

INSPECTION REPORT

ST CLARE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lache, Chester

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111311

Headteacher: Mrs Maureen Tolefree

Reporting inspector: Mrs Bernice Magson
18143

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th March 2003

Inspection number: 247105

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior school

School category: Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hawthorn Rd
Lache
Chester

Postcode: CH4 8HX

Telephone number: 01244 682294

Fax number: 01244 682294

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr F Titley

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18143	Bernice Magson	Registered inspector	English Art and design English as an additional language Educational inclusion	The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
8988	Joan Cross	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare, health and safety Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Partnership with parents and carers
3240	David Wilkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
17685	Linda Spooner	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science History Geography Music	

The inspection contractor was:

Primary Associates Limited
Suite 13
West Lancashire Technology Management Centre
Moss Lane View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TN

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
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?	5
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	9
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Clare's is a Catholic primary school situated in the Lache district of Chester catering for pupils from the ages of four to eleven years. It serves an area of some family stress and social deprivation. There are 121 pupils on roll, including 21 children in the reception class. In most year groups there are more boys than girls, but with similar numbers overall. The school is smaller than most primary schools and has fewer pupils than at the last inspection. Almost all pupils are of white British origin and there are none with English as an additional language. Pupil turnover is of modest proportions. One third of pupils have a free school meals entitlement, above the national average. 19 per cent of pupils have special educational needs (SEN), mostly with learning or behavioural difficulties. This is a below average figure. One pupil has a statement for their special educational needs. Staff turnover has been high over the past two years, with only one teacher in post since the last inspection. Attainment on entry to the school is normally below that expected in most areas of learning, although sometimes a little better in personal and social skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education for its pupils. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they are achieving expected standards in the majority of subjects and in comparison with pupils in similar schools achieve above average results in English and mathematics. However, there is considerable underachievement by some pupils in Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, and throughout the school in information and communication technology (ICT). Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features, especially for pupils in Years 1 and 6. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics are above the national average by the end of Year 6;
- Leadership and management in literacy and numeracy are effective in raising standards;
- Nurtures positive attitudes to learning and respect for others, encourages good behaviour and provides good opportunities for personal growth, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Encourages parents to be involved in the life of the school, enabling them to make a contribution to their children's learning;
- The extra-curricular provision for pupils is excellent.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by Year 2, and in ICT by Years 2 and 6;
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning needs to be more rigorous;
- Assessment procedures and their use;
- Behaviour management of some pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a satisfactory rate of improvement since the last inspection in 1997. A good effort has been made to address the previous key issues, although some further actions are still needed. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen, although it is not yet eradicated. There is improved provision in ICT and teachers are more confident when delivering this subject. Excellent extra-curricular activities are now available for pupils at lunchtime and after school and very good improvement has also been achieved in the cultural development of pupils where provision is now good. In Year 2 standards in science are judged to be lower than they were in 1997. There has been a steep decline in attendance over time, and currently it is well below average levels.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	B	D	C	B	well above average A above average B
mathematics	C	E	D	B	Average C below average D
science	C	E	D	C	well below average E

Standards for the current Year 6 pupils are average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained in all three core subjects for Year 6 pupils. Over a five-year period there has been good improvement in science for eleven-year-olds and a gradual improvement in English and mathematics. The trend of improvement in all subjects tested is in line with the national trend. Small numbers in some cohorts make comparisons in attainment difficult, as one child can represent up to 10 per cent. In the 2002 national tests Year 6 pupils achieved average standards in English and below average standards in mathematics and science. There was little difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Fewer pupils achieved the higher level five than nationally. Significant factors restricted the progress of this cohort. From the reception year they experienced discontinuity in their learning, as a result of many staff movements. Several pupils were identified with complex special educational needs and a high number of pupils had high rates of absence. Nevertheless, they achieved satisfactory progress over time and compared to pupils in similar schools, standards were above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Inspectors judge that the predicted targets for the current Year 6 cohort will be achieved and increased numbers of pupils are on line to achieve the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, and throughout school achieve good progress when they are given support in lessons. Standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are in line with expected levels in all other subjects except ICT, where they are below average. However, standards are improving in ICT, as more frequent opportunities develop to use computers following the increase in provision.

Since the last inspection the attainment of children on entry has declined. It is below expected levels in most areas of learning, although personal and social skills are sometimes better. Children make satisfactory progress overall, in the reception class. A comparison of national averages indicates that standards in Year 2 are improving over time in reading and mathematics, but have fallen in writing. However, in 2002, Year 2 pupils attained standards well below average in reading, writing and mathematics both in national and similar school comparisons. Progress for some pupils was unsatisfactory because of high levels of absence. This small cohort also included one third of pupils with special educational needs. In Year 2 girls are performing better in national tests than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a greater gender difference than nationally. Inspectors judge that standards for the current Year 2 cohort are below expected levels in all areas tested. A minority of pupils has behavioural problems, which are restricting their performance and also interrupting others. Standards in English and mathematics are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection, but have declined in science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are usually enthusiastic in lessons.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well both in classrooms and around the school. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to one another and to their teachers. They show respect and are polite. They enjoy being involved in decision making in the School Council.
Attendance	Poor. Well below average attendance of some pupils is restricting their rates of progress. A small number of pupils are persistently late to school.

Positive relationships between pupils and their teachers are encouraging pupils to improve their learning. The school is effective in promoting racial harmony.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and has some good features. Since the previous inspection teaching has improved as there are fewer unsatisfactory lessons, but there are also fewer lessons of a very good quality. However, in five out of ten lessons teaching was good or better. The teaching of basic skills is good in the reception class and children rapidly acquire early reading and number skills. In most lessons teachers plan a satisfactory range of activities to suit the needs of pupils of differing abilities. Most teachers share the lesson focus with pupils at the start of lessons so that they understand what it is they are to learn, and then as the lesson ends they reflect on progress. On occasions there is no written planned guidance and adults working in the classrooms are uncertain about what groups and individuals are to learn. In better lessons where teachers have made accurate assessments of pupils' capabilities and set challenging learning targets, pupils achieve very well. Some teachers negotiate good individual learning targets with their class, such as in Year 1, where pupils know clearly what they should learn and the small steps they must take to achieve progress. This good target setting is not consistent across the school. Teaching is of a consistently good quality in literacy but varies widely in numeracy. However, all teachers effectively extend literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge across the curriculum to consolidate learning. In unsatisfactory lessons there is a lack of pace, challenge and low teacher expectations. Whilst there are good examples of marking, this is an area for development in teaching. Pupils continue to make common errors because they are not advised about how they can improve. Some marking is merely ticks or words of praise, and many pupils are uncertain about the criteria, which determine good work. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory but improves when additional learning support is available. Outside specialist agencies give good support.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements in full. There is a weakness in the balance of time, which affects some foundation subjects.
Provision for pupils with	Satisfactory overall. Pupils achieve well when additional support is available. Good care is taken to ensure that pupils' individual learning

special educational needs	needs are met.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good and a strength of the school. Good provision is made for personal development in most subjects. Provision is enriched through an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and good links with local schools and the community. The school has effective procedures for promoting racial harmony.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Provision for the care and welfare of pupils is good. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The statutory assessment of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory, but other assessment procedures are limited in their effectiveness, except in English. The use of assessment in teacher planning and in tracking pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.

The school has a good partnership with parents. Parents have very positive views about the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher ensures the aims and values of the school are fostered effectively in a caring catholic environment, but because of high levels of staff turnover she is still establishing a cohesive staff team through which decision making can be focused and effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Roles and responsibilities are developing in strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The school's overview of its work is too narrow and is insufficiently rigorous to bring about rapid improvements in pupils' standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Teaching and support staff are deployed effectively and resources are used well to support and extend learning.

Staffing, accommodation, and learning resources are satisfactory overall. Governors apply the principles of best value effectively; for example, in researching for the most appropriate equipment, when improving provision for ICT. Developments in outdoor play areas offer a good range of learning experiences and are popular with pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school; • They feel comfortable about approaching the school; • The school is well led and managed; • Their children are making good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenge in learning for pupils of differing abilities in mixed aged classes; • Information about the curriculum.

Inspectors endorse some of the parents' views of the school, but find that the overall leadership and management of the school and pupil progress are satisfactory. Inspection findings are that parents receive extensive general information about the school curriculum both in the prospectus and in

occasional workshop meetings, but agree that information about termly curriculum topics is insufficient. Inspectors judge that the challenge in learning is not always sufficient for children in mixed aged classes and is dependent on the quality of teaching.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Inspection findings are that standards are average in English and science and above average in mathematics by Year 6. Over a five-year period there has been a gradual improvement in standards in national tests in English and mathematics and a more significant improvement in science. Test results vary year-on-year because of differences in the size of each cohort, which makes it difficult to make meaningful comparisons. However, comparisons of the 2002 national tests show that standards for Year 6 pupils were average in English but below average in mathematics and science. Fewer Year 6 pupils achieved the higher levels than nationally in all three core subjects and this brought the results down. The previous inspection states that this cohort had entered the reception class with expected levels of attainment. In the intervening period between Years 1 to 6 they have experienced considerable disruption not least in the discontinuity created by eleven staff changes. Other factors have restricted both their progress through school and their performance in the national tests at the age of eleven years. Several pupils were identified with complex special educational needs and the percentage of pupils with poor attendance was high, above both school and national averages. Nevertheless all pupils achieved satisfactory progress over time. In comparison to similar schools, pupils achieved above average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. In 2002, similar to the national picture, girls performed better in national tests than boys but not significantly.
2. By Year 2 standards are below average in English, mathematics and science according to inspection findings. Since the last inspection there has been a decline over time in the attainment of children when they start school. Most children start in the reception class with attainment below expected levels in most areas of learning and some cohorts have attainment well below expected levels. By Year 2, standards in the 2002 tests were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, both in national and similar school comparisons. Almost 50 per cent of pupils were below average in reading and no pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in writing. This would suggest unsatisfactory progress, but with the numerous staff changes and differences in interpretation of assessment criteria, it is difficult to ascertain accurately the entry profile of this cohort. The small cohort of 16 pupils included a third on the special educational needs' register and additionally one pupil with a statement for special educational needs. Significant levels of poor attendance also affected their progress. As a result, the standards achieved were lower than in previous years and compared with other earlier cohorts this group did not conform to the usual pattern. Their progress over time was at best satisfactory. However, apart from in 2002 standards have improved in reading and mathematics, although they have declined in writing. By the age of seven years, girls perform better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics and with a greater difference than nationally. The school has not analysed the reasons for this but the inspection shows that lack of interest and unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils is affecting their progress.
3. Assessment of pupil performance in English and mathematics is improving and greater attention is being given to tracking pupils' progress, particularly in English, which is helping to raise standards. For example, the identification of a weakness in pupils' writing skills has led to increased provision in writing activities and more pupils now have writing standards at expected levels. Overall, a more rigorous analysis has

been introduced but procedures are not yet embedded and in other subjects the quality of assessment is not consistent across the school. There remains a lack of rigour in tracking pupils' performance and in identifying strengths and weaknesses. For example, an analysis of data during the inspection revealed the poor levels of attendance of pupils in Years 2 and 6 affecting their performance in the 2002 national tests. The school has predicted realistic targets for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 with increased numbers of pupils on course to achieve nationally expected levels in English and mathematics. Inspectors judge that these targets will be achieved.

