

INSPECTION REPORT

FRODSHAM C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Overton, Frodsham

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111247

Headteacher: Mr D. R. Harris

Reporting inspector: Mrs O.M.Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 03 – 06 March 2003

Inspection number: 247098

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Overton Frodsham Cheshire
Postcode:	WA6 6 AF
Telephone number:	01928 733284
Fax number:	01928 735930
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. M. Mills
Date of previous inspection:	12 – 16 January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10859	Mrs O. Cooper	Registered inspector	English Information & communication technology Music Equal opportunities English as an additional language.	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.
9505	Mr D. Haynes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3191	Mr J. Curley	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17907	Mr M. Bowers	Team inspector	Geography History Physical education Religious education The Foundation Stage Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

North West Education Services
Cheshire House
164 Main Road
Goostrey
Cheshire
CW4 8JP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
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

This is an average sized voluntary controlled Church of England school situated in the relatively advantaged town of Frodsham. The school caters for 196 full-time pupils; 95 boys and 101 girls in the four to eleven age range. All pupils are white and predominantly of British heritage. Six pupils are of other white backgrounds and one pupil has English as an additional language, Russian being the first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average; the majority having moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. A well below average proportion of pupils is entitled to claim free school meals. Overall attainment on entry to the Reception class is above average for pupils of this age. The school is involved in the Health Promoting Schools initiative, which encourages a healthy lifestyle.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many strengths and few areas in need of improvement. Pupils reach well above average standards by the time they transfer to high school because the teaching in most year groups is good and the school is well led and managed, with a clear focus on raising standards. Pupils achieve well over time in the school helped by their very positive attitudes, very good behaviour, an effective curriculum, very good day-to-day care for their health and well-being and the very effective partnership with parents. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables pupils to reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- The school is well led and managed with a clear focus on raising standards.
- Overall teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' personal development is very good; they behave very well and become mature and responsible.
- The curriculum is good and is enriched by many visits and visitors to the school.
- Links with parents are very good and support pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The teaching in the Year 1 class.
- The procedures for school self-evaluation are not yet fully established and some curriculum leaders are not yet influencing standards in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and has made good improvement since. Overall standards at the end of Year 6 have risen, pupils' attitudes, the curriculum, the care for pupils, the links with parents and the provision for pupils' personal development have improved. The action plan in response to the key issues raised in the previous inspection report has been completed and the key issues largely overcome. Assessment arrangements are in use in all subjects; subject co-ordinators check standards and pupils' progress in their subjects and further developments are planned; investigative skills are sufficiently emphasised in science and all statutory requirements are met. In addition, the accommodation has been extended and improved to provide a good environment for learning. The weaker teaching in Year 1, identified in the previous inspection has not been remedied sufficiently.

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			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	B	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	A	A
Science	C	C	A	A

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

From the above average attainment on entry, the children make good progress in the Reception class in most of the areas of learning. By the end of their year in Reception, most children are on course to reach the level expected for their age in all areas of learning, with a significant number exceeding the expected level, except in physical development. Overall standards are above average.

The school's 2002 results of national tests at the end of Year 2 were above the national average in reading; matched the national average in writing, but fell below the national average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments showed pupils attainment in science to be below average. When compared to similar schools, these results were well below the average in writing, mathematics and science and below the average in reading. These results were not high enough for this school, given the above average attainment on entry as some pupils underachieved, particularly boys. The school has identified the weaknesses, taken action to overcome them and current standards are higher. In reading standards are well above average and in writing, mathematics and science they are above average. The identification of pupils needing a boost to their performance in both Years 1 and 2 and the good quality support provided has been beneficial in raising standards. In all other subjects standards are average, with the exception of art and design where standards rise above. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, but is better in Year 2 than in Year 1 where there is evidence of underachievement because pupils are insufficiently or over challenged. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

The school's 2002 results of national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science and compared well with those of similar schools. These pupils achieved well in all aspects of their work between Year 3 and Year 6, although higher standards in reading compensated for lower standards in writing in their English results. Current standards of work are similar, with little difference between standards in reading and writing now evident, as action taken has been successful in raising standards in writing. Pupils continue to achieve well and standards in all other subjects are above average with the exception of geography and music where they are average. Standards in geography have declined because of the way in which the curriculum is organised and the long gaps between units of work. The school's results in Year 6 over the last five years have risen in line with the national trend. The school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics in 2002. More challenging targets have been set for 2003 and the school is on course to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very happy in school and most are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In lessons, around the school, at lunchtime and at play behaviour is very good. There have been no exclusions recently.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' personal qualities are very well developed; pupils accept responsibility and show initiative. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English and mathematics and of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good in the Reception class and overall in Years 3 to 6, but is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. This is because of weaker and sometimes unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1, which detracts from the good teaching in Year 2. The further training undertaken by teachers and teaching assistants has improved the teaching of basic skills in writing. The overall strengths in the teaching are in the use of time, support staff and resources and in the planning. The good planning is not followed through in the teaching in Year 1 and led to some unsatisfactory lessons. In Year 1, some activities lack challenge for higher attaining pupils, whereas others are too difficult for lower attaining pupils or those with special educational needs. The teaching in most year groups meets the pupils' learning needs well and enables them to acquire knowledge and skills at a good pace. Pupils respond well to the good teaching by concentrating and trying hard to complete their work to a good standard. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6, because of the good support they receive in most lessons, pupils in Year 1 being the exception.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a wide range of relevant experiences and opportunities for learning, enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. All statutory requirements are met. The planning in geography is less effective than in other subjects and there is no policy or programme of work for teaching personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans of good quality set specific targets for pupils and are monitored for their effectiveness. Teaching and support assistants and parent helpers provide good support and enable pupils to be fully included in most lessons and make good progress towards the targets set.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Some one to one support is available and in other lessons good support from the class teacher or teaching assistant ensure the pupil understands the vocabulary being used.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for spiritual development is excellent, and for moral, social and cultural development is very good. The provision very effectively promotes pupils' personal qualities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is high regard for pupils' health and safety. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring behaviour are very good. Procedures for monitoring attendance are only satisfactory, as unexplained absences are not followed up on day one.

The school works in very close partnership with parents, who in return make a very significant contribution to children's learning, both at home and in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher supported by the deputy headteacher and senior manager provides clear direction for the work of the school. The roles of subject co-ordinators have been developed and some now influence the development of their subject, as part of the school's self evaluation procedures, but these are not yet fully embedded.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Effectively. There is an effective committee structure and good procedures for monitoring the work of the school, which gives them a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. All statutory requirements are met.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and staff monitor the work of the school closely through analysis of the data about each child's progress, and comparative information about the performance of schools nationally and locally. Pupils falling behind are identified and additional support is provided.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors have good systems to oversee the budget and obtain best value for money. Specific grants are used well to provide the best possible for the pupils. Staff are deployed effectively, with support staff deployed to provide maximum benefit for pupils. The principles of best value are applied well.

There are sufficient teachers and teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll. The recent extension has improved the accommodation and this is now good, with additional space for practical activities. There are adequate learning resources in all subjects, although some have to be loaned from the local authority when needed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel able to approach the school with any problems or concerns. • Their children are expected to work hard. • Children like school, their behaviour is good and they become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about their child's progress. • Inconsistency in setting of homework. • The range of activities provided outside lessons. • The teaching in the Year 1 class.

The inspectors fully support the parents' positive views of the school, with the exception of pupils being expected to work hard in all lessons in Year 1. The inspectors share parents' concerns about the class teaching in this year group. The information for parents, contained in pupils' reports, is satisfactory, but could be more helpful in informing parents' about their child's progress and any difficulties. Homework is set consistently in most year groups, with the quantity following national guidelines. However, most of this is reading, spellings or topic work. More variation in the type of tasks set would be beneficial for pupils. The range of activities outside of lessons is good and better than found in many schools, although many are led by parents, or outside agencies which have to be paid for.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In most years the children's attainment on entry to Reception is above average, although writing skills are often weaker. In years where there is a higher proportion of children with special educational needs the ability profile is lower and this is partially reflected in apparent fluctuations in results at the end of Year 2. Children make good progress and achieve well in the Reception class in all areas of learning. As a result, most are on course to reach, and a significant proportion to exceed the expected level in all areas of learning except for physical development. The outdoor provision does not enable the children to reach their full potential and standards are likely to be average by the end of the year. The children's literacy and numeracy develop well, their personal and social skills very well. This good progress is a direct result of the good and often very good quality of teaching. Overall attainment is above average.

2. In the school's 2001 results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, standards were above the national average in reading, matched the national average in writing, but fell below the national average in mathematics. Teachers' assessment showed standards in science to be below the national average and well below the average for similar schools both at the expected level and the higher level. Compared with the results in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, and the pupils' above average attainment on entry, these standards were not high enough, but were affected by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (14 percent). Nevertheless, there was evidence of underachievement among boys, with a downward trend in standards in reading and writing since 1998, whereas girls were improving. The school identified this trend, took action to overcome it and success is evident in current standards, which are well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics and science. Overall achievement is currently satisfactory, although better in Year 2 where teaching is often good, than in Year 1 where pupils underachieve in some lessons due to activities being too demanding for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs or insufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils.

3. The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were well above the national average and the average for similar schools in English, mathematics and science and were high enough. These pupils achieved very well over time in Years 3 to 6 and all pupils reached the expected level in mathematics and science and a well above average proportion reached the higher level. The current situation remains the same, with well above average standards in all three subjects and pupils continuing to achieve well as a result of the good teaching and often very good or excellent teaching in Year 6. Virtually all pupils are on course to reach the expected level in writing and all may reach the expected level in reading with continued hard work, which shows the gap between standards in reading and writing is narrowing. A significant number of pupils are on course to exceed the expected level in writing and reading.

4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Reception, satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and very good progress in Years 3 to 6, the latter being an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils do particularly well in junior classes because they know what they have to do to improve and, as a result take some responsibility for their learning and often reach average standards. The tasks in Year 1 are not always closely matched to pupils' specific needs and this affects their progress. When these pupils are withdrawn from class they find it difficult to settle to their tasks. There is only one pupil with English as an additional language, who is making good progress as effective support is provided from teaching assistants, from the class teacher or from parent helpers. This ensures the pupil is fully included in all activities, understands the vocabulary being used and what is expected in progress by the end of lessons. The school has not identified any pupils as being potentially gifted or talented in sport or music, although there are a number of potentially talented musicians and potentially gifted pupils. The potentially talented musicians do not make the progress they are capable of as they are given the same

tasks as other pupils. Potentially gifted pupils are adequately catered for in lessons through extension tasks when they have completed their work.

5. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are continuing to have a positive influence on standards. The school has become more flexible in its implementation of the strategies and this is helping the drive to raise standards. Pupils have many good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, both in literacy hours, other subjects, assemblies and school productions and these develop well. However, more emphasis could be placed on developing subject specific vocabulary in some lessons. By the end of Year 6 pupils speak with clarity, confidence and maturity when addressing small or large audiences. They can express their ideas and opinions well using a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils listen carefully and respond well to questions posed. In reading, pupils develop a range of strategies for attempting to read unfamiliar words and make good progress. Parents make a significant contribution to the development of reading skills by hearing pupils read regularly at home. Pupils use their reading skills well to research information from books, CD ROMs or the Internet. The school library is used well as a resource for finding information. The Early Literacy Strategy is used effectively to boost the performance of pupils in Year 1 and work in small groups withdrawn from the classroom helps boost the performance of pupils in Year 2, in both literacy and numeracy. Literacy skills are promoted well through work in other subjects, numeracy skills satisfactorily. Pupils make good progress in developing skills in mental recall of number facts and in strategies to help them carry out mental calculations to solve problems. They have a good understanding of shapes and measures and handle data with confidence, presenting it in a variety of charts and graphs.

6. Current standards of work among Year 2 pupils are above average in art and design and are average in all other subjects. Standards in science have improved, but in history, geography and religious education have declined due to the additional time allocated to English and mathematics and some weaker teaching in Year 1. In Year 6, current standards are above average in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology (ICT) physical education and religious education and are average in all other subjects. Standards in science, design and technology, physical education and ICT have improved since the previous inspection, but those in geography have declined because of the long gaps, on one occasion a year, between teaching units of work, which prevents the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills.

7. The school sets itself targets, but these have not been as challenging as they might have been previously and were exceeded in 2002. The targets for 2003 are more challenging and are likely to be achieved if the current rate of progress continues throughout the year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good; contribute well to the positive learning environment that exists in the school and are a key strength. The school's aims and values reflect the strong Christian ethos and contribute greatly to the positive atmosphere in the school. Pupils are keen to come to school and settle quickly into the daily routines without undue intervention from the class teacher. During nearly all lessons pupils concentrate well and show enthusiasm. This includes pupils with special educational needs, as most of them are keen and interested in their learning. The headteacher builds up very good relationships with individual pupils with behavioural difficulties and the pupils benefit from the counselling they receive.

