

INSPECTION REPORT

St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School

Northwich

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111461

Headteacher: Mrs J Boyle

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret Lewis
22787

Dates of inspection: 25 - 28 November 2002

Inspection number: 247116

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greenbank Lane Hartford Northwich Cheshire
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Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Simon Jones
Date of previous inspection:	October 2000

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22787	M Lewis	Registered inspector	Music Educational inclusion	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. Teaching and learning. Leadership and management. Key issues for action.
10965	P Edwards	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents and carers.
3942	K Sanderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	Quality and range of opportunities for learning.
24027	B Kutty	Team inspector	History Geography Foundation stage	
12900	L Short	Team inspector	English Physical education Special educational needs	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Wilfrid's is a Catholic Voluntary Aided school. It is larger than most primary schools with 358 pupils (183 boys and 175 girls) in 14 classes. There are 42 children in the reception classes. Before they start school many of the children attend the on-site pre-school on a part-time basis. The school is situated on a campus shared by six schools including a Catholic Secondary School. Pupils are drawn from three local parishes. A significant number travel to school by bus and taxi. A below average proportion of pupils (3 per cent) are eligible for free school meals. Nearly all pupils come from a white ethnic background. Two pupils speak English as an additional language but neither is in the early stages of learning English. A below average number of pupils (17) are on the register of special educational needs. Three pupils (0.8 per cent) have a Statement of Special Educational Need. This is also below the average.

Children start in the reception classes with a broad range of attainment but overall their attainment is typical for their age in personal, social and emotional and mathematical development and in speaking and listening. Attainment overall is above that expected for their age in number skills but below that expected in reading and writing.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides well for the pupils. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She has good support from the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. The good leadership and management have been major factors in the progress the school has made from being judged an underachieving school in 2000 to now being an effective school where pupils achieve well and exceed the standards expected of them at 11. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2. Financial management is sound overall. The school uses resources appropriately for the benefit of the pupils. It uses additional funding well. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards at eleven in English are well above the average.
- Standards at eleven in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. Children have a good start to their education and make rapid progress.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils behave well and their attitudes to learning are very good.
- Extra-curricular provision and pupils' involvement are very good.

What could be improved

- The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1.
- The understanding and involvement of governors of educational developments in the school.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics and the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 2000. The serious decline in the school's performance in national tests has been arrested and standards have risen in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching has improved in the Foundation Stage and in Key

Stage 2. Teachers now plan and assess work well for different groups of pupils; as a result pupils show very good attitudes to learning. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good.

The management and the curriculum in the Foundation Stage are much improved and children are provided with a good range of curriculum opportunities which helps them make good progress. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and senior staff are now good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has identified relevant areas for improvement in particular raising standards.

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	C	A	A	A	very high A*A well above average
mathematics	C	A	A	C	above average B average C
science	C	A*	A	A	below average D well below average E

Standards are rising throughout the school. There has been a significant improvement in test results for pupils in both key stages over the past two years. The trend in the school's results is now broadly the same as the trend nationally. In 2002 test results show that standards were well above average for English, mathematics and science in comparison with all schools and when based on pupils' previous results at Key Stage 1. In comparison with schools having a similar level of free school meals, pupils at 11 reached well above average standards in English and science but average in mathematics. Pupils achieved very highly in science in 2001 and results in science tests that year were in the highest five per cent of all schools. A similar rise in test results took place over the last two years for pupils in Year 2. They achieved well above average standards in both reading and writing, and above average in mathematics in 2002. In 2001 pupils' results at seven were in the highest five per cent of all schools for reading and writing. Teacher assessment of science in 2002 showed that pupils' performance was well below the average. Standards in science have improved and are now satisfactory.

Inspection findings show that the rise in standards is continuing. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in English where standards are well above average and they achieve well in mathematics and science and reach above average standards. In Year 2 pupils achieve well and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Pupils in Year 6 exceeded the challenging targets set by the school in English and mathematics in 2002. Higher but realistic school targets have been set this year and pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve them. Pupils' very good achievement in English is illustrated in their use of spoken and written language and in their clear enjoyment of books and reading. In mathematics pupils take pleasure in solving problems and applying and explaining their knowledge of mental calculations to their work. Throughout both key stages pupils do well in carrying out and recording experiments in science. At both key stages pupils do well in ICT and achieve above the expected standard. Pupils' attainment at Years 2 and 6 is average in all other subjects apart from art where pupils in Year 6 attain above the average.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress so that by the time they begin in Year 1, they are beyond the level expected for their age overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very good attitudes and show enthusiasm for school. They pay close attention in lessons and respond and concentrate very well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are sensible, courteous and show care for the school and the environment.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given to take on responsibilities. They develop good relationships with each other.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average and pupils enjoy school.

Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and the interest and involvement they have in their work and school activities make a significant contribution to their achievements.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. Consequently nearly all pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. It is best in the Foundation Stage, Year 2 and in Key Stage 2. There is a significant proportion of very good teaching in the Year 6 classes. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Children get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage where activities and learning experiences are well-planned and pupils' learning is checked carefully. In Years 2 to 6 teachers make very effective use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to teach English and mathematics. The use of the national strategies is satisfactory overall in the Year 1 classes. The school is currently emphasising the teaching of writing in order to increase pupils' skills. Drama is taught well particularly for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Visiting teachers make a good contribution to the teaching of art and drama. The teaching of mathematics is good. In mathematics lessons most teachers are skilful in teaching pupils different ways of working out mental arithmetic calculations. The pace of lessons sometimes drops when lessons are not timed sufficiently well. Pupils become restless, or if the timing is too hurried, they do not learn well enough. Teachers encourage pupils to investigate and find out for themselves in science. Pupils learn to record their experiments and this helps their understanding and to make good progress. Teachers have had up to date training in ICT and they use their expertise well to extend pupils' skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A good range of learning opportunities are offered throughout the school. Extra-curricular activities for pupils in both key stages are very good. The provision for residential visits and cross-curricular projects improve the curriculum in Key Stage 2.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has a high priority within the school and is managed very effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good and the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. It is very good for social development. Educational visits and visitors into school contribute well to pupils' social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. The school cares well for the pupils and is committed to their well-being and support of their individual needs. It checks pupils' progress well.

The school works closely with parents. Parents are kept well informed of the topics their children study and of their progress. The school encourages parents to be involved with their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher leads the school well. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the assistant head teacher who give a strong lead to curriculum initiatives. Subject co-ordinators in some subjects are new to their roles and need to develop subjects further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school. They are developing a sound understanding of the work of the school and fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and senior staff do this well. Careful analysis is used to identify priority areas for development. Governors evaluate some aspects of the school. They do not have enough input into the initiation of school development planning or monitor the results of their spending decisions.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses funding appropriately.

The school has adequate accommodation, satisfactory resources and sufficient teaching staff. The level of support staff in the Foundation Stage is insufficient. This impacts on children's progress in some areas of learning. Money is spent cautiously and the principles of best value are applied soundly.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school expects the children to work hard. Parents are comfortable to approach the school with concerns and consider it to be well led and managed. Their children like school and make good progress. The teaching is good and pupils behave well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some would like to be better informed on their children's progress. Some would like the school to work more closely with parents.

Inspectors agree with all the parents' positive views of the school but do not agree that the teaching is good overall in Key Stage 1. Inspectors consider that annual progress reports are satisfactory overall. They provide information on work covered, progress and targets for development. Parents have sufficient opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers. The concern raised by a small proportion of parents of younger pupils that messages written on reading records for pupils in Key Stage 1 went unanswered, is an issue of which the school is aware and is being addressed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There has been a major rise in standards since the previous inspection two years ago. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in English and well in mathematics and science. In Year 2 they achieve well in English and mathematics and satisfactorily in science.
2. The school has successfully reversed the decline in standards reported in the last inspection report and eradicated underachievement in these subjects. The trend in the school's results over recent years is now broadly in line with the national trend.
3. Test results in 2001 and 2002 for pupils aged 11 have shown a significant improvement in English, mathematics and science in comparison with all schools. Results were well above average for all these subjects in 2002 and when based on pupils' previous attainment at Key Stage 1. This was also the case for English and science in comparison with schools with a similar level of free school meals but not for mathematics where attainment was average.
4. Pupils' performance in national tests also improved significantly at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001 and 2002. In 2002 results in reading and writing were well above the national average and above the average in mathematics in comparison with schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, results in writing were well above average, in reading above average and mathematics in line with the average. Pupils in Key Stage 1 did exceptionally well in 2001 when results in reading and writing were in the highest 5 per cent of schools in the country and were well above average in mathematics. However, in teacher assessment of science in 2002 pupils' performance was assessed to be well below average. This is attributed by the school to the lack of teacher expertise in science assessment for that year and this is confirmed by inspection findings.
5. The considerable improvements in English and mathematics over the past two years have been due to the increased emphasis given and improvements made by the school in the teaching, learning, and the assessment and management of these subjects. The school exceeded the challenging targets it set in 2002 for both English and mathematics. It has set very challenging targets for 2003 based on the predictions of pupils' performance as a result of careful assessments. Pupils in the Year 6 classes are on course to meet these targets in both English and mathematics. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in English. In 2002 in mathematics and science boys did slightly better than girls who, nevertheless, performed higher than girls nationally. The school is very aware of its performance in national tests and makes comparisons with schools locally. It analyses them thoroughly and tracks pupils' performance from the time they begin in the reception classes.
6. Children do well in the Foundation Stage. They make a good start to their education in both of the reception classes. Many children have benefited from the part-time provision in the pre-school before starting full-time in the reception class. When they begin in the reception class, their overall attainment is broadly typical for four-year-olds in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, and speaking and listening. They attain above average in number skills but below average

in reading and writing. As a result of good teaching they make good progress and achieve well so that by the time they enter Year 1 their attainment is above average overall. They reach the levels expected of them in their personal, social and emotional development, reading and writing and creative development. They exceed the expected levels in speaking and listening and mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.

7. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress, particularly in reading and writing, and reach above average standards in all areas of English by the time they are in Year 2. They continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 and in Year 6 pupils achieve high standards in speaking and listening and in reading. Well-focused, daily, guided reading lessons in both key stages make a good contribution to the good development of pupils' reading skills. Standards have risen in writing at Key Stage 2 and writing is above average for pupils in Year 6. A significant proportion of higher attaining pupils reach the expected level for reading and writing before they begin in Year 6. This is due to the whole school approach taken by the school since the last inspection to improve pupils' skills in handwriting and presentation as well as planning opportunities for extended writing across different subjects such as in history where they write at length about the myths and legends of the Ancient Greeks.
8. Standards in mathematics by the end of both key stages are above average overall with a significant minority of pupils in Year 6 reaching well above the average. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school particularly in their understanding of number. In Year 2 they are able to explain the different ways they know to work out multiplication and the way it can be used to solve simple problems. Pupils in Year 6 confidently explore different ways of subtracting larger numbers and have a good understanding of the use of different types of fractions. They work quickly and accurately. Pupils do well in all areas of mathematics including shape and measurement and in the use and construction of a variety of graphs and charts.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning of skills, understanding and knowledge. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need make good progress and some make very good progress. This is because of the concentrated one-to-one help they receive which is carefully planned by teachers and support staff. When pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from the class for literacy and taught in small groups, they make very good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.
10. Pupils make steady progress in science in Key Stage 1 and standards are average overall. In Year 2 they learn to understand a fair test and to carry out and record simple investigations. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and in Years 5 and 6 they make very good progress and achieve well so that they attain above the average level. They extend their knowledge of scientific enquiry further becoming confident in setting up their own experiments. They apply their knowledge well to their observations and make good use of what they have learnt previously.
11. Standards in ICT are above those expected nationally for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. The school has kept up closely with the most recent changes in the requirements of the National Curriculum and at both key stages pupils work very confidently in ICT. They develop their skills quickly in Key Stage 1 and soon become able to input, save and retrieve text. By Year 2 they add pictures to text, record graphs and choose the most fitting types of graph for different purposes. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress and are able to use a range of ideas to assemble

booklets and the school newspaper. They research and find information, applying it to topics and presentations.

12. Pupils' attainment at seven and 11 in all other subjects is at the nationally expected level apart from art where pupils at 11 exceed the level expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The attitude of most pupils to the school and their work is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in the interesting activities provided. Most pupils work conscientiously and with commitment in lessons. This was observed in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were taking part in drama. They collaborated together excellently and discussed with enthusiasm their ideas for their roles within the scene they were studying. Most pupils listen very well to their teachers and to each other. They are keen to respond to questions and to share their own views and ideas.
14. The standard of behaviour is good overall. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils move around the school quietly and calmly. The school's golden rules are well known to pupils and they respond well to the use of 'golden time' when they are rewarded for good behaviour. They show respect for the environment, for the school and for each other's property. Two boys were excluded for fixed periods during the last reporting year. Parents and pupils have few concerns regarding bullying. Pupils know who they should approach if any incidents occur. The majority of parents and pupils are happy with the behaviour in the school.
15. Relationships are good throughout the school. Boys and girls of all ages mix freely. They work and play well together and care for each other. They consider each other's feelings and the majority of pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others. Pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes in lessons and very positive attitudes in withdrawal sessions. With appropriate support from class teachers and support staff they cope very well in small group and whole class situations. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs, to their work and in general, are very good.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. They are very keen to accept responsibility for duties in the classroom and around the school, for example, serving on the school council, acting as litter pickers and register monitors. They discharge these responsibilities conscientiously and collaborate well in the routines of school life. Pupils show good ability to use their own initiative and take responsibility for their own learning in lessons and when completing their homework.
17. At 95.5 per cent attendance was above the national average for the last reporting year and broadly in line with that reported at the time of the previous inspection. The level of punctuality is good and the majority of pupils arrive on time allowing sessions to continue without interruption.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good overall. In nearly all lessons seen during the inspection the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory or better. It was good in 45 per cent of lessons, very good in 22 per cent, and excellent in three per cent. Three per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. There is now less unsatisfactory teaching and a higher proportion of very good teaching. Teaching has improved in the Foundation Stage and is now good. Teaching is also good in Key Stage 2. It is very good in the Year 6 classes. Excellent teaching was seen in Years 2 and 6. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. It is better in the Year 2 classes than in the Year 1 classes. In Year 2 the quality of teaching varies from excellent to satisfactory with a significant proportion of good teaching. However, in the Year 1 classes there was no teaching better than satisfactory and one lesson was unsatisfactory.
19. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and children have a good start to their education. Teachers have high expectations of children in all areas of learning. The strengths of the teaching are the very good emphasis that all staff give to the children's personal, social and emotional development and on improving their communication and language skills. The good assessment procedures enable teachers and the support assistants to know and meet the children's needs very well. Children who give a cause for concern in their learning development are identified early and receive additional help and support.
20. A most important strength of the teaching in all phases is the good quality of teachers' planning and the thoroughness of the preparation that teachers make for lessons. Most lessons build well on what pupils have learned previously. Good reminders are given to them, by the use of effective questioning to check for pupils' understanding and to give them the opportunity to show what they already know. In most lessons teachers challenge the ability of pupils of different groups of children appropriately. Work is matched well to pupils' individual needs. Classes from Years 2 to 6 are set by ability in literacy and numeracy. Within the ability classes, teachers match work to different levels of ability. Talented pupils in music and writing have individual work matched to their needs. In this way all pupils are helped to achieve well and make good progress.
21. Another important strength in the teaching is the good use that teachers make of the assessment information that they gain from pupils' work and their individual knowledge of pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Assessment is used particularly well in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics across the school to improve children's learning. However, this is less so for other curriculum subjects. For example, children in the reception classes make rapid progress from a below average starting point in reading and writing to reach the expectation for their age when they start in Year 1. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is very good in English particularly in Key Stage 2. It gives good pointers to pupils to help them improve. This is not the same in mathematics and science where comments are less helpful to secure improvement. However, all work is marked regularly, and positively with encouraging comments.
22. Teachers manage pupils very well in the Foundation Stage, in Year 2 and in Key Stage 2. This is as a result of interesting lessons with good explanations and the use of stimulating resources and practical activities. For instance, in literacy lessons teachers choose texts which fascinate the children such as, 'Six Dinner Sid' for pupils in the Year 2 classes and, 'The Hobbit' for those in Year 6. Resources are used well

in science lessons for practical experiments such as making an electrical circuit. Teachers and helpers have good relationships with the pupils and the way that they organise and manage them helps them learn. Teachers create a hard working but friendly atmosphere in lessons, encouraging pupils to share their ideas and valuing and empathising with their ideas and responses. A teacher working with the lower ability set in Year 2 praised pupils well for their contributions and gave hesitant pupils confidence to read their work aloud.