4. Children begin their education in the reception class with attainment below expected levels in most areas of learning, although sometimes better in personal and social skills. They are making satisfactory progress overall. For the current reception class the early long-term absence of the class teacher led to some initial uncertainties in approach affecting progress, but they are now learning confidently. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and personal development, children make good progress and achieve expected levels by the time they start the National Curriculum. Children also achieve well in the development of their listening and reading skills. Attainment in speaking, writing and mathematical development remains below expected levels by Year 1.
5. Achievement in English is satisfactory. The literacy strategy is providing a sound structure to pupils' learning of knowledge and skills. In Years 1 and 2 teachers give good attention to teaching basic skills in building sounds, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Each year group has regular opportunities to write for a range of audiences. By Year 2 pupils can retell traditional tales or draft four lines of rhyming verse on a computer screen when playing a 'Guess who?' game. Many of these pupils write confidently and at length. Intervention strategies are introduced to support lower attaining pupils in both Years 1 and 2 to improve their skills in reading and writing and they are making good progress. By Year 4 pupils can write an instructional text or use their comprehension skills to create a biography. For example they researched on information about David Hockney and added an appraisal of the picture 'Mr and Mrs Clarke and Percy', successfully improving their note taking skills. Year 4 pupils are beginning to enjoy longer stories and are already identifying favourites such as The Harry Potter stories. By Year 6 pupils have a developing appreciation of their cultural heritage through their studies of literature such as 'Romeo and Juliet' or 'The Water Babies' and their teacher is skilfully widening their reading experiences beyond popular children's classics. The school has not yet addressed the structured development of pupils' speaking and listening skills or a good handwriting style. Test results indicate that the school has successfully eradicated the issue of gender differences by Year 6 with results matched to national differences, but for Year 2 pupils there is still a significant difference each year between the achievements of boys and girls.
6. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory overall, but with good progress in some classes. Progress is good when the challenge in lessons is appropriate and teacher expectations are higher. Some teachers use exciting strategies to make learning more interesting. For example, 'Dizzy Wizzy' a large puppet captures the attention of pupils in Year 1 as they learn about basic number bonds. Across the school at the start of most lessons progress is enhanced through the good use of mental strategies. Learning is fun. Pupils are happy to manipulate numbers and are confident to explain their actions. Year 6 pupils enjoy a competitive element to their learning and they pay good attention to their calculations involving simple formulas in a sustained effort to be successful. By Year 6 pupils can use their previous learning to help them in problem solving situations. These pupils are achieving well and attainment is above average. Pupils choose their own individual targets, which,

although not precise in detail, give them an indication of strategies to improve their work. However, in some classes inaccurate teacher expectation and inappropriate behaviour management restrict progress. For example, there are a significant number of pupils in the Year 2/3 class who have poor behaviour interrupting the learning of others. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below expected levels.

7. Achievement in science is satisfactory overall, and standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Where practical investigations take place learning is more rapid. Pupils in Year 6 make good progress and the school has realistically predicted national test results in 2003 to show an improvement with at least one third of pupils achieving the higher Level 5. These pupils present well-organised scientific reports detailing precisely their experiments, predicting possible outcomes and making good evaluations of their final results. In other classes progress is similar to that achieved in mathematics and is dependent on the appropriateness of teacher expectations and the management of behaviour. As a result, standards by Year 2 are not as high as at the last inspection. Although most pupils are achieving nationally expected levels, fewer are achieving above average standards. As there is no consistent system of assessment in science or effective monitoring of teaching and learning in this subject it is difficult to track pupils' performance or identify strengths and weaknesses in the current curriculum in order to raise standards.
8. In ICT, standards are below expected levels throughout the school and there is underachievement in skills development overall. However, with the recent improvements in provision and the better knowledge and skills of teaching staff there is now better planning and delivery of this subject. All strands of the curriculum are planned to be delivered this school year although as yet none have been taught in sufficient depth. Throughout school, word processing skills are developing successfully and in Years 3 to 6 most pupils enter and retrieve information independently. There is evidence of good quality word processing; for example, in Year 6 in 'Fantasy' stories. Data handling activities are linked to science and mathematics but overall, there are few opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects of the curriculum and consolidation of new learning is insufficient.
9. In all other subjects progress is satisfactory overall, but with good progress in some classes and in individual lessons. Standards match expected levels by Years 2 and 6. Skills are built up gradually through the school but not consistently. In history and geography, although standards are satisfactory overall, they are lower than previously because these subjects receive less emphasis in the curriculum. There is a good emphasis on practical activities to make learning more meaningful. For example, in a design and technology lesson in a Year 2/3 class, pupils designed playground equipment and then using strips of cardboard, tubes, and egg boxes created some imaginative models, remembering to test for stability and strength in their constructions. This lesson gave very good opportunities for the development of social skills among a group of pupils who find sharing and taking turns difficult. There is a sharp focus on improving numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The targets are appropriate and provide small steps, which most pupils need to help them in their learning. In some lessons a small minority of pupils with behavioural needs do not make enough progress because teachers do not have either additional support, or sufficient strategies to manage their behaviour and therefore learning is not as rapid or effective as it should be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. These aspects encompass strengths of the school that enable most pupils to learn effectively and mature well personally, as at the time of the last inspection. Attendance has fallen, however, against the national trend, and there is a lack of rigour in monitoring attendance in order to bring about improvement.
12. Children in the reception class settle well into class routines and from the moment they arrive in school they respond positively in lessons and are well behaved. Good relationships are developing and children are happy to take turns sharing in whole class activities. They are developing satisfactory skills of independence.
13. As pupils get older their attitudes towards learning generally remain positive. Parents are unequivocal that their children like school. This is apparent in the pupils' pleasant demeanour and willingness to extend the length of the school day by taking part in the many popular extra-curricular activities, which are on offer. Pupils also respond very positively to opportunities provided by the staff to create an atmosphere conducive for work and personal development. Pupils, for example, shared a 'bear hug' during registration and shared their experiences of feeling the care and love of others during class assembly.
14. With few exceptions pupils are compliant in lessons, are keen to learn and get on well with their work. They listen carefully to teachers' explanations and try hard to produce pleasing results. Behaviour is generally as good as parents' opinions suggest but a small number of pupils sometimes fail to meet the school's high expectations in this regard. Most of them are on the special educational needs register because of their particular behavioural difficulties and have suitable individual education plans that target their needs. Their poor self-discipline and immature behaviour sometimes interrupts the learning of others triggering inattention, poor concentration and unacceptably high noise levels within the class.
15. Pupils play well together in the playgrounds, which have space for them to organise enjoyable knock-about football without disturbing others. Girls and boys join in well with these games. Older pupils willingly volunteer for training as play leaders who help to supervise the new adventure play area for children in the reception and Years 1 and 2. They ensure that everyone has equal chance to enjoy the facilities safely and actively encourage sociable play. This initiative helps to build the positive relationships and care and consideration for others that exist throughout the school. No anti-social behaviour or racism was seen during the inspection and there were no exclusions from the school last year. Parents believe that any incidents of bullying are tackled effectively.
16. Pupils' personal development is good, helped by opportunities for them to take responsibility as the play leaders, prefects and school council representatives. All ages, including reception children, take great pride in their achievements on the council that have led to the improved play facilities, provision of cycle lockers and safer routes to school. Older pupils look after younger ones well at lunchtime. The prefects set good examples for the rest of the school by maturely escorting the infants from their classes to the dining hall and each taking charge of a table of children. They are proud of their idea to promote sociable attitudes by awarding a trophy to the best behaved table each week, which the school has adopted, and which works well. Teachers' encouraging comments in pupils' individual reward books form an invaluable personal record of their achievements.

17. Attendance is poor. At the time of the last inspection, attendance was in line with the national average and remained so until two years ago when it began to slip increasingly behind to a level now well below the norm. Unauthorised absence is minimal. Parents usually give legitimate reasons for their child's absence albeit sometimes only after requests from the school for explanations. Register markings suggest, however, that some parents condone absence on occasions; for example, by tagging extra days onto school holidays without requesting permission. One third of the Year 3/4 class was absent the day before the last half-term holiday. Irregular attendance slows pupils' progress because learning is disjointed. Everyone in the class is affected because teachers have to spend time going over missed work at the expense of new learning. Pupils who sat the national tests last summer had low attendance levels during the year, particularly in Year 2 whose standards were well below expectations.
18. Pupils generally arrive at school punctually but a small number are persistently late despite concerns expressed to the parents by the headteacher about the detriment to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, but with some significant variations between classes. Some very good teaching was seen. Teaching has improved since the last inspection in that there are fewer lessons in which teaching is unsatisfactory. However, there are also fewer lessons in which teaching is very good or better, although five out of ten lessons are at least good. There are some characteristic strengths in lessons and also some weaknesses that should be addressed if learning is to continue to have an upward trend. Although teaching staff have changed since the last inspection and all issues regarding unsatisfactory teaching reported at the last inspection have been addressed, they have not all been eradicated. There are still training issues to be resolved.
20. Generally teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, which helps them move pupils on to the next stage of learning. Good subject knowledge in literacy lessons lifted teaching to a consistently good quality during the inspection as teachers had higher expectations of pupils. However, this was not the general pattern and for example 50 per cent of teaching in numeracy was unsatisfactory. Subject knowledge rose to very good levels in lessons taught by specialist teachers, for example, in a mathematics lessons in Year 6, where the teacher was able to teach key vocabulary and challenge all pupils skilfully by his questioning. Good subject knowledge was also evident in some teachers' plans. Where teachers have made accurate assessments of pupils' capabilities and set out clearly what pupils are expected to learn rather than simply what activities they will undertake, pupils learn very well. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall, and in most subjects teachers incorporate a variety of teaching strategies to encourage learning. On occasions in the reception class there is no written planned guidance, which makes it difficult for adults working in the class to know exactly what individuals and groups are to learn. Throughout the school there is insufficient use made of assessment to help shape lesson planning. In some lessons, learning objectives and planned activities are not linked accurately enough to the pupils' different learning needs. As a result, activities to promote learning are sometimes too easy or too difficult and pupils do not make enough progress during the lesson.
21. There are some variations in the teaching of basic skills in sounds and number. It is good in the reception class and children quickly learn early reading and numeracy skills. Basic skills' teaching in reading and writing and physical education are also

good throughout the school. In other subjects there is some variation between classes. For example, basic skills of designing, making and evaluating are taught well in design and technology in Years 1 and 2 and good mental skills in numeracy are taught well in Years 5 and 6. In ICT the teaching of basic skills is weak because skills are not taught sequentially enabling pupils to build new knowledge on their previous learning. The new scheme of work has not yet been in place, long enough to ensure progression in learning.