9. Behaviour is very good. It is rarely necessary for pupils to be reminded of the rules. Starting in the reception year and continuing throughout the school the teachers' and non-teaching staffs' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and the pupils live up to these expectations most of the time. Behaviour in lessons is usually good and can be very good when the quality of teaching makes the lessons interesting and stimulating though the standard of behaviour in Year 1 can fall below that of the remainder of the school. Behaviour around the school, in assemblies and at play is very good. During the latest reporting period no pupils have been excluded for unacceptable behaviour.

10. Pupils show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others, as this is very well promoted by all adults in school and particularly during assemblies. No incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour were seen and this type of behaviour is not reported as a serious problem by either parents or pupils though a small amount of bullying has been reported. The school is an orderly community, each class creating their own class rules within the school's code of conduct. There is no evidence of vandalism. Learning resources and property are treated with respect and cloakrooms are very tidy. Pupils demonstrate a natural courtesy to adults, which was well demonstrated by pupils from all year groups as they walk about the school and during lunchtimes. Overall very good relationships exist between pupils and with adults. The only exception being Year 1 where relationships are not as strong as in other years, this detracts from what would otherwise be an excellent aspect of the school. An excellent example of relationships is the Reception and Year 6 buddy scheme where pupils work together throughout the year on a joint project, current Year 6 pupils still being able to remember their projects and their own buddies from their Reception Year. There are many examples of collaborative working during lessons. Pupils are at ease expressing their feelings to members of the inspection team; this was particularly evident during informal discussions with pupils when they talked about their likes and dislikes and about the behaviour of children around the school.

11. The school offers a very good range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school. Pupils assist with operating CD players and projectors in assemblies. There is no school council but pupils have had the opportunity of a formal meeting with the head teacher to raise points of concern. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, which are open to both boys and girls of all abilities and some to infant pupils; both pupils and parents appreciate this and clubs are well attended. Years 2 to 6 have the opportunity to go on an annual residential visit and these are greatly enjoyed by the pupils and help personal qualities to develop well. The school supports local, national and international charities and pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

12. During the last reporting period attendance at 96.1 per cent was very good and 2 per cent above the national average. There is negligible unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good overall and has been maintained since the previous inspection, but with an increased proportion of good lessons. The teaching in most classes effectively supports pupils' learning, the exception is in Year 1, where teaching is never better than satisfactory and in a few lessons is unsatisfactory. The action taken to overcome this weakness, which was evident at the time of the previous inspection, has not remedied the situation. The improvement noted by the local authority's advisor has not been maintained and further action is now necessary as parents are becoming increasingly concerned.

14. Of the 48 lessons seen, two were excellent, a further six were very good and another 26 were good. Eleven lessons were satisfactory, and three were unsatisfactory all in the Year 1 class. The teaching assistants, support teachers and parent volunteers are well deployed, provide good support for both class teachers and pupils and make a significant contribution to the good quality of teaching in many lessons.

15. The basic skills of literacy are taught well. Further training in teaching literacy skills has been undertaken by all teachers and some teaching assistants, which has been beneficial. Additional national materials have been successfully implemented to support pupils requiring a boost to their performance to help them to keep up. Daily sessions are held before school for selected pupils in Year 1, where pupils are effectively taught basic skills in reading and writing and good progress is made. In Year 2, groups of pupils are withdrawn for additional support in specific skills, such as comprehension, and again the good quality of teaching helps pupils to gain understanding and make good progress. Additional support in lessons for selected pupils in Year 6 enhances their performance prior to taking the National Curriculum tests. Because the staff are well deployed, all literacy lessons seen were at least satisfactory, most were good and in Year 6 were very good. Similarly the teaching of numeracy skills is good overall. In all year

groups except for Year 1, teaching is at least good. Brisk introductory sessions involving mental calculations motivate pupils well for the activities that follow and they make good progress in understanding different strategies for solving problems. Purposeful teaching follows these initial activities, enabling most pupils to make good progress in their learning.

16. The teaching in science, art and design and design and technology, history, physical education, religious education and ICT is good overall in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory over Years 1 and 2, because teaching in Year 1 is never better than satisfactory. This detracted from much good teaching in Year 2. Although the teaching seen in lessons in geography was good, the overall teaching is only satisfactory because of the long gaps between teaching some units of work. In music a subject already identified by the school for improvement, the teaching is satisfactory. Teaching in all areas of learning in the Reception class is good and often very good in personal development. The adults work well together and plan an interesting range of activities. The relationships between the teacher, teaching assistant and the children are very good, encouraging and guiding the children effectively. They have secure knowledge of how young children learn. However, the on-going assessment of children in Reception could be better as information is not recorded often enough.

17. The examples of excellent teaching were in mathematics and religious education in Year 6. The brisk pace and high level of challenge for all pupils leads to very good learning. In religious education, the teaching methods were very effective in building on pupils understanding of temptation and our conscience. By working in groups of three, with a subject, a tempter encouraging the subject to break the rules and the other pupil acting as their conscience pupils explored different situations. The lesson was brought to a successful conclusion through reading a passage from the Bible and relating the learning target to Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Very good lessons in mathematics in Year 2, both with the class and small groups and in ICT in Year 5 were characterised by the teachers' secure subject knowledge, good organisation and control and skilful questioning. In ICT, the teacher gave a very clear explanation of the task, demonstrated how to access the program, pointing out possible pitfalls on the way and pupils were then able to set to work quickly. A prompt sheet was provided to help pupils if they were not sure of the next step, which enabled them to work independently. All pupils achieved the task set by the end of the lesson, with higher attaining pupils able to move on to the next stage of learning.

18. The unsatisfactory lessons in Year 1 were in mathematics, science and religious education resulted from the good planning not being followed through in the teaching. The organisation is ineffective in these lessons, leading to wastage of time for learning. In science, for example, pupils were to be measured against a stack of bricks, but nearly half the lesson had passed before it was decided the organisation of the measuring was not right and the investigation into whether older pupils are taller would not be completed. In mathematics, giving a domino to each pupil took up time, allowed pupils to lose concentration and the activity did not challenge the higher attaining pupils. Unsatisfactory features in teaching religious education were in the level of detail when analysing a Bible story and pupils becoming confused in the message it contained. Overall, the teaching lacks sparkle and enjoyment for the pupils, which is evident in other year groups.

19. The key strengths in the teaching are in the effectiveness of the lesson planning, in the use of support staff and of resources for learning. In Years 1 to 6 the regular setting of homework supports pupils' learning, although the range of activities is limited. Lesson plans show clearly what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson, this is shared with the pupils and often reinforced as the lesson proceeds. Time towards the end of lessons is used effectively to check if pupils have made sufficient progress, so the next stage in learning can be planned. In Years 3 to 6, all aspects of teaching are good, with very good management of pupils, very effective use of time and resources and some excellent marking of pupils' work which sets targets for improvement for individual pupils. All aspects of teaching in the Reception class are good, except for recording the information about children's attainment and the setting of homework, which are satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, many aspects of teaching are satisfactory overall, because of the weaknesses in Year 1, however, most aspects of the teaching in Year 2 are good and help pupils to make better progress and recover some of the ground lost in Year 1.

20. The teaching for pupils who have English as an additional language is good and enables them to be fully included in lessons and to make good progress. The class teacher deploys other adults well to provide support during whole class sessions, for example in mathematics. The school has been successful in securing some time for one-to-one support and this is also helping the pupils' understanding of English. Where incorrect vocabulary is used, the class teacher corrects this in a sensitive manner.

21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. It is good in Reception, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. This is because the school is quick to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy. Teaching assistants have a key role to play in the teaching, supporting and monitoring of these pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2. The good teamwork in teaching these pupils is a key strength, with a good balance of withdrawal from class, for specific tasks linked to their individual education plans and being fully included in class lessons. These measures ensure pupils receive the necessary support to make the progress of which they are capable. The co-ordinator provides very good support for the teachers in compiling individual education plans that guide, direct and support the teaching. This gives class teachers a clear insight into the progress pupils are making.

22. The teaching meets the learning needs of the large majority of pupils and enables them to make good progress over time in the school in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils' skills as independent learners develop well from Year 2 onwards, as pupils begin to take some responsibility for their own learning. The school library and computers are used well to promote the development of pupils' research skills and the setting of projects for homework further enhances these skills. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of their own learning from the targets set in lessons and the targets they set for themselves, which are recorded in their book covers. However, pupils are not as aware of the levels they are aiming to achieve in National Curriculum tests in Year 6. Most pupils are interested in their work, try hard to succeed, complete the homework set and return it on time.

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

23. The school provides a good range of valuable and worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn. The curriculum includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, areas of learning for children in Reception and the Agreed Syllabus for religious education and fulfils statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when statutory requirements for physical education were not met. The curriculum is broad and balanced, except in the case of geography where in Years 3 and 4 there is a gap of one year between teaching units of work in geography. This is because the pupils do not have geography during the last term and a half when they are in Year 3 or for the first term and a half in Year 4. It was found during the inspection that standards in geography for this group of pupils were lower than for the other pupils. The curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils and they all have equal access to it. Although the school does not have a policy for equal opportunities, all pupils have equal access and opportunity to experience what the school has to offer, due to the caring attitude of the staff, the valuable support from teaching assistants and parents and the strong Christian ethos of the school.

24. All subjects are allocated an appropriate amount of time although the time allocated to dance and physical education in Year 2 is too long. Due emphasis is given to the importance of English and mathematics. The literacy hour is included each day, is well organised and has a notable impact on the high standards in the subject. Similarly the numeracy hour takes place daily and because it is effectively organised makes a valuable contribution to the high standards in the subject.

25. The previous report stated that schemes of work did not have sufficient detail to support fully teachers' planning which led to some duplication of work. However this is no longer the case because each subject has a policy and a comprehensive scheme of work with an overall plan so that each teacher knows what to teach and when so that needless repetition of work is avoided. Furthermore the subject co-ordinator examines the medium term planning in order to check that the overall plan has been effectively covered. The previous report also noted that although the planning was monitored the

outcomes of that planning were not. This is no longer the case because the subject co-ordinators examine the pupils' workbooks each term to ascertain standards reached and also whether the planning has been effective. In all subjects the pupils have a tracking sheet which records the progress of each pupil and thereby the success of the planning. Classes to boost the performance of selected pupils are organised in mathematics and English to improve the pupils' performance in the national tests and these are effective and successful. There is a good home school reading system in place with a record book for the use of the teachers and the parents. This scheme makes a valuable contribution to the high standard of reading in the school.

26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the insistence on equal access to the curriculum, that is evident throughout the school. Records are kept in very good order and all staff are involved in the process of developing a suitable curriculum for their pupils' individual education plans.

27. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The school does not have a policy for this aspect of education or a programme for the development of pupils' knowledge and skills, but relies on the experiences that the pupils have through the ethos of the school and the caring attitude of the staff, which is ineffective. The school has a sound policy for sex education and relationships. The science curriculum contributes to this topic and the school nurse provides valuable help, advice and knowledge when she comes to school specifically for this purpose. The Life Education Caravan visits annually and junior pupils spend half a day learning about different topics, such as peer group pressure, the dangers associated with alcohol, smoking and drug abuse.

28. The provision for extra curricular activities is good. The school organises mixed teams to play sport fixtures against other schools and these include football, netball, hockey, cricket, and athletics. Other sports' activities include judo, football coaching, and very soon basket ball coaching, which is being provided through a Lottery grant. Pupils also have the opportunity to join the school choir, or participate in instrumental music tuition, which has to be paid for by parents. The many sporting activities help pupils reach above average standards in physical education by the end of Year 6.

29. The curriculum is enhanced through the large number of educational visits that are organised for the pupils. Each year pupils go on a residential visit to the Conway Centre, Chester YHA, Llanbedr YHA, or Tattenhall. The pupils' social development benefits from these visits because they are given the opportunity to live independently from their families, while in the company of their peers. These visits also enhance the curriculum, for example, by carrying out field studies in history and geography. Numerous one day educational visits are also organised to places such as Chester Zoo, Old Trafford Football Stadium, Bunbury Mill and the Jewish Museum. All the younger pupils go to the Gateway Theatre to see the pantomime at Christmas. The school choir has also been to the Bridgewater Hall to see a concert. All these activities extend the pupils' cultural and social development.