23. An additional contribution to the good quality of teaching is the use of specialist visiting teachers at Key Stage 2, for instance, in a drama lesson led well by the class teacher for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The visiting teacher played a main part and made a good contribution to pupils' learning in a re-enactment of a situation taking place during The Reformation. This dramatic exploration enabled pupils to gain a very good insight and perspective of life in England at that time.
24. However, despite the many strengths of the teaching there are some shortcomings. Teachers do not always check carefully for pupils' understanding. Checking is sometimes too brief, with a lack of probing questions. This happened in a mathematics lesson in Year 1 when insufficient time was given for pupils to consider for themselves what they had learnt. At times teachers assume pupils' understanding to be better than it is. For instance, in an English lesson in a different Year 1 class, the teacher did not realise or check that very few of the pupils understood the meaning of vocabulary such as 'manual, caption, and label'. The interpretation by some teachers of the nationally recommended guidelines is insecure in some classes and not all teachers are confident in teaching art and design and music where no recent training has taken place. Although teachers plan the same lessons across the year group the emphasis is not always the same. For instance, in one art lesson for pupils in Year 3 where the task was very challenging, the lesson did not develop pupils' skills in a systematic and progressive way but in the parallel class this was done well. Lessons in art and design and design and technology, particularly in Key Stage 1, are too closely directed and insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to express their own ideas. When introductions are too long, the pace of the lesson slows and pupils become restless. When the conclusion of a lesson is hurried, there are missed opportunities for pupils to discuss and think for themselves.
25. Teachers have good overall knowledge and understanding in most subjects of the curriculum and particularly in the skills of teaching of literacy and numeracy. The programme for the monitoring of teaching, along with the intensive programme of staff training in literacy and numeracy, has contributed effectively to raising the quality of teaching and of pupils' learning in these subjects. Some teachers are less confident in the teaching of music. This means that the pace of the lessons is sometimes too slow and the content is not interesting enough.
26. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good overall. It is very good in the junior classes and good in Year 2. The teaching of the National Literacy Strategy has improved since the last inspection and is now well embedded. The teaching of reading, writing, spelling and handwriting is systematic and this helps pupils to do well. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of teaching the skills of reading and writing. However, the presentation and punctuation of the work of lower attaining pupils is inconsistent. The school has a structured approach to teaching reading skills and this works well. Pupils learn to enjoy books and stories of all kinds. Older pupils become confident in reading and in their text study learn to explore how authors create different effects in their writing.

27. Teaching in mathematics is good overall with some very good teaching in the Year 6 classes. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Teachers are generally confident with the National Numeracy Strategy, which results in lessons being brisk and moving at a good pace. Teachers develop pupils' mathematical thinking to find out alternative ways of working out answers and problems. They build well on what pupils already know in mathematics and high attaining pupils are given more challenging work.
28. The teaching of science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but it is very good in Key Stage 2. This is due to the very careful planning, use of assessment, organisation of lessons and very effective questioning. Assessment of science is less effective in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching in all other subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory in both key stages apart from in ICT where teaching is good throughout the school. Support staff help pupils well and those who teach small groups of pupils to boost their attainment in mathematics and English are usually effective although this is not always the case.
29. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well. They make very good progress. They are fully included in lessons when working with the whole class, and carefully matched work ensures they learn at an appropriate level. When pupils receive individual teaching, for example, for focused language support, teaching assistants use pupils' individual plans very effectively to plan each new step in their learning. Good quality learning resources are plentiful and used to very good effect. Pupils with statements of special educational need are taught very well and make very good progress. They are fully included in all educational and social experiences. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is closely monitored and recorded by all staff involved with them on a regular basis and particularly by the co-ordinator for special educational needs.
30. Homework is satisfactory and is similar to that in most primary schools in the infant classes. For the older pupils in Key Stage 2, it is well focussed and better than in the average school. It is given in accordance with the home school agreement.

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

31. The curriculum is broadly based and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The well above average time devoted to religious education impinges on the balance of time available for some other individual subjects such as music. However, because of the school's successful efforts in developing cross-curricular initiatives, for instance, the development of extended writing through history, geography and religious education and the development of art and design, dance and drama through religious education, the balance and breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils and they are prepared appropriately for the next stage of their education.
32. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and enables pupils to be supported across a range of curriculum subjects with emphasis given to literacy and numeracy.
33. At the time of the previous inspection a key issue was identified to ensure that teachers' planning addressed the needs of all pupils and that tasks were matched to their abilities and interests. This has been vigorously tackled. Teachers work hard to plan a range of appropriate tasks for pupils of different abilities within lessons. Arrangements for teaching pupils in classes set by ability in English and mathematics from Years 2 to 6 enable teachers to bring a sharp focus to planned activities and this

has played a part in raising standards. The overall quality of curriculum planning is good. Planning extends over the whole year, and across the whole of a pupil's time in school, and sets out clearly what will be taught and when. The school is continually thinking about its planned curriculum and how it might be improved. For example, ideas are currently being mooted about trying to give more intensive coverage of subjects such as design and technology and art and design through the allocation of 'blocks' of time, and at the same time creating more opportunities for links to other curriculum areas. Planning for the teaching of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are very good. Both national strategies have had a positive impact on standards since the last inspection.

34. Work is well matched to pupils with special educational needs both in the classroom setting and in situations where they are supported outside the classroom. The planning of the work for these pupils relates very well to targets set in individual educational plans. When pupils are withdrawn the planned work is well linked to what is happening within the class.
35. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Aspects are discussed during 'circle time' when pupils are able to sit and discuss, with their friends and adults, things which are important to them. Requirements relating to sex education are met through a school-developed programme of work for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school addresses issues of personal, social and health education regularly and frequently. Opportunities for making pupils aware of the misuse of drugs are developed through programmes such as, 'Me' and 'Looking after Myself'. Other agencies, such as the Schools' Nursing Service, make contributions in supporting work in health education.
36. There is very good provision for 'out of school' and 'extra-curricular' activities. The school provides a 'before' and 'after' school club, and a range of other well-attended activities during lunch times and after school. These include chess, French, creative sewing, gymnastics, creative arts and a range of sports and musical activities. Within this, the school has been successful in providing opportunities for younger pupils as well as for older ones. All of this is set against the logistical backdrop of the school ensuring the safe arrival and departure of the great majority of its pupils by chartered buses and taxis.
37. Very effective use of visits to such places as Roman Chester, Styal Mill, Norton Priory, theatres in Chester and Manchester, galleries and libraries is made to improve the curriculum. Pupils also have opportunities to meet with a diverse range of visitors, from re-cycling officers to Egyptian archaeologists, from Nigerian artists to the Weaver Valley Drama Group. The school encourages links with visiting artists and crafts people and specialist teachers from Cheshire School of Music and the Manchester Arts Education Festival who work directly with pupils. The curriculum is further enriched by the residential visits made by pupils throughout the junior classes to Conway, Malham, Ironbridge and Fairbourne. All of these opportunities make a significant contribution to widening pupils' academic, social and cultural education.
38. The school has good links with partner institutions including the on-site pre-school and the local high school that share the same campus. Students on work experience and some students from Years 12 and 13 are made welcome in the school and their support is much appreciated. The cross-phase projects developed jointly by the local high school and 'feeder' primary schools are especially effective. These, along with teacher visits and induction visits for pupils, help prepare pupils well for the next phase of their education.