22. Target setting is used effectively in some classes to help pupils know what they must learn and to give positive encouragement when they succeed. In Year 1 the system is of good quality. Targets are explained to pupils and are recorded throughout the year in individual target books. As small steps are achieved pupils receive brightly coloured stickers acknowledging their successes and new steps for improvement are negotiated. These pupils are knowledgeable about their learning and proud of their successes. In contrast, in Years 3 to 6 targets are set annually and shared with parents but not up dated through the year as progress takes place. These targets are too broad to be meaningful or provide an adequate tool of assessment.
23. Expectations of pupils are generally satisfactory and in some lessons there are examples of good challenges. In a history lesson on the Great Fire of London in Year 2, activities were full of challenge for pupils of differing abilities and the lesson had good pace. The teacher had high expectations and pupils responded well so that the lesson successfully achieved its objectives. Good links were made to literacy as pupils learnt about diary writing as they looked at the diary of Samuel Pepys.
24. In summary, strengths in the qualities of teaching and learning include:
- most teachers share learning objectives with pupils so that they understand what it is they are to learn;
 - teachers are developing good teamwork with support staff so that pupils can benefit from small group activities and the additional intervention;
 - most teachers manage behaviour well encouraging pupils to work hard and cooperate with others;
 - homework is used consistently and helps to extend pupils' learning;
 - resources are used well by teachers enabling them to provide pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences;
 - skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy are extended effectively across the curriculum through good teacher planning;
 - good links are made between foundation* subjects to support learning; for example, a collage completed by pupils in Years 3 and 4 improved their geographical understanding about care of the environment through an art lesson;

(* the foundation subjects are history/geography/art and design/design and technology/music/physical education)

- teachers are successful in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils within lessons; for example in the Year 2/3 class pupils completed a traffic survey and at the same time recognised some social needs of a community.
25. Key weaknesses in teaching and learning are:
- the lack of pace, challenge and low teacher expectations in some lessons;
 - a variety of teacher assessment systems so that learning does not build always systematically on previous knowledge and skills;
 - inconsistent marking. In classes where pupils' work is marked well, progress is good because pupils know what to do to improve. In other classes, marking is narrow and limited to simple ticks or one or two word comments. Consequently pupils are uncertain about what they need to do to improve their work;
 - across all year groups teachers do not make enough use of computers to consolidate and develop learning in all subjects.
26. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and is good when additional support is available. Outside specialist agencies, such as occupational therapists, also give good support when necessary. Teachers understand pupils' needs and with the good support of the co-ordinator their individual education plans provide clear guidelines for the small steps necessary to make improvement in literacy and numeracy. Good attention is given in most lessons to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in all activities. Their contributions are valued and these pupils are responsive and feel respected. However, planning for lessons does not always include learning intentions specifically focused on their needs with supportive guidance and resources available for them to learn independently and practice needs to be more consistent here. There are insufficient strategies in place to support pupils with behavioural problems in some classes. This leads to interruptions in learning for others at times.

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

27. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities through the formal curriculum, enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and good links with the community and local schools. There are some imbalances in the curriculum within certain age groups. The weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed.
28. There is a good curriculum for children in the reception class who are in the Foundation Stage of education. Most activities are appropriate and meaningful providing a satisfactory balance between directed teaching and independent exploration. Elements of the literacy and numeracy strategies are introduced and this helps to prepare children well for activities in Year 1. The teachers are conscious that there is no designated outdoor area available for children to use independently throughout the school day. Their medium and weekly planning takes account of this and opportunities are provided for children to develop skills with large toys within other available spaces.
29. An improvement since the last inspection is the use of national guidelines for all subjects. These have been adapted into a two-year cycle of topics to cater for the

mixed age groups found in each class. However, the school does not monitor well enough what the pupils are taught in order to check that all the work is covered. Consequently, there are deficiencies. For example in Years 5 and 6, design and technology is taught at the end of the year in one block of time making it difficult to cover all knowledge and skills that pupils should know.

30. At the time of the previous inspection, literacy and numeracy were not taught every day. The school has resolved this and these lessons are now part of every class's daily timetable. Whilst on paper the time allocated to the National Curriculum subjects is broadly satisfactory, there is a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy which is more than the nationally recommended times. Consequently, this reduces the time given to other subjects. For instance in ICT, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in a systematic way.
31. Satisfactory provision, in line with national guidelines, is made for pupils with special educational needs. Early identification of pupils' problems takes place and individual education plans are drawn up. These contain clear targets, together with 'small step' strategies to achieve them. These are regularly reviewed in the light of progress made. All pupils with special educational needs play a full part in the life of the school. The advice and support of visiting professionals and outside agencies is used well. Both the class teacher and the special educational needs' co-ordinator keep a good check on each individual's progress.
32. National strategies for the planning and teaching of literacy and numeracy have been adopted in all classes. Recently all the teachers have taken part in five days of numeracy training, which has given them a better understanding of the subject. However, the school makes limited use of numeracy in other subjects in order to practise and develop pupils' skills.
33. The curriculum for pupils' personal, social, and citizenship education (PSHCE) is good and dovetails well with the school's programme of religious education. The school makes good use of the experience, skills and knowledge of visitors such as the school nurse who participates in the teaching of the sex education programme to older pupils. This area of the curriculum is also effectively supported by such activities as the visit of the puppet team to heighten pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs.
34. The school's programme of extra-curricular activities is excellent and adds to pupils' learning in many subjects. A range of clubs is offered, including football, netball, art, folk choir, French, library and the homework club with its strong links to ICT. These activities are well supported and they attract over half of the pupils on a weekly basis. The older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit, which develops social skills, and pupils also make day visits to local museums; for example, to support their history topic. These visits significantly enrich pupils' lives giving them good first-hand learning experiences.
35. The school makes successful links with the local community. There are good links with the local Catholic secondary school, to which the majority of pupils transfer at the age of eleven years. From Year 5 onwards, pupils begin to make visits to the secondary school and 'taster days' are arranged for them. There are also links through music; presently pupils are rehearsing Music Hall songs in preparation for a joint production at the secondary school. The few pupils who transfer to other secondary schools are also adequately supported. The school plays its part in working with national organisations to support holiday activities for the children on the neighbouring estate.

36. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school provides more opportunities than it did at the time of the previous inspection to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures besides their own.
37. The provision for spiritual development is good. The school has a strong Christian ethos which is explicit in its mission statement and is exemplified in its times of worship and throughout the school day. Teachers raise the self-esteem of pupils through ensuring that they feel valued and included in the full life of the school. For example, positive comments about friends offered by Year 1 pupils are celebrated as part of a classroom display. This is indicative of a way in which pupils' self-esteem is supported. In school worship, pupils are very well behaved and quiet reflective music plays as the pupils enter the hall. There are good opportunities for pupils to discuss their thoughts and emotions with teachers and other pupils during 'Circle Time', a time set aside specifically for sharing sensitive feelings about themselves and others.
38. The provision for pupils' moral development is also good. There is a clear expectation of good behaviour in school and apart from a small minority of pupils, chiefly in one class, they respond well. Through the caring attitudes and example of staff, reinforced by the school rules, pupils learn to consider others and know right from wrong. These values are further reinforced through such books as the 'You're a Star Book' or the 'Reward Book' where the positive attitudes and actions of the pupils are celebrated.
39. Social development is promoted well; pupils regularly work in pairs or small groups. They are encouraged to take on responsibilities around school such as acting as prefects to supervise younger pupils over lunch. The School Council meets regularly with a boy and girl representative from each year group. They have had a significant influence on many school matters, such as the 'safe route to school' initiative and were very influential in choosing equipment for the new and exciting fixed playground equipment. Pupils are also encouraged to engage in social activities, which further broaden their horizons. Presently ten Year 5 and 6 pupils are participating in the junior 'Master Chef' at the local college and a large number of older pupils are due to take part in the Chester 'Mystery Plays' this Easter.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development has improved. It is now good. Each year, as part of the school's religious education programme, pupils have the opportunity to study a different world religion. There are displays around school to celebrate the differences in our society with the positive statement 'We all make it unique'. In artwork, in Years 5 and 6, pupils have studied the artwork of the Aborigines and created paintings of their own in a similar style. In a similar vein, the younger pupils have celebrated the artwork of African Cultures through developing skills in batik work. Cultural development is also promoted through pupils' visits to museums and through visitors to school, including Hindu dancers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The staff continue to provide a supportive environment within which pupils thrive as members of the whole-school family yet are known and cared for well as individuals. Pupils' welfare is paramount and suitable health and safety procedures, including risk assessments, are regularly undertaken. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place but a number of staff have joined the school since the last training session that dealt with such matters. Arrangements to deal with pupils who are ill or injure themselves are good. The school has produced very useful guidance on these and other issues for the midday team who, along with the deputy headteacher, have

attended recent training in their important role. Senior staff support this team effectively on a daily basis to ensure that the same ethos is maintained at lunchtime as at other times of the school day.

42. The area in the immediate vicinity to the school has a high incidence of family stress. The school is mindful of this and works closely with the local family centre, enlisting appropriate support for pupils from families in difficult circumstances. Outside agencies are also suitably involved with pupils who have special educational needs.
43. Parents greatly appreciate the approachability and responsiveness of the staff, which enables them to discuss problems or raise concerns about their child with ease. The school nurse visits regularly to offer parents advice on health related issues and to teach pupils some of the school's health education programme, including the aspect relating to growing up and puberty. Pupils are also benefiting from taking part in the Healthy Schools Initiative by, for example, responding to encouragement to keep fit by cycling to school.
44. The pre-school group, which meets on site, prepares children for the reception class by familiarising them with staff and surroundings. They and others who join the school attend useful induction afternoons in the term before they start school.
45. In general, the school achieves high standards of behaviour through clear rules and expectations, suitable praise and rewards for positive response, and teaching pupils why certain behaviour is unacceptable and must have consequences. These good procedures work very well to eliminate harassment and bullying but there is a need to review strategies for managing a small minority of pupils' behaviour in lessons, which are sometimes unsuccessful. A more effective common approach to tackling negative behaviour is needed, particularly for those with identified emotional and behavioural difficulties, so that the few who are poorly behaved do not set the tone for the others.
46. The school's procedures for checking and improving attendance are unsatisfactory overall. Lack of rigour in monitoring the registers for patterns of absence has allowed the level of attendance to fall well below the national average. The school suitably follows up absences that are not explained by parents and identifies pupils with very poor attendance. The education welfare officer is involved with a few families. A small number of pupils have been set targets for improved attendance or punctuality in their individual education plans, with some success. The school has an ethos of praising good work, effort, attitudes and behaviour but has no incentives for attendance. First day response to absence is not expected which raises safety issues regarding the whereabouts of children who are not in school. A computerised data base for attendance has very recently been installed which has the potential to help the school to keep a closer eye on individual, class, year group and whole-school trends. Since the last inspection the school has tightened up its procedures for promoting punctuality. Latecomers are noted in the registers and their time of arrival logged. Persistent late arrival is suitably followed up.
47. The school's systems for assessment and its use are unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection there has been a decline. Each teacher records pupils' attainment and progress but there is no agreed whole-school system and the school does not have a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do in each of these subjects and what they need to learn next. The exception is in the reception class where assessment procedures are satisfactory. In addition to an early baseline assessment, information from ongoing observations of what children know,

understand and can do are appropriately linked to planning what they need to learn next.

