pupils work well in pairs and act out, in words, a conflict situation with a parent. At the end of the juniors pupils give clear instructions to visitors on how to find books in the library using the classification system. Pupils in Year 2, listen to their teachers well and enjoy sharing information books together with their teachers during the literacy hour. They listen carefully to instructions for what they are to do in their independent tasks and at the end of lessons when they discuss what they have learnt. Pupils take turns in speaking and know not to call out. They comment about the text and pictures, remarking that the picture '*should have a warning sign for men working*'. As a result of careful and focussed questioning and clear explanations by teachers, they are confident in answering questions and come up with many answers for the teacher in their study of words. For instance, a group of Year 1 and 2 pupils build a long list of rhyming words when learning sounds and blends of sounds. The good relationships between teachers and pupils create a positive and encouraging atmosphere that is very effective in encouraging pupils to take part in class discussions.
113. The school emphasises and gives pupils good opportunities for drama from reception onwards. Drama is incorporated well into personal, social and health education lessons. For instance, the youngest children act out and take the parts of customers and waitresses in a coffee shop. Older pupils work together on a regular basis in groups during a time known in the school as *Yellow sessions*. For instance, in these sessions, they work on a drama scenario of finding a message in a bottle. This is good provision for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills.
114. Pupils' reading is satisfactory overall by the end of Key Stage 1 and it is good by the end of Key Stage 2. The standard of reading improves quickly as pupils progress through the key stage and by the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils are competent and confident readers. A significant proportion of them read with a high standard of fluency and understanding. Higher attaining pupils enjoy a wide range of books by well-known authors that teachers introduce into their reading, for instance, *Wuthering Heights* and *Sherlock Holmes*. In their independent reading they choose and enjoy stories by *Roald Dahl* such as *George's Marvellous Medicine* and the *Harry Potter*

books by *J K Rowling*. Towards the end of the juniors pupils in Year 5 are making good progress in their reading and a significant number have already reached the standard expected for 11 year olds. Year 6 pupils of all levels of ability read aloud well. Some read with very good expression bringing the dialogue alive. They discuss and explain the plots and characters in their books and offer opinions about the books and their authors. They have good skills in breaking up unfamiliar words of several syllables. They explain the meaning of words such as *sniggered* and know to use a dictionary to find the meaning of words of which they are unsure such as *scathingly*. Pupils in Year 5 appreciate how to read poetry effectively and as a result of very good teacher demonstrations they read poems such as *Jabberwocky* dramatically, bringing out the atmosphere of the poem well. By the end of the juniors pupils use the library effectively and are capable of finding information quickly. They have a good understanding of the contents, indexes and use of glossaries in books. They know how to use headings and sub headings to find information quickly.

115. In Key Stage 1 pupils make steady progress with their reading although only a small number reach levels any higher than the level expected for their age by the end of Year 2. Most develop a sound sight vocabulary, to match the vocabulary in the range of reading schemes, and knowledge of sounds and blends that they learn during the literacy hour. They learn to recognise rhyme and build up words in patterns such as *cap, tap, map, flap and snap* by changing the first letter and blends of letters. As a result of regular practice and good teaching of early reading skills, pupils learn to guess the ends of sentences accurately by using the meaning of the text and pictures. Pupils of all abilities are able to talk about the books they enjoy reading. They enjoy a variety of fairy stories and information books. Pupils in the infants take their reading books home regularly and read to parents and grandparents. This support contributes well to pupils' progress. Pupils who read at home the most make the best progress. All pupils choose books from the school library to take home and many borrow from the local public library.
116. Writing has been rightly identified as a thrust area for the curriculum throughout the school. This is the weakest area of the curriculum for pupils at both key stages. The oldest pupils who have had the least experience of the literacy hour find the skills of punctuation and spelling the most difficult. However, there are already signs of improvement within pupils' work. This is the case at the end of Key Stage 2 where teachers' hard work and emphasis on writing development is beginning to show through. Pupils have good imaginative ideas for their writing and are familiar with planning and drafting their individual work. In Years 5 and 6, they write quickly and quietly, producing drafts of a good length in a short time. They know that they need to edit their work to check and correct punctuation and spelling. They use dictionaries to help them. For instance, after a motivating discussion of ideas for writing in a journalistic style, three quarters of a Year 6 class succeeded in writing a short article to a headline, *Hero takes over coach after driver falls asleep*. They use imaginative vocabulary and begin sentences in interesting ways showing a range of styles. Pupils set out and present their work neatly with dates, headings and underlining although there is a lack of consistency in the quality and style of joined handwriting. Many are not yet secure in the use of correct punctuation and spelling expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs in the juniors make good strides in their learning in their set groups. This is as a result of good teaching of both reading and writing. For instance, in a Year 6 group they learn to recognise the key ideas in a text on *Natural Disasters* and to compare different types of newspaper reports. In another lesson Year 4 pupils with special educational needs were able to use what they already knew about different types of writing to identify the characteristics of non-chronological writing and to write facts about their pets succinctly.