39. There are sound links between the school and the community it serves. Pupils are encouraged to become involved in charity work and have been successful in raising significant sums of money, for example, for CAFOD and the NSPCC. Visitors from the local community include the police, doctor, nurse, parents and grand parents. Pupils develop an appreciation of the social needs of the community in which they live and of the wider world.
40. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. This matches the findings at the last inspection. There are some features of good practice within some lessons that could be built upon further across the curriculum. For example, in PSHE, art and design and drama lessons, pupils in Key Stage 2 are given opportunities to think about and share their feelings and consider and respect those of others. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, this is less the case in the infant classes where teachers often miss opportunities to develop pupils' spirituality. Some opportunities are planned to enable pupils to explore the beliefs of others. For example, older pupils study Judaism and Islam and pupils in the Foundation Stage learn about the festival of Diwali. Pupils in Year 3 showed real surprise and wonder when they discovered that a magnet would lift far more paper clips than they predicted. As a school pupils show their concern for others by raising funds for a children's charity through sponsored maths games and collecting boxes for the Christmas Shoe box appeal.
42. Provision for pupils' moral development is good and the provision for pupils' social development is very good. Both these judgements match the findings at the last inspection. The school states clearly what it expects from its pupils. Time is given to developing the importance of listening to others, valuing their views and the success of this is seen in the way pupils work together, both in lessons and in the playground. Pupils clearly understand the results of their actions on others. The older pupils show maturity and know what is right and wrong. These qualities form the basis of discussion in their PSHE lessons. As a result, they are considerate and display good behaviour. Through a range of subjects, pupils are offered opportunities to develop their confidence to work in groups. Pupils form good relationships with their peers and with all adults in school. They are polite, helpful, confident and happy to help others. For instance, they show responsibility when acting as an equipment monitor in science, as a team captain or as a member of the school's council. The range of extra-curricular activities and programme of visits, including residential visits for pupils in all year groups in Key Stage 2, is very good and has a positive impact on pupils' social development.
43. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and has improved since the last inspection. As part of a creative arts project last year pupils performed 'Macbeth' in an African setting. Older pupils learned and sang African songs. An artist and actor contributed significantly to pupils' cultural development as part of this project. A visiting Greek theatre drama group and an Egyptian archaeologist have supported pupils' work well in history. In art, pupils study the work of a small number of artists but these are mostly from European cultures. Pupils gain a good understanding of their local culture in geography lessons and when they visit Norton Priory, the Salt Museum, Roman Chester and theatres. Good provision is made for pupils to learn a range of musical instruments. These lessons are taught by visiting musicians. All pupils have opportunities to join lunchtime and after-school clubs to learn French.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. As at the time of the previous inspection the school provides a caring, supportive environment where every pupil is respected and valued. The majority of parents are happy with the support and guidance offered to their children. They feel that teachers know their pupils well and are helping them to become mature. Teachers monitor pupils' personal development closely through pupil profiles and achievement awards. Emphasis is placed on raising pupils' self esteem and making them aware of their individual achievements. The autumn term parent-teacher consultation meeting is used well by teachers for discussing pupils' personal development.
45. Staff use the school's discipline policy consistently to promote good behaviour. The policy is well supported by the home-school agreement. Procedures for dealing with any reported incidents of bullying are well known by staff, pupils and parents.
46. The monitoring of attendance is very good. Reasons are always sought for pupils' absences on the first day. The education welfare officer visits the school at least each term and works closely with the staff where there is perceived to be a problem with attendance.
47. The child protection policy effectively follows the procedures laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee. All staff have attended recent training on child protection issues.
48. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessments are undertaken. The school maintains appropriate links with outside agencies and lunchtime staff have attended courses to aid them in their role. The arrangements for first aid and informing parents of accidents and treatments are good. The school cares very well care for pupils with special educational needs and those with a Statement of Special Educational Need whose programmes of work match their individual statements well.
49. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainments and progress have been developed well since the last inspection and are now good, especially in English and mathematics. Alongside statutory national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6, optional recommended tests are taken by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Assessments are made each half term in English and mathematics and each term in science although assessment is less well developed in other curriculum subjects. The school has developed the careful analysis of test results well. It gains useful information on trends for pupils of different abilities and needs. Specific use of data devised by the Fischer Family Trust to analyse pupils' National Curriculum test results for 2002 enabled the school to ascertain what proportion of pupils, at age 11, had exceeded expectations when judging their results against their attainment in Key Stage 1. This kind of information is now being used to influence planning. The analysis of statutory and 'optional' tests by the assessment co-ordinator, enabled the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in English and mathematics, and as a consequence, the school worked out an amended programme of work to be covered with revised learning objectives and targets. Class teachers are fully informed and aware of work to be addressed to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils have group and individual targets and objectives, and they are aware of the progress expected of them. Teachers are aware of the levels of attainment that all pupils are expected to achieve at each phase in these subjects. In order to achieve more consistency in assessment, teachers work regularly in staff meetings on increasing their expertise in judging the 'level' of a piece of work, according to the levels of the

National Curriculum. In other subjects of the curriculum, teachers are currently using more 'informal' assessments. The school is aware of the need and has plans to develop a more structured approach in these subjects, building on the good practice developed in English, maths and science.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The good partnership developed between the school and parents found at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained.
51. The majority of parents indicate they are pleased with what the school provides and their children achieve. Parents feel 'The Link' newsletter keeps them well informed about the curriculum to be studied and other developments. The prospectus is attractively presented and provides a useful practical guide to the school. Parents know that they are welcome in the school at any time. The homework diary provided for pupils in the junior department is well used for home school communication. The concern raised by a small minority of parents of younger pupils that messages written on infant department reading records went unanswered is an issue of which the school is aware. Consideration is being given by staff to ways in which home-school communication can be improved. Annual progress reports are satisfactory and provide information on work covered and progress with targets for development. Nevertheless care needs to be taken that the language used is appropriate and readily accessible to parents.
52. Parents are consulted at every stage of the identification and assessment process of pupils with special educational needs and are involved in reviews. Parents are encouraged to support their children at home. Reports for pupils with special needs are given to parents at open evenings and in the end of year written reports. Liaison with parents is very good.
53. The involvement of parents in the work of the school is good. Parents support in classrooms with lessons in science, art and design. They assist with photocopying, performances and swimming. Parents provide transport for football matches and support on residential visits. Staff are very appreciative of this assistance. Parents are supportive of the school's homework policy and feel involved in this aspect of school life through the home-school agreement. The school has a 'before' and 'after' school club to assist parents with child care arrangements. The Parents' Association is active in organising fund raising and social events such as plant sales, the casino night and the summer fair to support the school and provide learning resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when she was new to her job and leadership and management were judged to be satisfactory. Since then she has ensured that the school has tackled the issues identified in the last inspection report in 2000 vigorously. Standards have been raised extensively in English, mathematics and science throughout the school and underachievement has been eradicated. The overall quality of teaching has been raised in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. The Foundation Stage now has an effective curriculum and good leadership. The headteacher has a clear sense of educational direction for the school. She evaluates its work effectively and knows what needs to be done to make further improvements such as the teacher assessment of science at both key stages and mathematics at Key Stage 1. She is committed to ongoing improvements. She has succeeded in

making new senior staff appointments that have contributed very well to the good improvements the school has made. She has built up an established team of new and experienced teachers and has secured their support to improve teaching and the management of curriculum subjects. Management structures and lines of communication are well developed through the school. Staff meetings and key stage meetings are regular and well-organised to agreed agendas.

55. The deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher were appointed several months after the previous inspection. They support the headteacher very well and set good examples of very good practice to other staff. Both have both made a good contribution to developing their assigned areas since then. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for one of the Year 6 classes and teaches to his strengths in both classes along with the other Year 6 teacher by specialising in some subject teaching such as physical education. This is a good arrangement for both teachers and works well. He also manages the school's standard funding and is developing staff in-service training. Since he came to the school he has been responsible for and successful in improving assessment throughout the school and the tracking of pupils' progress which has made a good impact on raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics.
56. The Foundation Stage is much improved since the last inspection. The assistant headteacher as co-ordinator in partnership with the rest of staff and in consultation with the pre-school setting has done a lot of work to improve the quality of the curriculum provision. She has prioritised the areas for development and used the resources well to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She provides good educational direction for the children, staff and parents. The school now has an effective and well-established curriculum in the Foundation Stage. The new planning system focuses clearly on what staff want children to learn and experience. The assessment procedures are thorough and staff use the lesson evaluations and the observations well to plan for the next step in children's learning. The ICT suite is used effectively to develop children's skills in information and communication technology. Staff prepare children well for the next stage in their learning. Children have easy access to the resources that they choose and use them confidently. However, freedom of choice and expression in some aspects of creative development is weaker compared with other areas of learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the support offered is good, overall. The good support that children receive for part of the morning by the part time teaching assistant is helping to improve the learning in literacy and numeracy based activities. However, the lack of adult support in the afternoon is having an impact on children's learning.
57. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has a high priority with the school and is very effectively managed. Staff for special educational needs, including the co-ordinator, have a clear role. The governing body is fully involved in monitoring and developing an overview of special educational needs provision. The school pays due regard to the recent Code of Practice. There is a small teaching room which provides a quiet and purposeful learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. The organisation and functioning of the room are in keeping with the good practice in the rest of the school. The pupils are supported in small or individual withdrawal groups and in class. Support assistants are well informed and are well deployed to enable the needs of pupils to be met effectively. All staff are efficiently deployed with their time being well managed and used to gain maximum support for the pupils.

58. The school is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all to learn and to ensure that all pupils are fully involved and included in learning. A co-ordinator has recently been appointed to ensure that any pupils who are recognised as gifted and talented are given work at their individual level.
59. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching play a major part in the school's self review of its work. Monitoring of teaching is undertaken by senior staff through a structured programme as well as by local education authority advisors. Performance management systems are in place and up to date for teachers. Systems to include teaching assistants are being developed. The induction for newly qualified teachers and those joining the school is good. The school has links with Manchester Metropolitan University for initial teacher training and Mid-Cheshire College for students studying for national vocational qualifications.
60. Most teachers carry a responsibility for leading and managing work in one or more subjects. Several subject co-ordinators, for instance, in English, science, ICT, design and technology, and music and physical education are new to their roles. They have job descriptions as co-ordinators and a good understanding of their role. However, they have not yet had sufficient time to develop an overview of the curriculum, standards, the teaching and learning and assessment in their subjects. However, monitoring, evaluating and curriculum reviews are planned for the current year in ICT, science, geography and art.
61. The current school development plan is a good working tool. It defines school priorities clearly and how they should be tackled. For instance, it gives clear targets and success criteria for developing pupils' writing. The plan of action defines concisely and clearly how this is to be done. The plan links well with staff development and costs; resources and time allocations are well defined. Success criteria have a clear link to raising standards. However, the governing body relies heavily on the headteacher to set the educational direction of the school.
62. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties satisfactorily. It has maintained the satisfactory systems it had in place at the previous inspection although there have been several changes of members and a change of chair and vice chair since then. No recent training has been undertaken by the whole governing body. There are well-established committees to monitor the different aspects of school. The sub-committees meet regularly for example, the finance committee meets twice a term and the others meet once a term. The headteacher makes regular reports to the curriculum sub-committees on the progress of the actions identified. Good links are established between the special educational needs co-ordinator and the governing body through the link governor. The governing body acknowledges that there is a need to further develop the links with other subjects and aspects. The chair of governors and the vice-chair are clear about some of the areas that need further improvement. Although the governing body has established effective systems to gather information about different aspects of the school, the monitoring of the impact of these actions is less rigorous. There is no formal structure for checking the impact of these decisions. For instance, the governors have taken decisions to retain parallel classes although the school is facing a reduction in pupil numbers. This is expensive and has hindered the appointment of much needed support staff.
63. Financial management is satisfactory. The school monitors spending carefully with the help of a consultant and money is spent cautiously. Specific grants and other government funds are used appropriately for instance, for staff in-service training to raise standards of teaching and learning and for building grants to improve the