48. Statutory assessments for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are fully in place. Additionally the collection of assessment information is good in English. It is rigorous and regular, and provides teachers with a clear knowledge of how well pupils are progressing in developing reading and writing skills. The school's collection of examples of pupils' written work in English, carefully assessed against national standards, provides good opportunities for teachers to check the accuracy of their judgements on the quality of pupils' writing. Satisfactory evidence of standards is also collated in mathematics through regular assessment of pupil progress using a range of tests. Methods for assessing and recording progress in science and in the foundation subjects are unsatisfactory. The procedures currently in place rely on each teacher's individual knowledge of their pupils.
49. A system of self-assessment is developing whereby pupils in Years 1 to 6 evaluate aspects of their work, and with their teachers set targets for self-improvement. This provides them with some opportunities to reflect on their own learning. The system is particularly effective in the Year 1/2 class where targets are precise, regularly monitored to check whether they have been achieved and new targets are then set. In other classes, targets for improvement are more general and in Years 3 to 6 are only set annually. As a result, teachers, pupils and parents do not have enough regularly updated information about achievement and progress.
50. The school does make satisfactory use of assessment information to group pupils by ability and to identify those who will benefit from additional support. The school also makes appropriate use of assessment information to monitor how well year groups are progressing in English and mathematics and to predict and set future learning targets. Results of assessments are used appropriately to identify individuals and groups of pupils for extra support such as those with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The school has successfully maintained its close partnership with parents since the last inspection and has upheld their very positive opinions about its provision. Key to this success is parents' strong belief in the leadership of the headteacher and the trust that is established through good communication. Parents find the staff easy to relate to and appreciate the welcome they receive when they cross the school threshold. They contribute well to their children's learning because they are successfully encouraged to get involved at home and at school.
52. Parents receive a very useful booklet of advice on preparing for school before their child first starts in the reception class. This outlines ways to help at home by sharing books, encouraging emergent writing and introducing simple mathematics through everyday activities such as shopping, cooking, playing games and making patterns.
53. A strong emphasis is placed upon family education, which helps reception and Year 1 parents to develop their own as well as their children's skills. Such courses have enabled families to work together on literacy, mathematics and an arts project involving batik and clay work. Parents have also helped to make story sacks to engage children's interest in reading. The parents' room, often used for such purposes, provides a welcoming environment for chats or more formal discussions and activities.

54. The school provides good quality information for parents about their child's progress. Each pupil's targets for improvement in literacy, numeracy, and personal development are shared with parents in the autumn term. Progress towards these targets is discussed at the main consultations with teachers in the spring. Parents are welcome to chat informally with teachers at the end of school or to make appointments for longer discussions. The annual written reports on progress effectively detail how children are getting on. These reports vary in style, the best being written in lively language, which captures more of the spirit of the child than is usual in such documents. For example, one report stated that the pupil 'is a superlative communicator' and 'should make a cracking Year 6 pupil and has a lot to offer.' Reading diaries provide further information about progress and are used very effectively for dialogue between home and school, particularly in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2.
55. Copies of individual education plans are available for parents of pupils with special educational needs. These parents are suitably involved in termly reviews of progress with the teacher and special educational needs co-ordinator, usually on an informal basis. The plans usefully include a brief statement as to how they might help their child to make progress; for example, with literacy, numeracy, attendance or punctuality.
56. The prospectus gives parents a lot of information about the curriculum, and meetings are held occasionally to explain aspects further. A successful workshop on mathematical investigations was well attended by parents who learnt how mathematics is taught and how to help their children to learn more effectively at home. Parents are regularly invited to assemblies, including end-of-topic class led presentations, but they are not informed in advance about the topics or main focus of lessons that their children are about to study.
57. Parents and members of the wider community are actively encouraged to volunteer assistance in school, on educational visits, with extra-curricular clubs and the parent and teacher association. A useful handbook guides them in their roles effectively. The staff greatly appreciate their time and effort, and the financial donations that are wisely spent for the benefit of the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The leadership and management of the headteacher and the contribution of the governing body are satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection there has been almost a complete change of teachers, including members of the senior management team, affecting the leadership and management of the school and creating some discontinuity. The present headteacher, appointed in 1999, has been effective in providing a caring, catholic learning environment where pupils are nurtured and encouraged in their education to '*reach for the stars.*' Despite a continuously changing staff team, the headteacher has been able to improve standards over time for pupils by the age of eleven years, particularly in science and mathematics. Currently she has identified literacy as a key priority to raise standards and has monitored teaching and learning to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject and measure the effectiveness of new initiatives. As a result, in the latest national tests in 2002 the school has achieved national averages in Year 6. Recent national awards acknowledge the effective management of change and the improvement in standards. The headteacher has a good vision for the future direction of the school but has not yet introduced a consistent system for managing change through which improvements can be achieved. Currently her overview of the school relies too heavily on her own perspective and needs to draw upon the views and

knowledge of others more. She is still working to establish a cohesive staff team with common agreed goals. All staff are committed to the development of the school but few have a clear understanding of the extent of their roles and responsibilities.

59. The recently appointed deputy headteacher and senior staff are working towards providing greater support to the headteacher in the management of the school. Good quality improvements in some of the teaching and learning in mathematics and in the provision for ICT have both been achieved under their leadership, although there is still more to do. The senior management team meets to analyse test results in order to identify subject strengths and weaknesses and to help share in the day-to-day administrative tasks. The deputy headteacher has started a national training programme to develop his role. Teamwork is still developing.
60. Monitoring of teaching and learning is undertaken mostly by the headteacher. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the school and has identified the appropriate priorities to incorporate into the school development plan. Curriculum co-ordinators currently have only a minor role in influencing the direction of the school through the school development plan. They are beginning to monitor their subjects by scrutinising teachers' plans and auditing resources, but have a limited overview of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. Plans are in place for them to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms but this has not yet taken place. As a result, there is limited direction in curriculum planning or sharing of expertise by subject co-ordinators. The inspection team identified some good practices, for example, in target setting in Year 1, but there are no mechanisms in place for co-ordinators to develop whole-school procedures from these worthwhile initiatives.
61. The school development plan is of satisfactory quality. It is a three-year plan drawn up after a process of consultation with staff and governors and includes both long-term plans and more immediate actions for the school to accomplish. Action plans have annual targets and details of strategies, resources and key personnel. Overall strategic plans are in place and are matched to school priorities, but there are few detailed costings within the development plan. A more extensive role in strategic planning is beginning to develop among a recently established executive committee of governors who are becoming more knowledgeable about the workings of the school. There is some monitoring of progress towards the planned outcomes identified in the development plan. However, much of the monitoring by governors and senior management team relies heavily on the headteacher for her advice and support and more formal systems of monitoring are yet to be established. Present systems ensure that the school provides satisfactory value for money but targets are too broad to be easily evaluated and financial implications lack sufficient detail to plan long-term expenditure with accuracy so that the school development plan is an effective working document.
62. The role of the governing body in the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. Governors take an active role in the functioning of the school, visit school regularly and take a keen interest in all its activities. They share in the school's good commitment to succeed. Governors recognise that it is important to serve the needs of the local community and they work effectively to support local initiatives. Good attention is given to all statutory duties. As governor expertise builds they are increasing their ability to support the school. For example, governors are linked with subject co-ordinators and both are beginning to learn more about what is working well. At present, governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but acknowledge that they must give a higher priority to the overall improvement in standards.

63. Curriculum co-ordinators show satisfactory management of the day-to-day needs of their subjects but their leadership is currently unsatisfactory, apart from in English and mathematics. New co-ordinators have been appointed, as a result of staff changes. Some initiatives are already commencing; for example, an electronic system of collating schemes of work for all subjects has been achieved, identifying progression of skills and knowledge for each year group. Whole school assessment systems in English are to be extended to other subjects. Most co-ordinators now have opportunities to participate in the preparation of the curriculum in their subjects and to audit resources. Currently there are weaknesses in that curriculum co-ordinators do not have sufficient opportunities to judge if curriculum plans are matched to the needs of pupils or if learning is progressing enough at a rapid rate.
64. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) manages the provision well for these pupils. There is a detailed and informative whole school policy in place and the recommendations of the New Code of Practice are fully implemented. The teaching assistants with responsibility for pupils with special needs are experienced and knowledgeable, giving good support as and when needed. The governor with responsibility for oversight of special needs takes a keen interest and is supportive of the school's work. She has developed her role effectively attending training and meetings extending her expertise
65. The parents, governors, staff and pupils are pleased with the good level of accommodation offered by the school. The very recent improvements in the playground have delighted the pupils and especially members of the School's Council who have had more active involvement in its development. The bright classroom areas and corridors, good quality displays, and well stocked library areas all help to create a positive learning environment where the staff and pupils are happy to work. The day-to-day work of the staff in the school office is efficient and unobtrusive. Technology is used effectively for financial management, but it is not yet impacting sufficiently to support school systems of assessment and attendance. Levels of resourcing are good providing pupils with good quality tools for hands-on experience and also enhancing the richness of the curriculum. Good attention has been given to the provision of laptop computers, used mostly in a central area, and regular access to machines is already improving standards. In most subjects the match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum are satisfactory. Teachers have a satisfactory expertise but the subject knowledge of teaching assistants is unsatisfactory. Good attention is given to using teacher expertise within the curriculum and especially in extra curricula activities. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governing body should:
- (a) Raise standards in English, mathematics, and science for pupils in Year 2, and in ICT for pupils in Years 2 and 6 by:
- In English, and mathematics:
- ensuring that all pupils, and particularly the more able, are consistently challenged with work of an appropriate level;
 - raising the quality and consistency of teaching in mathematics by sharing teachers' expertise.

In science and ICT:

- ensuring that key skills and knowledge build progressively within lessons through the development of a structured programme of learning;
- using a consistent process of assessment in science and ICT to evaluate progress accurately;
- introducing opportunities in other subjects to support learning in science and ICT.

(paragraph 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 20, 21, 25, 26, 30, 32, 65, 71, 90, 95, 100, 103, 108, 109, 112, 130, 144)

(b) Develop an inclusive approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning by:

- sharpening the process of monitoring to effectively evaluate the impact of teaching on pupil progress and spread the good practices established in literacy to all subjects;
- ensuring that key members of staff and curriculum co-ordinators have a clearer overview of standards, coverage of the curriculum, and the quality of teaching and learning across the school;
- ensuring that the outcomes of all formal monitoring are shared with the governing body to enable them to support the raising of standards more effectively.

(paragraph 7, 29, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 105, 112, 116, 120, 133, 134, 141, 154)

(c) Improve the procedures of assessment in order to:

- provide a consistent approach in the foundation subjects to define more clearly what pupils know, understand and can do in order to identify the next steps in their learning;
- improve its use in identifying strengths and weaknesses within each subject and in tracking the progress of pupils;
- refine the process of setting targets of improvement, so that targets are accurate, measurable and time related, reflecting the good practice in some parts of the school;
- improve the effectiveness of teachers' marking so that pupils have a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve.