30. The school has many links with the community and its contribution to the pupils' learning is very good. Frodsham and District Primary Schools' Arts Association give the school much support. For example the pupils exhibit their artwork in the annual art exhibition. Pupils take part in their dance workshop and the annual Dance Festival. The school has close links with St. Laurence's church and the pupils take part in a number of services each year both in the Church and in the school to which local people are invited, for example, the Advent Service and Confirmation. The vicar takes two assemblies each week, one for the juniors and one for the infants. The quality of these assemblies is very good. People from the village come into school regularly to talk to the pupils about their own experiences and recently a lady whose home is in San Salvador came into school to talk about the different way of life in her country. Other visitors, such as recycling officers, all help to enrich the opportunities for pupils to learn.

31. The school has important links with the two local high schools and these make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. Pupils go to Frodsham High School to use their facilities for design and technology, when making biscuits or slippers for example and to Helsby High School for a science workshop. Both

schools have close links with this school to ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils and continuity in the curriculum. The school also has good links with the local nursery group.

32. Arrangements for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are very good. Collectively they help to create a very pleasant atmosphere, in which everyone can work and grow. The overall provision for spiritual development is excellent. The school places great emphasis on this including it in its mission statement. Skilful and well-prepared assemblies and acts of worship, led by senior staff and the Church of England vicar, explore religious themes and the positive atmosphere encourages pupils to express their feeling of belonging and to grow in self-esteem. Special moments of reflection inspired by the account by one of the ten lepers of his meeting with Jesus' inspires older pupils to realise that God loves, cares and protects them. Pupils think and talk about their own experiences and appreciate the time provided in lessons and assemblies to pause and consider their own circumstances. Spiritual moments are created during whole school acts of worship attended by parents and governors where the school celebrates Jesus' time on Earth and many pupils show their commitment to the Christian faith by receiving Communion. Hymns and prayers are included in all acts of worship and special places in classrooms, where a religious theme and pupils' work are displayed, provide a focal point for pupils' thoughts. Older pupils were astounded to learn about the preparations Moslems make before they pray. The wonderful artwork displayed around the school and in pupils' books is an uplifting experience for the children. Pupils are encouraged to be curious and appreciate the natural world. For example, the placing of hen eggs in the school incubator as part of pupils' studies in science is an excellent aspect of the preparation for the Christian festival of Easter and the creation of new life.

33. Arrangements for pupils' moral development are very good. They all have clear understanding of what is acceptable and a great majority abide by the class rules they have helped to formulate. They know right from wrong. Pupils understand the consequences of their actions and appreciate that all staff apply the rules fairly and that rewards are often given. Themes in religious education lessons help the older pupils to understand ideas such as temptation, together with the presence and use of conscience, to help them recognise and choose the right alternatives. The school's overall aim is to develop a sense of morality in its pupils rather than merely keeping rules to avoid sanctions. The school is beginning to consider the views of people from other races and cultures.

34. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Adults in the school provide very good role models and there are very positive relationships between adults and children. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility for their own activities like helping during assembly by working the overhead projector and the CD ROM music maker. Children complete daily tasks around the classroom, helping the school to operate in an efficient and practical manner. The headteacher is particularly well skilled in supporting pupils who very occasionally have difficulties accepting the agreed class conventions. He involves them in discussions to help them to understand the reasons why their behaviour is unacceptable and what they can do to improve. Very many pupils accept the principle of fair competition and play competitive sports and games within the rules. The school is heavily involved in charity work. It supports international charities - Lepira, national initiatives - Barnardo's and the regional children's hospital at Alderhey. The impact of very good relationships is reflected in the social order and climate of the school where pupils collaborate well in class and older pupils become 'buddies' to younger children.

35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good overall. Pupils are very aware of the importance of their own cultural traditions. Studies in history and geography ensure that children appreciate the cultural heritage of British society. Visits to museums, musical concerts churches and art galleries increase their knowledge of non-Christian sects, European culture and World art. Pupils' studies of world faiths other than Christianity provide them with knowledge of the importance and impact of major faiths on people's daily lives. The school is fully involved in the religious events and festivals organised by the parish and contributes to various events organised by the local community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school's cares for its pupils is very good. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and his knowledge of pupils and their backgrounds, together with clear guidance for teaching staff, provides a good level of protection. The good guidance on child protection available to teachers does not extend to all other adults on the school staff. Record keeping and communication within the school is very good and contact is maintained with outside specialists and their services are effectively used when required. First aid provision is good and the children know what to do should the need arise. The caretaker and cleaner maintain a very high level of cleanliness and any aspect of maintenance is attended to promptly. This helps create a safe learning environment and also instils high values in the pupils that are reflected in their respect for property and learning resources. Health and safety awareness on the governing body is very high. A whole school safety audit has recently been completed. Risk assessments are carried out and are reviewed regularly. Safety inspections have led to items being included in the school improvement plan.

37. The school's aims and values reflect the school's Christian ethos and are prominently published in the school prospectus. Pupils establish their own class rules and know what is expected of them both in class and around the school. Safety in lessons is well promoted by class teachers. The school promotes a healthy eating regime with unlimited access to drinking water and a healthy selection of foods at lunchtime. Very good procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and there were no incidents of harassment or bullying during the inspection. The head teacher supports the class teachers very well in establishing and maintaining high expectations of behaviour; this is particularly evident on the occasions when the head teacher counsels individual pupils on behaviour. Access to the premises is very well controlled and to the Internet is satisfactory. A satisfactory level of supervision is provided when the children are at play but there is no play equipment provided and mid-day supervisors are not proactive in leading structured or guided play.

38. Registration is quickly taken and there are very few pupils arriving after registration closes. There are satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring absence. Registers are maintained correctly using a computer-based system and the administration staff are confident and competent at analysing the data. A good feature is the return of the registers to the office after each registration, however, the school does not contact parents on the first day of absence if no notice has been received. Attendance patterns are monitored for each year group and the education welfare officer involved when required.

39. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainments in English, mathematics and science are very good. They provide detailed and reliable information about pupils' attainment in national and other standardised tests. The information is used effectively to judge how well pupils are achieving year on year and as a basis for setting individual and year group targets. The results of National Curriculum tests are analysed in detail and senior managers use this information to compare boys' and girls' results to see how well the school is doing over time and to measure how successful teaching has been in improving pupils' performances.

40. In other subjects, whole school procedures for assessing what pupils know and can do are in place, although these are not fully implemented in physical education. Teachers complete an end of topic analysis of pupils' achievements, recording their judgements in the medium term planning documents. This provides evidence to help teachers prepare annual end of year reports for parents and to organise groups of pupils according to their current levels of attainment.

41. The school has effective systems to assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers monitor their progress and take prompt action if it slows. In their individual education plans, targets are precise and achievable. The accompanying information in pupils' files is thorough and analyses all the important aspects of their development. This ensures that the most suitable individual targets are set. The special educational needs co-ordinator raises her concerns with the local authority and seeks advice when needed. These pupils are supported well and staff ensure that they take an active part in all activities. The school uses assessment information well to improve teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science. For example, in both English and mathematics teachers regularly evaluate pupils' progress to identify both significant achievements and areas for development for these pupils.

42. The school keeps a careful eye on how well each pupil is learning. It has made careful predictions of the potential levels pupils can achieve by Year 6, and tracks and records their on going attainment. Teachers are therefore able to act quickly when it appears that a pupil is starting to lose ground, for example by providing extra support or arranging small group teaching. This has been effective in raising the standards of lower attaining pupils. Individual and group targets are provided for pupils in English and mathematics so that they have a clearer understanding about how to improve their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents' views as expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting are very positive. Parents particularly appreciate that their children like school, that behaviour is good, there is an expectation of hard work and that they are being helped to become mature and responsible. Parents are also comfortable in approaching the school if they have any problems. Areas of concern to a small minority of parents responding to the questionnaire centred on how well they are kept informed about their child's progress, the range of activities outside lessons and the teaching in Year 1 class lessons.

44. The school has forged very good links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. If the school registers a concern, parents are immediately notified and are invited to an initial meeting, where the school's future action is outlined and discussed. Parents see their children's individual education plans and are invited to regular meetings to discuss progress and set new targets. The co-ordinator is available to meet with parents on a weekly basis and the school manages an 'open door' policy for these parents very effectively.

45. The school offers parents an opportunity each term to meet class teachers and discuss the progress of their children; this is more than the requirement. The quality of written information provided for parents is good. A school newsletter informs parents of general events and occasional year group newsletters detail work that will be undertaken by each class. Pupils' annual reports for parents are satisfactory. They contain details of areas of study undertaken particularly in English, mathematics and science. Progress in other subjects is also separately detailed and a hand written section is attached on personal development and behaviour. Areas for improvement are identified but clear, specific targets are not set. The report is word-processed and parents feel it is too impersonal, but with the handwritten section attached, inspectors judge them to be satisfactory. The school prospectus is a friendly easy to read document, comprising all the necessary information parents require. The school sends letters to new parents, inviting them to bring their child to a series of introductory afternoon visits. They also receive an invitation to take lunch with their children before they start school. Indeed this policy has led to many children in reception taking school meals. However, a few parents feel that too much information has to be obtained from other parents on such matters as the occasions when it is possible to take lunch with their child. The annual governors' report to parents' is comprehensive with individual contributions from governors with specific responsibilities.

46. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home and their impact on the life of the school is very good and has a positive effect on pupils' learning and progress. During the inspection a 'World Book Day' was held for the Reception class, parents making a great effort to dress their children as their favourite literary character. A home / school agreement is in place but there is no Internet access agreement, although the school does have a satisfactory policy for this. Most parents confirm work undertaken at home and the inspection found that the amount of homework is appropriate to the age of the pupil and is well managed in all years except Year 1. Arrangements for marking homework in Year 5 need to be made clear to parents. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and organises social events for both parents and children and events that raise valuable funds for the school. Some parents have requested that the numeracy strategy is explained and individual class teachers have responded well but there is no whole school approach for workshops for parents. The overall effectiveness of the schools' links with parents is very good and over 20 parents regularly help in

the classroom each week, listening to children read and assisting in lessons. A number of parents also assist with after school clubs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The school is well led and managed; it successfully pursues its aims and enjoys the confidence of governors and most parents. A cohesive staff team has been built up which is committed to doing its best for the pupils. The school benefits from the purposeful and effective leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior manager who have maintained a very positive climate for learning and who provide clear direction for the school concentrating on raising standards, improving teaching and meeting pupils' personal development needs. The headteacher retires at Easter 2003 and the transition to the new headteacher is being very well managed by involving the deputy headteacher in the development of all aspects of the school this academic year to ensure a smooth transition. The deputy headteacher leads by example in her classroom practice and in all other aspects of her work and is highly regarded.

48. In order to overcome weaknesses in the teaching found during the previous inspection, advice was sought from the local authority advisors who had more experience of observing lessons and providing feedback than staff in the school. This led to some improvement and satisfactory teaching. Continuous support has, more recently, been provided by the school, but the initial improvement has not been sustained and further action is now required. In this aspect the school has been less successful and this is why the leadership and management of the school are not very good.

49. The strategic planning for the development of the school is good. Self-evaluation procedures have been agreed and established, relevant priorities for improvement identified and incorporated into the school improvement plan, which covers a three-year period. Music is a priority for development this year and this is a subject where standards could be higher. The analysis of test data and pupils' performance in test questions is good and has enabled the school to pinpoint where further improvement can be made and also the pupils who would benefit from additional support. As part of the school's self-evaluation procedures, the roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators are being developed. All have undertaken training in self-evaluation procedures and when their subject is a priority for development, then the training will be put to full use in evaluating the current provision and standards. The review and evaluation of the provision in English successfully identified the weaknesses in writing, which have been remedied. All subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work in books and on display and draw up an appropriate action plan to overcome weaknesses identified. However, a regular programme for monitoring teaching is not yet part of the school's self-evaluation procedures and weaknesses in following the good planning through in lessons is not identified. The new Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is fully in place and pupils are being encouraged to identify their own targets. Computer software is adapted to provide appropriate individual education plans and the register of these pupils is a working document that records and monitors pupils' progress. The provision is carefully organised and monitored closely by the co-ordinator, who effectively deploys skilled and enthusiastic teaching assistants to work within these situations, although monitoring procedures are largely informal. The school recognises that the provision for gifted and talented pupils is an area for improvement, but has a racial equality policy to ensure pupils are treated fairly. The school also receives support from staff in high schools, pending further training for the co-ordinator. Performance management procedures and the appraisal of teachers are good, up to date and with targets linked to the identified areas for improvement. The budget plan is then linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan to ensure they are remedied. The induction of teachers entering the profession is good, with effective support from the mentor and time for professional development provided each week.