117. Pupils begin the reception classes with a good understanding of writing. They enjoy writing their names and are beginning to form their letters. They are beginning to recognise the first letters of words and learn to write and build up simple three letter words quickly. They quickly develop good pencil control and soon show clear letter formation. In Year 2, they enjoy writing their own stories and work hard to write in sentences marked by capital letters at the beginning and full stops at the end. They have good ideas for stories such as *The Lion With No Tail* and *The Bees Who Lost Their Sting*. Half of Year 2 pupils write stories of a good length for their age. They also enjoy writing instructions, for instance, on *How To Make A Jam Sandwich*, although only a few succeed with this style of writing. Pupils write mostly in print script and are not yet beginning to join groups of letters or words. Pupils' written work is usually laid out well although in Key Stage 1 pupils write only on worksheets and paper. They do not use exercise books. Their work is kept meticulously by the teachers but in some cases the many worksheets used restrict the quantity of writing. Pupils do not have a constant record of their work to look back on, read or re-read the teachers' marking comments and see their own progress.
118. The teaching of English is good overall. Teachers plan their lessons together in teams across year groups very thoroughly. They know exactly what they want pupils to learn and in most lessons they make sure that pupils know what they are to learn. They explain work well and give very clear instructions for pupils to work independently. Teachers match work carefully to the different abilities of the pupils. This is also the case in the set classes of older pupils where teachers prepare different tasks for groups of pupils at different levels of attainment, providing well for their learning needs.
119. Teachers have good systems in place for pupils to work independently during the literacy hour. They use support assistants well during lessons. In classes of younger pupils teachers do not have effective ways in place to enable pupils to develop their own spelling skills. This hinders their independent writing and causes interruptions to teachers working with targeted groups. There are occasions in some lessons in Key Stage 1 when pupils are not set sufficiently hard work or challenging extension activities. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive the help they need in English lessons, although there is scope to match pupils' work more precisely to the targets on their individual educational plans. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make sound progress in their learning in English lessons. For instance, there was a high level of involvement for one bi-lingual child when correcting proof reading with the help of a dictionary.
120. Teachers use homework well to reinforce work done in class. Pupils take reading books and spelling lists home as well as work to reinforce what is done in lessons. There has been some inconsistency lately caused by staff illness and changes but this has now been rectified. In the best lessons teachers use their skills of questioning very effectively. They lead pupils' thinking well and this results in good learning and reasoning for pupils. Questions are matched well to pupils' understanding and teachers check that they have understood as they move through discussions and explanations. Work is marked well by teachers who give positive and useful comments for improvement to pupils. Pupils' work is checked regularly and tested frequently, and as a result teachers know the pupils' thoroughly and what they need to improve. Individual pupils decide with the teacher what they need to concentrate on in their learning. This target setting is done very well towards and at the end of the juniors but is less well developed earlier in the school.

121. The English curriculum is good. Literacy is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning across other subjects of the curriculum. The school uses the structure of the literacy hour effectively to teach basic skills and allocates additional time for writing at length and, in some classes, for handwriting skills. However information technology is not used sufficiently in English lessons. The curriculum and the use of resources, for instance, big books and reading books for shared and guided reading, has been carefully planned by the subject co-ordinator. Resources in the libraries are sound although there is room for further supplementation of both fiction and non-fiction books including those with a multicultural approach. Books are in good condition and well organised. All pupils borrow from the library and take books home.
122. The management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator, with the support of the headteacher, has played a major part in raising standards. Pupils sit recommended and statutory national tests from Year 2 to Year 6 annually. The results of these are recorded and carefully tracked. End of key stage tests are carefully analysed and used to identify improvements needed.

