

INSPECTION REPORT

MARSH GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106403

Headteacher: Mr P. Duffy

Reporting inspector: Mrs O.M.Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 24 – 28 September 2001

Inspection number: 230517

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Postcode:	WN5 0EF
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D. Pilkington
Date of previous inspection:	16 – 20 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10859	Mrs O. Cooper	Registered inspector	English Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further.
11077	Mrs J. Harrison	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22740	Mrs M. Leah	Team inspector	Music The Foundation Stage	
30935	Mrs K. McArthur	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education.	
7994	Mrs P. Weston	Team inspector	Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language	
29504	Mrs S. Herring	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2959	Mr B. Leek	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Marsh Green is a large community primary school with 299 boys and girls in the main school and a further 46 children attending the nursery part-time. The school serves an area of severe social deprivation. The proportion of pupils from families where English is not the first language is low, the principal non-English first languages spoken being Turkish and Albanian. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average and the proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is above average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception classes in both language and number is well below average. The school accommodates students undertaking initial teacher training, and has had problems in getting supply teachers at short notice when required.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a satisfactory school, with some good features. Overall standards are below average by the time the pupils transfer to high school and improve from the well below average standards on entry. This is because the teaching is satisfactory overall and is good in the nursery and Years 3 to 6. In addition, the school is well led and managed, pupils are well cared for and, as they get older their attitudes to school and work improve. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The teaching in the nursery and in Years 3 to 6 is good and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is good and they become mature and responsible.

What could be improved

- Some of the teaching in reception, Years 1 and 2.
- Standards in English.
- Standards in mathematics.
- Standards in science.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection in March 1998 and standards have risen in line with the national trend. Satisfactory progress has been made with the points for improvement raised by the last inspection when considering there have been three headteachers in that time. In particular, the school has improved its system of assessment, successfully implemented the plans for information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects and has made appropriate arrangements to ensure pupils are fully supervised at playtimes. The school has been less successful in improving the rate of progress for some pupils in Years 1 and 2 as there are still examples of unsatisfactory teaching, although overall the teaching has improved. Funding from the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB 4) and for the professional development of teachers has been used effectively and has been beneficial in the drive to raise standards. In addition, the implementation of the school's performance management policy has helped to improve pupils' writing skills and so raise standards in English by the end of Year 6.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	E	E*	E	Well above average A above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E Very low E*
Mathematics	E	E	E	E	
Science	E	E	E	C	

Children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) make satisfactory progress but, by the end of the reception year a significant proportion are unlikely to achieve the national Early Learning Goals in language, number, their understanding of the world, personal or creative development. In physical development most are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals.

The results of national tests in 2000 at the end of Year 2 matched the national average in reading and mathematics, but were below the national average in writing. Nevertheless, pupils achieved well. The school has worked hard to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and this is reflected in higher standards since the previous inspection. The 2001 results were slightly lower, partly because the proportion of pupils with special educational needs was higher. Standards of the current Year 2 pupils' work are well below average in reading, writing, and mathematics and are below average in science. Nevertheless, most pupils achieve satisfactorily in all subjects except mathematics. There is some underachievement among lower attaining pupils and some with special educational needs due to weaknesses in the teaching. Attainment on entry was particularly low for these pupils and some have poor attitudes to school that are a further barrier to their progress. Standards are average in religious education, design and technology and physical education, but are below average in all other subjects except music where there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement.

The results of national tests taken at the end of Year 6 in 2001 showed notable improvement in mathematics and good improvement in English from the 2000 results, which were in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools. The 2001 science results were slightly lower than the previous year. Current standards of Year 6 pupils' work are below average in English, mathematics and science and are just below average in information and communication technology. In all other subjects standards are average. Pupils achieve well overall. The school met its targets for English and mathematics in 2001 and is on course to do so in 2002.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 and 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Some younger pupils have poor concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. A few pupils present challenging behaviour but this is managed very well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils' personal development is good, but they do not have enough opportunities to develop initiative and personal responsibility.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Below the national average. Unauthorised absence in above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Good

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

The quality of the teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. In Years 1 and 2, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory, as there are weaknesses in planning tasks that meet the learning needs of lower attaining pupils and some with special educational needs and occasional lessons are poor. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching is good, has many strengths and, meets the learning needs of all pupils well, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of pupils who have English as an additional language is satisfactory. The main strength in the teaching throughout the school is in the use of time and learning resources. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in Years 3 to 6 and is helping to raise standards. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of literacy is satisfactory, with some strengths and weaknesses, but of numeracy is unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and in all other subjects where judgements can be made, except design and technology, religious education and art and design where it is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects where judgements can be made and is good in geography and history. It was not possible to make secure judgements on teaching in physical education in Years 1 to 6 or in music in Years 1 and 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum provides an appropriate range of experiences and opportunities for learning and meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils have individual education plans with relevant targets and progress towards them is reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are supported well by class teachers and teaching assistants and soon learn to speak English and participate fully in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for the development of pupils' personal qualities is good. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and is good for their moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school looks after its pupils well. Good procedures are in place to ensure child protection, pupils' welfare and safety. Standards in English and mathematics are assessed regularly and effectively; pupils' attendance, behaviour and personal development are well monitored and action taken when necessary.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents.	Satisfactory. The school works hard to involve parents in the life and work of the school but few parents respond.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership and clear direction for the school are provided by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who are well supported by other members of the senior management group. A good climate for learning has been established. Responsibilities are delegated effectively and many curriculum subjects are well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. All statutory requirements are met and governors monitor the work of the school through their committees, links with curriculum co-ordinators and termly meetings.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Assessment data and reviews are used effectively to compare the school's performance with other schools locally and nationally, to identify areas for improvement clearly and take appropriate action to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Finances are managed efficiently with due regard to the principles of best value. Funding from specific grants is used well in the drive to raise standards. There is adequate accommodation, sufficient teachers and a good number of teaching assistants. The resources for learning are sufficient in all subjects except for information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children make good progress. • Their children are expected to do their best. • They feel comfortable in approaching the school with concerns or problems. • The teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More interesting activities outside lessons. • The arrangements for setting homework. • Information given on their child's progress.

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views for pupils in the nursery and in Years 3 to 6. However, some teaching in reception and of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in Years 1 and 2 could be better. The range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory and similar to most schools. The arrangements for setting homework match the national guidelines and are clearly stated in the school's homework policy, although parents are not as aware of its contents as they should be. A significant number of pupils do not complete or return their homework and this affects their rate of progress. The information on their child's progress, given in annual reports, could be better and inform parents if their child is doing as well as expected for his/her age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards achieved by pupils in the Foundation Stage

1. The school's assessment of children soon after they enter the nursery indicates their attainment is low. Test results on entry to reception classes show that their attainment in literacy and numeracy is well below average. Children make satisfactory progress overall, with better progress in the nursery, where the teaching is mostly good. By the end of their time in reception, the proportion of pupils likely to achieve the national Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning is well below average, especially in literacy and numeracy, but is average in physical development.

Results and achievements of pupils in Years 1 and 2.

2. The results of the year 2000 national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading matched the national average and were well above those of most similar schools (on the basis of entitlement to a free school meal). Writing results were below the national average, but were above the average for similar schools. The mathematics results were similar to those in reading and were in line with the national average and above the average for similar schools. These pupils achieved well given their low starting point on entry. The results in reading, writing and mathematics show an improving trend since the last inspection and in 2000, the percentage of pupils exceeding the expected level for their age in reading and mathematics was above the national average. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in reading and writing, but in mathematics girls do better than boys. In science, teachers' assessments showed standards were below the national average, but above the average for similar schools. The school has worked hard to raise standards in literacy and numeracy, supported by funding from the SRB. However, results declined in 2001 in reading, writing and mathematics because of the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including 11 per cent of pupils who had formal statements of their needs. The results in writing were better than those in reading in 2001, because teachers hear children read as often as possible in school but many parents do not support their children in reading at home.

3. The standards of work of the current Year 2 pupils are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and below average in science. The attainment of pupils on entry was particularly low for this year group and the satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching is not good enough to motivate these pupils to want to learn. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all subjects, except for mathematics and for a number of lower attaining pupils and some with special educational needs in English, where there is some underachievement because tasks are not planned carefully enough to enable them to make satisfactory progress. Standards are average in religious education, design and technology and physical education but are below average in art and design, information and communication technology (ICT), history and geography. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards in music.

Results and achievements of pupils in Years 3 to 6

4. The overall results of national tests in 2000 for Year 6 pupils were well below the national average and those of most similar schools. The results in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average and, in English were in the bottom 5 per cent of all schools. The 2001 results showed a significant improvement in English, both in reading and writing. Overall in English 80 per cent of pupils reached the level expected for their age and 43 per cent exceeded this level. Results in mathematics also showed good improvement, but in science there was a slight decline as the pupils experienced difficulty in reading the test papers. In relation to their starting points in Year 3, the Year 6 pupils made good progress overall and achieved well. The school's initiatives to raise attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 were successful.

5. Over the three-year period 1998-2000, the test results were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science each year with the exception of English in 1998 which was below the national average. During this period the performance of boys was against the national trend in English as they did better than the girls. In mathematics and science they also did better and to a greater extent than found nationally. The 2001 results show no significant gender differences, as most attending homework classes to boost performance were girls. The trend in results in the five-year period 1996-2000 was upwards in line with the national trend. The results in 2000 did not meet the targets set by governors, but those in 2001 exceeded the targets set in English and mathematics.

6. The standards of the current Year 6 pupils' work is below average, overall. Nevertheless, pupils are achieving well and are on course to reach the targets set in English and mathematics. Achievement is good in ICT, history, geography and music and is satisfactory in all other subjects. Standards are below average in English, mathematics, science and ICT and are average in all other subjects. There is no evidence of underachievement in any subject or among any specific groups of pupils. Standards in information and communication technology are improving well and pupils are catching up now that the resources and teaching have improved.

Standards in English, mathematics and science.

7. Throughout the school pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well during literacy lessons and by Year 6, although standards are below average, they have improved their clarity and confidence in speaking and, have significantly extended their range of vocabulary. Most pupils express themselves clearly, but sometimes struggle to find the precise words they need. A few are reluctant speakers, not wishing to read their work out to the class. They usually listen to their teachers and follow their instructions, as teachers are quick to spot those not giving them their full attention.

8. By the end of Year 2, a small majority of pupils enjoys reading and their reading is satisfactory, but too many are still in the early stages of learning to read. By Year 6, a significant majority of pupils reads accurately, fluently and independently. This proportion is lower than in most schools. Few are confident in tackling unfamiliar texts to access information in reference books. Average and higher attaining pupils read books from the library, but most select fiction books. Lower attaining pupils are given graded reading books by teachers, which they find boring.

9. The school has made writing a focus for improvement and is succeeding. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to retell traditional fairy stories in their own words, but with limited use of punctuation. Handwriting improves steadily. Greater emphasis on learning to spell the most commonly used words is beginning to reap rewards in developing pupils' confidence in writing, but standards of work are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils create their own stories by Year 6, with some use of interesting vocabulary, but the limited range of their vocabulary affects the quality of their work. The slow development of writing and spelling skills affects pupils' progress in other subjects, but there are signs of improvement. Teachers ensure that all pupils draft their stories or poems when planning their work, to give them a system for completing and editing work.