50. The governors are totally committed to the school and carry out their roles and responsibilities efficiently and effectively and the staff feel well supported. The governors are very well organised and have an effective committee structure, with decisions from committee meetings being ratified at full governing body meetings. Several governors are in school frequently and monitor at first hand the implementation and effectiveness of their policies; talk with staff about curricular developments and with

the headteacher about potential problems or areas for improvement. The governors are kept well informed through the headteacher's termly reports, through the analysis of assessment data and by presentations made by staff at governors' meetings. For example, the Year 2 teacher met with governors to explain why standards at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were as they were. The governors meet with staff, the trustees and the Parent Teacher Association committee members annually to share information and discuss items of mutual interest. Such a meeting led to the vision for improving the accommodation, which has recently come to fruition.

51. The school's strategic use of resources is good. Specific grants, for example for pupils with special educational needs are used well to provide good support for these pupils by giving the co-ordinator time to monitor the success of pupils' individual education plans and the support they receive. Funding for staff training has been used appropriately to establish school self-evaluation procedures, which are now in the second year, but with further development planned. The support from another headteacher in establishing these procedures has been beneficial in helping teachers to develop their skills in classroom observations. As a result of these recent observations much support has been provided to try to improve the teaching in Year 1.

52. Financial procedures are good. The school bursar left in September 2002 and because of the headteacher's impending retirement the post was left unfilled until the new headteacher was appointed, as the school secretary is also retiring. In the short term, the headteacher has managed the budget efficiently on a day-to-day basis with some support from the finance department. The two administrative posts have now been combined and a new appointment made for the beginning of the summer term to remedy the situation. The financial files are kept in immaculate order and procedures for issuing orders and checking goods and invoices are secure. The school has not had a visit from the auditor since the previous inspection. The principles of best value are applied well, with governors challenging themselves to find more cost-effective ways of providing the best possible for the pupils and the local community.

53. The completion of the building of a staffroom and two new classrooms has seen a major improvement to the accommodation, which is now good. The reorganisation of classes has led to good use of the accommodation available. The outdoor facilities are also good, although further development of the outdoor area for Reception children is planned. The library is well positioned for use by junior pupils and the recent purchase of books by the Parent Teacher Association has enhanced the range of up-to-date books available. There are sufficient resources for learning, most of good quality in all subjects, except for sensors in science and artefacts for religious education, although the latter can be borrowed from the local authority loan service. There are sufficient staff, both teaching and support staff, who work hard to make learning interesting for the pupils.

54. The good leadership and management of the school have been maintained since the previous inspection, with improvements in standards at the end of Year 6, except in geography. Also in, developing school self-evaluation procedures and the use of management information systems to aid the efficient running of the school. Information about the pupils, finance, assessment and individual education plans are stored on computer for ease of access and updating. A very helpful and informative school web site has been established, with hyperlinks to other local authority services where parents will find information they may need. The information is updated frequently and includes photographs of pupils at work. However, insufficient improvement has been made in the teaching in Year 1, because it has not been monitored often enough.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to maintain the well above average standards at the end of Year 6 and improve provision for pupils in Year 1, the headteacher and staff, supported by the governors should:

- (1) improve the quality of teaching in the Year 1 class by:
 - monitoring the teaching more rigorously;

- setting targets for improvement and checking whether they have been met.

Discussed in paragraphs: 2, 13, 16, 18, 48, 54, 73, 80, 86, 98, page 9

- (2) ensure the school's self-evaluation procedures develop fully and enable all subject co-ordinators to influence standards in their subjects.

Discussed in paragraphs: 49, 51, 74, 87, 97, 127, 134.

In addition to the key issues above, the governors should consider the inclusion of the following minor issues in their action plan:

1. Amend the geography curriculum to eliminate long gaps between studying units of work so that pupils build systematically and progressively on what they already know and can do.

Discussed in paragraphs: 6, 23, 98, 101, page 8

2. Identify potentially gifted and talented pupils and ensure they are adequately challenged in lessons.

Discussed in paragraphs 4, 49, 117, 124.

3. Devise and implement a policy and programme for teaching personal, social and health education.

Discussed in paragraph: 27

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	26	11	3	0	0
Percentage	4	13	54	23	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	196
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	18

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	14	15	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	12
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	27	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (81)	93 (85)	90 (81)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	12	12
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	28	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (81)	86 (81)	90 (81)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (94)	100 (94)	100 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	29	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (97)	100 (94)	100 (94)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
185	0	0
3	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	434,600
Total expenditure	433,589
Expenditure per pupil	2,168
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,803
Balance carried forward to next year	1,011

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

196

Number of questionnaires returned

75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	24	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	44	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	59	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	39	13	3	1
The teaching is good.	53	36	3	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	49	16	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	34	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	45	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	40	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	33	4	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	49	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	35	20	3	7

Other issues raised by parents

Nine letters were received from parents. The only other concern expressed by a number of parents was about the teaching in the Year 1 class. The inspectors share their concerns.

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

56. All children start school in the September of the academic year in which they become five. There are currently 24 children in the Reception class, all attending full-time. There are very good links with the private nursery established within the school grounds. Parents and children are invited into school on more than one occasion during the summer term prior to starting school. These arrangements enable children to settle quickly and confidently into school routines. The good provision for children in Reception has been maintained and improved since the previous inspection has been good, as the accommodation has been improved, both indoors and out and the curriculum amended and updated to current national requirements.

57. The school uses the early learning goals and the National Curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. These consist of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Each area is made up of four stages or 'stepping-stones' from which progress and standards can be measured.

58. While standards of attainment vary slightly from year to year, results of the tests given to children soon after they enter school, confirm that attainment is above average for children of this age in most years, although writing skills are often weaker. Most children are currently working securely in the third stepping-stone and many are working towards the fourth stepping-stone. About one third of the children have already exceeded the stepping stones and are beginning to work at the first level of the National Curriculum. Overall children achieve well in the Reception class. Their achievement is good in reading, writing, number work, their knowledge of the world and in their creative development. There is a strong emphasis on these areas and they are taught well. Almost all children are likely to reach the early learning goals and many exceed the level expected for their age in these areas of learning. Standards are above average in these areas of learning. Achievement is satisfactory in children's physical development and standards are average. In their personal, social and emotional development, the children make very good progress, with most on course to reach and a significant proportion to exceed the expected goals by the end of the school year. The school makes good provision for children identified as having special educational needs and, as a consequence, they make good progress.

59. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all areas of learning and as a result the children are on course to exceed the expected levels in all areas of learning except in their physical development, where outdoor provision does not enable them to reach their full potential. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, of personal skills it is very good. This ensures that children have a firm foundation in these skills when they move into Year 1. The teacher responsible for the Reception class plans precisely with her learning support assistant. The many parent volunteers, including the person responsible for the on-site nursery, are carefully deployed, know exactly what is expected of them and which children they have to work with. This ensures that time is used well and children benefit from their care and support. Yearly and termly planning is strong in setting out a clear programme of learning that stresses language and mathematical work. Weekly lesson planning carefully identifies which skills the children will learn. The use of guidelines for teaching English and number help the children make good progress in these specific areas of learning. Teachers use visits and walks around the school and church well together with parents who talk about their jobs. These activities promote children's knowledge of the world around them. Relationships between children and adults are excellent. Children are managed well using praise and encouragement. This promotes their self-esteem and helps them to become confident learners.

60. Staff make day-to-day frequent assessments of children's attainment and progress as they work and record these in their own assessment notebooks. However, this information is not transferred often

enough to the children's record books and in the event of a member of staff being absent, could hinder the children's progress by giving them undemanding or inappropriate activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Children look forward to coming to school and settle quickly to their tasks. Routines are well established so that children know what is expected of them. For instance, they will come into the classroom, engage in conversation with their friends, look through a picture book then sit on the carpet ready for the start of the day. They are confident learners, all being able to talk about their work in front of the class. They take turns and share equipment and accept small responsibilities well, for instance, by taking the register to the office or providing the school kitchen with the numbers of pupils staying for lunch. Teaching and learning are very good. The great majority of children can hold their interest in a task and listen attentively to adult explanations and stories.

62. They have a growing awareness of their own culture and of non-western cultures through their work in class and their regular involvement in school assemblies. Adults reinforce the school's values well throughout the day as small incidents arise. Praise is used well to motivate children. Resources and displays are attractive and children willingly help to tidy up at the end of a lesson or session.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Children enjoy listening to stories, which are told by adults. They communicate with each other using simple vocabulary in the role-play castle, job centre and DIY warehouse. They show a good interest in books and handle them respectfully, turning the pages carefully and commenting briefly on the pictures. Most know that print conveys meaning. Higher attaining children are able to read simple texts whilst lower attainers rely on memory and picture cues to tell the story. The great majority of children write their name in a legible script and are given good opportunities to write about the jobs adults do in the local village and compose letters of welcome to 'Millie the Mouse' who has recently come to live in the classroom. Lower attaining children are beginning to form letters correctly to produce words. They have received very good opportunities to practise their letter shapes through the use of plastic letter shapes that slope to guide a ball-bearing that models the writing process for each letter. During the week of the inspection pupils were examining the theme of animals and formal literacy lessons based on the national strategy were planned well to explore this theme. The children read about 'Farmer Duck' during their shared text session. They respond well to the teacher's questioning about the story to develop their opinions and share them with the class. Adults show very good knowledge of children's levels of development and ICT is used effectively to help lower attaining children to practise initial sounds. Guided reading sessions are planned well, enabling children to increase their confidence in identifying words and gaining meaning from text. Higher attaining children can compose sentences to accompany illustrations. These children were accurately using capital letters, full stops and question marks. Adults continue to seek opportunities to engage pupils in speaking and listening. This has given children confidence to verbalise their thoughts and ideas accurately and to contribute to group and class discussions. Staff display a positive attitude towards reading and books and they ensure that suitable, relevant and stimulating books are available in all areas of the classroom. The 'buddy reading' initiative, where Reception children work with Year 6 pupils, is a very effective method to stress the importance of reading and further develops their confidence. The good teaching enables the children to learn at a good pace, particularly in developing writing skills.

Mathematical development

64. Most children count reliably to ten and higher attaining children go on to twenty and beyond. Most children recognise the numbers to nine and have started to write them correctly. More able children accurately complete horizontal addition sums, for instance 6+3. Knowledge of flat shapes is good and children use this knowledge well to recognise these shapes in objects found in the classroom. Higher attaining children are beginning to investigate three-dimensional shapes. Teachers use the national guidelines for mathematics well to prepare stimulating activities for the children and overall, teaching is

good. Mental mathematics activities challenge the children to order odd and even numbers as they count from 1 to 20. The animal theme is continued as children sort and count the number of animals in the fields of the toy farm to create a number sentence, for example $4+5+2=11$. Whilst some children require support in completing these tasks others actually tally the species of animal on their tally board. Staff have high expectations of the pupils and adults effectively support identified children. The session is planned well and there are excellent relationships between adults and children. However, the tasks are too demanding for some of the lower attaining children, who then have difficulty in sustaining their concentration.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

65. All the children are enthusiastic and curious about the world around them. They really enjoy their walks around the school to observe the leaves on the trees and the mini-beasts below. They use hand lenses to make more detailed observations of these living things and classify everyday objects as either 'alive' or 'not alive'. They keep accurate and detailed weather records and investigate the immediate vicinity of the village to identify the range of jobs that adults engage in. Children help to create a mountainous terrain that 'Barnaby Bear' travels through on his journeys and they recognise such features as mountains, valleys, lakes and streams. Children describe the taste and texture of various foods and experiment with the properties of sand, water and other everyday materials. Children confidently use computers and operate the mouse with increasing accuracy. All staff use correct language and provide stimulating activities for the children. The teaching is good and sometimes very good and the children are on course to reach and a good proportion to exceed the expected level by the time they enter Year 1.

Creative Development

66. Opportunities to take part in role-play areas are imaginative. The school has good resources to stimulate children's interests and to link them with current classroom themes and overall teaching and learning are good. A wide range of mark making tools is readily available and children enjoy illustrating their work with detailed drawings, particularly when they create folding storybooks and illustrate their historical writing about Beatrix Potter. Children are able to choose from a good range of equipment to develop their creativity including, marbling and bubble paintings, textures and the creation of patterns. Adults work well with children, encouraging them to be imaginative, to think for themselves and to explore the use of different materials when creating pictures. Good quality musical instruments are readily available for the children to investigate the sounds they make, to accompany their singing and begin to develop a sense of rhythm.