MATHEMATICS

123. Pupils at the end of both key stages attain the standards expected for their age in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures and data handling). The 2000 national test results show that pupils in Year 2 and 6 were in line with the national average. The pattern is significantly better where the results are compared with similar schools when results are well above average. Since the last inspection in January 1996, standards in Key Stage 1 and 2 have broadly improved in line with national averages with Key Stage 2 performing better than Key Stage 1. This is due to the higher expectations, better targeting of work to pupils' ability through setting, and the good quality of teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. There are no marked differences between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately and make sound progress.
124. By the age of seven pupils count to 100, order numbers to 30, work in multiples of five and ten and use appropriate vocabulary, for example, 'minus' and 'rounding to nearest ten'. They solve simple mathematical problems, estimate and measure length, and make sound deductions from graphical data, for example, identifying pupils with the least and most letters in their names, and the most common number of letters in pupils' names.
125. By the age of 11 pupils carry out long division and multiplication, add mixed fractions, calculate simple percentages and convert metres to kilometres using a decimal point. They identify angles as acute, obtuse or reflex and estimate the number of degrees in a given angle and calculate the missing internal angle in a triangle. They understand simple chance and probability and use mathematical vocabulary such as mean, mode and median accurately.
126. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge to problems in both Key Stages 1 and 2. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
127. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school are good overall. There is room for improvement in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 where two satisfactory lessons and one unsatisfactory lesson were seen. In Years 4 to 6 teaching varies from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. The pace of learning in Years 5 and 6 ensures pupils make good progress. A scrutiny of work revealed that the demands

made on pupils in Year 3 are too low because the amount of work completed is limited and pupils of different abilities are set the same work.

128. In the very good lessons pupils are encouraged to use a range of mental strategies to solve problems in their own way and practical apparatus is used effectively to make them think hard and support learning. For example, the use of simple 'angle estimators' enabled pupils to create a range of acute, reflex and obtuse angles quickly and effectively. In another successful lesson pupils were challenged and inspired to develop mental subtraction through staged addition. In the least successful lessons work was too easy, the pace slow, with pupils not completing sufficient work.
129. The teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is soundly established and planning is very good. However, the use of clear questions at the end of sessions to assess what pupils have understood is good in the best lessons but is not consistently applied by all teachers. Planning identifies clearly what is to be learnt in a lesson but this is not always shared with pupils at the start of lessons. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this results in pupils being able to explain their work using the correct terminology. The oral and mental sessions are usually delivered with enthusiasm, pupils learn quickly and show good mental ability. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills and teachers manage pupils and resources efficiently. In the best lessons worksheets are used successfully to support learning and are matched to challenge the range of pupils' ability. However, in some lessons a number of activities based on worksheets are too easy for higher-attaining pupils. In all areas of the school the pupils' ability to use ICT to develop their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills is inconsistent. Use of ICT is good in Years 5 and 6 where pupils use it to practise angle estimation, but too few opportunities are offered elsewhere. Mathematics is used to aid learning in other subjects, for instance, in science where pupils record their findings in a variety of charts, graphs and diagrams.
130. Teachers use a very good range of procedures to assess pupils' attainment to ensure they are making expected progress. In addition to regular teacher assessment, the school uses national tests, non-statutory tests and tests organised by the local education authority to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. These are used systematically and effectively to track pupils' progress from year to year, predict attainment, set challenging targets, and as a means to monitoring pupils' progress, to ensure they are meeting expectations.
131. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Pupils have good attitudes in their lessons. They are involved, work and concentrate well. The mathematics curriculum has been reviewed through the adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy and is no longer 'dull, repetitive and unchallenging'. The amount of homework is satisfactory. Through good systematic monitoring, joint planning and auditing of resources, the subject co-ordinator has been influential in ensuring that the National Numeracy Strategy has been fully and successfully implemented. There is now consistency in planning containing clear objectives, and work is matched to the range of ability. Standards are rising.

SCIENCE

132. Inspection findings show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are broadly average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when important weaknesses were found.