10. In mathematics, standards of work are well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average in Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop satisfactorily their mental arithmetic skills and begin to find strategies for solving problems. There is too little emphasis on investigative work and insufficient use of mathematics in other subjects. There is too much use of worksheets with lower attaining pupils, which does not help them in recording their work. Pupils can identify and name a range of two and three-dimensional shapes and begin to use standard measures with reasonable accuracy, but opportunities are too few to develop secure understanding. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a sound recall of multiplication facts, can calculate simple ratios and proportion and understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and proportion. There are weaknesses in pupils' problems solving skills as pupils have too few opportunities to

experience this type of work, Their understanding of standard measures is slow to develop, again due to insufficient opportunities. Pupils can calculate the area and perimeter of shapes and measure and draw angles with reasonable accuracy. They can collate data and present it, for example, in bar charts.

11. In science in Years 1 and 2, standards of work are below average. There is insufficient recording of work done, but pupils are developing investigative and experimental skills and are beginning to understand the importance of fair testing. By Year 6, standards of work are also below average and there is too much copied work. Pupils build up their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes satisfactorily.

Progress of pupils with special educational needs

12. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and make good progress in Years 3 to 6 where there is a higher level of support and teaching is better. Most achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, however, there is some underachievement in English and mathematics when work is not sufficiently well suited to their needs and progress is slower. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, both in withdrawal groups and in working towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. In lessons, where they are supported by teaching assistants and when work is carefully tailored to their needs, they make good progress. No pupils have been identified as being gifted or talented.

Progress of pupils with English as an additional language

13. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, overall, although progress is better in Years 3 to 6. Pupils who have arrived in Britain in the last year are achieving well as they receive good support in lessons from other pupils and their teachers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have satisfactory attitudes towards school. A significant number of children in the Foundation Stage have difficulty in settling to school routines and sharing equipment. In Years 1 and 2 pupils often have poor concentration or are immature for their age and have unsatisfactory attitudes in about 1 in 4 lessons. However during their progress through the school there is steady improvement in these attitudes. By Years 5 and 6, many pupils have a good attitude towards learning, listen well and carry out their work sensibly with minimum fuss.

15. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. This is not achieved easily as some pupils are difficult to motivate and a few others have challenging behaviour. Nevertheless teachers expect good standards in the classroom enabling pupils to learn with confidence. In the few lessons seen where the teaching was not effective in engaging pupils with suitably challenging work, the pupils lost interest and misbehaved.

16. Relationships in the school are good. Around the school pupils are friendly and whilst there may be the occasional "fall out" in the playground, this is rare. Pupils are pleased with their new play equipment at lunch times and this helps harmonious play. There is very little bullying and pupils feel confident in the abilities of their teachers to sort out those incidences that may occur. There is no evidence of any racial tensions at the school. Pupils make good gains in personal development and parents are pleased with the way their children become more mature and responsible at the school.

17. Levels of attendance at the school are still unsatisfactory and have an adverse effect on pupils' attainment. Last year the overall attendance was 93.2 per cent compared to the national

average of 94.4 per cent. Some parents are not sufficiently supportive of the need for regular attendance. For example, one per cent of the absences is due to taking holidays in term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of the teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, and is good in Years 3 to 6. A total of 81 lessons were seen. Of these, 6 per cent were very good or excellent, another 53 per cent were good and a further 35 per cent were satisfactory. Six per cent of lessons (5 lessons) were unsatisfactory, including two that were of poor quality. The proportion of satisfactory teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and the good teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is one of the key factors in the rising standards by the end of Year 6.

19. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall but varies between the nursery and reception classes. In all areas of learning the teaching is satisfactory and, in personal and social development teaching is good. There is a strength in the use of time and resources for learning in all classes. In the nursery, the teaching is good in all areas of learning, as the staff are secure in their understanding of how young children learn. There was one example of satisfactory teaching in the nursery during story time when the management of the children was not quite so effective and the nursery assistant not deployed effectively in supporting the teacher. In the reception classes the teaching is satisfactory overall, with one unsatisfactory lesson seen in physical development. The weakness was due to low expectations of the children and little development in their physical skills. There is only one teaching assistant for the two classes and further support is needed to help some children overcome problems at an earlier stage.

20. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching is unsatisfactory overall. There are again strengths in the use of time and learning resources, but some weaknesses in important aspects of teaching such as the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and in the management of pupils. Support has been provided to help overcome the problems. Not all teachers have a full grasp of the strategies needed to teach reading and writing to pupils with low levels of attainment, which was a criticism in the previous report. Of the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, approximately one in five was unsatisfactory. The organisation of the lower attaining pupils is not effective in helping all of them to learn as much as they could. They begin the lesson as one group and then withdraw half the pupils for individual or group tasks. This change of classroom part way through the lesson does not help in sustaining pupils' concentration. The group then comes back together towards the end of the lesson when some pupils would benefit from a little more time to complete their tasks before concluding the lesson.

21. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is never less than satisfactory and is good in 75 per cent of lessons. Teachers' expectations of pupils are higher, lessons are usually interesting and challenging and pupils respond well. The teaching of the lowest attaining pupils is often very good in Years 5 and 6 because the teaching inspires pupils and motivates them to do their best. The pupils with severe behavioural difficulties are managed well and there is no disruption in lessons. Tasks are linked closely to the learning needs of all pupils and effective use is made of the computer suite to support learning in many subjects as well as teaching skills in ICT.

22. The teaching and learning of English are good overall, with some very good lessons in Years 3 to 6 and no unsatisfactory lessons. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory overall, and occasionally good, however, there are some weaknesses in the teaching of withdrawal groups of lower attaining pupils and some with special educational needs for the reasons given above. Tasks planned do not always build on what pupils already know and can do and this hinders their progress. There is some insecurity in teaching early skills in writing and pupils do not see the purpose of tasks they are given to do. The strengths in the teaching are mainly in Years 5 and 6, where teachers have high expectations of the pupils and teaching is more lively and purposeful. Lessons proceed at a good pace and keep pupils actively involved and interested. Teachers establish good routines and expect high standards of behaviour and full concentration from pupils. In Years 3 to 6, teaching assistants and part-time teachers provide good support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, which enhances their learning. Literacy hours are satisfactorily planned to national

guidelines. Literacy skills have improved in the last two years and now support pupils' learning effectively in most subjects, for example, in science when recording the results of experiments. Pupils know their personal targets for improvement in writing, and are aware of their own progress. Teachers are skilful in involving all pupils productively in speaking and listening activities in most lessons, directing questions to those not participating. Lessons outside literacy hours are planned effectively to give pupils more time for extended story writing and this is successful in raising standards and pupils' confidence. Written work is marked regularly and often has helpful comments and targets for improvement.

23. The teaching of mathematics is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6. The strengths in teaching are in Years 5 and 6 where there are examples of very good and excellent teaching with low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The use of support teachers to withdraw pupils for specific tasks is already being reviewed, with a view to improving the good support already provided. Computer programs are used well in developing each pupil's skills at their own pace. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented and pupils are developing their skills in mental calculations, with improvement evident in national test results in Year 6. The weaknesses in Years 1 and 2 are due to inappropriate activities being planned for the lower attaining pupils and ineffective management of pupils.

24. The teaching of science is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6. The weakness in teaching investigative and experimental skills contained in the previous report has been overcome. In ICT, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject has improved, but is still variable. Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where it has not been such a high priority. Particular strengths in the teaching include the very good use of the interactive white board and the careful planning of the subject into many lessons in other subjects. Only in Year 3/4 classes are computers used effectively by teachers for lesson planning and other aspects of their work, as there is still some lack of confidence amongst staff.

25. Overall, inspection evidence shows teaching to be good in geography, history and in music in Years 3 to 6. The teaching is satisfactory in art and design, design and technology and religious education in Years 1 to 6. In music in Years 1 and 2, and in physical education overall there is insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement as too limited a range of activities was seen.

26. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are taught well in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, the organisation of the pupils and change of teacher and classroom part way through lessons is not effective and hinders the learning of those concerned. The activities planned for some pupils are not matched closely enough to their learning needs. Teachers are usually successful in matching teaching styles and learning materials to the pupils' needs in Years 3 to 6. The good relationships between staff and pupils and the effectiveness of classroom support in Years 3 to 6 have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

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

27. The quality of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. This is an overall improvement since the last inspection when some omissions in ICT were identified and these have been addressed satisfactorily. In addition there are now more opportunities for pupils to learn about science through exploration and investigation, though opportunities for investigative work within mathematics are limited.

28. The curriculum for the children in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall and follows the nationally recommended areas of learning. Since the last inspection, nursery and reception teachers have begun to work closely together to establish a coherent and

consistent curriculum. Teachers plan together, following national guidance in the six areas of learning, but with priority rightly given to personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy and mathematical development. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is generally broad and balanced. An appropriate emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy leading to an overall improvement in standards since the last inspection and there is a sensible balance between other subjects. Each class has one lesson of physical education each week rather than the two shorter lessons previously allocated. Standards are therefore satisfactory rather than good, as at the last inspection. The school's curriculum is based on sound policies and programmes of learning. These are generally based on national schemes of work, though some are in the process of being updated. Additional time has been allocated to reading in all classes, however, this has yet to have a significant effect on raising standards at the end of Year 2, but is evident in rising standards in Year 6.

29. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils identified as having special educational needs and enables them to take part in all areas of the curriculum. In some lessons, tasks are very carefully structured to meet pupils' specific learning needs. For example some Year 5 and 6 pupils work on computer programs in literacy and numeracy on three days of the week and this is beneficial to their rate of progress. However, in Year 1/2 classes there are weaknesses in the organisation of the lower attaining pupils, which includes those with special educational needs. The movement of pupils between rooms affects their rate of progress. In the nursery and reception classes, the provision is satisfactory, with external agencies providing support where necessary. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and they soon learn to speak English and to contribute to lessons. The school works well to ensure that equal opportunities for learning are made available for all pupils, including the refugees.

30. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and the overall effectiveness of these strategies is satisfactory. However, these are not consistent throughout the school. There are weaknesses in the teaching of English and mathematics for pupils in Years 1 and 2, though teaching and learning for older pupils are good. The school has given a high priority to developing writing in other subjects and this is helping to raise standards. However, a comparative weakness exists in giving pupils sufficient opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum such as science and geography, and in problem solving. Opportunities for pupils to develop independent research skills and show initiative are also limited.

31. A suitable range of activities outside lessons is provided. These are generally well attended and extend the skills of those choosing to take part. However, the number of pupils choosing to join in the homework club is comparatively low. After school activities cover rugby, skittleball, chess, keep-fit, drama, writing, mathematics, recorder, creative arts and the ECO gardening club, though there are few opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sports on a regular basis. A number of educational visits, including a residential week for pupils in Year 6, are arranged each year and these enhance pupils' studies.

32. The school has developed good links with the community. A strong feature of the work of the school is its participation in the ECO project. The school has worked hard over a long period of time and recently gained a second certificate and a green flag, signifying a high level of commitment by pupils and staff to improving their environment. The school's involvement with the Wigan Business Partnership raises pupils' awareness of the world of work, as did the careers' convention held at the school.

33. The school has sound links with their partner institutions. Pupils visit the secondary school to meet staff and to use the facilities, preparing them for the next stage of education. However, whilst curriculum links have been mooted in the past, these have yet to be established. The school regularly welcomes teaching students from the local colleges and universities to undertake teaching practice and provides opportunities for nursery students to fulfil their work experience.

34. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory. It is in the early stages of development and is a priority for development in this academic year. Drugs,

health and sex education is taught through lessons in science and religious education. A short time is allocated to PSHE at the end of each morning in some classes, and it is envisaged that a full lesson will be allocated to this aspect in the coming year. The Life Education Caravan is to visit the school this half term to involve all pupils in some aspects of PSHE, which also form the focus of some assemblies. Pupils look at "What's in the News" each week and had the opportunity to look at citizenship by staging mock elections to coincide with the recent General Election.

35. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is good overall, maintaining the standards identified in the last inspection report. Provision for social and moral development is good and for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.

36. Spiritual development is sufficiently provided for through religious education, lessons in other subjects and acts of worship, which meet statutory requirements. Pupils learn to respect the values and beliefs of other faiths through studying Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, as well as Christianity. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect quietly on their own experiences, such as thinking how they can care for God's world, before saying a prayer. They also reflect on the experiences of the day as they say a prayer before going home. However, opportunities for pupils to develop self-knowledge are limited, and it is intended to extend this provision through the PSHE curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to think about people less fortunate than themselves and are involved in raising money for charities such as The National Children's Homes.

37. The school's provision for both social and moral development is good. The 'Education for Sustainability' curriculum is particularly impressive and pupils' achievements in picking up litter, re-using materials and turning off lights has been recognised nationally. Pupils also seek to improve the school grounds by working in the gardening club where they plan their projects carefully and keep detailed minutes of their discussions and decisions. They develop a sense of the difference between right and wrong as they participate in discussions before deciding on the class rules for the whole school. These place a good emphasis on respect and provide a good basis for living in a community. Pupils are also encouraged to think about their responsibilities as when older pupils devised their own Commandments when studying Judaism and younger pupils considered how they can help at home. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 discuss issues related to bullying and design graphic anti-bullying posters to be displayed in the corridors. This fostering of care and respect helps to create a calm working atmosphere, particularly for Years 3-6, and is a significant factor in helping to raise standards. Older pupils help the younger children and some older pupils have undertaken training and gained certificates as play leaders and help younger pupils in the playground and during wet playtimes. Relationships between all members of the school community are generally good and staff provide good role models for pupils to base their own manners and attitudes. A residential trip to the Lake District is organised annually for Year 6 pupils, giving them the chance to join in various outdoor pursuits and to develop their social skills. Good behaviour, care for others and hard work are encouraged and rewarded by the weekly presentation of certificates, which are highly regarded by the pupils.

38. There is sound provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils study several world faiths in religious education, which help them to find out about different festivals and customs. In art, they learn about the works of famous painters, though these are generally restricted to European artists. Similarly, pupils have the chance to listen to the work of composers such as Holst and Vaughn Williams in assemblies and in music lessons. Learning is enriched by visits to local places of interest such as Tatton Park and The Manchester Science Museum and by the contributions of an artist and poet in residence. However, in this predominantly all white school, there are few opportunities to develop an understanding of life in a culturally diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school takes good care of its pupils. Pupils say that teachers and other pupils are helpful and friendly and that they feel confident in the school. There is clear provision for equal opportunities and no children are left out in any way.

40. Effective child protection procedures that comply with legislation are in place. All staff and non-teaching staff have received training on child protection and local authority guidelines are followed. Appropriate health and safety procedures are followed and the school works closely with community groups to watch and take care of the premises. Risk assessment is up to date. The school has established an orderly and safe environment in a local area that faces some difficulties and vandalism. During the week of inspection a few dogs were seen wandering around the school playing fields, which have several gaps in the fencing. This potential health and safety hazard was discussed with the school.

41. There are effective procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and to eliminate oppressive behaviour. Pupils like the merit systems and assemblies to recognise and reward good behaviour. There are a few pupils who can be challenging, but they are well managed and seldom disturb the learning of others in the class. In the last year the school excluded 3 pupils for a fixed period for poor behaviour, this is less than at the time of the last inspection and signifies a general improvement in behaviour standards. There is information around the school reinforcing the policy for preventing bullying and harassment.

42. Although attendance levels at the school are still not satisfactory, the school has succeeded in reducing the level of unauthorised absence by contacting parents on the first day children are away. Attendance procedures are now good. Registers are kept to statutory requirements. The education welfare officer gives good support to the school, visiting the homes of those children who are frequently absent.

43. Procedures to support personal development are good. Recently a group of older pupils has been trained as play leaders to help with those younger and this helps to promote good play times. Pupils in Year 6 volunteer as prefects, for example helping with lunch time supervision. Pupils enjoy taking part in an industry day to manufacture and sell a product or in the school's environmental work to clear up or recycle rubbish. These projects recently led to the "green flag award". However there is further scope in lessons to develop pupils' initiative and self-responsibility.

44. The school has improved the procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress since the last inspection and they are now satisfactory. Assessment in music and in ICT is not yet fully in place. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment data in their planning as for example, in grouping pupils. Other assessment information is analysed to highlight gaps in pupils' knowledge and to adapt the curriculum accordingly. Although pupils are not always aware of what National Curriculum level they are working at, they feel well informed about their progress through marking and their teacher's comments. They are set useful targets for improvement, which are on display in some classes, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and these help to raise attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents are pleased with the school. There was a relatively low response rate from parents to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection and to the pre inspection meeting held at the school. Those who did reply say they feel welcome in the school to meet with the teachers and the headteacher to talk about any concerns. They believe the school expects their children to work hard, that teaching is good and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. A significant number of parents want a wider range of extra curricular activities for their children, for example football. A few parents are not completely satisfied with homework, the partnership with the school and information on their children's progress.

46. The inspectors broadly agree with parents' positive views and areas for improvement. However they consider that the partnership is satisfactory. The school works hard to encourage parents to participate in school activities and work; is successful in forming a strong partnership with some parents, but meets a disappointing response from others. For example, where pupils are identified as having special educational needs, home visits are sometimes required before the pupil can be placed on the register, as parents are unwilling to come into school.

47. Parents are invited to many special events during the year, for example “ECO” days of action, to take part in environmental projects, class assemblies and parents’ weeks to work alongside their children in class. Recently the school hosted a mathematics day, and a literacy day with visiting authors. These events are reasonably well attended and parents give good support to harvest festival and school fayres. However only about half the parents choose to attend the annual consultation evenings to discuss their children’s progress with the teachers. This does not reflect a strong enough interest in supporting their children’s education. The school recently identified a group of Year 6 children who would benefit from attending classes after school to boost their performance before taking national tests, but was disappointed to find that less than a third of the children were encouraged to attend.

48. Written communications sent home are of satisfactory quality. The school sends a useful outline of the areas of work to be covered in the term with suggestions as to ways to help at home. The Marsh Green Express tells parents about life and successes in the school and there are regular School Watch newsletters. The annual written reports on children’s progress meet statutory requirements and are written in parent friendly language. They could usefully be further improved with a more precise indication of attainment both in relation to the child’s ability and in comparison with children of the same age. The school sends progress reports home to parents who do not attend the consultation meetings with teachers. However, this is very close to the end of the school year and there is little opportunity to make alternative arrangements to meet with parents. This is due to the short period of time between the publication of test results and the end of the summer term.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership of the school by the headteacher and his deputy is good and promotes the school aims effectively. The management structure of the school has changed and improved since the last inspection and is now good. The senior management team (SMT) comprises the headteacher, deputy headteacher and team leaders. The management structure provides good communication channels between staff, team leaders and the headteacher, which are important for this school with three different buildings and both headteacher and deputy headteacher based in the junior building. The school benefits from this management structure where each team leader is accountable for monitoring and standards in classes in their team and therefore focuses on improving teaching and planning and strives to raise standards. However, there is no written evidence to show the effectiveness of their monitoring of planning and to justify the time given to it. The management team has established a positive, calm climate for learning in most classes, and especially in Years 3 to 6, which is characterised by the higher expectations of the teachers’ work and pupils’ effort, behaviour and achievement. In the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, a small number of pupils find it difficult to adjust to the school’s routines and expectations, have unsatisfactory attitudes towards school and these are a barrier to their learning. Staff appreciate the extension of the management structure, work cohesively, and are united in their commitment to raising standards. Parents have confidence in the leadership and management of the school.

50. The governors carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. The school has difficulties in recruiting governors, nevertheless, they have an effective committee structure and a programme of meetings to feed into the annual budget setting process. All governors are linked to curriculum co-ordinators and they meet to discuss developments in subjects and feedback to full governors’ meetings. This helps them to have an overview of the school’s work, and a sound understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. They now plan more strategically for the longer-term development of the school and this is an improvement since the previous inspection and important with falling numbers on roll. Assessment data is used to analyse school performance against local and national standards and appropriate targets are set for performance at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

51. Subject co-ordinators have responsibilities for monitoring planning and standards in their subjects and carry out their responsibilities effectively. They monitor standards by sampling written and other work and keep portfolios of assessed samples of work. Through the target setting procedures introduced in the last year all co-ordinators are more aware of the importance

of this process in raising teachers' expectations of pupils and standards in general. The deputy headteacher leads by example in her expectations of the pupils in her class and groups, and they are very clear as to what is expected of them by the end of each lesson and pupils are frequently reminded of their targets. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage and of special educational needs provision is satisfactory. The governors are considering the inclusion of the special educational needs co-ordinator in the senior management team in recognition of the importance of this aspect of the school's work.

52. There are sound procedures for monitoring teaching and learning and support is provided where necessary. Lessons are observed by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, LEA advisors and some subject co-ordinators. This monitoring revealed some lack of interest for pupils in lessons in Years 1 and 2 and support was given. The teachers are much more open to receiving feedback than previously. Whilst this is an improvement since the last inspection, and standards have risen, the monitoring needs to be more rigorous to overcome the unsatisfactory teaching still evident.

53. The school has difficulties at times in finding supply teachers to release subject co-ordinators to carry out their roles or to replace staff on sick leave. The pupils find frequent changes of teacher difficult to cope with and they react in the way they behave. The school, therefore, is careful to ensure as much consistency for the pupils as possible in the supply teachers they employ. Pupils cope with having different teachers for English and mathematics because they are working with the same person every week and the behaviour management procedures are usually applied consistently. Students undertaking initial teacher training are accommodated and they receive good support when working with groups of pupils and learn much about behaviour management. The headteacher is instrumental in maintaining the calm climate, which is conducive for learning by dealing with any behaviour problems swiftly and effectively. Bureaucratic demands from central government and the local education authority, take up a significant proportion of the headteacher's time.

54. The school's improvement plan is a good, clear document that spans three years and includes priorities, action plans, accountability, time scales and costing. It contains the relevant priorities and focuses on improving teaching and raising standards. The funding from specific grants is linked into the plan and it is clear which initiative or part of the school budget the funding is coming from. The previous year's plan showed when the action had been completed, with the exception of three on-going aspects. The implementation of the school's performance management policy was contained in the plan, was effectively introduced and has been beneficial in improving pupils' writing skills and in helping the school to achieve its targets in English and mathematics.

55. There are sufficient teachers and a good number of teaching assistants reflecting the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. No classes have more than thirty pupils and there are additional teachers to support pupils with special educational needs. The expenditure on teaching staff was below the national average in the last financial year, owing to experienced teachers leaving and more recent entrants to the profession being appointed and the carry forward in the budget was too high. The additional staff to support pupils with special needs will reduce the carry forward by the end of this financial year to an acceptable level.