Physical Development

67. Children have good skills with pencils, crayons and small tools, which are generally held correctly and used accurately. Children work with a typical range of jigsaw puzzles, construction toys and malleable materials such as clay and 'play-dough' with enjoyment and skill. In physical education lessons the children show sound control over their bodies and control of small equipment as they balance in different positions using parts of the head, hand and foot. They continue to travel around the hall as they balance a beanbag on their head arm or elbow. Teaching and learning are good because teachers plan well and make the best use of the resources available. Children make good progress as they learn to evaluate their own and their classmate's skills and repertoires. Adults pay careful attention to safety and the children show good levels of attentiveness and interest as they follow instructions and sustain the activity. The outdoor area is a stimulating resource where children can use wheeled vehicles and walk around the woodland area to appreciate the ever-changing moods of the seasons, but does not provide as much physical challenge as it could do. The school has plans to improve the outdoor area even further in order to enable children to reach their full potential, which they cannot do with the current limitations in the activities available. Most children are on course to reach the expected goals by the end of their time in reception, but few are likely to exceed them. Overall standards are average in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

Strengths:

- standards are well above average by the end of Year 6;
- standards in writing are now close to those in reading;
- pupils' writing skills are promoted well through other subjects.

Areas for improvement:

- improving the quality of teaching in Year 1 class lessons;
- increasing the use of subject specific vocabulary to extend the range of pupils' vocabulary.

68. Overall standards of work are currently above average in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but in Year 2 are now better than those in the last two years. Current standards in writing in Year 2 show improvement over those in the last four years as writing has been the main focus for improvement and action taken has been successful in remedying the weaknesses. Action taken has included thorough analysis of pupils' performance in tests; identifying where pupils could do better; amending the curriculum and setting targets for improvement for individual pupils. In addition, teachers have undertaken further training to improve their knowledge of how to teach writing skills and in the use of additional national materials to help lower attaining pupils and these have led to good teaching in many lessons. There are, however, some weaknesses in the teaching in Year 1 lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress from Year 2 upwards, but are not as well supported in class lessons in Year 1, where activities are sometimes too challenging and other adults are not well briefed. Those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress as class teachers ensure they are adequately supported when one-to-one support is not available. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily in infant classes and well in junior classes.

69. The school's results of national tests in Year 2 in 2002 showed standards in reading were above the national average and in writing matched the national average. These results did not compare very favourably with similar schools and were not high enough because too many pupils (over 40 per cent) only just reached the expected level in writing and few exceeded this level. The school took action to boost the performance of pupils in Years 1 and 2 and the success of the extra classes daily before school for selected Year 1 pupils and the intensive support for small groups of pupils in Year 2 is now evident in standards being attained. The school's 2002 results of national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average and the average for similar schools and were high enough as these pupils achieved particularly well between Years 3 and 6. This continues to be the case in Year 6 as pupils of all abilities achieve well. In Years 3 to 6, teachers make good use of carefully selected texts to help pupils understand different styles of writing and how authors achieve their intentions. Pupils are then given opportunities to write in this way for themselves and so develop their own preferred way of creating, for example, suspense or mystery and intrigue. This has led to the gap between standards in reading and those in writing narrowing, with very little difference now evident.

70. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Pupils throughout the school listen closely to their teachers, the only exception being in Year 1, where teaching is sometimes uninspiring and pupils lose interest. In assemblies, pupils listen with rapt attention as Bible stories are acted out. Pupils speak with increasing clarity and confidence, both in class situations and when speaking to larger audiences, for example, in assemblies. Pupils read with expression passages from the Bible, the collect for the day and prayers, which had been given to them immediately before the service. Effective use is made of drama and of putting people in the 'hot seat' as characters in stories having to explain their thoughts and actions in response to questions from others. Whilst pupils are very mature speakers by Year 6, using a good range of vocabulary, insufficient emphasis is placed on developing subject specific vocabulary in a few lessons. Pupils in Year 5 research information for a topic which interests them and this forms the basis for a talk to the class which effectively helps pupils develop their confidence in speaking to larger audiences.

71. In reading, standards are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils in both year groups are currently on course to reach the expected level for their age, or higher, by the end of the academic year. An increased proportion of Year 2 pupils is on course to reach the higher level. Parents play an important

part by hearing pupils read regularly at home, or checking their children's reading diaries as they get older. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Year 1 where parent helpers and the teaching assistant support the class teacher, so increasing the level of adult help. Pupils achieve well in Year 2, where basic skills in reading are well taught and pupils use picture clues, their knowledge of letter sounds, or split words into small parts when attempting to read unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils can self-correct errors, realising what they have said does not make sense. The introduction of non-fiction books has increased the interest for boys and halted the downward trend in their attainment. In Year 6, pupils talk with confidence about books they have read by a range of children's authors, such as Harry Potter books by J.K Rowling, collections of books by Jacqueline Wilson or Roald Dahl. They talked about particular books, which they have enjoyed, such as fantasy or adventure books and which have led to them choosing other books in the series. Pupils named books by Charles Dickens, which they have studied, such as Great Expectations, Oliver Twist and Nicholas Nickleby and discussed how he portrayed life at that time. They discuss the characters and what type of people they were with confidence, referring to the text to prove their point. The in-depth study of different authors and their styles of writing are key factors in the improving standards in writing. Pupils successfully vary the way in which characters are introduced into their stories, through the use of description, mystery or suspense, which immediately interests the reader.

72. Standards in writing are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. While all Year 2 pupils may reach the expected level with continued effort and support, the proportion likely to exceed this level is broadly average. Pupils have a good understanding of simple story and sentence structure and can add their own endings to familiar stories showing a logical sequence of events. Sentences are mostly correctly punctuated and higher attaining pupils use speech marks accurately and words for effect when writing. They write clear instructions, such as for playing a tape, write accounts of events in their lives and make good attempts at writing poems. Accuracy in spelling develops well as parents play a large part in this at home, not only in helping children to learn spelling patterns, but also the meaning of words. Pupils know and understand alphabetical order, which helps in using dictionaries. Writing skills develop well over Years 3 to 6 and virtually all are on course to reach the expected level with over 20 per cent likely to exceed this level. In Year 6 pupils are currently creating their own stories about a granny based on the story of 'Grinny'. The discussion of the text they had read and the teachers' skilful questioning led to pupils effectively introducing 'granny' into their story in a variety of ways. One story opened "Granny is not a granny really, but an alien come to take over the world." Immediately questions are raised in the reader's mind about granny's appearance and how she intends to take over the world. Pupils have a good understanding of how to structure and organise their writing for different purposes, for example when writing letters of complaint, play scripts, presenting their views, for example, of foxhunting, writing newspaper articles or accounts. Grammar and punctuation are used accurately and spelling is mostly correct. Pupils learn how to redraft and improve their work, often working with a partner initially. Final pieces of work are well presented using neat, joined handwriting.

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, but is only satisfactory in Year 1, where progress is slower. The scrutiny of work showed examples of Year 1 pupils with special educational needs being given work which was too hard for them, such as writing the end of a story, whereas higher attainers were given the task of putting words into sentences which was too easy. Teachers plan their lessons well to cater for the differing needs of pupils and select texts carefully to maintain pupils' interest. In Year 1 this good planning is not followed through in the teaching, which is why it is only satisfactory. The many texts available are used well and additional support is targeted effectively to support those in most need, so helping pupils to keep up, regain lost ground or be fully included in lessons. Small boards are used effectively to encourage pupils' confidence in their abilities as writers. They work with partners writing their own sentences, which are easily improved, corrected and erased when finished with. The very good lessons in Year 6 were characterised by the brisk pace and high level of challenge, with skilful questioning which required pupils to draw on their knowledge of texts read previously. Marking is a particular strength in Years 3 to 6, with specific targets for improvement so pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve. Pupils respond to teachers' comments, sometimes in writing, as relationships are very good and pupils are comfortable to let teachers know how they feel. This keeps pupils well informed of their rate of progress.

74. Leadership and management of the subject are good and have been successful in the drive to raise standards, particularly in writing. The co-ordinator has a good overview of standards from the thorough analysis of pupils' performance in tests and where the weaknesses lie. Planning is checked, pupils' workbooks scrutinised and progress of individual pupils monitored to ensure sufficient progress is being made. However, no opportunity has been made available for monitoring teaching, although the co-ordinator has been trained in his role as part of school self- evaluation training. Taken overall, good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, particularly in pupils' writing skills.

Literacy across the curriculum.

75. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' literacy skills through work in other subjects. The scrutiny of work in all subjects showed evidence of independent writing in many lessons and minimal use of commercial worksheets. In Year 1, pupils write sentences about their chart on pets in mathematics. In science, pupils write up the results of their investigations and experiments. Having researched information in history, geography and religious education, pupils then write up this information independently. In Year 3 pupils have written about their experiences of getting lost having read the story of the 'Lost Sheep'. In Year 5 pupils have written questions about life in Eritrea which they wish to answer in geography and about aspects of life during World War II in history. Pupils produce designs and write the materials they wish to use in art and design and design and technology and write about composing a melody in music. Pupils use their ICT skills often to help in presenting their written stories and poems.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths:

- the teaching of numeracy skills is good overall, enabling pupils to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6;
- pupils are well motivated and have a keen interest in mathematics;
- assessment is well used to pinpoint weaknesses and plan remedies;
- pupils are good at mental mathematics and have quick recall of multiplication facts.

Areas for improvement:

- computers in classrooms could be used more often in lessons.

76. Standards of work at the end of Year 2 are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are well above average as pupils are achieving well. This is similar to the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.

77. In the 2002 national tests in Year 2, results in mathematics were below average when compared to all schools but well below average when compared with schools with a similar background. The number of pupils who reached the higher level was average when compared to all schools but below average when compared to similar schools. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2002, the results were well above average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. The number of pupils who reached the higher level was well above average when compared to all schools but average when compared to similar schools. The results were similar to those in science and English.

78. Through the effective methods used in the daily numeracy session infant pupils begin to manipulate numbers well in their heads. For example in one lesson the pupils were able to double and half numbers up to 20. Pupils are also able to operate with near doubles like $9+8$ or $8+6$. Pupils have good opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations and in one lesson the pupils were investigating whether it mattered which numbers came first in addition and subtraction sums. They enjoyed the activity and the more able pupils discovered that in subtraction the bigger number must come first or the answer will be a minus number. These pupils understood negative numbers and could plot them on a number line. Most pupils work with large numbers up to 1000. Pupils investigate data with confidence, for example in connection with birthdays, enjoy the investigation and reach a high standard. The pupils use the four rules

of number, and apply them successfully in simple word problem and money sums. Pupils learn and understand an appropriate range of shapes and measures and have developed a good mathematical vocabulary. Pupils recognise three-dimensional shapes such as cylinders, triangular prisms and square based pyramids. They understand simple fractions and can calculate half of 16. They can also use tally charts and simple graphs to present data. Small booster groups are arranged for the lower attaining pupils in order to improve their manipulation of numbers and to remedy weaknesses that the teacher has discovered. This is particularly beneficial to these pupils in raising their attainment and confidence in mathematics.

79. Standards in Year 6 are well above average and pupils continue to practise effective methods for calculating numbers mentally in their daily numeracy lessons. For example they are quickly able to double 40 and use this information to double 39 or add $38+37$. In one class the pupils were involved in investigating difficult sequences of matchstick patterns. The teacher created a mathematical atmosphere in the classroom and the pupils enjoyed the challenging activities. Through the results of their investigations the pupils were able to devise an equation formula to calculate, for example the ninth sequence in the pattern. The school should aim to maintain this high impetus in mathematical investigations. Pupils are able to use the four number operations confidently and accurately to solve word problems and can calculate long multiplication using the grid method. They are familiar with bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. However although they are adept at producing these in the computer suite they do not use the computer in the classroom frequently enough to produce them in mathematics lessons. Pupils work with equivalent fractions and change fractions to decimals or percentages successfully. They are able to multiply and divide decimals by 100 or 1000 by moving the decimal point. Pupils have learnt about co-ordinates and can use them to plot shapes in all four quadrants. They know about a wide range of shapes like the heptagon or a square based pyramid and can calculate the areas of multiple shapes although they are unable to work out the area of a triangle. Using a protractor they can construct acute and obtuse angles accurately. The pupils talk enthusiastically about mathematics and in one discussion they were able to calculate the probability of a six showing when a dice is rolled a certain number of times. Pupils use spreadsheets to load information and produce the results on a suitable graph. In this investigation they were interested in mistakes in data and used a line graph to clearly show that some of the information was incorrect. In a Year 4 lesson seen the pupils were investigating which operation to use when working with word problems. The pupils with special educational needs were well catered for, used an easier worksheet and had extra help from the teacher so that they were fully included in the lesson. This is the usual practice in mathematics lessons so that these pupils make similar progress to other pupils but reach appropriate standards.