(paragraph 3, 7, 10, 20, 22, 25, 29, 47, 48, 49, 60, 63, 70, 74, 90, 95, 96, 104, 112, 116, 133, 140, 144, 152)

(d) Improve the skills of those people involved in working with pupils with behavioural needs, particularly in Years 2 and 3.

(paragraph 2, 6, 7, 10, 14, 26, 45, 88)

(e) Improve attendance to more closely match national averages.

(paragraph 11, 17, 46, 88)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	13	10	3	0	0
Percentage	0	7	46	36	11	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 three 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)		121
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (89)	75 (84)	81 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (95)	75 (95)	81 (100)
	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	10	11	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (70)	71 (45)	86 (80)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (65)	81 (60)	86 (65)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Please note: Test and examination data is excluded from inspection reports if there are 10 or fewer pupils. This also applies to hear groups of boys and girls separately.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	99	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20:1
Average class size	24.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	61

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	254,757
Total expenditure	261,269
Expenditure per pupil	2214
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,741
Balance carried forward to next year	45,228

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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	122
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	28	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	32	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	57	2	0	0
The teaching is good.	60	34	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	58	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	23	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	36	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	55	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	74	26	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	32	4	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	60	6	0	4

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

Other issues raised by parents

A minority of parents expressed anxiety about mixed aged classes and the challenge in learning for pupils of differing abilities. Some parents feel it is difficult to participate in their children's learning because information about the curriculum is limited and no homework diary is provided.

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

67. Satisfactory provision for children in the reception class ensures that they make a secure start to school life. At the time of the inspection, there were twenty-one children attending on a full-time basis. Children are admitted into the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.
68. Assessment and other evidence shows that attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. The overall picture, however, indicates that on entry, the knowledge, skills and understanding of the majority of children are below and sometimes well below average, although a wide range of ability is represented. This indicates a different starting point from that identified in the previous inspection report, when attainment on entry was average. This significant difference is reflected in the generally lower levels of the children's achievements. Attainment in speaking, writing and mathematical development is below expectations. Attainment in listening and reading is in line with expectations and the large majority of children are achieving well in these two areas.
69. By the end of the reception year, most children are in line to achieve the expected learning goals in personal and creative development, most aspects of physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs also achieve as well as other children in the class because activities in lessons are suitably planned to match their learning needs and adults provide appropriate support. Children achieve well in their personal development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in the development of listening and reading skills. In all other areas, achievement is satisfactory.
70. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection in the reception class was satisfactory or better in four out of five lessons. It was good in one lesson and unsatisfactory in one lesson. In most lessons, planning provides a secure framework for teaching and learning in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. On occasions, there is no written planned guidance. Where this happens, there is not enough information for adults working in the class to know exactly what it is that individuals and groups of children are to learn. The teacher and nursery nurse plan lessons together on a regular basis and review what has been learned at the end of each day. In most lessons, the teacher makes sure that other adults in class have a clear understanding of their role and a good knowledge of what the children are expected to learn. This results in activities that are focused and meaningful. Occasionally, where activities are not as appropriate, teaching is less successful. For example, the use of a weather forecast computer program proved too difficult for many of the children and as a result, little learning took place.
71. Elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are introduced and this helps to prepare children well for the work they are expected to do in Year 1. However, introductions are sometimes too long, and as a result, many of the children become restless. The teacher maintains appropriate records of progress in all six areas of learning and with the nursery nurse, makes satisfactory use of this information to plan the learning for the next lesson. The marking of work in children's books and folders is good. It celebrates their achievements and helps them to know how they can improve using a helpful, 'You need to...' approach. Parents make a good contribution to learning, particularly in reading, through the help and support they give to their children at home. Reading diaries are of a very good quality. They

offer a genuine dialogue between home and school and provide parents with clear guidance on how to help with their children's reading.

72. Parents are provided with satisfactory opportunities to visit the school before their children are admitted. In addition, children make special visits before they start school to help them find out about their classroom and get to know their teacher and support staff. The parents' handbook provides good information on a range of aspects of school life.
73. The reception classroom is of a good size. The class has timetabled access to the school hall for physical education and other activities. Although there is currently no designated play area for children in the reception class, appropriate use is made of the school grounds to develop the children's social, physical and imaginative skills; for example, going on a 'bear hunt.' Resources are sufficient to promote learning in all areas and are often used imaginatively by the teacher to make learning interesting and to help the children build on their knowledge, skills and understanding.
74. The headteacher and reception teacher work effectively together to plan the provision being made for the children. Currently, the school does not have a system in place to check what the children know, understand and can do through analysing the children's recorded work.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. By the end of the reception year, most children will have achieved many of the Early Learning Goals in this area. Teaching in this area of learning is good. The class has decided on its own mission statement – 'WE ARE A TEAM.' The teacher and other adults are good role models and provide many opportunities for children to be partners in their education, to learn about themselves and to know how to behave in a range of situations. Routines are made clear and good relationships are established. Many opportunities are provided for children to listen to each other and as a result, most do this readily and have learned to wait until it is their turn. The children regularly take part in assemblies and are successfully learning about being part of a larger community.
76. Activities are often interesting and because the children know what is expected of them, they are developing satisfactory independence skills. For example, they tidy away efficiently when asked because they know where things are stored.

Communication, language and literacy

77. Teaching is satisfactory in this area with some good features, particularly in the teaching of reading and opportunities for the children to develop their listening skills. During whole class discussions, questioning is used skilfully to challenge higher ability children. However, not enough opportunities are provided for lower ability children to be fully involved. Approximately half of the children are unlikely to attain the expected learning goals in speaking and writing, and attainment overall is below expectations for children of this age. Assessment information indicates that attainment at the start of the school year in this area of learning was below average.
78. Many opportunities are provided during class discussions and activities for the children to develop language skills. For example, key words are carefully introduced at the start of lessons and reinforced by adults during activities. Most children listen attentively, paying attention to what others say, and this is an area of learning where many are likely to achieve most of the expected learning goals. The speaking skills of

approximately half of the class are below expectations for their age. When speaking to adults or other children, some use more complex sentences to answer questions or to talk about what they are doing but a similar proportion use only one or two words or short phrases when responding to questions or when asked to talk about what they are doing.

79. The teaching of reading is good. It is planned carefully and ensures that individual children are successful in building their reading skills step by step. As a result, most of the children are gaining a secure understanding of how stories develop. The majority read familiar words accurately and can explain the main events in a story. The majority of children also can identify the sounds of many of the letters in the alphabet and about half of the class are able to use this knowledge to help them to work out familiar words. In literacy lessons, the teacher makes effective use of shared 'big books', providing an effective reading model and promoting good reading strategies. Children respond very positively to stories. This was observed as they took part in a dramatised version of the story, 'Rain', showing good levels of recall as they acted out the movements and sounds made by the animals in the story.
80. Levels of writing are below expectations of children of this age. Some children use letter strings to represent what they want to say. A small number of children are beginning to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to write simple words independently. Good opportunities are provided for the children to write for different purposes, for example, in addition to writing their news, higher ability children also write simple letters and record their work on weather watching.

Mathematical development

81. Although the majority of children are not on course to attain the learning goals in this area, they are achieving satisfactorily from a relatively low starting point. Teaching in this area is satisfactory with an emphasis placed on the development of number skills both in mathematics lessons and other planned activities. Activities are matched appropriately to the children's learning needs and this ensures that they make sound progress. Most recognise and count numbers to five with some confident to ten and beyond. Higher ability children are able to combine numbers to find a total.
82. In the numeracy lesson observed, most children were able to say the days of the week, although they are not yet sure of the way in which the days are ordered. Work in books indicates that most children can identify longer and shorter objects and higher ability children are able to compare three objects by length.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children are likely to reach the expected goals in this area. Sound teaching and opportunities to learn more about the world are provided through a range of interesting activities and adults make careful use of language to ask questions, introduce key words or to provide a commentary on what the children are doing. A good example was observed in one activity where a group of children dressed felt figures in the right clothes to match a range of different sorts of weather, using their language skills to negotiate and decide which dolls should be wearing which clothes.

84. The topic approach to learning ensures a constant thread runs through many activities. One such activity made good use of a digital camcorder linked to the television to create a 'television studio'. The children were fascinated and responded well as they became 'television weather forecasters.' The children with special educational needs showed particularly good progress, contributing effectively and extending their vocabulary skills as they did so.
85. The classroom computers are generally used appropriately to help the children to develop their computer skills and to reinforce what is being learned. The large majority of children know how to operate the mouse to make things happen on the screen as they work on letter sounds or number games. Most children work independently.

Physical development

86. Most children are likely to achieve the learning goals in this area except in activities such as handwriting, which needs smaller, more precise movements. Teaching is satisfactory in this area. Children are provided with opportunities to use a range of small construction toys for building. For example, four children, including some with special educational needs, worked together amicably as they made a boat, discussed where the main components should go and together fixed these to various parts of the construction. It was not possible to observe a physical education lesson or the children working in the outdoor environment. However, medium-term and weekly planning indicates that this area of learning is planned appropriately.

Creative development

87. Most children are in line to achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good in this area of learning. Children showed satisfactory control as they made 'blow-paintings' by mixing watery paint and carefully blowing it across the paper. In the music lesson observed, effective planning ensured that the learning objectives were fully achieved. Most children were able to name a range of percussion instruments and by the end of the lesson could identify and copy different musical sounds. A particular strength in the lesson lay in the feeling of shared success.

ENGLISH

88. Standards in English are average for pupils by Year 6, as was the case at the last inspection. Over time progress is satisfactory, but varies from year-to-year. Currently it is good in Years 1 and 6. Significant factors have influenced rates of progress throughout the school, causing extensive discontinuity and disruption. For example, staff changes and low pupil attendance have affected most year groups. Currently standards in Year 2 are below average and have declined since the last inspection. The behaviour of a minority of pupils in the mixed Year 2/3 class is restricting their progress; for example, in speaking and listening. The school has recognised the need to address this issue. During the inspection learning was good for all pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties, because of the good level of adult support both for group and individual pupil activities. Pupils with specific learning difficulties achieve satisfactory progress over time as their individual education plans identify literacy targets, which are reviewed regularly to ensure learning remains meaningful.
89. The English curriculum is broad and balanced and has a strong focus on the development of literacy skills. Additional curricular activities at lunchtime and after

school also enhance the English curriculum. The literacy strategy is effective in providing a structure to the learning of reading and writing skills. Increasingly the school is giving good attention to linking the development of literacy with other subjects so that pupils have increased opportunities to practise new skills. For example in a design and technology lesson in Year 4, pupils practised note taking skills. Reading is encouraged through attractive displays. A recent arts project, which was linked with the story of 'The First Musician' by Alison Graham, has encouraged all pupils to read the story. There are several learning groups through which specific needs of pupils can be addressed. They teach basic skills in reading and writing through short programmes of intervention and are effective in raising standards particularly of lower attaining pupils.