accommodation. When making these decisions the governors assessed the needs of the school carefully and applied the principles of best value. Additional funding raised by the school is used well for the benefit of the pupils. A good example of this was the additional money used last year to provide additional computers in classrooms.

64. The numbers and experience of the teaching staff are sufficient to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum adequately. However, the number of teaching assistants in school is low compared with other schools. The ratio of adults to pupils in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. There is only one part time teaching assistant who shares her time between the two reception classes. The teaching assistants have all had training in child protection and information and communication technology.
65. Learning resources are satisfactory and are used effectively to support the teaching and learning of all the subjects and the areas of learning in the reception classes. The resources are good for ICT and satisfactory in other subjects. However, the resources to deliver the newly introduced scheme of work on food technology are inadequate. The school has improved the outdoor equipment available for younger children and plans are in hand to provide climbing frames and other equipment for the outdoor area. The school had increased the number of reading books and amount of research materials for pupils although there is still a need to extend this further. The library books are organised in subject areas and the reading books are matched to pupils' levels of reading. However, this facility is not put to good enough use, as pupils are not given the opportunity to use the library regularly through a well-planned timetable for different age groups and classes. The school uses the ICT suite well to improve pupils' research skills.
66. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. Improvements have been made since the last inspection and it is to be improved very shortly through the refurbishment of the area used by the Foundation Stage and one Year 1 class. The site is clean, tidy and well maintained by hardworking staff. Attractive displays show how well teachers value pupils' work. The outside area is spacious. Nevertheless, the surface of the basketball area of the playground is uneven and rough in places.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff, and governors should:
 - (1) Improve the overall quality of teaching for pupils in the Year 1 classes to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress and build on their good achievements in the Foundation Stage
(see paragraphs, 18, 24, 41, 51, 84.)
 - (2) Improve the leadership and management of the school in order to raise standards by:
 - increasing the involvement of the governors by involving them more fully in the analysis of the school's performance and its work, in the school development plan and in monitoring the outcomes of their decisions
 - developing the role of subject co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics and the Foundation Stage to include an understanding of

standards; teaching and learning; the curriculum and assessment in their subjects

(see paragraphs; 60, 61, 62, 105, 110, 124, 132.)

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

- increase the ratio of adults to children in the Foundation Stage in line with recommendations
- improve the marking of mathematics and science to ensure it informs pupils of what they do well and how they can improve their work
- improve teacher assessment in science at both key stages*
- monitor the work of teaching assistants*
(see paragraphs: 64, 75, 21, 90, 28, 99, 59.)

*The school has already begun work in this area

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

76

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

37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactorily	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	34	21	2	0	0
Percentage	3	22	45	28	3	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	358
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	17

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	28	27	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	28	28
	Girls	22	25	26
	Total	47	53	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (95)	96 (97)	98 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	23	21
	Girls	24	24	22
	Total	50	47	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (93)	85 (97)	78 (93)
	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	33	27	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	29	31
	Girls	25	21	26
	Total	53	50	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (91)	83 (88)	95 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	29	29
	Girls	25	22	23
	Total	53	51	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (90)	85 (90)	87 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
321	3	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
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)	16.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

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

Financial information

Financial year	2002
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	£
Total income	800, 971
Total expenditure	831,667
Expenditure per pupil	2,194
Balance brought forward from previous year	39, 696
Balance carried forward to next year	9000

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5

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	350
Number of questionnaires returned	182

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	41	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	45	6	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	48	5	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	59	8	1	3
The teaching is good.	49	42	3	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	48	15	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	34	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	47	14	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	41	2	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	43	4	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	56	5	1	4

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

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

68. Children are admitted to the Foundation Stage in the September in the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection there were forty-two children in two separate reception classes. Of these 31 per cent would not be five until the summer. In addition to the two reception teachers a support assistant works five mornings a week. Her time is shared between the two classes. Any child with a Statement of Special Educational Need receives good support. Staff provide a good start to children's education in a safe, secure and effective unit where children are happy to come to school. There is effective liaison between the pre-school setting and the reception staff. This helps make the transition to school easy for children.
69. Many children enter the reception classes with skills that are in line with those expected of their age in almost all areas of learning except in reading, writing and number skills. Reading and writing skills are below that expected of their age, whereas in the number aspect of mathematical development a significant number of children start with attainment above that expected of their age. The good teaching along with the good help offered by the support assistant, enables all children to make good progress in their basic skills. By the time they leave the reception classes, they are well on their way to attaining beyond the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Teaching is good in this area of learning and children make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children begin school with skills that are in line with those expected of their age. Teachers give opportunities to play in different social groups. Children build enough self-confidence to attempt and overcome problems as they play. For example, a group who were making the model of a village realised that they did not have the resources to make a road. One boy found suitable construction material and brought it to the group who joined in to create a road. The teacher praised the boy for his initiative. Staff set good examples for children, always taking time to listen to their suggestions. Children are given opportunities to take on responsibilities around the class like being the register monitor, distributing beakers during snack times and watering the plants. They do this confidently and effectively. The snack times are used well by teachers to develop children's social skills. Children are always very polite to each other and to adults. Children's independent skills are developed systematically through praise and encouragement. Most children can manage to get dressed and undressed for physical education and they help one another in the process. Their behaviour in and outside the class is always very good.

Communication, language and literacy

71. The teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy have improved since the last inspection. They are now good and children make good progress. Children start in the reception classes with well developed speaking and listening skills. Carefully planned activities and the small group support they receive in the morning sessions extend children's language skills and they are well on their way to attaining beyond what is expected of them by the time they begin in Year 1. Staff use the 'role-play' situations well to model language and develop children's understanding

of how to use talk to imagine and recreate characters and experiences. They sit with children during snack times and encourage discussions within the group. As a result children gain an increased understanding of the need to listen to others and how to initiate conversations. Staff encourage the less able children to talk about their experiences in these situations and this helps them to gain self-confidence to speak in a larger group. Teachers use stories and other resources well to develop children's talk.

72. The careful organisation and planning of books and the opportunities children have to share them with friends, help them to develop their interests in reading. Aspects of the Literacy Strategy are introduced slowly in a way that interests young children and extends their skills in reading and writing. Children are enthusiastic about reading the big book with the teacher. Teachers use these sessions effectively to raise children's understanding of stories as well as how to apply their knowledge about letter sounds, frequently used words and picture clues to make sense of what they read. They are encouraged to take books home to share with adults. The teachers offer good suggestions to parents as to what to do and how to develop children's skills without losing sight of enjoyment for reading. They make good use of the support staff and other adult helpers to maximise the opportunities children have to share and read stories and books in small groups. The support offered by the support staff is good. All children make a good start in learning to read. The majority of children are using letter sounds to work out unknown words. They are confident to talk about the pictures and most of them can state which part of the book or story they like best and why. The majority are well on their way to attaining standards expected of them by the end of reception with a significant minority achieving above this.
73. Children are provided with a variety opportunities to write. They write instructions to get to the shop or make a shopping list or storybook about stories they hear such as 'The Little Red Hen'. When they begin school children's writing skills are below those expected for their age. The good teaching and support they receive in the reception classes help them to make good progress. Staff provide good examples for the children. They act as scribe to what children say in discussions and develop their interests in writing. Higher attaining children begin to write simple sentences independently. In one lesson a group of children wrote instructions about the way to the shop; one of them wrote, 'go across the field and over the road'. Nearly all children use words in their writing. They sequence pictures correctly to retell a story. Standards in writing are in line with those expected nationally.