80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, although better in Year 2 than Year 1, where there are unsatisfactory features. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and organise numeracy sessions well. In particular the teaching of mental mathematics is good. Basic mathematics is well taught and in Year 6 the pupils have quick, accurate recall of multiplication facts, which supports written calculations. The pupils enjoy mental arithmetic sessions and are enthusiastic about learning methods that make calculations easier, for example doubles and near doubles. Another important strength of teaching is the different levels of work that are planned for the various ability groups in the class and this has an important influence on learning. The marking of work is thorough and effective. The teachers have a warm relationship with their pupils and, as a result, their confidence is bolstered so that they readily tackle problems that they thought were initially too difficult. Often the teachers create a relaxed working atmosphere in the classroom where pupils concentrate and behave well. This makes an important contribution to the high standards. Teachers have high expectations and set work that will challenge all pupils, except in Year 1, where some tasks are too difficult for lower attainers and insufficiently challenging for higher attainers. Homework is regularly set and this makes an important contribution to standards. Unsatisfactory features are poor use of time for learning, when resources are given to each pupil by the teacher and unsatisfactory management of the pupils who talk whilst the teacher is talking. More use could be made of computers in lessons to support pupils learning, as they were often switched on but not in use. Pupils use their numeracy skills satisfactorily to support their learning in, for example, science where they measure amounts and carry out calculations when doing

experiments. In design and technology, pupils use their measuring skills when constructing objects of a specific size and in history when using timelines to calculate the length of time kings and queens reigned.

81. Management of the subject is good. Planning is regularly checked and books are examined each term to monitor standards. However, teaching and learning in the classroom are not monitored but plans are in hand to do this. Assessment of the subject is very good. National Curriculum tests are analysed question by question to see where weaknesses lie in order to remedy them through planning. Optional national tests are used in Years 3 to 5 each year and the results recorded so that pupils' progress can be tracked and difficulties that the pupils might have can be identified and remedied. Mathematics makes a valuable contribution to the social and cultural development of the pupils when they learn to work in groups and realise that challenging mathematics is both intriguing and enjoyable. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

Strengths:

- most of the work is based on investigations;
- pupils are taught to write up their findings in a clear scientific way;
- all aspects of the National Curriculum are well covered;
- pupils are able to talk confidently about scientific topics.

Areas for development:

- the pupils' ICT skills are not used frequently enough when presenting findings of investigations;
- there are no sensors in school like temperature gauges to support the teaching and pupils' learning.

82. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average and achievement is satisfactory. Standards of work in Year 6 are well above average as pupils achieve well. This shows improvement in standards in Year 2 and year 6 since the last inspection. The previous inspection reported that investigative work was a weakness but this is no longer the case. Most lessons are based on investigations and the pupils are taught how to prepare and carry out investigations and present their findings in a scientific way.

83. Teachers' assessments in Year 2 in 2002 showed that standards were below average when compared to all schools but well below average when compared to schools with a similar background. The number of pupils exceeding the expected level was below average when compared to all schools but well below average when compared to schools with a similar intake and were not high enough. The results in science were similar to those in mathematics but below those in reading and writing. In the national tests in Year 6 in 2002, the results were very high when compared to all schools and also when compared to similar schools. The number of pupils exceeding the expected level was above average when compared to all schools but average when compared to schools with pupils from a similar background. Results in science were similar to those in mathematics and English

84. Pupils in Year 2 understand what constitutes a fair test and used this concept when setting up an experiment to see how materials change. They were experimenting with ice cubes to find out in which part of the room the ice would melt first. They made a prediction based on their own knowledge that ice would melt quickest in the warmest place. Every five minutes the pupils checked their ice cubes and made drawings of them. The teacher showed the pupils how to record what they found out. To conclude the experiment the teacher put the cubes back in the freezer to show that this material change was reversible. The water in this experiment was compared to their previous investigation with bread, which was toasted, and the results could not be reversed. In Year 1 where the pupils were investigating "Ourselves" the pupils measured their hands, feet, height and also noted the colour of their hair and eyes to prove scientifically that they had different characteristics. The pupils are involved in a wide range of investigations covering all aspects of the National Curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils investigated the function of the heart and measured their heart beat before and after exercise and found that it beat faster after exercise and discussed why this was so.

85. In Years 3 to 6 science lessons are based on investigations and pupils understand how to present their findings in a scientific way. However the pupils do not use ICT frequently enough when presenting their findings in the form of graphs and charts. In Year 6, pupils investigate materials and in particular how salt dissolves in water. They can set up a fair test ensuring that as far as possible the variables such as salt and water are the same. The pupils co-operate well and record their work accurately in a scientific way. The pupils know that they can recover the salt by evaporating the water. Pupils investigate the properties of glass and decide what makes it suitable for making drinking glasses and cooking dishes to use in an oven. The teacher ensures that the pupils use the correct vocabulary and that they are familiar with words such as "transparent" and "translucent". Pupils know, from their investigations, that it is possible to tell the time using shadows and what conditions encourage microbes to grow and turn food mouldy. Through talking to the pupils in Year 6 it is clear that, besides learning investigative skills they also acquire a wide range of scientific knowledge and how to use it. For example they suggest a fair test to find out which of three tennis balls is the best bouncer. They can point out on a diagram of an investigation why it

is not a fair test because some of the variables are different. When discussing the functions of the heart they can explain a line graph showing a person's pulse rate before during and after exercise. They can explain the scientific difference between a solid, a liquid and a gas. When talking about materials they can explain that these usually change state when heated but that some materials like chocolate will revert back when cooled whereas other materials like wood will not. When discussing healthy living they know that smoking, alcohol and certain drugs are harmful to health. The pupils are conscious of safeguarding the environment. They know that too many cars and discarded rubbish pollute the environment whereas recycling materials, using sustainable energy like windmills and planting trees, safeguard the environment. Year 5 pupils go to the high school to work in the science department and this makes a valuable contribution to the high standards in school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in the lessons either through adult support or different written tasks and as a result they make similar progress to the other pupils, at an appropriate level.

86. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, although better in Year 2 than in Year 1 where there are unsatisfactory features. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good. The teachers effectively teach the pupils how to think and investigate in a scientific way. There is good use of questioning to encourage the pupils to think scientifically. Suitable questions are directed to the less able pupils so that they are included in the lesson. More demanding questions are asked of the more able pupils to stretch their knowledge. Lessons are interesting because the teachers have good knowledge of science and use it to motivate the pupils. The teachers have a caring attitude to their pupils and they respond well. Consequently, behaviour is very good and pupils concentrate on their work. This makes a valuable contribution to the high standards reached. Lessons are well planned and the appropriate equipment is readily available. As a result the work runs smoothly and pupils are able to carry out experiments with no unnecessary difficulties. The only exception is in Year 1, where activities are not well organised and too much time is taken up on the initial activities leaving insufficient time to complete all that was planned in the lesson. The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used and consolidated when using calculations and presenting findings of investigations. There are no sensors in school like temperature gauges which pupils could use to support work in making systematic observations and measurements.

87. Management of the subject is good. There is a comprehensive scheme of work and a clear overall plan so that all the teachers know what topics are being taught. The co-ordinator examines the books each term to check the standard of work being produced. However teaching and learning in the classroom are not monitored to identify any weaknesses in following the planning through in lessons, for example in Year 1. It is already planned to do this in the near future. National Curriculum test results are analysed question by question to see where weaknesses lie so that future planning can remedy them. An assessment is made at the end of each topic and recorded on each pupil's individual record card in order that pupils' progress can be tracked. Science makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual and social development. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths:

- the direct teaching of skills and techniques makes an important contribution to the above average standards;
- pupils experience a wide range of media and techniques;
- the attractive displays around the school encourage pupils' creativity.

Areas for improvement:

- more use could be made of three-dimensional art and in particular the use of clay to extend the work already being done;
- increasing the use of sketchbooks for practising skills and techniques.

88. Only three lessons were observed due to the arrangement of the timetable and judgements are therefore also based on examination of work and discussions with pupils and staff. Standards at the end

of Year 2 are above average whilst achievement is satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 are also above average, but pupils achieve well due to the good teaching and reach well above average standards in aspects of their work. This is similar to that reported at the previous inspection.

89. The reason for the improvement in standards at the end of Year 2 is that the pupils are introduced to a good variety of media and techniques and there is much direct teaching of skills. The pupils are effectively taught how to mix their own shades of colour and use this skill in painting some attractive self-portraits. The pupils also use a computer program to generate portraits of themselves and this is a good learning experience. Pupils are taught to observe objects closely when making observational drawings, using pencils of different quality. For example, when investigating textures in Year 2, pupils visited the local church and made good quality drawings of different aspects of the building to help in producing a collage. They used good shading techniques to record a variety of textures of brickwork, the windows and the doors. Pupils acquire good knowledge of the work of famous artists and create attractive pictures in the style of Paul Klee using subdued colours like brown and yellow. These make an attractive display and enhance the creative atmosphere of the school. Pupils also collaborate well to make large pictures for communal displays, such as in Year 1 where the pupils, with support, painted a scene from Little Red Riding Hood. Pupils have experience of various media including charcoal, pastel and soft pencils, for instance when they create portraits of themselves and the results are of an average standard.

90. Standards are above average at the end of Y6 because skills are taught directly, sketchbooks are used to make draft drawings and the pupils are introduced to a wide range of art activities. For example, in a Year 4 lesson seen the pupils were creating pictures, which were influenced by a visit to Chester to study Roman artefacts. Some pupils were using mosaics made of coloured card to create pictures of, for instance, a Roman soldier. In Year 6 pupils used their observational skills and sketch books well to make initial drafts of their pictures, such as the sketches of objects that they could see through the windows. They were studying the style of David Hockney and used a piece of drawing paper to practise the techniques he used. Better use could be made of the sketchbooks throughout the school to practise skills like shading with soft pencils and show pupils' progress over time. Pupils made some remarkable patterns out of geometric shapes to form flowers and beautiful pictures of entwining flowers using bright colours inspired by the work of William Morris. When Year 6 studied the Victorians, they painted unique pictures of country scenes using watercolours built around a suitable postcard. This work is of a particularly high standard, as pupils used their observational skills well and matched the paint closely with the original colours. Pupils make beautiful containers out of clay, which they glaze and fire. However not enough use is made of pottery for three-dimensional work through the school. Pupils successfully create pictures using a computer. The school uses resources at a local high school and artists in residence to enhance the provision and standards. On display in the school corridors are large pictures painted on a canvas frame of beautiful arrays of flowers. These pictures were created by the pupils with help from the local high school art department and greatly add to the creative atmosphere of the school. The pupils created beautiful tiles with a variety of designs on them during a ceramics workshop and these make eye-catching displays in the school. Pupils are familiar with art from other cultures, such as Aboriginal art and Indian patterns which form part of their studies. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are fully involved in all art activities and make similar progress to other pupils because of the good support they receive.

91. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Most teachers have an enthusiastic knowledge of art, teach skills confidently and these make a significant contribution to the standards. Teachers encourage the use of sketchbooks to make draft drawings but these are not used frequently enough to practise skills like shading. Teachers have a good relationship with their pupils in Years 2 to 6 and motivate them well. As a result, the pupils enjoy art and behaviour is very good. Most teachers have high expectations and regularly evaluate the work done with the help of the pupils. All these aspects contribute to the good standards in the subject. In Year 1, the slow pace of the lesson introduction and inappropriate remarks in response to pupils' answers were unsatisfactory features, which reduced the overall effectiveness of the lesson on portraits. Good use is made of support staff to encourage the less able pupils.

92. Management of the subject is satisfactory. There is a good quality scheme of work in place and a clear overall plan in order that staff know what to teach and when. There is a suitable assessment system in place and pupils' work is scrutinised so that pupils' progress and standards can be checked. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- pupils are taught effective methods for designing and making objects;
- pupils are introduced to a wide range of techniques for making models;
- pupils are effectively introduced to food technology.

Areas for improvement:

- pupils need more experience of techniques to control models;
- pupils could develop further their experience of mechanisms;

93. It was only possible to observe a small number of lessons during the inspection and therefore judgements are made mainly through photographs and plans of work completed previously and discussions with pupils and staff. Standards of work at the end of Year 2 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. At the end of Year 6 standards are above average and achievement is good. Standards have been maintained in Year 2 and have improved by the end of Year 6 since the previous inspection.