90. By Year 6 standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils start the National Curriculum in Year 1 with expected listening skills for their age but with speaking skills below expected levels. In most lessons teachers plan well and include good opportunities for speaking and listening skills to be extended. Good attention is given to including all pupils in the introductory discussions in lessons, not only in English, but also in other subjects of the curriculum. These opportunities are successful in developing pupil confidence, in encouraging pupils to listen to the opinions of others and in promoting class discussions. Initially many pupils are frustrated by their inability to explain themselves clearly, but with increasingly wider vocabularies the discussions become more lively and involved. By Year 6 pupils express themselves clearly and debate enthusiastically using a good range of subject specific vocabulary. Most teachers recognise the need to develop the speaking and listening skills of less able pupils and in class these pupils participate in puppet plays, role plays, or in shared reading and writing activities where their learning needs can be supported. Teachers encourage more able pupils to incorporate a wider use of words in their written work by including discussions of descriptive vocabulary, for instance by using a Thesaurus. From a hesitant start pupils gradually learn technical vocabulary. More able pupils in Year 1 confidently checked a story of Cinderella to find compound words, initially describing them as 'pound coin' words but soon using the correct technical term. Other opportunities in school provide a wider debating chamber. The school council enables pupils to discuss relevant school issues and in PSHCE lessons, pupils share achievements and discuss concerns in an open forum. There is no assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do to track their progress.
91. In all year groups pupils have good opportunities to practise their reading. They read stories together in groups or in a whole class activity. Good attention is given to improving pupils' understanding of sounds in Years 1 and 2. Basic skills are taught regularly through the literacy strategy. In Year 1 there is a wide variation of ability and many have standards below those expected for their age. Less able pupils are developing their ability to hear and identify initial sounds in words, but in comparison, more able pupils decipher some complex vocabulary and understand spelling rules beyond those expected for their age; for instance discussing among themselves if 'wedding' has a double consonant in the middle of the word. By Year 2, standards remain below expected levels although pupils make satisfactory progress. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of traditional tales and can describe favourite stories, but the majority of pupils are hesitant in reading independently and only the more able read with expression and fluency. By Year 6 pupils have average standards in reading. Skills of comprehension have improved in Years 3 and 4 because of frequent practice in lessons. Older pupils read an appropriate range of literacy and can explain skills of authorship of their favourite storywriters. Examples of school made books show that pupils understand and appreciate various types of literature. A 'Harry Potter' book included pupils' own rhymes, quizzes, word search,

and stories similar to an activity book, while books on the 'Aztec' replicate information books. Parents are eager to help with reading homework and many make a good contribution to their children's learning. Parents of younger pupils have given additional beneficial support to the school making a selection of story sacks with the help of the Family Literacy initiative. All pupils have library skills appropriate to their age. They visit the school library each week at lunchtime and choose from a wide selection of library material, attractively arranged to focus their attention on specific themes or authors.

92. Standards in writing are average for pupils in Year 6 and are showing improvement for the pupils currently in Year 2. The school gives good attention to the development of writing skills with regular opportunities for pupils to write for different audiences. By Year 2 writing standards are just below average and most pupils can write a few sentences showing good understanding of a story sequence. Many of these pupils have made good progress this term, initially writing two or three sentences and now writing a full story. Average pupils choose appropriate vocabulary to make their writing more explicit, choosing words such as 'a beautiful, blue, glittery dress' to describe Cinderella's ball gown, whilst more able pupils use speech marks accurately to distinguish the spoken word. By Years 5 and 6 pupils write effectively with empathy for their subject matter and with good skills of description. In a piece of historical writing about a Victorian classroom, an able Year 5 pupil created vivid imagery of 'an absolutely huge blackboard with miniscule writing, as though a money spider had dipped into a chalk pot and walked all over the gigantic board.' Year 6 pupils enjoy writing. They have written persuasive arguments to convince the reader about the benefits of children's television, written a play script of the storyline in 'The Water Babies' and a dramatic biography of the life of Emil Zatopek the long distance runner. In this year group pupils and their teachers undertake good planning, preparation and drafting to ensure that the presentation of work is of good quality. Watercolour paintings of Prospero provided a beautiful background to some work on characterisation in the Shakespearean play 'Romeo and Juliet', leading to a character study entitled 'The Enchanter.' The quality of handwriting and presentation of work in other classes is varied and at best is of a satisfactory standard.
93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but with some good strengths. During the inspection the teaching was of a consistently good quality in all lessons seen but a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers planning indicates that this is not maintained over time.
94. The key strengths in teaching and learning are:
- the development of the literacy strategy which provides regular opportunities for the development of reading skills;
 - good quality reading resources so that pupils have access to a broad range of literature and can develop library skills;
 - regular opportunities to write for different audiences using various styles, such as biography, play script, poetry and narrative;
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects; for example, in a link to religious education involvement in Year 6 in a book-making activity to create books entitled 'Here I am';
 - good use of homework to consolidate and extend reading and writing skills;
 - good involvement of parents, for example through Family Literacy, or in homework tasks.

95. Weaknesses in teaching and learning are the result of:
- limited use of assessment so that work is of an inappropriate challenge;
 - pupils' targets which are too broad or revisited too infrequently to be meaningful;
 - limited access to computers in literacy lessons as a method of recording.
96. There are extensive systems of assessment in place to measure pupils' standards. From this information the literacy co-ordinator identifies strengths and weaknesses in pupil performance and makes suggestions to overcome difficulties. However, the new teaching staff are still getting used to school systems and insufficient attention is given to tracking pupils' progress over time in each aspect of the English curriculum. Additionally in some classes an appropriate challenge is lacking particularly for pupils of higher ability. Although teachers usually demand more difficult challenges, few probing questions are asked. As a result, the learning of higher order writing skills lacks rigour, particularly for more able pupils, for example, some pupils are not yet reflective about their work. Annual targets for improvement are shared with pupils and their parents in an effort to raise standards although these are not upgraded as the year continues so that pupils can understand if their progress is sufficient. Older pupils have their own targets for improvement in writing, but these are too broad to be useful or measurable. For example, a target 'I need to make my stories better' gives insufficient indication to the pupil about how to improve or how to measure their progress. There are good examples of teachers' marking specifically to focus pupils' attention on good practice but this is not universal and in some classes there are merely comments of praise. There is an excellent writing portfolio prepared by the co-ordinator, well annotated to show National Curriculum levels and also a collection of pupils' work, which plots progress of a selection of pupils over time.
97. Leadership and management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of how to raise standards and uses her expertise successfully to assess present standards through regular monitoring of teaching and learning.

MATHEMATICS

98. Standards in mathematics are above the national average by Year 6. The test results in recent years have fluctuated and have been either at or below the national average. However, standards are now broadly the same as those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' standards by Year 2 are below the national average and are lower than at the time of the previous inspection. This fall in standards has taken place since 2001. There is no significant gender difference in performance in national tests at Year 6, although girls achieve better than boys at Year 2.
99. The contrast in standards between Years 2 and 6 is attributable to the difference in the quality of teaching the pupils receive. In Years 5 and 6 teaching is very good and challenges pupils because the teacher matches the work well to the pupils' abilities. There are elements of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 2, which slows pupils' progress. The pace of the work is slow and a number of pupils struggle in group work because they do not understand what they are doing. There are also a significant number of pupils in this class with poor behaviour. This poor behaviour interrupts the learning of others. The present strategies to manage these behaviour patterns are inadequate. Consequently, by Year 2 very few pupils are able to achieve the higher levels of attainment.

100. In other classes in the school, the pupil's behaviour and attitudes are good and this makes them willing learners. They listen attentively and co-operate well in group work. Resources for the subject are good and teachers use them well to support learning. For example, the teacher's use of an abacus in Year 1 to aid pupils' understanding of tens and units helped pupils to understand a 'ten' and a 'unit.' The teachers use computers well to support pupils' learning when, for example, they draw graphs of data which they themselves have collected. However, overall, there are missed opportunities to use ICT to support the teaching of mathematics.
101. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their abilities. The limited numbers of classroom assistants in school usually give additional support to these children. They break the learning down into small steps and by use of resources such as counters offer the extra support that these pupils need.
102. The teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. In Year 1 the teacher promotes the learning more successfully with a variety of activities that interest and excite the pupils. For example, the teacher captured the attention and imagination of the pupils immediately by use of a large puppet 'Dizzy Wizzy', in order to teach them basic counting on skills to promote their understanding of differences in numbers. The Wizard had made mistakes in the number of ingredients added to the cauldron and the children had to calculate the error. In the group work, the pupils, with the aid of an abacus, showed a good understanding of tens and units and the more able pupils could confidently apply this knowledge to solving money problems by counting out coins. The Year 1 pupils in this class are attaining at the nationally expected level.
103. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall, but is better with the older pupils because the teacher keeps them on their toes with lively introductions to lessons. Sometimes a competitive element is introduced to oral mental work, which makes learning fun for pupils. In these lessons good attention is paid to developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary such as 'product', 'times' and 'multiple'. In work on number patterns, pupils were able to make complex number patterns for others to solve. The teacher introduced the idea of a simple formula such as 'the next number is equal to the last number minus seven' in order to extend the thinking of the more able pupils. Most pupils in this class are confident with basic number bonds and their tables. The more able give quick answers to questions such as, double 38, 50 per cent of 24 and they know, for instance, that 0.2 is the equivalent of one fifth. Pupils are also well able to apply these skills in problem solving situations. Resources are not always used effectively. In an unsatisfactory lesson the use of the interactive whiteboard hindered the progress of the pupils. The teacher, in his keenness to use equipment, gave less attention to ensuring that the pupils were building on previous learning and introduced too many ideas to the pupils at once. Similarly in group work, the higher ability pupils working with software designed to aid their understanding of fractions were able to answer their questions almost immediately and spent the rest of the lesson unchallenged. The inconsistency in teaching remains a weakness from the previous inspection.
104. Throughout the school pupils present their work neatly which helps to improve the accuracy of their calculations and drawings. The teachers conscientiously mark the pupils' work. However, the best example of marking in numeracy is in Years 5 and 6. Here the teacher regularly gives the feedback to pupils that challenges them to do better or points them clearly to the reasons for their mistakes. Generally, the assessment procedures present a mixed picture of inconsistency across the school. The target setting shared with pupils and parents is particularly good in Year 1 where pupils have clearly defined targets such as, 'to order number to one hundred'. The

set targets in Years 3 to 6 are too broad and therefore the pupils' progress cannot easily be measured.

105. The subject co-ordinator, recently appointed to the school and some 15 months in post, has made a good start. The analysis by the co-ordinator of the recent statutory assessment test has enabled the school to identify the overall strengths and weaknesses in teaching; for example, the need for teachers of older pupils to give more attention to problems associated with angles in triangles and lines. Consequently, this work has recently been given added attention in Years 5 and 6. The school uses the nationally recommended scheme of work, which is adapted by the school to cater for the mixed-age classes. All the staff have undertaken extensive training, which has enabled them to make a good response to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The co-ordinator has undertaken monitoring and evaluation of teaching in the school but this has not been sharp enough to identify clearly enough the weaknesses in teaching that need to be improved.