56. The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils, but the distance between the buildings makes full integration difficult. Vandalism is a severe problem for the school with 84 broken windows at the time of the inspection and this despite having security cameras on site and being involved in the 'school watch' initiative. This puts extra pressure on members of staff, who frequently have to remove glass before pupils enter in a morning. The governors need to consider what further action can be taken to overcome the problems.

57. There are sufficient learning resources for most subjects of the curriculum, although in ICT in Years 1 and 2 the number of computers is inadequate. Many of the resources for children in the Foundation Stage are jaded and worn and do not inspire or motivate the children. The arrangements for funding the Foundation Stage are partly the reason why many resources are in need of replacement, as funding has to be requested from each curriculum co-ordinator. The

reading books used by some of the oldest pupils lack interest for them, the school has recognised this shortcoming and has started to purchase more suitable material.

58. Financial management is secure. The recommendations contained in the most recent auditor's report have been implemented. Special grants are used solely for the intended purposes and the funding for pupils with special educational needs is appropriately supplemented with funding from the school budget. The money available to support standards in the school is used effectively to set up classes to boost the performance of pupils and to run a homework club. The governors and senior staff compare the school's performance and expenditure with those of similar schools. Governors maintain an oversight of finances and ensure that money is spent in accordance with the principles of best value when placing contracts and when making spending decisions. The resources, including staff, are deployed satisfactorily, but the way in which support teachers are deployed could be more effective and provide even more support for some lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Whilst financial information and pupils' details are kept on computers, the use of management information systems to aid the efficiency of the school is unsatisfactory. Attendance registers, pupils' assessment information and the analysis of outcomes are not kept on computers and much time is spent in collating the information.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to continue the improvement made since the previous inspection and raise standards, the headteacher and staff with the support of the governors should carry out the action identified in the school improvement plan, which includes the following issues:

- (1) Improve the quality of teaching in some lessons in reception and Years 1 and 2 by:

more rigorous and frequent monitoring of teaching;
sharing the excellent practice in the school;
providing additional training and support.

Discussed in paragraphs 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 52,

- (2) Raise standards in English by:
providing more interesting activities which will help pupils develop their skills in writing and improve their accuracy in spelling;
providing more interesting reading books for older lower attaining pupils;
seeking ways of increasing opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to read to adults or older pupils;
reviewing the arrangements for deploying the special needs support teacher and teaching assistants.

Discussed in paragraphs 73 - 78.

- (3) Raise standards in mathematics by:
increasing the emphasis on developing mathematical skills in other subjects;
placing more emphasis on investigative and problem solving tasks;
reviewing the system of setting pupils across two year age groups.

Discussed in paragraphs 79 – 86.

- (4) Raise standards in science by:
analysing pupils' performance in national tests to find gaps in their knowledge;
monitoring planning more rigorously to ensure sufficient depth in coverage of all areas of the National Curriculum programme of study;
developing a range of recording methods to enable pupils to present evidence and evaluate their findings.

Discussed in paragraphs 87 - 92

In addition to the key issues above the governors should consider including the following minor issues in the action plan:

- (1) Take all possible steps to work in closer partnership with parents and raise attendance rates.
Discussed in paragraphs 46, 47, 48.
- (2) Improve the arrangements for allocating funding to the Foundation Stage co-ordinator.
Discussed in paragraphs 57, 72.
- (3) Improve the content of pupils' annual reports by informing parents if their child is doing as well as expected for his/her age.
Discussed in paragraph 48.
- (4) Increase the use of management information systems to improve the efficiency in collating pupils' assessment data and attendance records.
Discussed in paragraph 58.
- (5) Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of life in a multicultural society.
Discussed in paragraph 38.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	81
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	38	33	3	2	0
Percentage	1	5	47	41	4	2	0

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

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)	23	299
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	147

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	22
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	100

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	47

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	21	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	17
	Girls	13	12	14
	Total	26	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (74)	68 (79)	83 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	16
	Girls	7	12	13
	Total	19	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	51 (77)	68 (85)	78 (85)
	National	*N/a (84)	*N/a (88)	*N/a (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	23	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	17	13	12
	Total	32	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (44)	64 (42)	64 (71)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	19	18
	Girls	17	15	15
	Total	33	34	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (51)	77 (49)	75 (68)
	National	*N/a (70)	*N/a (72)	*N/a (79)

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

*N/a national percentages are not yet available.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	255
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:1
Average class size	25.0

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	288

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	786,375
Total expenditure	750,326
Expenditure per pupil	2,067
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,511
Balance carried forward to next year	61,560

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	345
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	34	9	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	1.5	0	1.5
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	38	5	2	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	31	14	4	11
The teaching is good.	55	34	2	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	38	11	1.5	1.5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	23	5	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	31	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	32	14	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	34	6	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	34	8	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	25	20	7	14

Other issues raised by parents

Five letters were received from parents, two were very supportive of the headteacher and staff and recent improvements. Others raised concerns about standards in physical education, mixed age classes and pupils' behaviour on the way to and from school.

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

60. Due to falling rolls, only forty-six pupils are on the nursery register. Children are gradually admitted in small groups during the September of the year in which they become four. Through these careful admission procedures, including a visit to each child's home, the school begins to establish positive relationships with children and their families. Few parents, however, regularly help in school. As the inspection took place very close to the start of the school year, all nursery children were new to the situation. Some were in their first days in school. Children spend three terms in the nursery before starting full-time in the reception class in the September before their fifth birthday. There are a total of forty-one children who have just started to attend full-time in the two reception classes.

61. The quality of teaching is sound overall with 93 per cent satisfactory or better. Teaching in 36 per cent of lessons, all in the nursery, is good. In one lesson, in physical development in reception, teaching was unsatisfactory. There is little difference in the quality of teaching in all areas of learning, except for personal, social and emotional development where teaching is good overall. Throughout the Foundation Stage, relationships are strong and supportive. Children's ideas are valued and praise and encouragement used effectively to build confidence. High quality teamwork between teachers and nursery nurses makes best use of everyone's skills to promote the children's progress. Where teaching is good the teacher uses her secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children to provide a range of interesting, first-hand experiences which are clearly focused, and enthuse children to learn. When teaching is less than good, insufficient attention is paid to what children already know when planning new work. Expectations are too low and tasks do not fully engage or challenge children. Whilst teachers use the resources they have well, much equipment is dull and worn and does not attract children to learn.

62. Attainment varies widely, but overall, children begin nursery with skills that are well below those of most children of this age. This is confirmed by the careful assessments made of these young children soon after they join the nursery. Whilst they make sound and sometimes good progress, from very low beginnings, school assessment at the beginning of the reception year shows that attainment is still well below average. The school's assessments together with inspection evidence indicate that pupils are unlikely to reach the expected Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world or creative development by the time they start in Year 1. In physical development, standards are slightly higher on entry, progress is satisfactory and children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals.

63. Children with special educational needs are identified early and make satisfactory progress alongside their peers. They are fully included in all areas of learning. Several children receive support from the Speech Therapy Service. There are no children who are learning English as an additional language.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. The good teaching reflects the considerable emphasis given to this area. Considering their low attainment on entry, children achieve well. Staff are aware of the children's needs and promote personal, social and emotional development through all aspects of school life. Daily routines are established consistently so that the children come to learn what is expected of them. Staff treat the children with care and respect, and value their contributions. Although their concentration span is extremely short, children in the nursery are interested and keen to learn. A significant minority, however, are not confident to leave their carers or join in nursery activities. Staff are patient and sensitive in encouraging all children to participate so that they grow in confidence. Particular efforts are made to welcome children to the school community and to build up individuals' self-esteem. For instance, each child is involved with others in

baking and sharing a cake to celebrate their birthday with the rest of the class. Staff work hard to establish acceptable standards of behaviour, and caring attitudes. Many opportunities are provided for children to share and take turns and to care for others and for equipment. Staff model positive attitudes and clearly and frequently reinforce the school's values. For example, when one child knocks all of the books from the shelf, he is quietly taken aside and reminded of the need to care for books before being helped to put them back. Disputes, for instance, in the home corner are calmly resolved and used to encourage co-operative attitudes as children are asked to consider the point of view of others.

65. In the reception classes, as well as the promotion of personal development across the curriculum, thirty minutes each day are specifically set aside to develop personal and social skills. The daily sessions are used successfully to build the children's self-esteem, for instance, when children tell each other what they are good at. Most children are thoughtful but many are passive and not keen to offer an answer. Almost all, however, are persuaded to show positive attitudes to one another in passing a smile around the circle. Most children settle quickly to daily group work, but many lose interest after a short time and do not persevere without adult help. They do, however, sustain their interest and concentration for longer when engaged in practical tasks such as tasting food. They watch in wonder as sand trickles through an egg timer. Although they are making progress in waiting for turns and sharing especially when supported by adults, many children still call out at inappropriate times in class and find it difficult to co-operate with others as when putting equipment away.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Achievement is satisfactory over the Foundation Stage. Many children start nursery with very poor language and literacy skills. Some children are reluctant to speak at all, and over half of the children speak indistinctly in single words and phrases. Their vocabulary is narrow and their response to adults often shows poor understanding of what has been said. All teachers plan small steps in learning towards the Early Learning Goals, which enable children to increase their communication skills over time. Priority is rightly given to the development of speaking and listening skills. Interesting role-play areas are organised to stimulate children's ideas, and develop their spoken language through play with their peers. Stories, rhymes and jingles are used effectively to generate interest and enthusiasm. In the nursery, children enjoy stories like *The Tiger Who Came To Tea*. Many do not listen well, however, and interrupt frequently. The teacher works hard with an enthusiastic and lively approach to keep all on task. She uses the pictures in the book to maintain interest and to highlight the sequence of the story. Relevant opportunities are created to raise the children's awareness of letter sounds. Nursery children are encouraged to hear and say the initial sound in their name, for instance, in the *Pat-a-Cake* rhyme. There are many good opportunities for nursery children to communicate informally in writing as they 'write' messages to each other in informal role-play, or write shopping lists and notes. Most nursery children make marks on paper but few as yet use letter shapes. Nevertheless, they do know what they want to say and can 'read' the writing back. In the reception classes, daily language and literacy lessons are more formal and successfully incorporate appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy. The whole class part of the lesson is well taught with clear objectives, careful explanations and demonstrations that help children understand. However, the quality and organisation of group tasks do not always support learning effectively. Tasks are sometimes uninteresting and do not challenge children of different attainment. Too much time is spent, for instance, on copying over the teacher's writing and not enough on extending the children's learning through their own emergent writing. Children are just beginning to recognise some letters by sound and are starting to make links to letter shapes but there are too few opportunities to use this knowledge in their own writing. All children are learning to write their first name but few can do so with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. They do not understand terminology of letter and word. In reception and nursery classes, adults model good attitudes to the enjoyment of books and the children become increasingly careful in turning pages and telling stories.