94. From an early age pupils are taught effective methods for designing and making objects. They are encouraged to think about the model to be made before drawing a plan and listing the materials required. The pupils then learn the necessary skills to make the object, decorate it to give it an attractive finish before making an evaluation of the finished product. Year 2 pupils, for example, made lovely animal stick puppets during a puppet workshop. The puppets were carefully cut from card and painted with vivid colours. The evaluation sheets were made in the shape of the puppet and were added to the delightful display of which the pupils were justifiably proud. The pupils successfully designed and made Joseph's 'dreamcoat' out of paper and decorated it with geometric shapes. Other pupils designed the 'dreamcoat' on a computer, prior to making it out of fabric. Pupils experience food technology. For example in Year 1 they designed and made a fruit snack. When they had eaten the snacks the pupils gave them a favourable evaluation.

95. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils have a wider experience of designing and making objects and use good quality planning and evaluation sheets. In Year 4, for example, the pupils make attractive pop-up books which include shepherds, kings and the stable and tell the Christmas Story. The teachers take advantage of resources outside the school to enhance the standards in the subject. For example, Year 6 visited Bunbury Mill and made some interesting wooden models of cranes previously used at the mill to hoist up bags of flour. These are good quality models. The school has good links with the local high school and uses their specialist facilities to enrich the curriculum. For example the pupils design a mechanism to make a variety of toys move, one being a butterfly which repeatedly lands on a flower. They then go to the high school workshop, work with an advanced skills teacher and make the toys using a series of cams and rods successfully, which operate inside a cardboard box. However, the pupils could extend their skills by using other mechanisms, like hydraulic tubes with plungers to make even more interesting moving models. In food technology, pupils successfully investigate biscuits and healthy sandwiches, which they design, make and eat. Year 5 pupils take their biscuit designs to the high school and make the biscuits according to the recipe on their design sheets. Attractive boxes of appropriate size and shape are then designed and made in which to put the biscuits to make an attractive present. Pupils have successfully made electric models, such as cars. The pupils also have experience of using textiles and Year 6 pupils

have plans to go to the high school to design and make a pair of slippers using the textile workshop. Literacy and numeracy skills are used and consolidated in lessons, such as when pupils use accurate measurements in constructing models and when writing their account of activities, but there is little evidence of ICT being used to generate designs. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in all lessons and make similar progress to the other pupils due to the good support they receive in the classroom.

96. Very little teaching was observed during the inspection because of the arrangement of the timetable but the other evidence indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Basic design and making skills are more effectively taught from Year 2 upwards. The pupils learn effective methods to tackle design and technology problems. The teachers encourage the pupils to use design and evaluation sheets so that they need to think clearly about the models they are making. Pupils investigate objects to see how they are made, for example cardboard boxes to put biscuits in. The pupils learn important skills like how to score cardboard so that it will bend neatly and how to accurately and safely use a saw.

97. The management of the subject is good and makes an important contribution to the standards attained. There is a good quality scheme of work in place and a clear overall plan so that the teachers know what to teach and when. There is a suitable assessment system in operation so that pupils' progress can be tracked. The co-ordinator examines the work completed to check the standards achieved, but has not observed any lessons as yet. The subject makes a worthwhile contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

GEOGRAPHY

Strengths:

- effective teaching methods often lead to interesting lessons.

Areas for improvement:

- insufficient depth of coverage of geographical topics in Year 1
- long gaps between teaching units of work lead to a lack of continuity in teaching, prevent pupils building systematically on their knowledge and skills and affect overall standards.

98. Standards are average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents a decline in overall standards due to insufficient depth of coverage of topics in Year 1, and gaps of up to one year between teaching units of work in Years 3 to 6, which hinders pupils' the systematic development of pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language make the same rate of progress as their classmates.

99. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of the regions of the British Isles. They explain the cycle of the seasons and compare them with the seasons in holiday resorts. In describing contrasting areas, they identify the key features and discuss the similarities as well as the differences from their own locality. They apply their studies to places in Ireland, Llandudno and the tropical island of Lanzarote. In Year 1, pupils plan their route to school, identify physical features on the way and study a map of the area around the school but there is no systematic development of geographical skills, which can be built on in Year 2.

100. Year 6 pupils show a sound knowledge of rivers, their effects on the landscape, the environment and the local economy. They understand the natural phases of the water cycle and its effects on the climate of The United Kingdom. They study the nearby town of Bunbury, successfully researching its location close to a river where a water mill was constructed to process the crops grown in the locality. Pupils complete detailed maps of their own locality, building on their studies in Year 4 where they examined the topic of settlements and the factors affecting decisions on where to locate villages. Pupils research the geographical environments of countries and villages on the continent of Africa (Eritrea) and India

(Chembakolli). Their studies involve work that compares the life in these countries and villages with that of Frodsham and increases their knowledge satisfactorily.

101. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen was good, but because of the long gaps between units of work, which hinders the systematic development of pupils' skills and knowledge, overall teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Teachers focus well on the key objectives for the lessons. They explain points clearly, so that the pupils understand. However, some of these explanations are too long and the opportunity is not always taken for pupils to become involved in the more practical aspects of the subject. Teachers select exciting teaching materials that motivate the pupils and engage their interest, prompting them to ask questions and to take part in discussions. In Year 2, the teacher introduced the task to research into the Isle of Struay by quoting from Katie Morag's book about the island. The teacher referred to the pupils' recent work when they created imaginary islands using ICT. This gave the pupils a good insight into facilities available on an island by analysing illustrations of the town. Year 3 pupils were surprised when their teacher dressed in a sari and took on the role of a visitor from Chembakolli. She encouraged them to ask her questions about life in the village. They quickly engaged themselves in the activity and were shocked to hear that she had to walk two miles to the village well everyday to collect water. The pupils were able to make accurate comparative judgements about life in Frodsham and life in Chembakolli.

102. The lessons observed during the inspection were well planned and very good relationships existed between teachers and pupils. Teaching effectively promotes independent research and pupils' abilities to use maps to locate physical features, settlements and to plan routes. Pupils, including those with special education needs, with English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils, are challenged to write detailed geographical accounts about land, climate and people. This is because teachers generally have appropriate expectations of these pupils in their classes and they make satisfactory progress.

103. Currently the headteacher is managing the subject satisfactorily in the absence of a permanent subject co-ordinator. The compilation of newspaper articles and photographs of geographical events, such as unusual weather and volcanic eruptions, have enhanced the sound level of resourcing. The school makes good use of loan services to provide artefacts and books. For instance, pupils were able to handle kitchen utensils and carriers used by villagers in Eritrea. This gives them very good opportunities to explore their uses and make comparisons with kitchen utensils in their homes.

104. The school acknowledges the long gaps between teaching units of work are unsatisfactory and made some adjustments to the planning during the inspection to ensure that geography is taught more regularly throughout the juniors in future, to enable pupils to use and develop their geographical skills more fully. Taken overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

Strengths:

- knowledgeable teachers in most year groups communicating their enthusiasm for the subject;
- the challenging nature of much of the work set;
- the teaching of the skills of research and enquiry.

Areas for improvement:

- the teaching and pupils' learning in Year 1.

105. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, current standards of work are average in Year 2, partly due to the time allocated to literacy and numeracy, but also because pupils make a slow start in Year 1, where no research work is recorded in pupils' books and little indication of what has been taught. This represents a fall in the standards by the end of Year 2. Current standards of work in Year 6 are above average and have been maintained. Pupils make good progress from Year 2 upwards and achieve well, but achievement in Year 1 is only

satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make the same rate of progress as their peers.

106. By the end of Year 2, pupils confidently compare photographs and illustrations of present day life with those of days beyond living memory. They observe the features displayed in photographs and order them according to contemporary life and the life and times of days gone by. Year 2 pupils show a good appreciation of the lives and achievements of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. They make notes about the conditions in hospitals during the Crimean War and frame detailed questions to ask Florence Nightingale. Many children write accurate, legible accounts of Florence Nightingale's life and pupils with special educational needs accurately sequence typical sentences about her to create an accurate biography.

107. Pupils build well on these skills in Years 3 to 6 as they study British and local history and other civilisations. They develop good enquiry skills as they draw on both primary and secondary sources, using pictures, text, artefacts, literature and the Internet. A strength of their learning is the way Year 6 pupils examine photographs and illustrations to show a good understanding of, for instance, what it was like in the time of the Ancient Greeks. They know that amphora and kyrater were kitchen utensils and that key tasks in their lives involved fishing, agriculture, spinning and weaving. Year 4 pupils are knowledgeable about the differences between 'invaders' and 'settlers' and they write confidently and knowledgeably about the influence of Celts and Romans on the British Isles.

108. Year 5 pupils put themselves into the roles of people from a different age. For instance, they play the role of evacuees during World War II and write authentic accounts of their lives using replicas of historical artefacts and 'bill-boards' to capture the mood of the time. The inclusion of ration book covers; information about Air Raid precautions and 'Dig for Victory' slogans creates an atmosphere of empathy that underpins the production of newspaper broadsheets and 'Dig for Victory' poems. Year 3 study the times of the Ancient Egyptians and know about Tutankhamen and Howard Carter's work. They develop their factual knowledge by studying pictorial evidence and develop accurate historical vocabulary.

109. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but the inspection of teachers' planning and the scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and most identify interesting and challenging ways to present it to their classes. For instance, Year 6 pupils, examine photographs of Victorian times in order to come to a decision about the lives of both rich and poor families. They are able to scan reference books and use the Internet before coming to conclusions about the reliability of historical data. There are good levels of discussion, collaboration and argument between pupils before they make an historical assertion based on the evidence they have found. The teacher enters into the discussions and questions pupils to help them develop their thinking. The lesson was successful because of the availability of a good range of historical sources enabling pupils to form opinions and make judgements. There is no recorded evidence of any work in history in Year 1.

110. Other good teaching strategies include the practice of challenging pupils to organise personal research studies then deliver a lecture to the class. Such activities and discussions promote pupils' speaking and listening skills well. The headteacher is currently managing the subject satisfactorily. There are sufficient books and adequate documentation (both original and replicas), that add to the authenticity of the pupils' studies. However, although the school utilizes the LEAs loan service, the number of, for example, Victorian artefacts, was not representative of all aspects of life from that period. Taken overall, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths:

- teachers are secure in their subject knowledge;
- the computer suite is used well for teaching skills which can be followed up in the classroom;

- there is evidence of computers being used to support pupils' learning in most subjects.

Areas for improvement:

- gathering large groups of pupils round one computer when explaining how to use programs is not effective when teaching new skills;

111. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and rise above average by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were average. The creation of a computer suite, although small, and the appointment of a technician to maintain the equipment have improved the resources and the Government's target of one computer for every eight pupils has already been met. Training available to all teachers has been undertaken and this has been effective in increasing teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject, which has had a positive effect on standards. In a significant number of lessons, computers are used to support learning and reinforce skills learned previously. Discussions with pupils revealed many have computers at home and so are able to practise their skills further and this helps their learning in school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well over time in the school, although progress is better in Years 3 to 6 where more adults help in lessons. Additional support from parents makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6, for example, such support in Year 3 enabled pupils with special educational needs to complete the tasks successfully through one-to-one support.

112. By the end of Year 2 pupils are confident in using a keyboard and type in their work successfully, already realising that it is easier to edit their work on a computer than by hand. They use their skills, for example, to present their favourite poem for display. In history, pupils use information about the local area and its population to create a simple database. They use CD-ROMs to access information about topics being studied. In mathematics, they present data in the form of pictograms and bar charts, for example hair colour. They use the digital camera to support their work in art, photographing aspects of local buildings and use graphics programs to create attractive pictures and patterns.

113. By the end of Year 6, pupils talk confidently about how they find information they need using the Internet, send and receive e-mails or order goods off the Internet. They consider themselves to be computer literate. Homework set for pupils in Year 4 involved a topic on animals and many pupils have used the Internet to find information and pictures, leading to good quality work being produced. Pupils use books to find information needed and classify it to create a class database, for example, Year 3 pupils were seen adding to their database about animals, which they successfully saved onto their disk. Year 6 pupils entered test data into a spreadsheet and confidently used a formula to calculate totals, then calculated average scores. Year 5 pupils can control model traffic lights by carefully planning the next stage in the sequence of events and feeding it into the computer. They improve and refine their instructions when the traffic lights do not work in the correct sequence. Pupils know that ICT devices can be used to monitor and measure external events, for example the school has a weather station on the roof, which sends information to a computer in the library. Pupils can monitor temperature and wind speed, and produce the information in a range of graphs. They can copy and turn shapes and patterns to create designs for wrapping paper. Word processing skills are well developed, with pupils able to change the colour and size of fonts to produce, for example, attractive posters for school events. Multimedia presentations are included as part of the work for the summer term in Year 6, but discussion with teachers indicate previous examples to be of good quality.