133. Teacher assessments for 2000 of pupils at the age of seven show that their performance was very high in comparison with the national average. Test results for pupils aged 11 were below the national average but close to the average for similar schools. This drop from an above average trend for previous years reflects the changes of staff over the last year when temporary staff undertook science teaching for some time.
134. Since the last inspection, the school has adopted the new recommended scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to ensure appropriate coverage of all aspects of the curriculum. Work seen during the inspection shows that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of living things and physical science. They are extending their knowledge of materials, however, this area will not be given fuller attention until later in the year. In Key Stage 1, pupils have collected data, made measurements and recorded their findings clearly, making use of simple bar graphs. They recognise the five categories of food and identify features of a balanced diet. They have conducted experiments to show how sound varies over distance. Their work on reproduction shows that they use the correct names for the young of different animals. In the juniors, pupils have studied the effects of forces such as gravity and friction. They have tried out theories about mould growth, conductivity and insulation. Pupils use scientific vocabulary effectively and this makes a good contribution to their skills in literacy. They have discussed the possible link between a person's height and the length of the femur, then made careful measurements to find out the facts. They have written up their notes carefully, illustrating them where appropriate and using charts and graphs effectively to extend their mathematical skills.
135. In contrast to previous inspection findings, pupils now have plenty of opportunity to investigate and experiment. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They respond well to the good management by their teachers. The questions "Why?" and "How?" and explanations such as " We did this to find out whether..." appear right through their work, revealing enquiring minds, enjoying the thrill of discovery. In class, boys and girls perform equally well. Test results show that girls do better than boys, following the national trend. Pupils with special needs work as well as their classmates, having suitable tasks and support.
136. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, the pace and variety of lessons have improved. A lively approach by the teacher to Year 1 work on food made sure that all pupils were fully involved in planning, making and subsequently eating a selection of sandwiches. Rather than present a narrow stream of facts, teachers' challenging questioning, taking account of differences in ability, make pupils think hard about the effects of what they eat. In consequence, they are able to offer the considered view that *"If you eat all junk-food you won't get energy, you'll get fat"*. In contrast, when the teacher did not require them to substantiate their comments, Year 2 pupils were content to give only basic replies to questions about hazardous substances in the home. Although they knew most of the reasons, they showed little initiative in offering them.
137. In Key Stage 2, planning now focuses strongly on pupils' grasp of scientific processes rather than just factual knowledge. Pupils' work shows that their progress is appropriately more rapid as they get older. In the best teaching, the teacher's expert approach as a facilitator and questioner, prompting and probing, group by group, according to ability, enables Year 6 pupils to discover for themselves the effects of different loads on electrical circuits. The good plenary session at the end of the lesson balanced the clear guidelines given at the start. The different strands that had

emerged were effectively drawn together so pupils finished with a good grasp of what they had done and how well they had done it. As pupils responded to questions and suggestions, they used correct terms such as 'positive', 'negative' and 'series' with the most confident pupils able to explain 'open circuit'. The value of the correct use of scientific symbols was vividly brought home when groups drew diagrams of what they had constructed for other groups to build. They realise that if the circuit diagram is inaccurate, then things are unlikely to work. They enjoy the idea of checking classmates' work for accuracy.

138. Teachers make sure that pupils are always aware of the need for evidence for findings and particularly for fairness in testing. A Year 4 class, for example, suggested confidently that groups experimenting with different materials to determine the best insulators needed to have equal amounts of ice and take the same time. They were also aware that the place a test is conducted may affect the results: pupils were quick to point out that in their warm classroom some ice might melt before they really had a chance to prove their theories.
139. Management of science is good although there is insufficient use of information technology to extend pupils' skills of recording. This year the science co-ordinator is teaching both Year 6 science groups so pupils have the benefit of a more skilful and expert approach. Resources are sound and the use of a special room set aside for teaching science at Key Stage 2 is successful in keeping all resources readily available for lessons. Pupils' progress in science is checked regularly. In response to an analysis of pupils' work and assessments, the school is now looking at ways to improve boys' achievement.

ART

140. Pupils throughout school attain standards expected of their age with a significant number of pupils attaining above this by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a considerable improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged to be below the age-related expectations at both key stages. This improvement is a direct influence of the good leadership and direction provided by the co-ordinator.
141. There was very little teaching time identified in Key Stage 1 on art and design at the time of the inspection. The judgement on standards are based on the scrutiny of the work seen and the displays around school. Pupils' work on their self-portraits and their drawings of pets using pastels and pencils show that they can select and use the colours and include details. However, opportunities to develop their aesthetic interest and creative skills are less evident.
142. The overall standards in Key Stage 2 are in line with the age-related expectations in all the four aspects (exploring and developing ideas, investigating and making, evaluating and developing and knowledge and understanding). The good teaching and learning opportunities provided in the juniors enable a significant number of pupils to attain beyond their expected level in exploring and developing ideas, investigating, evaluating and developing their work. Year 6 pupils work effectively on recreating their still life sketch using printing with inks. A number of pupils use the tools and materials to show depth and three-dimensional effects. The way teachers direct children through a step by step approach, encouraging them to appraise their work as they progress, are good. They generate an enthusiasm and enjoyment in the learning in art for all pupils. Some of the work produced at Key Stage 2 is of high quality. Opportunities such as these were not evident in Key Stage 1.

143. Pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour in lessons are good.
144. The opportunities for pupils to work with and learn from other local and national artists are good, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils learn about a range of well-known European artists and their styles, such as Picasso and cubism. The school encourages and organises visits to art galleries and studios such as the Drumcroom Art Education Centre and Gallery. Pupils have opportunities to work with professional living artists. However, the opportunities to learn about art from other than Western cultures are limited. The school plans cross-curricular links with history, ICT, mathematics and literacy. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils work on creating pictures of the model they have observed, using computers. The way pupils use measurements to create angles and three-dimensional effects is a good example of cross-curricular application.
145. The school follows the nationally produced and recommended schemes of work. The resources are good and art areas are well organised. These give pupils the opportunity and independence to choose and use the tools and materials they need to create their desired effect.
146. The subject is well managed and led by the co-ordinator who monitors the planning throughout school. There is no formal monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator teaches art and design to pupils in Key Stage 2. There is no whole-school procedure for assessing and recording pupils' progress. This is an area identified for further development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

147. The last inspection had identified the standards of attainment in both key stages to be below that of national expectations. The scrutiny of pupils' work, the lesson observed in Year 2 and the discussion with a group of current Year 5 and 6 pupils on their previous work indicate that this is no longer the case. Pupils are attaining in line with what is expected of their age in all the four components of the curriculum. Most of the work seen in the infants during the inspection was on food technology.
148. Insufficient lessons were seen in either key stage to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching. Teaching in the lesson seen in the top infant class was sound.
149. Pupils in Key Stage 1 draw on their previous experiences and skills in planning and tasting different fruits to decide on what to select when designing their 'drink smoothies'. They state the reasons for choosing particular ingredients to make the drink more exciting and appealing to others. In lessons such as this the careful questioning by the class teacher has enabled pupils who learn more slowly to focus more on the process as well as the outcome. The teachers create an atmosphere of mutual respect and encourage pupils to express their views. Through their work on designing and making dinosaurs, pupils demonstrate an understanding of how to plan, make and evaluate their models. Pupils' attitudes to work are good.
150. In the discussion with a group of junior pupils from Years 5 and 6 about their space vehicles, they were able to explain in detail how they went about designing and making their models. They were clear about the purpose of their design and how they had to make adjustments with the axle to make their space vehicle to move forward without losing the balance.

151. The school uses the nationally produced scheme of work to plan for the subject. However, this is not sufficiently monitored or evaluated to ensure that pupils learn sequentially and build on what they already know. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to develop, plan and communicate ideas for design and planning. Due to the absence of the co-ordinator the headteacher is currently overseeing the subject. The headteacher is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. The resources are adequate to implement the subject effectively.

GEOGRAPHY

152. Due to insufficient evidence of pupils' work and lack of opportunity to observe pupils in lessons, it was not possible to make a firm judgement about the standards of attainment or the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2. During the last inspection timetable arrangements restricted the observation of work in Key Stage 2.
153. From the observations of two lessons at Key Stage 1, teachers' planning and examination of pupils' work, it is evident that the school has improved the teaching of geography in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. As a result the standards of attainment are in line with that expected for pupils of this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. The way teachers encourage and challenge pupils in consolidating and extending their learning through questioning is good. Through such questioning, pupils are able to explain the similarities and difference of different types of jobs that people undertake within school and identify the geographical features of places.
154. The work of pupils in Years 5 and 6 linked to their history lesson shows that they have good skills in using maps to identify places. This was also evident in the lesson observed in Key Stage 1 where pupils from both Years 1 and 2 were able to identify France and Britain on the map and a globe. Teachers set high expectations of all pupils. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and their enthusiasm about the subject is evident in the whole discussions. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported in lessons.
155. The school follows a two-year cycle of planning in accordance with the national scheme of work. Planning is sequential and builds on the skills and knowledge that pupils have already learned. The co-ordinator has successfully reviewed the policy with the help of the local education authority adviser for geography. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and whole-school procedures to assess pupils' progress are not yet in place. The subject co-ordinator, who is due to leave the school at the end of the term, does not have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject although she is able to describe the actions she has undertaken since taking over the responsibilities in January 2000. The resources are adequate to deliver the curriculum effectively.

HISTORY

156. Standards of achievement are broadly in line with national expectations for pupils' ages in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
157. The school follows the nationally recommended curricular guidelines to ensure the curriculum is appropriately balanced. In addition, the co-ordinator has prepared a planning file to ensure that there are no clashes or inappropriate repetitions of topics over the years.