Mathematical development

67. Achievement is satisfactory over the Foundation Stage. Teachers provide for the systematic development of skills through a range of appropriate, organised activities. In the nursery, practical activities like baking are used well to develop mathematical concepts. Children are taught to weigh ingredients, to count eggs and candles on the cake. They recite numbers as they clap syllables in their names and join in rhymes like *One, Two, Buckle My Shoe*. They learn to recognise patterns as when arranging alternate green and red rectangles to make Humpty Dumpty's checked trousers. They enjoy exploring concepts of size and capacity in the water and sand trays. In the reception class, appropriate elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are incorporated into the daily mathematics sessions. Teachers demonstrate clearly to enable children to match objects one-to-one as one bucket to one spade. They are extending their repertoire of number rhymes and practise reciting numbers to ten, several children counting up to five objects reliably. Most children do not yet recognise and name numerals. Whilst whole class teaching has clear relevant objectives, which support learning, group tasks like colouring in worksheets are uninteresting and not well matched to children's needs. They do not motivate children to learn. The quality and range of equipment to support children in developing matching, ordering and counting skills is uninspiring and does not attract children to explore.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Teachers plan interesting activities, which are clearly focused and enable children to investigate using their senses and to achieve satisfactorily. Resources are carefully organised so that children benefit from being practically involved in first-hand experiences. In the nursery, the teacher uses skilled questioning to extend children's observations and understanding. For instance, she asks, 'Can you see the white sugar anymore? Where has the sugar gone?' Children are encouraged to consolidate their learning by talking about what they see. In the reception class, children are interested and curious to use their sense of taste to identify a range of foods. They respond well to the practical task and sustain concentration. Their vocabulary to describe the taste and smell is limited. In nursery and reception classes, daily opportunities are provided for children to use ICT to support their learning. With adult support, the children are becoming increasingly adept at using the mouse to move objects on screen, although they are not yet independent in doing this.

Physical development

69. Teaching is better in the nursery than in the reception classes. Overall achievement is satisfactory. The wide range of outdoor toys and the school hall are used frequently by nursery and reception children in developing their physical skills and they achieve satisfactorily. Teachers manage children very well with praise and encouragement, and work hard to keep all on task. Some children, however, find it difficult to follow instructions and the pace of learning slows when these have to be repeated. Teaching usually has clear objectives. However, in the one unsatisfactory lesson observed, there was insufficient focus on the development of skills, the teacher's expectations were too low and children did not make the progress of which they are capable. Most children walk, run and jump with increasing confidence, using the space with an awareness of themselves and others. In the outside play area they manoeuvre tricycles and cars to move around the track. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff provide daily opportunities for children to develop their skills. They control tools such as scissors and paste spreaders to carry out their purpose. Whilst the children become increasingly competent at managing their personal hygiene, few are independent in dressing and undressing.

Creative development

70. Achievement is satisfactory over the Foundation Stage. The good opportunities provided for both informal and formal role-play are a strength of this area. In the nursery and reception classes, imaginative play areas are well organised to stimulate children's imagination, for instance, in the *Three Bears House*. Opportunities are missed, however, to extend children's ideas through adult intervention in their play. Nursery children enjoy acting out the nursery rhyme of *Little Miss Muffet*. They try hard to crawl like the menacing spider and identify with Miss Muffet's feelings as she runs away. Children are encouraged to join in musical activities. Nursery children enjoy shaking percussion instruments as they sing a nursery rhyme. In the

reception classes, they start to build up a collection of favourite songs and respond well to the rhythm of a rap to tap out a beat. Many children in reception and nursery cannot sit still or follow instructions to perform together. They show poor understanding of the teacher's questions by inappropriate responses. For example, to the question, 'How am I making this sound?' a child replies, 'Sounds like Daddy Bear'. Teachers plan appropriate opportunities for children to explore a range of media. Children satisfactorily express their own ideas in paint, printing and in cutting and sticking activities. They enjoy co-operating with others to make a class collage.

71. Formal and on-going assessments are carried out thoroughly. However, not enough use is made of the information collected at the end of the nursery to plan work at the beginning of the reception year. This results in some inappropriate expectation that slows progress as children start in the reception class.

72. The Foundation Stage is satisfactorily led and managed and there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has been successful in managing the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum, but planning strategically is hampered by the lack of an appropriate budget for the Foundation Stage. Whilst a small budget is apportioned, most spending needs are processed through each subject curriculum co-ordinator's budget. This results in the continued use of unsuitable and unattractive resources that do not meet the children's needs.

ENGLISH

73. Standards of work are well below average at the end of Year 2 and are below average by the end of Year 6. This does not indicate a decline in standards, but reflects different year groups with a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Since the last inspection and particularly in the last two years, the school has given a high priority to raising the standard of work throughout the school, has been largely successful and the improvement has been good. Funding from the SRB has been used effectively to raise standards in writing. In addition, the implementation of performance management has focused on improving pupils' skills in writing, teachers have undertaken training to improve their skills in teaching English and, the assessment procedures have been improved with the progress made by each pupil now tracked from year to year. These initiatives have been successful in increasing most pupils' confidence in their abilities as writers and readers, and in raising standards by the end of Year 6, where there was a significant improvement in the 2001 results. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress as the teaching is good in virtually all lessons and is sometimes very good. When taking into account their previous experience, all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language. Pupils need consistently good teaching to make this rate of progress and this is not the case in Years 1 and 2 where teaching is satisfactory overall, but has some weaknesses in the teaching of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Whilst most pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, a small number of the lower attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they should. The reasons for this are threefold, tasks are not planned carefully enough to meet their learning needs and the organisation of the pupils into two groups in different rooms for their tasks leads to loss of concentration. Having to come together as one group again towards the end of the lesson prevents some pupils from completing their tasks, as it does not allow the teachers the flexibility to meet the pupils' needs. The attitudes of these pupils to school and work are unsatisfactory and this is a further barrier to their learning. These factors lead to some underachievement among the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

74. In speaking and listening standards are well below average by the end of Year 2 and below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils enter Year 1 with a very limited range of vocabulary and many lacking in confidence in speaking. Listening skills are poor for a significant number of pupils. The youngest pupils often answer questions with single word answers and need much encouragement and support. Teachers pay particular attention to extending the range of vocabulary in all subjects and in particular through literacy hours. This is effective in helping pupils to be able to express their ideas and opinions and progress is good. However, many still struggle to find the words they need to express their ideas and opinions fully. Listening skills improve satisfactorily as pupils learn to listen to instructions and follow them and to wait for their

turn to speak. Some still have difficulty in this in Year 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils are more confident in speaking to their teachers and each other, but there is still some reluctance to speak to the class when sharing their work with others during plenary sessions. Pupils understand speech changes according to the situation and most speak audibly and clearly. Drama is used well in lessons and in other subjects such as history as a way of encouraging the development of speaking skills and an after school drama club is well attended. Every opportunity to encourage the development of pupils' speaking skills is taken, for example during assemblies.

75. In reading, standards are well below average by the end of Year 2 and are below average in Year 6. Teachers hear pupils read as often as possible in Years 1 and 2, but it is mostly the higher attaining pupils who read regularly at home for further practise. Some books used for group reading during literacy hours were stolen during a break-in the day before the inspection started and insufficient copies were then available. However, the school has a good range of graded reading books suitable for the younger pupils, and most pupils are interested in books and reading. Progress in learning to read is satisfactory given that much discussion of the pictures needs to take place to encourage pupils to look closely at the pages and to understand how books are organised. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils read fluently with some expression and can correct some errors by themselves using their knowledge of letter sounds or by splitting words into smaller parts. They can recall the main points of stories read. Lower attaining pupils are reading books from the early stages of the reading scheme. The higher attaining pupils make better progress than other pupils, as often they read more regularly at home and return books to school each day. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils read with confidence books they have chosen from the library. They give reasons for their choice and discuss books by their favourite authors such as Roald Dahl and J.K.Rowling. They discuss the most interesting parts of the story and the main characters. They can read non-fiction books fluently and understand the use of index and contents pages. Where pupils select books for themselves some average attaining pupils select books that are too easy and others select books that are too difficult and hinder their fluency and understanding of what has been read. A check needs to be kept by teachers that books are sufficiently challenging, but not too demanding. Lower attaining pupils are still reading books from the graded reading scheme in many cases and the reading material is not sufficiently interesting for pupils of this age, providing little incentive to improve. Overall, pupils make good progress in developing reading skills in Years 3 to 6 and achieve well. The high level of support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is a key factor in this rate of progress. The school libraries are well stocked and used effectively in developing pupils' literacy skills. The SRB funding enabled the school to improve its range of resources, including books and this has been beneficial.

76. In writing, standards are well below average in Year 2 and are below average in Year 6. Much hard work has gone into improving standards in writing since the previous inspection and whilst the action plan implemented was not successful initially, more recent action has been. The movement away from using worksheets and copying teachers' writing has been beneficial in developing pupils' writing skills, however, this is still evident in some lessons with lower attaining pupils, including some with special educational needs, in Years 1 and 2, leading to little progress. Where pupils learn to form letters correctly and then put letters together to make words they can read, writing skills develop more quickly. Further work on spelling patterns then helps pupils to develop their skills as independent writers, but this is not consistent in all lessons. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils retell familiar stories such as 'Rumpelstiltskin' showing some accurate use of full stops and capital letters and good attempts at using speech marks. Lower attainers attempt to retell stories using a logical sequence of sentences, but there are few full stops. The scrutiny of work from the previous year showed the work for lower attaining pupils was poorly planned in one group. For example, pupils were writing familiar words to complete sentences one day and the next they had to trace over the teacher's writing. By Year 6, pupils can write for a range of purposes and understand that the style of writing changes accordingly. Their stories and poems show good use of imagination but spelling is still a weakness for a significant minority of pupils and their limited range of vocabulary prevents too many pupils from using interesting vocabulary for effect in their stories. However, they do their best using words from the vocabulary they have, for example, they used 'miserable' and 'fed-up' to describe people's feelings on a wet day. Pupils use dictionaries to help them in their work

and, from their individual targets know what they have to do to achieve higher standards. Pupils' attitudes to their work are much more positive in Years 5 and 6 and this is where most progress in learning is made. The relationships between pupils and their teachers are particularly good and this helps pupils develop self-esteem and confidence, which is evident in their pride in their achievements and the presentation of their work. Pupils are now using their literacy skills much more in all other subjects, for example when writing up science experiments, writing about pieces of music they have heard, and when writing newspaper articles about the Blitz in history. The promotion of writing in all other subjects has been the main focal point this year as the SRB funding was earmarked for this. The evidence from the scrutiny of work and in portfolios shows the action to have been successful. Good use is made of computers to word process pupils' work and produce final drafts of stories and poems. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the opportunities to use computers and so work at their own pace. The computer suite is used well for literacy lessons and helps pupils in the presentation of their work.

77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6, with no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6 where teachers' expectations are consistently high and pupils continually challenged to give of their best. The purposes of lessons are shared with pupils and teachers check pupils understand what they should know by the end of each lesson. Teachers assess pupils' understanding towards the end of lessons, which enables them to adjust their plans for future tasks where necessary and so meet the learning needs of all pupils. The teaching assistants are very well briefed as to their roles and they provide good support for the pupils. Teachers are confident in modelling writing in Years 3 to 6 and this is helping pupils to improve their skills as they join in creating a class story or poem, for example about 'cats' in Years 5 and 6. Effective use is made of brainstorming ideas and words to use in writing tasks and this helps pupils to get started. Good teaching with the higher attaining Year 1 and 2 pupils resulted from a range of tasks well matched to the pupils abilities, where pupils could work independently whilst the teacher focused on hearing one group read. The tasks were enjoyable, for example 'fishing' for words pupils could read and having to read three.