114. The teaching and learning are good overall, but better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2 where they are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy using computers and teachers plan well to include their use in many lessons. The key features of good lessons in Years 3 to 6 are the clear explanations of how to use different programs and because teachers are confident and understand the programs being used they can inform pupils of likely problems, so pupils are not upset when the unexpected happens. Effective prompt sheets, such as seen with Year 5 pupils, are helpful should pupils forget the next step in accessing the program and enable pupils to work independently and resolve problems for themselves. Lessons are organised well, so that half the pupils in each class use the suite at a time. This gives pupils a computer

each so maximising the time available for learning. The weaker aspect of teaching is where large groups of pupils are gathered round one computer, while the teacher demonstrates how to use a program. It is difficult for some pupils to see clearly and understand fully, which can lead to problems when working independently. The school does not have an interactive whiteboard, which would remedy this weakness. When tasks set are too challenging, for example, in Year 2 where pupils were retelling a story in their own words, but a significant number did not have sufficient ICT capability to complete the task successfully, teaching is satisfactory. Pupils did not make as much progress as they could have done as the task was not carefully matched to the next stage in their learning.

115. Computers are used in most subjects. In English, pupils type in their work, edit it and present it attractively. Many different graphs and charts, such as pie charts, block and line graphs are produced to support work in science and mathematics. Research, for example into aspects of different periods in history, into climatic conditions and ways of life in other countries in geography and into other religions in religious education support pupils' learning well in these subjects. Using computers, they move items of furniture and plan where to position different pieces of furniture in a room, to get a feel for the space available with different sized pieces. Programs are available to enable pupils to explore different sounds in music and begin to make simple compositions. In art, pupils produce a range of attractive graphic pictures, some in the style of famous artists such as Mondrian, others based on their own ideas. Whilst there is sufficient evidence of the use of computers in most subjects, further use could be made of ICT to support work in mathematics, and in science where no sensors are available.

116. The subject is well lead and managed by the headteacher, who offers very good support to all staff, including teaching assistants, has good knowledge of the programs in use and of ICT in general. The developments in the subject have been well planned and the need for a rolling programme for replacing computers identified as a priority for the new headteacher. Manageable assessment procedures have been implemented and records of pupils' work show clear evidence of the good progress over time in the school. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

MUSIC

Strengths

- most pupils enjoy musical activities and many choose to learn to play instruments;
- there are good opportunities to be involved in school productions and visits to concerts.

Areas for improvement

- pupils' knowledge of famous composers and their works is very limited;
- developing pupils' skills in composition.

117. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Music has been identified as a priority in the current school development plan and appropriate steps have been taken to raise standards, through revising the subject policy and programme of work. The updated programme is being phased in, but the full effect of this is not yet evident in standards in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in lessons and make the same rate of progress as their peers. The school has not identified any pupils as being potentially talented, although there are some among those playing instruments such as flutes and keyboards. In discussions with these pupils they reported not being challenged sufficiently in some lessons as they have more understanding of musical notation than others, and have to wait for them to catch up, but over time they achieve well because of their tuition in small groups.

118. Pupils enjoy singing, evident in assemblies as well as in lessons. Teachers make good use of their own voices as a resource and pupils respond well, following their example. By the end of Year 2, pupils can maintain a steady beat and successfully play on the first beat of a bar, or on three of the four beats in a bar. They have a sound knowledge of a range of instruments and most hold them correctly when

playing. They select appropriate instruments for playing long or short notes when performing different pieces. Their early experiences in composing their own music and producing graphic notation have been limited in the past and their knowledge and understanding in this aspect of the subject are weaker, because teachers have been less confident in their teaching of composition skills. The revised programme of work should help to remedy this weakness.

119. By the end of Year 6, pupils begin to move naturally to music being played, showing their interest and enjoyment. They can sing two part songs with good voice control, clear diction and they successfully maintain their own part. They can add an ostinato using tuned percussion instruments to enhance their performance. All pupils play recorders in Year 5 and this is a good introduction to understanding and reading musical notation for those not playing instruments at an earlier stage. Pupils have a good knowledge of different types of music, such as classical, jazz, blues and mood music, but their knowledge of famous composers and their works is very limited. In discussions with Year 6 pupils, the only composers they could name were Mozart and Beethoven and they could not name any pieces of music they had composed. Music is played as pupils enter the hall for assemblies each day, with reference made to this, but this is not as effective as it should be in raising pupils' awareness of different composers. Composition skills are also weaker as previous experiences have been limited. Pupils could not recall having recorded their compositions for others to play, although they have made up their own tunes on recorders using notes they have learned.

120. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons involve a good balance between listening and performing, with instruments used often. A good lesson with Year 5 pupils was based on secure subject knowledge and led at a brisk pace. Consequently, in the time available pupils learned the two parts in a new song, worked in small groups to explore the most effective ostinato to add and by the end of the lesson performed the whole song. The teachers' high expectations of work and effort kept the lesson moving at a good pace and sustained pupils' interest. The organisation of pupils into mixed gender groups was done quickly, with no fuss. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in other musical activities, such as school productions, visits to concerts and through visitors to the school, for example a steel drumming band. Through activities such as these, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

121. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Steps have been taken to raise standards as already mentioned and the co-ordinator has a secure overview of standards and most of the areas for improvement. The implementation of the revised programme of work is due to be monitored by the co-ordinator towards the end of the summer term. Taken overall, satisfactory progress has been made since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths:

- standards are above average by the end of Year 6;
- boys and girls respond well to physical activity.

Areas for improvement:

- ensure sufficient challenge for all pupils in lessons;
- make full use of the outdoor facilities available.

122. In Year 2, standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age and their achievement is satisfactory. Standards rise above average in Year 6 as pupils achieve well. The teaching of games' skills to pupils in Years 5 and 6 is good, which along with pupils' participation in extra-curricular activities enables them to make good progress in developing their skills and techniques. Standards have been maintained in Year 2 and have improved in Year 6 since the previous inspection, as the subject has been a priority for improvement in the last year.

123. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 2 move with sound balance and control, using space well as they form bridges and balances. They work well with a partner to create symmetrical movements, enthusiastically taking turns to lead and follow as they build up their routines. However, too much time is devoted to evaluating other children's performances; consequently, they do not fully extend their repertoires to include contrasts in speed and changes of direction.

124. Year 6 pupils enjoy playing a game based on hockey. They play competitively and fairly according to the rules, showing satisfactory skills in ball control when receiving and passing the ball to a team mate. More able pupils read the game well, being able to regain the ball from opponents and move into a space to receive a pass to threaten their opponent's goal. Year 5 pupils quickly achieve accurate skills using racquets to control small balls as they practise their tennis skills. They work hard in pairs in activities that include throwing to a partner who hits the ball back for the thrower to make a catch. They keep the activities going and change positions to ensure that both pupils have opportunities to develop their skills of control and accuracy. More able pupils work together well in groups, but the activities do not always extend their skills or challenge them to achieve a higher performance, especially for pupils potentially talented in sport. Teachers plan well and work hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language take a full and active part in lessons. Boys and girls respond equally well in all lessons.

125. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6. In lessons seen in Years 4, 5 and 6, teachers enjoy very good relationships with their classes. They give clear and enthusiastic explanations and so the pupils' responses and behaviour are good. Satisfactory teaching, for instance in Year 2, resulted when pupils included highly skilled stretching movements as they moved into a balance, but the opportunity to demonstrate these skills was not provided and consequently other children did not incorporate this movement into their own repertoires. In satisfactory lessons in Years 3 to 6, pupils are not fully challenged to increase their skills of catching and throwing when the games lessons take place in the hall because inclement weather threatens and pupils do not self-evaluate their performance or that of other team players. Consequently, the progress pupils make is limited to the consolidation of existing skills. The size of the lower play area restricts the opportunities for pupils to engage in open play in their games of hockey. More use of the upper play area, which is larger, would be beneficial.

126. There has been a good improvement since the previous report, especially in organising swimming at the local baths. This ensures that, by the end of Year 4, almost all pupils achieve the minimum distance requirement. There is good provision for adventurous activities with the oldest pupils attending a residential course at the local authority's outdoor education centre.

127. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development through the many clubs that meet out of school times and the involvement of children in Country Dance festivals and Maypole dancing. The involvement of the school in inter-school sports competitions ensures that the more able and potentially talented pupils have opportunities to work at higher levels. However, these pupils need to be given tasks that are more challenging in lessons. The curriculum is well organised and resourced and sports coaches add to the quality of skills taught to the pupils. However, although there is a manageable and agreed system to record what pupils can do, this is not fully in place. Monitoring of teaching is not systematically organised as yet, but there are plans for this in the summer term as part of the school's self-evaluation procedures. Overall leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths:

- teachers in Years 3 to 6 plan meaningful and suitable tasks that make the subject relevant and interesting and which enable pupils to reach above average standards;
- pupils have opportunities to discuss issues that impinge on their daily lives.

Areas for improvement:

- lessons planned in Year 1 are above the pupils' levels of understanding; teaching methods are not exciting and pupils sit and listen to adults talking for far too long. This leaves much to be covered in Year 2.

128. Standards of work are average in Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. In Year 6 pupils attain standards above those set out in the locally agreed syllabus as they make good progress and achieve well overall throughout the junior classes. Standards by the end of Year 6 have been maintained since the previous inspection, but by the end of Year 2 have declined due to the time allocated to literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make the same rate of progress as their peers as additional support is provided by their teachers or teaching assistants.

129. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that God is a person who loves and cares for them. They develop their relationship with Him through prayer, song and Biblical readings. Children involve themselves in stories taken from the life of Jesus through song and drama. They know that Baptism is a special ceremony when people become a member of God's family and that weddings can be a Christian ceremony. They take part in such pageants as the Harvest Festival and learn about the main events in the Easter Story.

130. In Years 3 to 6, pupils study Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity. They build on previous knowledge to form their own opinion about Jesus, gaining deeper insights into His life and messages through the study of Christian festivals and ceremonies. By Year 6, many pupils have a good knowledge of events in Old Testament books such as Genesis and Exodus. They have good knowledge of many Jewish festivals including The Passover and the Festival of Light. Older pupils reflect on the messages associated with religious ceremonies. They study the idea of prayer, reflecting on the Moslem belief that prayer is 'To be alone with God'. They identify links between the Bible, Torah and Qur'an, realising that they are sacred books because they contain the words of God [Allah]. Year 6 pupils study the emotions they experience and realise that they can make promises to both themselves and to others.

131. Overall, teaching and learning are good, but better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and two, where they are satisfactory overall, but with unsatisfactory features in some Year 1 lessons. Although unsatisfactory teaching is based on secure knowledge, when a story is being analysed with the children to gain insights into the messages it contains, too much detail is included and pupils become confused. Teaching methods are insufficiently varied, for instance, where pupils sit and listen to the parable of The Prodigal Son for thirty minutes. After telling the story briefly, pupils could have acted out the role of the people in the story and developed an understanding of the feelings that the father, the prodigal son and his brothers would experience as the story unfolds. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is always good and occasionally it is excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan well and their initial explanations are concise and clear. This gives pupils a good introduction to the topic. Pupils receive good guidance in how to record their understanding of the theme of 'New Life'. Video clips are used effectively to give introductory insights into the importance Muslims place on prayer.

132. In Year 6, a cartoon of 'Jimmy Cricket' makes an excellent introduction to the theme of 'Conscience and Temptation', breaking down pupils' reservations and creating the right environment for them to discuss times when they can be tempted and how their conscience can be used to guide them to choose the correct action. There are very good relationships in these lessons and very good use of such techniques as collaborative discussion and role-play enables pupils to explore their own thoughts and ideas in a secure atmosphere. Lessons end with a reflective moment where, for example, pupils examine their own attitudes to prayer, and relate to the knowledge they have acquired. For instance, one Year 4 child says that 'Lent is a time to help us draw close to God and do something special for Him'. Year 6 pupils have excellent opportunities to read from The New Testament about Jesus' temptations in the desert. In all lessons, candles are lit as a focal point during Bible readings or time for reflection to highlight the

important moment. Pupils listen respectfully to the readings, which correspond to the time in the Christian year at the beginning of Lent.

133. Good use is made of visits to the local Parish Church of St. Laurence and pupils have opportunities to think deeply about the contrasting approaches to Christianity. However, although pupils visit a Jewish museum they do not visit a synagogue. Although the school is able to borrow religious sacred artefacts, to have their own sets would give them greater flexibility in their planning and offer pupils a greater understanding of the ceremonies and symbolism of world religions.

134. The recently appointed co-ordinator has already started to influence the development of the subject, and has drawn together a draft long-term plan of excellent quality. Although she does not have opportunities to observe teaching she monitors lesson planning and makes comments and suggestions. Current leadership and management of the subject are good, but not yet fully evident in standards being attained by pupils. Taken overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.