158. It was not possible to observe teaching in Key Stage 1. Pupils' work in Year 1 indicates that they are developing a suitable concept of the passage of time, in response to exploration of their locality. They have visited the old school and the hospice, which they have recorded by drawings. These point out old-fashioned windows and drainpipes and compare these with their own homes. In Year 2 the opportunity to handle a real wash tub and *possing-stick* has made them vividly aware of the labour intensive nature of a Victorian washday. The task to write their impressions enabled higher attaining pupils to write in detail, naming items correctly and showing sound literacy skills. The pupils who learn less quickly showed that their imaginations had been engaged, as one child commented with feeling that "You had to push and push!".
159. In a Year 4 class, the teacher explained the value of inventories as sources of information about the way of life, using an example from Tudor times. The higher attaining pupils grasped the concept readily, and the majority of pupils were eventually able to prepare a list of items from their homes to give a flavour of their own lives. In so doing, they could appreciate that in its day, the Tudor list was just as modern, despite changes in language. Whilst no pupils knew, nor could they guess the meaning of 'settle' or 'spit', pupils had no trouble working out 'bed-chamber'. Some of the pupils receiving behaviour support, however, worked on areas more to do with sports and hobbies, which did little to advance their historical knowledge. In a Year 6 class, the teacher had grouped the pupils according to their abilities. The groups had researched the life of children in ancient Greece. They had used a good range of resources, comprising of books and an interactive CD-ROM. In much of the written work, pupils show that they are regularly encouraged to look at sources of information and consider the reasons behind past events. From the factors contributing to victory at the *Battle of Marathon* to some of the actions of Henry VIII, they have offered views, which they justify, generally using correct terms. In many cases, they draw comparisons with modern times, which enhances their concept of chronology. History makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.
160. In Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory overall although it varies in quality. No poor teaching was observed as was the case during the last inspection. In the best lessons, good subject knowledge coupled with skilful questioning enabled the teacher to include everyone, regardless of ability, in the question and answer session. The higher attaining pupils were suitably challenged to expand upon their statements. Support staff were well deployed to help pupils with special educational needs find information and play a full part in the lesson.
161. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator is a graduate in history and a specialist. She has been able to support colleagues in improving their skills and has observed several of them teach. She has developed the range of resources to meet the needs of the curriculum, as identified at the last inspection. She is aware that the range needs to be expanded further, for example, to support planned work on World War II and also plans to increase the range of visits to widen pupils' experiences. Further training is planned for the contribution of history to pupils' literacy skills. Assessment of pupils' work is beginning and follows the recommendations in the nationally produced scheme of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

162. Standards in ICT are average at Key Stage 1 and below average in Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection too few opportunities have been taken to develop Key Stage 2 pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills systematically over time. Although this

in now being addressed through the implementation of a new scheme of work, it has resulted in pupils acquiring unsatisfactory skills in the majority of the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum.

163. Pupils in Year 2 use a word processor successfully to write stories to interpret a picture they created using clip art. They use the delete key, highlight text and change the font. They use a graphics program to draw pictures and create repeating patterns using 'tiler' to create a design for a tablecloth. These pupils do not use a CD-ROM to find information but do use a programmable toy to develop skills in simple programming. Year 6 pupils have sound word processing skills using a range of fonts, colours and emphasis to create presentations of stories and poems. They interrogate databases to identify, for example, birds that live in marshland and eat insects. They use an art package to create pictures in the style of Picasso but are insecure in the use of ICT in control, modelling and multimedia presentation. Although planned, pupils have not used e-mail.
164. Only one lesson of ICT was observed and consequently there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement about teaching. There are instances where ICT is used within the curriculum. For example, in mathematics in Years 5 and 6, for the estimation of the size and type of angles. Year 5 pupils create pictures in the style of Picasso to support art and Year 6 pupils draft text directly onto the computer for editing to support literacy. However, overall Key Stage 2 teachers lack the skills to identify sufficient learning opportunities to enable the development of ICT across the curriculum, or to identify where it can be used to support the development of skills in other subjects.
165. Teachers monitor pupils' completion of the scheme of work but there is no systematic means of recording pupils' progress. However, the school is developing a simple recording system to record pupils' attainment based on the expectations in the scheme of work.
166. Since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 with the National Curriculum requirements being met. However there is insufficient progress in Key Stage 2. The school has recently adopted the QCA's scheme of work, updated its equipment and increased the range of software. However, while some teachers have sufficient expertise, overall teachers have not kept pace with the changes in the subject since the last inspection and many still lack confidence. The school has identified the weaknesses and created a detailed ICT action plan. This supports the school improvement plan and addresses the weaknesses in the subject over the forthcoming year. Money from the National Opportunities Fund has been allocated to develop teachers' skills, confidence and interpretation of the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum. Until recently the subject has been well managed by the co-ordinator who is now on maternity leave. The appointment of a new subject co-ordinator is now under consideration.