78. The subject is well led and managed. The monitoring of teaching revealed some uninteresting activities in Years 1 and 2 and this has largely been remedied. The progress made by each pupil is tracked from year to year and their progress towards predicted levels at the end of Year 2 and 6 reviewed annually. Pupils' performance against test questions is analysed and the curriculum adapted where necessary. These procedures have been successful in identifying where pupils could do better and much effort was put into those areas to reach the standards achieved in the 2001 tests for pupils in Year 6. This gives the co-ordinator a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and how far the school is on course to meet its targets.

MATHEMATICS

79. Standards of work are well below average at the end of Year 2 and are below average by the end of Year 6. Standards have been maintained at the end of Year 6, but not in Year 2. The less positive picture for pupils at the end of Year 2 is due to the high percentage of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2. Overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

80. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below the level expected for this age group. Throughout the school, pupils are organised into classes according to their previous understanding and each class contains pupils from two year groups. The quality of teaching of pupils in the lower attaining set for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, which includes pupils with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory and therefore they do not achieve as well as they should. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils in the higher attaining set is more successful, and the achievement of these pupils is satisfactory. Overall, the progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory because of the inappropriate choice of activities in some groups and ineffective strategies for managing the class. The pedantic approach towards some lower attaining pupils, primarily in Year 2, reduces the joy of learning and reduces the progress they make.

81. Achievement for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. The dynamic teaching of the lower attaining pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, including those with special educational needs, enables pupils to achieve very well. The good level of support within the class enables lower attaining pupils to make good progress. Clear instructions and structured teaching of numeracy skills, enables all pupils to achieve as well as they can. However, older pupils in the mixed age groups, sometimes dominate the oral and mental sessions, limiting opportunities for younger pupils to offer answers and to explain how they have worked things out.

82. All the lessons seen follow the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and the introductory oral session and the opportunity to reflect on what pupils have learned at the end of the lesson are generally effective. However, activities in the group work section are not always well matched to pupils' needs. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum and in solving problems. In addition, opportunities to use ICT to aid learning are limited.

83. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are developing an early understanding of place value with 3 digit numbers and recognise odd and even numbers. They have a basic understanding of multiples of 2 and 10 and can perform some multiplication within their knowledge of tables though they are not able to use this in division. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of patterns on a hundred square and can use simple division to work out how many rows of ten chairs can be formed from 40 chairs. They can also add two 2-digit numbers involving exchange. Lower attaining pupils can add three numbers together to total 10 and can use a number line to calculate 2 more and 2 less than numbers to 20. There is an over-reliance on worksheets for this group of pupils and this makes it difficult for them to develop the skills of setting out their work. There are some opportunities for pupils to solve simple word problems, but pupils have few opportunities to develop a facility with number through open-ended puzzles and investigative work. Most pupils can classify two and three-dimensional shapes and can measure in centimetres. Overall, however, opportunities to develop an understanding of measurement and to display information on graphs are insufficient.

84. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are developing a sound recall of their tables, though many pupils are not confident with sevens, eights and nines. Pupils can use the grid method for multiplying hundreds, tens and units by numbers up to 10 and understand the effect of multiplying or dividing a number by 10 or 100 though they have no experience of long multiplication. They can calculate simple ratio and proportion and understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and proportion. There are few opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in solving problems. Higher attaining pupils can add and subtract large numbers accurately and understand addition of negative numbers. They have some experience of dividing by numbers bigger than 10 and of investigating number patterns such as square numbers. Lower attaining pupils can add two 2-digit numbers with increasing accuracy and can put hundreds, tens and units in order. Most pupils can calculate the area and perimeter of regular shapes and can measure and draw angles with reasonable accuracy. Higher attaining pupils can calculate the area of a triangle using the formula and can identify which nets will make a cube. Lower attaining pupils develop an understanding of measurement through looking at recipes for making soup and can mark millilitres on a jug. Overall, however, opportunities for developing an understanding of standard measurements are restricted. Most pupils can construct simple bar charts but very often these are not properly labelled. Higher attaining pupils can work out the mode, median and the mean and understand probability as a fraction.

85. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory but there are wide variations, with teaching ranging from excellent to poor. The quality of teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory overall. This represents a less positive picture than at the last inspection. Whilst half the lessons observed were satisfactory, a half were unsatisfactory and one was poor. In the satisfactory lessons good use is made of counting aids such as pointing sticks and puppets to improve the pace of pupils' counting. Clear instructions are given and resources are readily available to motivate the pupils and help their understanding. In the unsatisfactory lessons there is a lack of strategies for gaining and holding pupils' attention and of understanding of the learning needs of lower attaining pupils. This was demonstrated when a group of pupils in Year

1 were instructed as a group to sort coins into values, without talking to each other. Class control was ineffective and pupils were constantly harried unnecessarily rather than reinforcing good attitudes through praise. Consequently, pupils become disenchanted, lack interest and are not able to learn. Another unsatisfactory lesson resulted from the inappropriate choice of resources; the large cardboard dice would not roll and, through lack of a clear explanation of the task many pupils wrote down the cost of pairs of toys but did not find the total. Consequently the learning objective was missed. There are two teachers allocated to the lower attaining set of pupils. However, one teacher is under utilised for a large portion of the time as the other teacher leads the introductory session and the plenary session, and much time is lost when the group splits into two and one group moves to be taught in another room.

86. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6 and is particularly good in Year 5 and Year 6. Three quarters of lessons seen were good or better, 17 per cent were very good or better and one excellent lesson was observed. In the best lessons, the dynamic approach of the teacher motivated the pupils to learn very well. In this lower attaining group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the teacher has very high expectations of the pupils, and whilst explaining that the task is difficult she makes them believe that they can succeed if they think carefully. She constantly refers to pupils' own experiences, such as the 'Countdown' game to keep them on task and help them understand. The good relationships in most classes ensure that pupils are willing to try and are not afraid to make a mistake. Pupils are encouraged to explain how they have worked things out and this helps their understanding. In the less successful lessons, the introductory sessions lack pace and activities in small group work are not sufficiently well matched to pupils' stage of development. Regular assessments are used effectively to check pupils' progress and to plan the next stage of learning. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has made a careful analysis of the results of the optional tests. As a result, the teaching of data handling was moved from the end of the term to ensure better coverage of the topics. The setting arrangements were introduced last year and the school recognises the need to review the effectiveness of having two age groups in each set.

SCIENCE

87. Standards of work are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' progress well from a low starting point on entry to school, and their achievement is satisfactory. The last inspection found that standards in science were well below average throughout the school, and the action taken has been successful. There has been an overall improvement since then, and results have risen in line with the national trend over the last five years. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

88. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, with occasional good lessons. Pupils enter school with limited knowledge and understanding of the world. The school stimulates and develops their natural curiosity and interest by providing opportunities for pupils to participate in planned investigations. Using 'the senses' as a natural starting point, pupils are taught to predict what will happen when syrup, oil and water are poured into a jar, and show a real sense of wonder when they see the liquids separate into layers. They try to identify flavoured crisps and different smells, saying that peppermint 'smells like medicine', but most pupils show a limited vocabulary when communicating their findings. Year 1 pupils have learnt that a prediction is 'a good guess' but they do not yet use many scientific words. Pupils in Year 2 have investigated the ways materials can be changed, for example when bread is toasted, or the way ice melts at different rates depending on the warmth of the room. Recording of pupils' work is rather limited as much of their early investigative work is practical, but they are taught to write reports, complete charts, and to illustrate their experiments. Year 2 pupils test the speed of cars on slopes of different inclines, and know that they must make the test fair by changing one condition at a time, and their reports show that they have discovered that a car will move faster on a steeper slope. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have made satisfactory progress, but lower attaining pupils still show limited knowledge and understanding in most areas. Pupils' work is limited by their lack of literacy skills, by their ability to express their ideas clearly and to write and present their findings well.

89. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Teachers plan effectively and give pupils' more opportunities to develop their skills of investigation than in other year groups. They share the learning objectives for lessons so that pupils know what they will be learning. By the careful use of questions, teachers enable pupils of all abilities, as well as those who have English as a second language, to participate fully in their lessons. Good use is made of teaching assistants to support different groups of pupils, and they make a good contribution to pupils' learning. In less successful lessons, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Similarly, when teachers do not give clear explanations or directions for tasks, or when lessons are rather long, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

90. In a good lesson on magnetism, Year 3 and 4 pupils tested the strength of different magnets. Working co-operatively in small groups of mixed ability, they carefully counted and recorded how many paper clips each magnet would support and confidently presented their results to the class. All pupils were surprised to learn that the smaller magnets were not necessarily the weakest. Scrutiny of work in this age group shows that pupils of all abilities are taught to record experiments in scientific form, including their predictions of the outcome, the method, the equipment and the results. Higher attaining pupils illustrate their work well, but lower attainers do not always complete their work fully.

91. Year 5 and 6 pupils can construct a balanced meal as part of a healthy diet. They can identify vitamins, carbohydrates, proteins, fats, sugars and minerals as food groups, but are less sure about the composition of individual food items. The teacher sets up a good practical activity, well related to the pupils' own experience, to analyse the contents of breakfast cereals, crisps, bread and cakes. In this lesson, the teacher enables pupils to make good use of the computer to create a database of their findings. When results are presented, all pupils are surprised at the variations in the amount of sugar, fat and fibre found in similar foods. Pupils use correct scientific vocabulary in their work, for example describing changes in materials as reversible or irreversible. All pupils know the principles of a fair test.

92. Although teachers plan regular science investigations, older pupils could have wider opportunities to devise and carry out their own tests, and take greater responsibility for their own learning. Little use is made of the computer to record findings or to research information. There is a limited range of ways of recording experiments and activities in the younger age group, mainly because pupils lack the necessary literacy skills, and often work in both age groups is copied from the teacher's script. By increasing the range of recording methods, pupils would improve their ability to present evidence and evaluate their findings. The presentation of average and lower attaining pupils' work is often hampered by poor handwriting and spelling.

93. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, and good progress in Years 3 to 6. Class teachers deploy teaching and special needs assistants well so that these pupils receive good support. Pupils often work in mixed ability groups in science lessons, which gives all pupils opportunities to support and help each other. Pupils throughout the school generally work co-operatively in their groups and behave well during lessons. As pupils are taught in classes that cover two age groups, work is planned over a two-year period, to avoid repetition and to ensure full coverage of each area of the science curriculum. Pupils of all ages have a good awareness of science in the local environment due to the school's strong participation in the 'ECO Schools' project. They learn about caring for the locality and develop a practical knowledge of the importance of recycling. Pupils are taught to be aware of safety issues, and younger pupils know that red signifies danger.

94. The school responded positively when the last inspection found that standards in science were in need of improvement, and that pupils should undertake more investigative work. There has been a good improvement in the amount and range of investigations undertaken throughout the school, and each class carries out at least one planned investigation every half term. Results show that standards have risen. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Science is currently a priority in the school improvement plan. This appropriately includes training to improve subject knowledge and improving cross-curricular links to literacy.

ART AND DESIGN

95. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, with further evidence obtained from a close scrutiny of pupils' work on display, in their sketchbooks and from discussions with staff and pupils. Standards of work by the end of Year 2 are below average and lower than at the time of the previous inspection because less time is allocated to the subject to allow for the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, from a very low starting point on entry to Year 1, achievement is satisfactory.