SCIENCE

106. Attainment in science at the age of seven is below average and is not as high as it was at the previous inspection when standards were in line with national expectations. This is because although most pupils are reaching the expected level, not enough pupils are achieving above this. A factor contributing to this is that in the Year 2/3 class, the behaviour of a minority of pupils is not managed effectively and this results in some pupils achieving less than they should. Nevertheless, pupils are achieving satisfactorily from a below average level on entry to the school. In addition, standards this year are higher than those achieved in the 2002 annual assessments. Pupils in all classes, with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. This is principally as a result of activities being appropriately matched to their learning needs and, when available, effective adult support in lessons.
107. Attainment for eleven-year-olds is similar to that found at the previous inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and the school is well placed to see an improvement on last year's annual science tests. Most pupils are likely to achieve the expected level and over a third are in line to achieve above average levels.
108. Teaching and learning are satisfactory over time in all classes. The teaching observed in lessons was satisfactory in three of the lessons seen and was good in one lesson. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers in all classes provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to present their work independently and in a variety of ways. This helps them towards becoming creative, scientific thinkers with a developing ability to use a range of reporting methods; for example, charts and diagrams. The school programme of study for science offers an appropriate balance between knowledge based learning and investigative work. Most teachers mark work with care, showing their appreciation of good effort and making sure that pupils know how they could make improvements. Where marking is not as good, this is because the teacher's comments lack the precision to enable pupils to know exactly what it is they need to do to improve. Expectations of presentation are particularly high in the Year 5/6 class and this results in very well presented and organised work by all pupils.
109. Pupils are managed well in most classes, but there are some weaknesses in the Year 2/3 class. In the Year 1/2 lesson observed, pupils with special educational needs were provided with particularly effective adult support, enabling them to be as successful in their work as other pupils in the class. Pupils' literacy and mathematical skills are satisfactorily developed as they record their work in a variety

of ways. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT when organising and presenting the results of their findings.

110. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a satisfactory knowledge of, for example, similar and different characteristics of animals and can classify them into different groups such as reptiles, birds, fish and insects. They present their understanding of healthy foods through independent written work and labelled diagrams. In the lesson observed, pupils were able to work out from their knowledge of living creatures, ways in which animals use parts of their bodies for survival. Many use scientific vocabulary such as 'predator' and 'carnivore' appropriately.
111. By Year 6, all pupils have learned to present their work in a well organised, scientific way. Their work in books indicates that they have a clear understanding of the importance of the careful collection of evidence, predicting possible outcomes and evaluating their findings. They record their observations systematically, often by writing reports but also by drawing diagrams or presenting data in graph or numerical form, and sometimes recording information to two or three decimal places. Pupils are developing sound scientific knowledge. In the lesson observed, for example, they were able to explain clearly that air resistance is a force that affects the speed of movement of objects. In the activity that followed, they worked productively as they tested their predictions taking account of the need to keep the tests fair, using stop watches to measure the time taken for 'flyers' to reach the ground, and recording their results on charts. Following the teacher's questions about the patterns of results, most pupils were able to identify the importance of accuracy when measuring.
112. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been successful in his first year in the post, ensuring that the programme of study is broad and balanced across all aspects. Not enough work has been done to improve the quality of assessment procedures. These are unsatisfactory because although teachers keep their own records, there is no consistent, whole-school evidence of the progress being made by each pupil and the standards being reached by each year group. Although samples of pupils' work are collected and checked from time-to-time, there is no system in place as yet to identify strengths and areas for development and report these back to teachers. Opportunities to observe and evaluate teaching and learning are limited, and as a result, the co-ordinator does not have a sufficiently clear overview of strengths and areas for development. Resources are adequate to support the subject and are of a good quality. The co-ordinator has included the continuing improvement of resources as a priority in the subject improvement plan.
113. The subject provides good opportunities for personal development through working in pairs and groups. Pupils learn about healthy living and taking care of themselves. Sex education, drugs awareness and environmental issues are satisfactorily addressed as part of the programme of study.

ART AND DESIGN

114. Standards in art and design are in line with expected levels for pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 and since the last inspection have been maintained. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. Pupils enjoy art and are enthusiastic in their learning. Boys and girls work well together and achieve similar standards. The curriculum provides a good range of experiences in painting, observational drawing, printing, sculpture and textiles. Gradually pupils increase their understanding of line, texture, colour and tone and older pupils, in composing a picture, learn about shape, pattern and space.

115. Strengths in the provision include:
- good subject knowledge enables teachers to evaluate pupils' work and introduce teaching points appropriately;
 - good links between subjects enable pupils to extend their skills and knowledge in art;
 - personal, spiritual, social and cultural understanding are developed through the study of art.
116. Areas to be developed include:
- the consistent use of sketch books as a record of pupils' achievements and progress;
 - opportunities for the co-ordinator to undertake monitoring of teaching and learning.
117. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed good observational skills and more able pupils include some intricate details in their pictures. All pupils are beginning to understand the difference between fantasy and reality; for example, in Year 1 they recreated 'treescapes' copied from digital photographs. Using a viewfinder they pinpointed details and composed their pictures. By Year 2, pupils are encouraged to develop their understanding of pattern in the world around them as they produce wax resist rubbings. Later, in contrast, when working with a local artist they produce banners in batik work using the same wax resist techniques to replicate their own imaginative ideas. Pupils decorated their work with sequins, ribbons and feathers to add colour and interest to their designs. However in Year 2, progress is restricted by the inappropriate behaviour of a minority, which demands a lot of teacher attention and limits opportunities for extended activities.
118. Year 6 has introduced pupils to a variety of activities to extend their knowledge and understanding in art and they make satisfactory progress overall. During the inspection, the pupils in Years 5 and 6, using chalk and charcoal, looked at light sources and then added light and shadow to their figure drawing. Although Year 6 pupils are eager to achieve, many give intermittent attention to their artwork affecting the quality of the final product. During the plenary part of lessons the teacher was effective in encouraging individuals and groups to be self critical and make constructive comments about their friends work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were successful in looking at the work of artists such as David Hockney to identify how a picture is composed. They realised that the arrangement created an instant understanding of the relationships between figures and then tried this in some work of their own.
119. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lessons are planned well and resources are prepared well prior to the lesson. Learning objectives are explained clearly to pupils and good use is made of teacher demonstration to teach art techniques appropriately. However, many lessons are too instructional and there is little opportunity for pupils to choose their own resources or work independently on their own designs. In most lessons teachers manage pupils well and a positive learning environment is created.
120. Art provides a good opportunity to extend spiritual, social and cultural understanding. As pupils work together they learn to appreciate and applaud the achievements of others both in school and of famous artists. They look at the benefits of art and design in their world, for instance while creating a wall mural of their local environment, or a wall hanging of Mother Nature looking at the patterns in fruit and

vegetables. The temporary co-ordinator has some good ideas for the development of the subject but there has been little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. For example, there is some duplication of resources as a full audit of resources has not taken place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. Pupils make good progress and attain standards broadly in line with the national expectation at the age of seven years. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but with some good features. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a judgment of standards by Year 6 due to the lack of available evidence.
122. Within Years 1 to 4 pupils have good first-hand experiences of observing and discussing the products of other people before embarking on design and make projects of their own. For example, the pupils in Year 2 studied the playground equipment in the schoolyard, made drawings for themselves labelling the parts and talked about the materials they were made of. In Years 3 and 4 before making pop up cards, pupils looked at folding pictures in books and then modelled some of their ideas in paper before making their own in card. These are good learning experiences for the pupils and show that the teachers have an appropriate understanding of the subject.
123. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils' finished products are already bearing a significant resemblance to their original design ideas. One Year 1 pupil was proud to show her moving picture, a face with moving eyes created by a slide arrangement. The picture's eyes lit up and so did the child's eyes as she beamed with the pleasure of her finished product. In lessons, teaching builds successfully on pupils' previous learning. Before pupils made their pop up pictures in Years 3 and 4, they had the opportunity to learn how to use a cutting knife safely by using a steel ruler. Year 1 pupils are to practise sewing skills before embarking on their glove puppets later this term. This is further evidence of good learning experiences, which are systematically developing pupils' skills.
124. A very good lesson was observed in Year 2 where pupils were making their own models of playground equipment. There was good challenge in the lesson. For example, the teacher reminded pupils to think about the stability of their models. Pupils were encouraged to review their own work and their finished products showed a good level of imagination and creativity.
125. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work well together, often in mixed age and ability groups. When faced with a problem they will persevere such as in attaching materials together. They take a pride in their work and are eager to describe it to the rest of the class.
126. The present class of Year 5/6 pupils has not yet undertaken any lessons in this subject. The teacher has planned a block programme of work for the summer term on the topic of 'Moving Toys'. This provision is unsatisfactory and is not fully in line with the school's own scheme of work. For this reason, no work was seen on which to make secure judgments about standards.
127. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for 15 months and has had little opportunity to make an impact on the subject besides introducing a two-year rolling programme of topics for the subject in line with school policy. The subject is due for review in the coming year.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Attainment is in line with expectations for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven years. This indicates that standards have been maintained by the end of Year 2 but are not as good as they were at the time of the previous inspection when standards were above expectations at the age of eleven years. This is partly because although the large majority of pupils are set to achieve the expected level by the end of Year 6, not enough opportunities are provided for higher ability pupils to attain beyond this level. Pupils in the infant classes and in the Year 5/6 class, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. This is not the case in the Year 3/4 class where standards of recorded work are well below expectations and achievement is unsatisfactory. As a result, these pupils are not well prepared for the work expected of them in Years 5 and 6.
129. Year 1 pupils are developing a satisfactory knowledge and understanding about the local area and more distant places. They write about the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' and make simple comparisons between quiet and busy roads. This last theme is further developed in the Year 2/3 class. Pupils also write about different types of transport on the imaginary island of 'Struay'. Work on display indicates that they are given opportunities to use their mathematical skills as they conduct a traffic survey outside school. They also use observational skills well to interpret traffic conditions from photographs and record their findings in chart form. Opportunities to use the school grounds and local area result in the large majority of pupils developing satisfactory mapping skills.
130. The work done by Year 3/4 pupils since the beginning of the school year is of a low standard. The very small amount of recorded work in books is often unfinished and is poorly presented. In one lesson, where the learning objective was concerned with improving the environment, the complexity of the ICT work was too challenging for the majority of pupils and overwhelmed much of the geography component.
131. Progress accelerates in the Year 5/6 class as a result of the teacher's high expectations of effort and by Year 6 most pupils are developing satisfactory geographical knowledge and skills to enable them to produce work at the expected levels. They demonstrate a secure understanding of how water reaches the tap, producing detailed, labelled diagrams and written descriptions. They are beginning to use their knowledge to consider some of the ethical problems the world faces, such as the quality of water worldwide and ways in which this can be improved for the good of the people in those regions.
132. The quality of teaching over time is satisfactory in most classes except in the Year 3/4 class where evidence indicates that it is unsatisfactory. In the infant classes and the Year 5/6 class, there are good opportunities for pupils to work independently. Marking is mostly effective. It encourages good work and often sets targets for improvement. Expectations of presentation are particularly high in the Year 5/6 class and as a result, pupils take a pride in their work.
133. Planning of the work for each term mainly focuses upon national guidance attached to specific units of work and provides a sound framework to guide lesson planning. The assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory as there is no whole school system for teachers to follow and no efficient way of finding out how well pupils are progressing across the school.
134. The subject leader does not have enough opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in lessons. Pupils' work in books is checked from time to time but the

outcomes are not formally presented to staff and as yet the co-ordinator does not have a clear overview of standards throughout the school. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory.

135. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' personal development through opportunities to learn about the relationship between people and the environments in which they live.

HISTORY

136. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain levels in line with national expectations. This indicates that since the previous inspection, although standards have been maintained at Year 2, they are not as good at Year 6. By this age, pupils have a secure knowledge of historical facts but although they have some opportunities to learn skills such as being able to research a topic independently and work out some of the factors that have influenced past events, not enough higher ability pupils are given work to help them achieve beyond the expected level. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with satisfactory support in lessons and this enables them to make satisfactory progress and achieve at a similar level to others.
137. Pupils in the Year 1 lesson observed were provided with good opportunities to learn about 'eye witness accounts'. As a result, most were able to combine their knowledge of the main events leading up to the Great Fire of London with their literacy skills as they wrote in the style of Samuel Pepys' to record in diary form what they might have done or how they might have felt. Pupils with special educational needs were provided with carefully focused support and made the same good progress in the lesson as others. By Year 2, work in pupils' books shows that the large majority are achieving the expected level in their knowledge and understanding of ways in which their own lives are different from those of people who lived in the past. For example, they compare domestic equipment of a hundred years ago with that of the present day recognising how they have changed. They classify objects into groups, such as carpet beaters that were used in the past and vacuum cleaners that are used nowadays.
138. Pupils continue to make steady progress through the junior classes. Work in books shows that pupils in the Year 3/4 class are developing a satisfactory knowledge of life in Anglo-Saxon times. They record their work through writing accounts, drawing diagrams and using their imagination to write creatively; for example in stories about Grendel and Beowulf and the 'Exeter Book' of Anglo-Saxon riddles. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class are developing a satisfactory knowledge of Aztec life and a growing awareness of some of the main events that led to the fall of the Aztec Empire. In the lesson observed, pupils made good use of their scanning skills to identify key points in a prepared evidence document in preparation for writing a report.
139. The quality of teaching and learning over time is satisfactory. It was good in both of the lessons observed. The marking of pupils work is good in the infant classes and in the Year 5/6 class, providing pupils with clear information on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. All teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to record their work independently. Teachers' expectations of presentation are high in most classes, particularly in the Year 5/6 class and pupils respond positively. Expectations are not as high in the Year 3/4 class and as a result, pupils' work is often untidy and poorly organised. Satisfactory links are made with other subjects. For example, pupils learning about Anglo-Saxons produced pieces of weaving and Year 5/6 pupils used their knowledge of the Victorians to help in their performance of a Victorian Carol Concert. Good use is made of the local area,

particularly when learning about the Romans, but also through visits to places such as Ellesmere Port Boat Museum and Styal when learning about the Victorians.

140. Planning for work in history includes appropriate learning objectives to deliver a programme of study that is broad and balanced. The current system of collecting and recording evidence about what pupils know, understand and can do in history are unsatisfactory. Although teachers maintain their own records, these are not consistent and as a result, there is no whole school overview of how well pupils in each class are learning.
141. The co-ordinator's role does not provide enough opportunities for her to gain a clear overview of how successfully pupils are learning through observing the quality of teaching and the standards of work in each year group. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly through opportunities to learn about why people in the past did things and how these led to important events and changes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

142. Standards in ICT by the ages of seven and eleven years are below the national expectation. Standards remain very similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The school has made some progress towards the targets set for it at that inspection, chiefly in the area of resources and training. It has provided a good range of hardware and software to enable the pupils to receive adequate coverage of the ICT curriculum. Teachers have undergone recent training. The school has recently introduced a satisfactory programme of work, based on national guidelines, to support the teacher's planning. In some aspects of the work, pupils are quite confident, for example, in Years 3 to 6 the pupils' keyboard skills are well developed and they show a good understanding of the various icons on the toolbar. However, they have received an insufficient range of experiences over each of the strands of the curriculum and thus have insufficient skills to enable them to reach expected levels in Years 2 and 6.
143. The strength of the present provision is in the area of communicating information through word processing. In this one area of the work, standards are at the national expectation by Year 6. The pupils' own 'Fantasy Stories' show appropriate quality as presented in the classroom display. Pupils have saved and amended their work, selected different fonts, introduced graphic images and used Word art to enhance their work. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils word-process work to set out their poems or create covers for their Christmas Calendars. However, by the age of seven years very few pupils are able to save or retrieve work for themselves.
144. A number of factors are contributing to the pupils' lack of knowledge understanding and skills in ICT. Rather than unsatisfactory teaching, they are chiefly as follows:
- at both key stages, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in a systematic way;
 - insufficient time has elapsed since the introduction of the new scheme of work for pupils to have the breadth of experiences necessary to attain national standards;
 - the assessment of pupils' attainment is weak and the teachers have insufficient understanding of what pupils need to achieve to attain the appropriate standards.

145. At both key stages, pupils undertake work in data handling often linked to work in science or mathematics. In Year 1, pupils have produced pictorial graphs of their favourite car colours, for example, and examined the pictures to see what this shows. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are beginning to work on a simple spreadsheet in order to create a column graph of data they have collected in science. Whilst the work in Year 1 is at the appropriate standard compared to the age of the pupils concerned, the work of the older pupils is insufficiently developed.
146. In the few lessons observed, the teaching was satisfactory overall. It is in the planning of work in interesting contexts that there are strengths and in the relative lack of attention to the teaching of skills sequentially that there are shortcomings. There are some good examples of work set in the context of other subjects. In Years 3 and 4 pupils were using monitoring equipment to study the environment in connection with their work in geography. In the classroom, they have graphs on display that they have produced where they are beginning to interpret sound and light levels around the school.
147. The school has recently purchased a digital projector to ensure that all pupils can see when teachers are demonstrating new techniques. It was most effective when the teacher was patiently moving the pupils' learning forward and building pupils' vocabulary of technical terms such as 'cells' in spreadsheets. On another occasion, it was used less successfully when the teacher baffled the pupils by constantly introducing new ideas to the screen before other knowledge had been absorbed.
148. The pupils enjoy their time at the computer. They engage well with the activities and share the resources well. They support each other, behave well and respect the equipment.
149. The subject co-ordinator, recently appointed to the school, has made a satisfactory start. In the first instance and correctly, the problems with hardware and software have been addressed. The technical expertise of the co-ordinator is a real asset to the school in terms of troubleshooting equipment. The focus of development now needs to be in raising standards of attainment by ensuring that pupils receive an appropriate curriculum based on developing their knowledge, understanding and skills. In order to develop pupils' skills further there is likely to be the need for more staff training.

MUSIC

150. It was not possible to judge overall standards in music, or the quality of teaching, as no music lessons were observed. However, music is an important and carefully chosen feature in assemblies. This offers good opportunities for pupils to develop their listening skills and appreciation of music and allows them time to reflect on their own thoughts. In all of the assemblies observed, the pupils were quietly responsive to the music being played, sitting very quietly and attentively as they listened. Standards in singing in assemblies are satisfactory across the school where pupils sing hymns tunefully in response to the music being played.
151. The scheme of work and the subject planning show that all aspects of the programme of study are taught throughout the school. Discussion with Year 6 pupils indicates that they are given satisfactory opportunities to develop singing, listening, composing and performing skills through, for example, singing two part songs and composing and playing their own music.
152. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' achievements in the subject. This information is used to inform reports to parents and a copy is passed on to the next

teacher at the end of the year. This lack of a whole school agreed system is unsatisfactory, as it does not provide a consistent picture of how well pupils are progressing in each class.

153. A range of musical activities provides good opportunities for the pupils to share music through concerts in school and visits into the community. Music plays an important part in the services held in church where pupils sing, sometimes in Latin, and both the infants and juniors take part in annual school concerts. The Folk Choir gives carol concerts for residents in the local retirement home at Christmas and is currently rehearsing for performances at the Gateway Theatre and the Chester Carnival. In addition, pupils in years 5 and 6 are due to be involved in an 'Old Time Music Hall' workshop at the local High School. Visitors to the school provide good opportunities for the pupils to have a range of musical experiences, such as a recent visit by the Manchester Camerata and an Indian Dance performance. Currently, there are no opportunities for pupils to learn to play a specialist instrument.
154. The co-ordinator for music is skilled in the subject and aspirational for its improvement. Currently, however, there are not enough opportunities to observe teaching and learning to provide a clear overview of how well pupils' musical skills are developing throughout the school. Resources are adequate to support teaching and learning in the subject and are of good quality. The school is developing a range of additional equipment, such as an electronic keyboard and public address system, partly provided for through donations from the business community.
155. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly in opportunities for reflection and through sharing music with parents and the local and wider community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

156. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with the national expectations by Years 2 and 6. Standards remain very much the same as those reported at the time of the previous inspection. No lessons were seen in gymnastics during the inspection but the pupils are taught the full range of the curriculum. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have the opportunity to take part in swimming lessons. They make good progress; for example, in the present Year 6 all pupils are able to swim at least the required distance expected of eleven-year-olds. Pupils' skills and experiences are enhanced by the weekly opportunities to take part in football and netball clubs outside of lessons. School staff take these. There is a good take up rate in these activities and pupils enjoy inter-school competitions. The school team has recently won a local football competition.
157. The standards of dance in Years 1 and 2 are appropriate to the pupils' ages. In Year 1, pupils express themselves satisfactorily with graceful movements to create a simple narrative. They imitate good stretching moves to catch the 'good dreams' of the story and begin to interpret the mood and tempo of music to fit their sequences. This work is built on in Year 2 where pupils work in groups experimenting with mechanical movements and then develop harder sequences, for example mirrored patterns.
158. By Year 6 pupils display appropriate skills in passing and receiving balls in their games lesson. They can pass a rugby ball in pairs accurately over a distance of 3 to 4 metres and catch the ball confidently. They then apply these skills in small group attack and defence activities communicating well with each other.

159. The teaching is good, an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers challenge pupils both mentally and physically. Teachers maintain pupils' interest in their learning by varying activities within the overall theme of the lesson. Teachers offer good examples to pupils often by demonstration to illustrate a teaching point. The work planned for pupils clearly builds on their previous learning. For example, the pupils in Year 1 were reminded of how to use different levels in their warm up activities. A weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection remains. Insufficient opportunities are taken to encourage pupils to monitor and evaluate the work of each other, and to act as 'critical friend', in order to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of their performances.
160. Pupils listen carefully and follow instructions well. They have a good understanding of the need for exercise and by the time they reach Year 6 they know the effects it has on their bodies. They co-operate well in their group work and are supportive and sensible with each other in these situations. Not all pupils changed for the outdoor games activities. The school should review its procedures to ensure that this unsatisfactory situation can be improved.
161. There is satisfactory leadership of the subject currently. Already a thorough overview of the subject has been made in preparation for the subject becoming part of the next school development plan.