Mathematical development

74. Teachers provide a range of activities to support children's mathematical development. Teaching and learning is good and children make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers use nursery rhymes, action songs and games to make the learning of mathematics fun for children. Staff use 'role-play' areas effectively to build on and extend children's understanding of numbers, shape and measure. For example, the teaching assistant asked a group to make a list of things they wanted and to write down the prices. Most children could do this successfully. She extended the children's understanding of numbers and counting by asking them to read out their lists and give her the correct amount by counting out one pence coins. With some support, a child with special educational needs was able to choose what he wanted and identify the numbers on a card. The higher achievers in the group compared the prices by working out how many more coins were needed. In one session a group of higher attaining children were trying to work out how ten fruits could be separated into two groups and how to record it. One

girl pointed out that she could record it by drawing a circle around each group to show that they were two sets of fruits. Most children can recognise and sequence numbers up to six confidently. They can tell the teacher what is one more than a given number. They develop a good understanding of shapes, space and measure. They compare containers according to size and explore which one will hold more water. They know the names of two-dimensional shapes and use them to find how many different shapes they have used to make a picture. Nearly all of the children are well on their way to attaining beyond the expected level by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children start the Foundation Stage with a reasonable understanding of the world around them. Staff in the reception classes build on this knowledge and extend it further through well-planned activities. Practical activities, such as experimenting with a torch to see what happens to the shadow as it is moved nearer and farther away from an object, raises children's interest and enthusiasm to learn about how things work and how they change. Children use their observations well to describe the texture of the fruits and identify the seeds. They know that seeds grow into plants. Opportunities such as cake making help children to look at how things change. Children talked about how the colour of the mixture changed from white to brown when they added the cocoa powder. They know that it is important to wash their hands before handling food. Children can choose resources and work out how to go about constructing a model with a purpose in mind. They could choose the right shapes to construct some of the buildings they saw on their way to the shop. Teachers use these sessions well to develop children's thinking skills. They are given opportunities to learn about different beliefs and cultural practices through celebration of events special to their lives like their birthdays. They learn about other celebrations such as Diwali. The majority of children are confident in using the computer to draw pictures and to play games. Staff also use the computer suite well to develop children's skills on how to log on and access programs. Most children could do this well by following the teachers' instructions. They have good control of a mouse that they use adeptly to move objects into different positions as the teacher asks. However, insufficient adult help is available in these lessons and this means that the less confident do not make as much progress as they could. The teaching in this area of learning has improved since the last inspection and is now good. As a result, the majority of the children are on course to attain beyond the levels expected of them by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

Physical development

76. Children are set to reach beyond the expected levels of the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The teaching in this area is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff use the outdoor area creatively by organising the activities during playtimes and lesson times to offer children maximum opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoyment in games. Children from both reception classes take part in these activities with confidence and enthusiasm. They throw and catch balls with increasing confidence and skill. They hop, jump and run. Children have regular opportunities to use climbing frames and large apparatus and to carry equipment such as a mat safely between four. They do this well and follow the teachers' instructions carefully. They are developing their skills on how to travel in different ways on and off the apparatus. They are beginning to understand how to balance and how to jump off the apparatus safely. However, some children have not yet developed an understanding of how to use the space safely as they

move around. Staff use physical development sessions very well to develop further children's understanding of positional vocabulary such as under, over and along. Children use small implements such as pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and glue spreaders with confidence.

Creative development

77. Teachers develop children's imagination effectively. Children can organise themselves into different characters and use the available resources as props to develop their 'role-play'. The selective intervention by the staff helps the children to move the 'role-play' forward and to extend and consolidate their knowledge and skills in other areas of learning. This was seen when the children were making a model of a village. When the children got stuck with their 'role-play', the teacher intervened by asking them where the road to the village was. This started the play back on track. Reception children join in songs and rhymes confidently and add actions. Staff give children opportunities to use different materials like paint, pastels and crayons to create pictures. However, many of these activities are either teacher directed or teacher led. There is a lack of opportunities for children to experiment with different media and materials create their own ideas and experiences. This restricts their imagination and their freedom to express. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall. This is similar to the time of the previous inspection. The majority of children are on course to attain the expected levels by the time they begin in Year 1.

ENGLISH

78. Standards in English are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above average at the end of Key Stage 2.

79. Pupils' results have shown a significant improvement since the last inspection. This has been because of the improvements in the quality of teaching, the effective use of assessment to focus on setting targets for individual pupils and the use of other curriculum subjects to improve the English curriculum. Pupils are given opportunities through regular, planned sessions for speaking and listening, handwriting practice and particularly for sustained independent writing.

80. The National Literacy Strategy, along with school initiatives related to writing and handwriting, has been effective in raising standards in lessons. Pupils are set for literacy from Year 2. Throughout the school the literacy hour is purposeful and well planned. Low attaining pupils receive additional literacy support and most make good progress. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress because of the very effective withdrawal teaching in literacy and the support given in the classroom. At the last inspection the school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy had not had an impact in raising standards in English, it now has made a positive impact on standards and many pupils are achieving above what is expected for their age.

81. By the age of seven, pupils have made good progress in speaking and listening skills and standards are above average. There are good opportunities both within the literacy hour and in other lessons for pupils to speak and listen. Pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and directions and most gain a clear understanding of what they are to do. Pupils are encouraged to give their views and made to feel that their views are valued. For example, pupils in a Year 3 lesson listened intently to the teacher reading the poem 'Smelly People'. They answered questions willingly, and talked readily to one another about it. Older pupils'

contributions are also sought and valued. For instance, when Year 6 pupils made observations on how the description of Gollum' in 'The Hobbit' made him appear disgusting, mysterious and cunning. Some very powerful Year 6 drama work about medieval beliefs linked to a history topic demonstrated that pupils tackle difficult situations. It was impressive to see the manner in which the pupils expressed their ideas clearly and logically, illustrating their excellent understanding of the roles they had taken on. By the age of 11 the standards achieved are well above the national average because of the good opportunities given to pupils to develop their spoken language.

82. Standards in reading are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above at the end of Key Stage 2. Reading is taught systematically. From the early part of Key Stage 1 pupils are confident and use their knowledge of letter sounds and know how to blend sounds in order to build and read words accurately. Higher attaining pupils read accurately and fluently and their reading is lively and interesting with good intonation and excellent expression. They know what the contents and index pages of a book are for and how to use them. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and characters. By the age of 11, the higher attaining pupils' reading is accurate, fluent and expressive. They describe incidents from the text including vivid description of a favourite part. Lower attaining pupils know how to use appropriate ways of reading unfamiliar words. All pupils enjoy reading and give reasons for their choices of favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl, J.K. Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. Although there are too few opportunities to make use of the library for independent research, pupils have a good understanding of how to use reference books and are able to access information from CD-Roms and the Internet.
83. Standards in writing are above average at the end of both key stages. As a result of the school's analysis of pupils' previous work, systems have been put in place to teach handwriting skills from an early age. The school has concentrated on introducing methods to improve handwriting, extended writing and presentational skills. Teaching includes timetabled handwriting sessions in all classes. In order to support extended writing skills and writing for different purposes, there has been a planned approach to writing across different subjects. This is a development since the last inspection when the lack of such an approach was a criticism. For instance, pupils in Year 2 practised letter writing as part of their work in history about Florence Nightingale. Low attaining pupils are able to write in simple sentences while higher attaining pupils use more complex sentences, using connectives and punctuation accurately, including the use of speech marks. Spelling is generally accurate. The range of writing is good across Key Stage 2 and pupils are given many opportunities to consolidate and develop their skills. Opportunities are given to word-process work on the computer. In Year 6 the range of written work is impressive with many opportunities for extended writing in other subjects which plays a part in raising standards. Pupils' work includes examples of short stories, newspaper reports, biography and autobiography and extended narrative showing imaginative use of vocabulary, correct grammar and very good use of punctuation. The standard of presentation is usually good although it varies especially in the work of lower attaining pupils. The best work is neat, well-written and organised. It shows that pupils have self esteem, take pride in their work and want to do their best.
84. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2 but across the school it ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 with the best teaching in Years 2, 3, 4 and 6. Teachers' good planning is shared with pupils so they know what they will be learning in the lesson

and how to go about their tasks. In the best lessons, teachers question pupils about previous work so they can recall what they have learnt. This also helps the teachers assess how well pupils have understood and retained what has been taught. Teachers' good subject knowledge of language and speaking and listening for developing literacy skills is evident during discussions about vocabulary and language structure. As a result, pupils listen intently, following the discussion closely with an eagerness to contribute. In the best lessons, the teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm are inspiring to pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils' reading was lively and interesting and they read with excellent expression as a result of the teachers' very good demonstration. They learned quickly and showed that they had understood that the exclamation mark in the text 'Hey! What are you doing to my cat?' meant using their voice in a more forceful way. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson were given opportunities to express their ideas on the meaning of phrases in poems, for example, 'Trees ease off their coats of bark'. This helped them become motivated to read and discuss the poem. In lessons that are very good or excellent, teachers provide challenging work for all groups of pupils who work hard and achieve well. This is not the case in unsatisfactory lessons, where work or teaching methods are inappropriate and lead to unsatisfactory learning and behaviour. Marking is very good and contains evaluative comments so pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve. Pupils are given individual targets so they know what they are aiming for and how to achieve their targets. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning, helping them to consolidate and extend the work they do in school.