96. Skills develop slowly because most pupils have very limited experience of handling pencils or using colour before they start school. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to express their ideas, to use different media and become aware of colour, but drawings of figures and buildings are still immature by the end of Year 2. Older, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to draw detailed faces with greater attention to detail. Pupils improve their ability to record what they see and develop their ideas for pictures of houses, such as when observing the school buildings. In a less successful lesson in Year 1/2 classes, the subject matter was inappropriate and did not enable pupils to improve their skills. Year 2 pupils improved their manual control of folding, pleating, scrunching and rolling paper to create bold abstract pictures. Pupils gain some experience of basic three-dimensional work when they create models of houses. They begin to look at the work of Van Gogh as a famous artist.

97. By the end of Year 6, standards of work are average and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils express their ideas using a wider variety of media, including textiles and recycled materials. In a good creative and expressive activity Year 5 and 6 pupils explored the famous 'Willow Pattern' china. They created an exciting composite work of fabric squares; and a three-dimensional pagoda using a mixture of plastic and corrugated card interwoven with fabric strips. In another creative and expressive activity, pupils used a viewfinder to select small areas of floral designs to draw carefully, sensitively blending and shading the colours. In Years 3 and 4, pupils draw their friends, but many do not look closely enough at their subject. Fine pencil skills are still limited, but pupils show an increasing sense of colour, for example, when creating boldly coloured repeating patterns. All age groups experiment with paint, learning to mix subtle colours and to use shading. By Years 5 and 6, some of their drawing still lacks control, but most pupils have developed sufficient knowledge to use monotoners to paint sensitive still life groups of vases and folded fabrics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use sketchbooks effectively to experiment and develop ideas. During a good drawing lesson for Year 5 and 6, the teacher explained the task clearly and provided good resources that stimulated pupils' ideas. Pupils used their sketchbooks well to practise illustrating the facial expressions of sports players, and showed careful attention to the lines around the eyes and mouths. The pupils are taught to modify and improve their work successfully. Pupils increase their knowledge of famous artists, for example, when they draw faces in the style of Picasso.

98. Art and design contributes well to other areas of the curriculum such as religious education, geography, science and design and technology. All staff, including teaching assistants use every opportunity to develop pupils' vocabulary when discussing techniques and materials, or whilst evaluating their work. Year 5 and 6 pupils use well-coloured line drawings to illustrate the meaning of metaphors and similes. The curriculum is enriched through visits from professional 'artists in residence'. No ICT was seen in art lessons, although suitable software is available. All work is well displayed and displays make a particularly strong impact on the school environment. Good links have been made with industry through the 'Industry Art' project, and framed artwork by pupils of all ages is loaned to local firms for display.

99. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, and is good in Years 5 and 6, which is why standards improve. The teaching assistants give good support to their groups. Lesson planning is satisfactory and resources are used well. This enables all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language to make satisfactory progress. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils, behaviour is good and pupils co-operate well in art lessons.

100. The subject is well led and managed and there is a good action plan to develop the subject further. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines that give teachers greater support in the systematic teaching of skills and techniques. Assessments of pupils' work are used well to monitor progress and to set targets for future work. Art and design makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, and social development of the pupils, but as yet there is only limited study of art from other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and achievement is satisfactory. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below the expected levels throughout the school. From the start of their time in school, staff aim to teach pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to design and make products fit for a purpose.

102. By looking at a doll's house, bricks, tiles and pattern books, pupils in Years 1 and 2 begin to learn about houses, in preparation for making their own models. Useful links are made with literacy and mathematics when they name rectangles and squares in the design, learning to use the correct vocabulary. They make bold designs on paper and make some progress in their ability to use the scissors accurately when they cut out windows and doors, although these skills need more practise. They use construction kits to build a 3-dimensional house, and to build a model truck, complete with wheels. Pupils next build a moveable truck, using card, with axles and wheels that support it. The experience of measuring and shaping wheels improves their hand-eye co-ordination, but pupils show limited ability when using tools.

103. All lessons include suitable practical investigative activities. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate the effects of air by looking at wind instruments, bubbles and a swimming ring. The teacher builds on what they have learnt to enable pupils to design and make a simple pneumatic system that will open a box lid, but does not fully reinforce the notion of air as a force. Whilst pupils are not given the opportunity to devise their own test, they do have to assemble the system and investigate ways to improve it, and finally evaluate their results, which they do satisfactorily. The teacher emphasises that products must be of good quality. Year 5 and 6 pupils carry out a project to design biscuits, and use their design books to record their initial research of commercial brands to compare tastes and textures. When they make slippers, they take apart different styles to see how they are made. From this, they cut out a paper template and make 'mock-ups' to test the suitability of their own design. Although the final product is well decorated, textiles are not used so pupils do not learn about stitching or working with fabrics. In a good lesson, pupils research techniques for making different sounds. They investigate ways to use the materials, and make sounds by plucking, shaking or stroking their container. A group of higher attaining pupils generalise their results to show that larger containers produce deeper sounds. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well when the groups feedback at the end of the lesson, and explain carefully how they made and adapted their sounds.

104. The Eco-Schools Project has made a good contribution to pupils' skills and experiences in this subject. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have been involved in various activities to design and make useful products from recycled materials. The well-made products included moneyboxes, a pyramid shaped pencil holder and a box to hold scrap paper. Parents of younger pupils contributed to the project to redesign the playground. They came into school and worked on design ideas with the pupils, giving a real sense of purpose to design and technology lessons.

105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they will be working on, and provide well-prepared resources. In the best lessons, ways of recording are adapted for pupils of all abilities. Pupils are expected to discuss, evaluate and refine their designs. Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils the opportunity to develop their ideas by encouraging them to use their initiative. Teaching assistants support pupils well, enabling all pupils to participate fully in all activities. Behaviour and attitudes are generally good in lessons, and design technology contributes well to pupils' social development by giving them opportunities to collaborate on tasks. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Links are made with other

subjects, including English, science, art, music and mathematics, and with ICT using the 'Paint' program to develop ideas based on shapes.

106. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. During her first year in post, the co-ordinator has ensured that every class has sufficient resources to cover all aspects of the scheme of work. Activities are appropriately planned over two years and the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning to ensure the curriculum is fully covered. Assessments of pupils' work are used to set future targets. Older pupils now need to improve their skills with different tools, and to work with a greater variety of materials, for example linking with science to use a power supply to make moving devices. The subject is currently a priority area in the school improvement plan, and the co-ordinator has plans to develop the way pupils record their design ideas.

GEOGRAPHY

107. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2, and only two lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. In addition, evidence from pupils' books and from discussions with staff was used to make judgements on standards and progress.

108. Standards by the end of Year 6 have improved since the previous inspection. They are still below average by the end of Year 2, but are average by the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language.

109. By the end of Year 6, the pupils use and interpret maps. Because the teacher gives a clear explanation of grid references, followed by practical application, the pupils are able to use new knowledge practically to read a map. Working in pairs they use four figure grid references to locate specific features of an Ordnance Survey map of the locality. They understand and use the key to check the meaning of symbols. Lower attaining pupils struggle to give accurate grid references to help others to locate features, this is because of their low ability level in mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 take part in field studies and undertake fieldwork investigations, for example, they completed a road survey outside school as part of their investigation into how safe the road is. Their solution to some of the safety problems is to put up a sign saying 'no parking' and to paint yellow lines on the road.

110. Indications are that the quality of teaching is good throughout Years 1 to 6. Lessons are well planned, are varied, interesting and include appropriate practical and fieldwork. Teachers are careful to build on the pupils' previous work and to use the pupils' experiences to contribute to lessons, as they did when they planned a visit for Year 1/2 pupils to take 'Barnaby Bear' to the local Asda store. Barnaby Bear is also used effectively to familiarise pupils with the wider world, for example, postcards are sent to the pupils on behalf of Barnaby from his visits to the various capitals of the world and are placed appropriately on the world map together, with the flag of that country. Field studies also play an important part in widening the pupils' horizons and in developing their interest in the world around them from first hand experiences. A trip to Freshfield is a good example of this, here pupils followed the signs to the M58 motorway, observed first hand a level crossing and visited the red squirrel reserve. They studied the sand dunes and noted the problems associated with the marram grass, which is gradually covering the sand dunes. In Years 3 to 6, teachers extend the work done on the local area by visiting places such as the local water authority to study water treatment and try their hand at forecasting the future weather. Teachers encourage the pupils to consider environmental issues such as the problems associated with a seaside resort. An example of this is when the pupils make comparisons with the shops in their own environment and the shops on the main road in Southport. From a very low level of skills when they enter Year 1, pupils reach average standards by the time they transfer to their secondary school. This is because of the good quality of the teaching, which results in good learning.

111. Teachers plan good links to other subjects for example in Years 1 and 2 the traffic survey outside of school effectively reinforced the pupils' knowledge of constructing bar charts and the discussions following the investigation as to how safe the road was, aided their speaking and

listening skills. Whilst the skills, knowledge and understanding that the pupils gain match the expectations for pupils by the end of Year 6, because of the good teaching, their capability to write and record their knowledge is under-developed. Their literacy skills are weaker than their capability to absorb geographic facts. This reflects in the quality of the written work that they produce.

112. Overall management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress in implementing a sound curriculum and is beginning to raise standards as well as improving assessment procedures. The school makes good use of national guidance to plan the curriculum and there are plans to further develop the use of information and communication technology. Resources are good and are used well by teachers.

HISTORY

113. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection, one in Year 1/2 classes and two in Years 3 to 6. Discussions with staff, and analysis of work in books and on display indicate that by the end of Year 2 standards of work are below average and are average by the end of Year 6. These standards represent good achievement for the great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language who make good progress relative to their previous learning. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6.

114. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a sound understanding of periods in history. They successfully compare a Victorian scullery with a modern kitchen; because the teacher uses good quality resources and the pupils are able to appreciate the differences between washing clothes in Victorian times and washing today. They understand that washing machines were not invented in Victorian times but only a few are able to truly appreciate the time scales and to identify correctly items from Victorian times. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils are developing a deeper understanding of time when they study the Romans. This is because the teacher refers back to the time line displayed in the classroom emphasising the time difference. The pupils are able to use information books to consider differences between two written descriptions of Boudicca and show good understanding and retention of previous learning as the teacher questions them. Using a two column grid a good number are able to work independently to record their findings about Boudicca and the source of their information, although the pace of work is a little slow. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study World War 2 and, when comparing homes in 1940 to those of today, they show a good understanding of time and of the progress made during this period in, for example, the introduction of new technology. They use the Internet to research information on for instance bombs, mines and incendiaries. By the end of Year 6, pupils have studied a suitable range of periods in the history of the United Kingdom and other countries and have a satisfactory understanding of when specific events took place.

116. In the lessons observed teaching was good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, however analysis of work and teachers' files suggests that overall teaching is good throughout. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well, providing activities to interest pupils. Teachers plan for pupils to use their literacy skills well, an example of this is the reading of 'Goodnight Mr Tom' to enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of life during the Second World War. The pupils' written stories on display were particularly well presented, showing empathy and good understanding of the period.