MUSIC

167. Music has improved since the last inspection and now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Since the previous inspection, the school has put a commercial scheme of work in place to support teachers and this is still in use in Key Stage 1. Since the beginning of this term the nationally recommended scheme of work has been put into place in Key Stage 2.

168. Pupils make steady progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of music throughout the school and in some lessons in Key Stage 1 they make good progress. On the evidence of work seen, standards of attainment at the end of both key stages is about the same as is usually found in most primary schools.
169. Pupils make satisfactory progress and in some lessons in Key Stage 1 they make good progress. In the best lessons they learn to sing simple tunes together. They learn and memorise a wide range of songs and add actions. They sing with confidence and enthusiasm. For instance they add the miming actions to songs such as “*If you’re happy and you know it*”, and “*Goldilocks went to the house of the bears*”. As a result of good teaching with careful instructions and good demonstrations, pupils learn to ‘*walk the beat*’ feeling the rhythm in their bodies and quickly develop the ability to maintain a steady beat. Pupils learn to handle instruments with care and add a percussion accompaniment at the correct time. They practise rhythm patterns and learn to play them together refining their performance skills.
170. The singing in assemblies and in large groups is good. All pupils develop a wide repertoire of songs and hymns and sing in tune with good diction and enthusiasm. They develop a sense of phrasing and dynamics well. At both key stages pupils enjoy their music lessons. They work hard to improve their performances and take a pride in getting it right. The majority of pupils listen attentively during lessons. Satisfactory progress is maintained in Key Stage 2. In Year 6, pupils identify and perform rhythmic patterns. They practise and refine their skills to fit the repeated patterns together and perform in different groups following conductor and notation cards. They take different parts for choruses and verse and show an understanding of pitch and dynamics and the difference between a beat and a rhythm. They use instruments confidently and work and count with care to come in at the right time to add to the lyrics.
171. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers at Key Stage 1 are confident and secure in teaching music. They plan their lessons carefully from the commercial scheme. They extend their ideas and so pupils learn further by using their own knowledge of the subject. Teachers use resources well and prepare them in advance of the lessons. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils. They capture their imagination during lessons which sustains good behaviour well and have high expectations of pupils’ achievements. Lessons are planned across the year groups. In some lessons at Key Stage 2, lessons are carefully planned to refine pupils’ knowledge and develop skills but nevertheless are tedious. In these lessons, despite teacher’s enthusiasm, insufficient subject expertise and variety of content results in a lack of pupils’ interest and enjoyment for the length of the lesson. For instance, some pupils with learning difficulties became restless during an hour-long lesson, using the song *A Yellow Submarine*.
172. The subject is well co-ordinated although due to the serious illness of the subject co-ordinator at the time of the inspection, music was overseen and planned by the curriculum teams for each key stage. No assessment is in place for the subject although this is planned in accordance with the national guidelines for the coming year. Pupils have opportunities to learn a keyboard and the recorder. Resources are satisfactory and readily accessible for pupils and teachers in both key stages.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

173. Standards in physical education are average at both key stages. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained with examples of good practice, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2.
174. Using simple apparatus pupils in Year 2 link two or three movements, for example, slide, jump and forward roll and demonstrate these confidently to other pupils. They get equipment out and put it away responsibly, listen to instructions and watch other pupils' demonstrations sensibly. Key Stage 2 pupils' work in dance is in line with expectations for their age with some groups performing above expectations. For example in a Year 5 and 6 class Year 5 pupils perform at similar standards to the Year 6 pupils when interpreting '*Being Alive*'. All pupils co-operate very well, in pairs and fours, to create imaginative sequences that are well co-ordinated, interpret rhythm and use levels and space well. The vast majority of pupils swim 25 metres by the time they leave Year 3 but there are no further opportunities for pupils to go swimming before they leave the school. All pupils enjoy physical education lessons and behave responsibly. They are active for the vast majority of the time.
175. Teaching is good overall. Teaching is firmly based on the QCA scheme of work which forms the basis of very well-planned lesson exemplars created by the recently appointed co-ordinator. Teachers give pupils good support and encouragement while allowing sufficient opportunity for them to develop skills and interpretation independently and through group work. Other examples of good practice are where lessons have good pace to maintain interest and involvement. Teachers insist on good behaviour and involve pupils in discussion of each other's performances, and use good knowledge and understanding to ensure pupils are challenged.
176. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and her expertise is being used well to raise expectations in physical education through joint planning meetings and detailed lesson planning.
177. Since the last inspection the school has addressed the majority of the issues raised in the report. There is strong leadership, a scheme of work and overall work is challenging, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities to practise and refine their work and to evaluate the work of others. However, recording of pupils' strengths and weaknesses is still insufficient to inform planning based on pupils' prior achievement although this is planned for the coming year. The range of extra-curricular clubs has been maintained and under the direction of the new co-ordinator more are planned. Older pupils have the opportunity of a residential visit to the Lake District, when they experience outdoor adventurous activities. Currently the school offers netball, football, rugby, skittle ball and judo to all pupils and take part in a range of inter-school sporting competitions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