85. Pupils who are lower attaining in reading are given additional literacy support. Those pupils who have special educational needs are well supported in lessons by either the class teacher or support assistants, and in withdrawal sessions. This ensures that they are able to access the curriculum and make progress against the literacy targets in their individual educational plans. However, the teaching in booster classes for pupils in Key Stage 2 is not always satisfactory because the expertise of teaching assistants is not sufficiently secure in English.
86. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is new to the subject and has good knowledge and understanding and has identified areas for development. The school's strengths and weaknesses have been analysed and strategies put in place to ensure improvements in standards, as in handwriting and spelling. Assessment arrangements are good. The use of assessment to track pupils' progress and to guide curriculum planning is very good. The quality and quantity of books have been increased and are now satisfactory; the school has identified this as an area for further development.

MATHEMATICS

87. Pupils' results have shown a significant improvement since the last inspection. In 2002 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved standards well above the national average. Standards were above average at the end of Key Stage 1.
88. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and inspection evidence shows standards continue to rise and are above average overall, with a significant minority of pupils achieving standards well above the national average by the age of 11. In 2003, pupils in Year 6 are expected to reach their targets, which are higher than last year. These good standards are achieved through good teaching; good, enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject leadership; and clear, effective application of the National Numeracy Strategy. The strategy is well understood and tailored by teachers to

match the needs of the pupils. The improved use of assessment information enables teachers and teaching assistants to offer well-targeted support to pupils with special educational needs and tasks with relevant challenge for higher attaining pupils. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. The mathematics curriculum is broadly based and well balanced. Teaching is frequently lively and good; appropriate use of practical resources motivates pupils. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work, and has had some opportunities to monitor teaching. She has a good overview of the subject and has the enthusiasm and subject expertise to make a significant contribution to the development of the subject.

89. By the age of seven pupils develop a secure grasp of place value up to 100. Many pupils understand that doubling and halving are inverse operations. Pupils understand multiplication as repeated addition, 'four add four' and higher attaining pupils see it as an 'array', 'two sets of four'. Pupils estimate measurements of various objects before measuring them accurately, and know some of the properties of 2 and 3 dimensional shapes. They are familiar with 'points', 'edges' and 'sides'. The school is committed to the fostering of both oral and written numeracy skills as part of the development of all round mathematical knowledge. By the time they are seven many pupils are competent in using a range of different methods to solve problems, and can explain how they do so to others.
90. Good teaching throughout Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils build successfully on their previous good achievements. In a lesson with pupils in Year 3 who were looking at unit fractions of numbers, very good provision, use of apparatus, and clear instructions and questions helped pupils learn well. As the lesson progressed, pupils developed a greater facility with working out values and spotting patterns. One pair of pupils said, "To find one tenth of 60, we just removed the zero, and for one fifth of 60, we just doubled our answer because one tenth of 60 is 6, so one fifth of 60 is 12". This shows how well they understood and could explain. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson explored ways of subtracting larger numbers. They used number lines or the 'vertical method' successfully. Confident teaching, with a good balance of instruction and pupil activity, quickly helped move pupils' learning on. They rapidly became adept at both methods. Many showed the confidence to combine 'moves' on the number line, so that instead of making five moves, they managed with only two, demonstrating good level of mental calculation. By the age of 11 pupils have a good understanding of the relationships between unit, decimal and percentage fractions and can interchange them. They understand, and use, the calculation of area and perimeter, and can respond accurately to such questions as "Do shapes with the same area have the same perimeter?" There is a good balance of development between numeracy and other areas of mathematics. Pupils improve their knowledge of rotational symmetry. They solve problems using standard units of measure and can construct a range of graphs. Higher attaining pupils interpret the data identifying 'mode', 'mean' and 'median'.
91. The quality of learning and teaching is good overall, especially at the top end of the infants and in the juniors. With pupils grouped in ability sets, teachers are able to identify very clear, specific learning objectives for lessons. Within these sets teachers strive to provide different activities for the ability range. Consequently, all pupils are helped to learn and progress at their own level. Teachers' planning is clearly focused on practising and improving key skills for pupils of all abilities. Relationships are very good and teachers take great care to build pupils' confidence, particularly in the lower attaining sets. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and their willingness to share ideas and methods of working, especially at the top end of the

junior department, makes a significant contribution to learning. Books are regularly marked and sometimes marking is discussed with pupils. However, teachers do not always indicate the next step in learning and what pupils need to do to improve.

92. Assessment procedures for mathematics are good. Teachers know the pupils well and assessment information is used to track pupils' progress and to make predictions about their expected levels of attainment. It is used to inform what will be taught next. In 2002, when comparison of SATS results for 11 year olds with those in similar schools showed the school doing slightly less well in mathematics than in English and science, the school assiduously tried to identify possible reasons and causes, and made adjustments to learning programmes. The provision of learning resources has improved, especially those resources needed to underpin and support the school's shift towards more practical activities.

SCIENCE

93. Standards are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and these match the findings at the last inspection. At the end of Year 6 standards are above average and this shows good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2, last year, were poor. The school took action immediately to rectify this and methods of teacher assessment are already improving. Pupils in Year 2 are now grouped by ability for science in order to challenge all pupils and extend their scientific knowledge and understanding. Assessment of their work is recorded in the back of individual pupils' books for each unit of work. This also helps pupils to see their own progress in science.
94. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. Pupils in Year 1 experiment with a range of simple materials such as paper, sand, rice, stones, feathers and cotton wool to find out that objects always fall towards the earth because of gravity. They use their previous knowledge of forces well when they predict that paper falls more slowly when flat and more quickly when it is screwed up into a ball shape. As they experiment and watch demonstrations, pupils come to realise that although the paper is the same size and weight, air acts on flat paper with a greater resistance so that it floats down to the ground rather than dropping as when it is screwed up.
95. Pupils in Year 2 acting as 'detective scientists' find out which of three different rubber bands stretch the furthest. The higher achieving pupils offer good predictions and know that a prediction is 'their guess at what might happen.' The teacher uses good methods of questioning to ensure that all pupils are involved and responding. Pupils show a sound understanding of a fair test and decide that the same people should pull the band because some pairs might be stronger than others and that would not be a fair test. Recordings of their plans for the experiment are adjusted to carefully match the needs of all pupils in the year group, including those with special educational needs.
96. Pupils' work in Year 3 shows a good understanding of materials and their properties, magnets, forces and friction. Pupils experiment with different magnets to find out if all magnets are equally strong. They know that not all metals attract and suggest that they could measure which was the strongest magnet by 'moving it nearer to the object carefully and measuring the distance when it pulled the object to it. Pupils show a good understanding of fair testing and explain that using paper clips is fair because, "all magnets pick up paper clips and the one that picks up the most is the strongest". There was great excitement when the first magnet lifted a string of a

hundred paper clips when the group had predicted it would only lift ten. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed their magnet experiment and all achieved success.