116. Overall management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has made progress in implementing a sound curriculum and is beginning to raise standards. The introduction of a nationally recognised curriculum has supported teachers in planning lessons. Monitoring by the co-ordinator of classroom practice has not yet taken place but this is planned for later this year. Resources are good and well arranged to enable staff to easily locate items for the period that they are teaching. Good use is made of the locality to make learning more interesting, for example pupils visit Tatton Park to experience at first hand life in a Victorian kitchen. The use of computers for research is developing and the school recognises the need to widen the range of software. A good start has been made building a portfolio of work, some of which has been

assessed. Once completed this will provide good guidance for teachers and help in the monitoring of pupils' work. The teaching of history makes a good contribution to pupils' awareness of their cultural heritage.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards are below average overall. However, over the last year, the school has given a high priority to raising the standard of work in ICT amongst the pupils in Years 3 to 6. Additional computers have been purchased, a discrete ICT suite has been installed and teachers have been given appropriate training. This initiative has been successful. Pupils in this age group are making good progress due to good teaching and, taking into account their limited previous experience, all pupils, including the high proportion with special educational needs, achieve well. Although standards of work in the Year 5/6 classes are still just below what is expected for their age they are improving and it will take more time before the full effects of the school's initiatives work through to the oldest pupils.

118. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn the specific ICT skills in discrete lessons before applying and extending these skills in a variety of subject contexts. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' good word processing skills. Numeracy benefits by pupils being able to store and retrieve mathematical data and present it in various graphical forms. Other subject areas such as science, history and design and technology are also using ICT, not only to support and enhance the work in the subject but also to practise and extend ICT skills. This is a big improvement on the situation found in the previous report. However, there are still a number of important areas of work in which the pupils have had little or no experience. They include using the Internet to exchange and gather information, and using electronic devices to make things happen and to monitor and respond to events, such as changes in temperature. Most of these are planned to happen in the near future.

119. The overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Particular strengths of the teaching include; the very good use made of the new interactive white board for whole class demonstrations; the careful planning of lessons; and the match of the work set to the pupils' needs. Some teachers were not as confident as others and, although their lessons were satisfactory, they were reluctant to make the changes needed to keep all pupils on task if unexpected events occurred, such as a computer malfunction.

120. In Years 1 and 2, ICT has not received the same high priority. There is a shortage of computers and teachers have not received the same level of training. Consequently improvements in this area have been modest and standards are below what is expected for the pupils' age, which is similar to that found in the previous report. The overall satisfactory teaching enables pupils to make sound progress from a low starting point. In some areas, such as recording their work and sharing their ideas in different forms, pupils achieve well. Some good work was done in Year 2 where pupils recorded the life cycle of a butterfly by a series of pictures. However, pupils do not have the opportunity to experience in any depth the full range of activities in the National Curriculum programme of study. There was little evidence, for example, of pupils using an adventure game or simulation to explore and test their ideas.

121. Pupils enjoyed working with computers particularly when they were appropriately challenged and achieved success. They respect the equipment and generally their behaviour is good. Pupils' good attitudes, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are a significant factor in their learning. Currently there are no clear procedures for pupils to save their work and, as little is assessed and recorded, pupils are not sure how they can improve. Teachers are not in a position to give detailed guidance, as they do not have a clear picture of individual pupil's progress.

122. Progress since the previous inspection has been good, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The challenge for the school is to bring about a similar improvement in standards in Years 1 and 2. The leadership and management of the subject are good and have been beneficial in supporting staff in their drive to raise standards.

MUSIC

123. There is insufficient evidence to judge overall standards of attainment or teaching at the end of Year 2, as most lessons were taught outside the inspection period. The planning shows satisfactory coverage of the subject in Years 1 and 2. As at the time of the last inspection,

standards are average at the end of Year 6. Pupils continue to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully involved in lessons and make good progress

124. The quality and range of pupils' singing in Years 1 and 2 is similar to that found in most schools. Pupils sing enthusiastically from memory in their weekly hymn practice. They keep in tune, even when singing unaccompanied. The pupils show a developing sense of rhythm in clapping a repeated refrain. They are beginning to consider changes in pitch and identify high and low notes. No evidence was seen of pupils in Years 1 and 2 composing their own music.

125. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to develop their singing skills and to extend their repertoire. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 identify and copy strong beats and rhythms. They make satisfactory progress when developing their ideas and fitting different rhythmic patterns together to accompany their singing. In Years 5 and 6, pupils create their own lyrics, based on newspaper headlines, to sing a round. They identify and explore the relationship between sounds and realise how music can reflect different intentions. When singing, they maintain their own part with an awareness of how different parts fit together to create an overall effect. They evaluate thoroughly their own work and practise to improve. Pupils' knowledge of a range of music from different cultures or famous composers is less well developed than their composition and performance skills. Nevertheless, pupils in Year 6 are familiar with the work of Gustav Holst and respond imaginatively to the stimulus of '*The Planets Suite*' through art work.

126. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. In half of the lessons observed, teaching was good and in half it was satisfactory. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan interesting lessons with clearly focused learning objectives that improve pupils' skills. Pupils are very well managed especially in Years 5 and 6. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect to give pupils confidence to perform in front of others and to evaluate their work honestly. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the lively inspiring teaching, and enjoy making music. When teaching is less than good, management strategies are used inconsistently and too much time is spent on keeping pupils on task.

127. Management of the subject is good and provides clear leadership. Since the last inspection, a detailed action plan has been implemented to improve the curriculum and the standard of teaching. The recently introduced scheme of work based on national guidance provides good support for teachers in their planning to develop skills and knowledge over time. Scrutiny of teachers' plans and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that in-service training has also greatly improved the teachers' confidence and expertise.

128. The curriculum co-ordinator evaluates the school's performance and adjusts the action plan accordingly. Teachers' plans are monitored for continuity and consistency, but there has been no monitoring of teaching and learning in class. Assessment procedures against National Curriculum levels are being trialed, but are not fully in place. The curriculum is extended for some pupils in Years 3 to 6 by the weekly after school recorder club. There are good links with other subjects especially with ICT when pupils use a computer program to aid their skills of composition. Music makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development as pupils collaborate with others and perform successfully in class, in school and in the community, for instance, in the Wigan Song Share event with other primary schools.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is average. Whilst dance is the focus for all lessons this term, planning indicates that all elements of the curriculum are suitably covered. By the end of Year 6, some pupils achieve a good standard of performance in dance. However, because of difficulties with the closure of the swimming baths only about a quarter of the pupils in Year 6 were able to swim 25 metres by the time they left school in the summer. The previous report identified good standards overall by the age of eleven. However, due to the justified increase in emphasis on literacy and numeracy, less time is now allocated to the subject, though good teaching in the lessons observed in Years 5 and 6 ensures that the time is used effectively.

130. Pupils achieve as well as they can, and due to good teaching in the older classes, pupils develop a confidence to try and a desire to improve their own work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well through the good use of demonstration to explain ways of moving. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well through positive encouragement from the teachers and through the good support for individuals from the teaching assistants where available. In the lessons observed in Years 5 and 6, the expertise of the teachers is used well to extend the skills of the higher achieving pupils.

131. By the end of Year 2, pupils can move well in time to the music and can devise their own movements to fit the rhythm. Pupils are aware of the importance of the warm up and move sensibly about the room making good use of the available space. Higher attaining pupils can link several movements together, for example when moving to Bob the Builder, they mime carrying the plank, placing it in position and nailing it securely, and can then repeat the sequence. When pupils have the opportunity of watching each other, the majority can make sensible suggestions as to how they could improve their movements. In the mixed age classes, some pupils demonstrate good social skills in choosing to help any younger pupil who appears to be in need.

132. By the end of Year 6, the large majority of pupils interprets music well and chooses their movements carefully to match the music from 'Cats'. They move fluently and with precision and respond well to suggestions from the teacher as to ways of improving their work. Higher attaining pupils use their whole body in interpreting the music including using their fingers as claws and suggesting moods through facial expressions. Lower attaining pupils are encouraged to try their best through the teachers' judicious use of praise. Pupils are developing their skills in observing each other's work and making sensible suggestions as to how their performance could be improved. Some pupils extend their skills in attending after school clubs such as dance, keep fit, skittleball and rugby. However, the opportunities to participate regularly in competitive sports are limited.

133. It was possible to see only one lesson in Years 1 and 2 and two lessons in Years 3 to 6, both with older pupils. It is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory and the two lessons observed with older pupils were good. All lessons have a suitable structure with appropriate warm up, vigorous activity and cool down and there were good opportunities for pupils to observe each other and make suggestions for improvement. Good use is made of pupils to demonstrate good practice, and this also improves pupils' self esteem and confidence. This was particularly evident in Years 5 and 6 where pupils who may experience some difficulty in other lessons have the chance to demonstrate their considerable expertise. Teachers in these classes also use their considerable subject knowledge to extend pupils' expertise and also transmit their enthusiasm to the class. Good use is made of a video recording of a professional stage production to give pupils ideas and to help them improve. In the lesson in a Year 1/2 class, some pupils found it difficult to concentrate for the whole lesson and movements in time to the jungle poem were less successful than to the music of Bob the Builder.

134. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is a specialist and has provided suitable training and good support for colleagues. Weekly assessments take place and are then included in the planning sheets to help pupils develop their skills. There are good links with literacy, such as when pupils suggest verbs and adverbs related to the ways cats move.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. Only one religious education lesson was observed during the inspection, due to timetable arrangements. Pupils' work in their books and on display was carefully scrutinised and discussions were held with staff and pupils to gain further evidence.

136. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils are working at levels expected for their ages in the locally agreed syllabus and their achievement is satisfactory. This was also found to be the case at the previous inspection. There is a daily act of collective worship with a spiritual element that enables pupils to reflect on their lives and learn about prayer. During the inspection, pupils in

Years 5 and 6 were deepening their understanding of Islam as part of their work on major world faiths. They also study Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism and have a sound understanding of the different beliefs and festivals. All staff aim to stimulate pupils to engage in personal reflection and to consider important issues, both in their own lives and in the world around them. Some lessons begin with a quiet moment when pupils close their eyes and listen and think.

137. Younger pupils know about miracles performed by Jesus, through the Bible story of the 'Five loaves and Two fishes', and how Jesus calmed the storm on the sea. Pupils write their own prayers, and these may be used when each class says a prayer at the end of the school day. Pupils write their own rules for life and for school having studied examples of rules contained in the holy books of each major faith. These are presented in the form of decorated scrolls, relating to work on Judaism as well as to design and technology.

138. Older pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity when they study the Temptations of Jesus. Reflection on the nature of temptation contributes to the pupils' growing awareness of the moral issues that affect their own lives. They consider the qualities needed for various roles, for example a shepherd, a father and a king, leading to their own ideas about God. In a lesson on Islam, Year 5 and 6 pupils learnt about the importance of prayer and reflection. The teacher introduced a real prayer mat used by Muslims, and the pupils handled it reverently and thoughtfully. The teacher involved a Muslim pupil to tell the class how to pronounce the names of the 5 pillars of Islam correctly, sensitively using his knowledge to promote understanding and respect for the practices of another major faith. Pupils responded to the idea of making a special place to pray by thinking of places that were special to them. The atmosphere was calm and peaceful, and enabled pupils to progress in their spiritual and personal development. Teachers use every opportunity to encourage pupils to widen their vocabulary, and to learn the correct names for places of worship and books, and to make opportunities for thoughtful discussion in small groups. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and are fully included in all activities.

139. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was satisfactory, and this is supported by the work in the pupils' books. The topics for each year group as specified by the locally agreed syllabus are fully covered, and the co-ordinator monitors this satisfactorily by overseeing teachers' planning. Resources for teaching the subject are sufficient, and supplemented by the schools' loan service. There are good links with the local church, and the vicar is a regular visitor to the school. Pupils' experience and understanding of other world faiths could be widened by visits to other places of worship. The subject is satisfactorily led and makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' overall education and personal development.