178. The standards achieved by pupils in both key stages are in line with the locally agreed syllabus and pupils have good attitudes to their learning.
179. Since the last inspection, when the school did not meet its requirements, the Wigan Agreed Syllabus has undergone a thorough revision. Pupils now follow a realistic scheme of work derived from the syllabus and prepared by a working party of teachers from several schools, under the leadership of the local authority adviser. They cover an appropriate range of topics and make sound progress overall. Teaching about world faiths in particular is no longer limited. Teachers regularly draw attention to those elements common to the major faiths. For example, recent work on

Celebrations has linked the shared theme of Light in the Nativity of Jesus, the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, and the Hindu festival of Diwali. It has also included the aspects of giving and rejoicing shared in the Muslim feast of Id El Fitr taking place at the same time of year. All these links have been well reinforced in assemblies for the whole school.

180. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They generally use questioning well, which makes pupils think for themselves. As a result, they remember what they learn more effectively. When Year 2 pupils expressed concern that there must surely be something amiss if there were several different accounts of the Nativity, the teacher patiently reminded them of how they had begun the lesson. Each had recalled a fact or description from an account studied the previous week; different things stood out more for some children than for others. Then the profound realisation dawned that a different emphasis is not necessarily wrong. Teachers make effective links to literacy so pupils use correct terms, even to the extent of spelling 'frankincense' correctly aloud. Pupils are beginning to suggest reasons why, for example, the Wise Men made their journey as well as simply knowing that the journey took place. Year 3, in contrast, had little time to reflect before the teacher gave them answers herself, and in consequence later pupils did not recall very well many important points of what they had studied.
181. A Year 4 class learned about symbolism through the teacher's illustration of candles to show the Light of the World. In groups, pupils of all abilities worked well together to discuss and produce appropriate decorations for an Advent calendar. One group offered the good idea that Advent was like a 'count-down', before a rocket launch. A single pupil, reluctant to co-operate, responded well to the good management common to all classes as the teacher stressed her sadness rather than annoyance that he was spoiling the lesson for his classmates. As he saw their interest and enjoyment, he became reluctant to miss out and eventually participated happily in his group.
182. In Key Stage 2, pupils' work shows that they have thought particularly about the way in which belief affects behaviour. Year 6 folders show that pupils have a grasp of major points of the Five Pillars of Islam. They have an idea why a Hindu temple is set out in the way it is. In some cases, pupils have explained why they and others go to church. Reflection, reasoned explanation, and relevance characterise lessons. Year 5, for example, reflected on the implications of Judas Maccabeus' revolt against the tyranny of King Antiochus. The teacher's questions drew out links with work in history on ancient Greek dictatorship, and in geography by showing where the places were and what they are called now. Pupils showed a good recall of many facts. The personal experiences related by pupils who have celebrated Hanukkah made classmates' appreciation of the menorah and the dreidels they handled more vivid. Whereas the spiritual dimension to lessons was lacking at the last inspection, this is far from true now. Pupils' strong awareness of the deeper questions were succinctly captured at the end of the lesson by one pupil's simple but sincere voluntary prayer of thanks for present-day freedom of worship.
183. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator, as a member of the local authority working party, has been instrumental in the production of its scheme of work. This has made the agreed syllabus more accessible to all teachers so that those without a particular expertise in religious education may be equipped to teach what is required. The co-ordinator liaises regularly with colleagues to evaluate pupils' progress and to monitor the effectiveness of the new scheme. Her regular

involvement with the working party enables her to share with staff ideas of best practice. The school continues to invest in relevant books and a range of artefacts that answer the shortcomings of outdated and insufficient resources identified in the last inspection, for example, new Bibles for Years 5 and 6 are next to be ordered.