97. Very good teaching and learning continues in Year 4 when pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of materials. In a very well planned lesson and well-prepared investigations, pupils understand that electricity flows through some materials and not others when they make an electric circuit. They predict with confidence and test various materials for conductivity and insulation. They use the results of their tests well to select suitable materials to use to make a switching device for a circuit. Most groups achieve successfully and make a push on/pull off, or press on/off switch. The very good learning in this lesson is due to very clear explanations by the teacher, good provision of resources and the amount of time planned for pupils to apply previous learning to achieve a successful switch.
98. Pupils in Year 5 extended their knowledge of the human body and the function of the main organs. They understand the reasons for a healthy diet, regular exercise and show a good awareness of the good and bad uses of drugs. Year 6 pupils are confident to set up their own experiments and know that they have to have evidence to support their own ideas when testing. They confidently talk about their work on food chains and use scientific language well to explain the links in a food chain. They understand clearly the difference between carnivores and herbivores and explain accurately what they mean when they talk about predators. They confidently share their successes and difficulties when doing an experiment to test which type of sugar will dissolve quickest in water and understand why sugar did not dissolve in some of their tests. Very good assessment by the teacher of the experiment and changes to the next lesson's plans allow all pupils to have additional opportunities to achieve successful results. Good support is given in lessons by an additional teacher and a very able teaching assistant who work very well with small groups to extend learning and encourage purposeful discussion.
99. Teachers in Key Stage 2 plan work carefully to match the needs of all pupils and this helps all pupils to achieve success. Good opportunities are planned for pupils to work together in groups and they show good negotiating skills when one person is selected to record the predictions and findings for the experiment. Teachers' very good questioning skills encourage pupils to think carefully and this helps them to offer very good suggestions. Teachers use positive comments when marking pupils' work but do not give pupils targets for improvement. Pupils enjoy their work in science. They listen well, settle quickly to their tasks and are fully involved in all aspects of lessons.
100. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader is new to this position. She is well qualified and keenly interested in science. Her very good teaching is already making a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make. She has audited resources and is fully aware of the need to match appropriate resources to the needs of the units of the nationally recommended guidelines for science. Assessment for science is not used consistently well across the school although better procedures are now in place in Key Stage 1. Additional training is needed for some teachers who work with the younger pupils in order to improve their confidence and subject knowledge. Some younger pupils are withdrawn from lessons for individual music lessons and miss their science lessons on a regular basis. This is affecting adversely the progress they make in this subject.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards in art and design are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the last inspection for Year 2 but is an improvement for Year 6. The reason for this is the impact that the creative arts project has in classes in Years 5 and 6 and the very good opportunities provided for the older pupils to work with a visiting artist. Sketchbooks are used throughout the school and older pupils have many opportunities to express their feelings and emotions through their work in art. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 but pupils' work and discussion with pupils, show that teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching in Year 6 is very good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in nearly all classes. Good progress is made in Years 4 and 6. This helps older pupils to achieve above average standards by the time they leave the school.
102. Pupils in Year 1 use art skills appropriately to illustrate work in design and technology. Pupils' sketchbooks show sound pencil sketches of faces showing the correct positions for facial features. These ideas are developed further when they paint self-portraits using ready mixed paint. Pupils use this knowledge well to extend their computing skills when they use a simple drawing program to create faces, again adding all the facial features. In Year 2, pupils work together to create large collage pictures of Katie Morag and Grannie Island. They extend their knowledge of natural and manufactured materials by using these in their pictures. Pupils compare colours and carefully match these in their own work with those in the book illustrations. Good links are made with work in geography, and on computers. In lessons in ICT they use 'click and drag' skills competently to create their own island picture. Work seen in Key Stage 1 does not show opportunities for pupils to explore mixing their own colours or use powder paint. It is too closely directed so the skills being developed are limited. There is little evidence of observational drawings or of work linked to the study of other artists.
103. Year 3 pupils look at 'relationships' as a theme for a small group picture showing a family occasion or celebration. In their drawings they are beginning to show an awareness of how to represent people who are near and far away. They think carefully about the ways in which they can show feelings and emotions in their drawing. Good opportunities are planned for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills as they work in small groups and share their ideas with each other. Pupils in Year 4 extend the range of materials they use when they create pictures of Egyptian death masks, linking their art well to history. They use ink and emulsion paint successfully to create these pictures and add appropriate decoration using a range of coloured tinfoil. They use their mask designs to create very exciting fabric pictures using marker pens, pastels and coloured inks. Art is closely linked to work in religious education. For instance, after listening to a story of a disabled child and the gifts that the child shared with others, they considered what gifts they have and can share. As a result of discussions, they listed 'love, time, patience, friendship and talents' and illustrated these well using crayons and spray ink.
104. Pupils in both Years 5 and 6 have sound opportunities to develop their observation skills when they draw objects such as headphones on a stand, a guitar and a torch. The higher achieving pupils show good attention to detail in their drawings, adding colour where it is appropriate. They observe carefully the picture 'His Room' by Vincent van Gogh and create their own room in the style of the artist. They show a sound understanding of perspective and proportion in their drawings. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have visited Chester Cathedral and taken 'a bird's eye view of the building by lying on their backs to observe the detail of the windows and roof. They sketched what they saw and brought this work back to extend further in school. Teachers

support this work by good use of the overhead projector to remind pupils of their visit and this helps them to create wonderful large charcoal drawings of the view above their heads. Skilful use of rubbers gives interesting shades to the arches and roof timbers and produces excellent results.

105. The teaching of art in Year 6 is very good and is closely linked to other aspects of their learning which makes it relevant to the pupils. For example, before making pictures to show movement, pupils go outdoors to move in slow motion and pose for others to observe. They sketch these movements and transfer their sketches onto polystyrene tiles to make printing blocks. They used these effectively to create different print patterns on newsprint. A visiting artist supports their work on a frequent basis during a 'creative arts' afternoon. The theme of their work was 'to catch a glimpse of heaven'. The class teacher created a very calm and quiet atmosphere for pupils to listen to the 'Morning' music from Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite as she read the story of the Creation of the world. Pupils gave their own ideas of what they think heaven is and are confident to make suggestions such as 'it is above the clouds, behind the galaxy, around us all the time and it is a state of mind.' Pupils talked about their feelings when they entered Chester Cathedral for the first time. They felt awe and wonder at the size and splendour of this special place. The artist skilfully shared his own work in his sketchbook and that of other pupils in other schools with them to give them confidence to explore their own feelings and ideas in paint. The teaching in this lesson was inspiring and led pupils to explore 'heavenly colours' and mix a range of different colours using acrylic paint. They worked for two hours totally engrossed and did not want the session to finish. The very good introduction to their work, linked to the creative arts project, provides an excellent grounding for the development of their pictures. The class teacher is also receiving very good training as she and the artist work together with the pupils.
106. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a sound overview of art in school but checks have not been made to ensure that pupils systematically develop a wide range of skills and understand and use a wider range of materials. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines but these have not been evaluated carefully or adapted to meet the needs of the school. Plans are in place for this to take place next year. No monitoring of art has been undertaken and no procedures are in place for assessing pupils' development. Resources are adequate but pupils need more opportunities to mix their own colours and to have more freedom, particularly in Years 1 and 2, to show their own ideas in their work and not be over-directed. Pupils have limited opportunities to study the work of other artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This matches the findings at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils' sketchbooks show that, in some classes, teachers lack confidence and subject knowledge and this is affecting the progress pupils make. Evidence of this is also seen in the quality of the work pupils produce and the lack of subject related guidance to help pupils to achieve success.
108. Pupils in Year 1 investigate simple levers, pivots and slide mechanisms. They know that scissors are levers and label the pivot correctly in their sketch-books. Pupils successfully create a simple moving picture using a lever but all create very similar pictures and have little opportunity to express their own ideas. They draw a seascape background, use a given shaped card for the waves and cut out sea creatures and a

Noah's ark to include in their picture. Many experience difficulty cutting and drawing smaller shapes and need much adult support. They use sticky pads to fix the waves to their background and stick either a sea creature or Noah's ark onto a strip of paper to create a lever mechanism. This work is very directed and does not enable pupils to begin to think for themselves and try their own ideas to make things move. Many struggled to find an appropriate place to make the hole to fix their lever.

109. Pupils in Year 2 make hand puppets, writing their instructions for this as part of their work in literacy. They use templates to cut out their felt shapes and stick the two pieces together. They add eyes and facial features again using glue. However, all the puppets ended up being the same shape and colour. No opportunities were provided for pupils to express their own ideas and explore different materials to create their own individual puppets. This shows a lack of teachers' understanding of the design and make process and restricts pupils' opportunities to develop their own thinking and design skills. There is some evidence to show that pupils evaluate their finished work and offer suggestions for improvement. For example, they suggested that 'the two pieces of felt might be sewn together rather than stuck as the glue takes too much space and the puppet is too small.'
110. No design and technology work was seen in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 look at structures. This work is linked to a creative arts project involving a wide range of subjects. The project this year is 'The Reformation' and the starting point for their own models is the theatre set used last year in, 'Tales of Power' that was on display in the Year 5 and 6 classes. They sketch different views and look carefully at the materials and components used in the structure. Pupils record their own ideas and label these well in their sketchbooks. They develop these ideas into good sketches of proposed-scaled models. All pupils have worked with art straws and masking tape and shared the different tasks well in order to achieve one final model. Many have difficulty in achieving a really rigid structure but those using a wigwam tent shape add circular supports and are successful in achieving a solid framework for their model. With the exception of dowel rods, there is no evidence to suggest that older pupils develop an understanding of resistant materials. No mechanisms such as gears, lifting devices or motors to create moving objects were seen during the inspection. No manufactured construction kits were linked to any of the work seen.
111. Management of the subject is satisfactory overall although there is work to be done by the new co-ordinator who has no previous experience of leading this subject. A nationally recommended scheme of work is in place and being piloted for the first time this year. Resources have been audited and although satisfactory, not all match the chosen units of work. More are needed to deliver the food technology aspects of the curriculum. All pupils have sketchbooks and these are used for both design and technology and art. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor teachers' plans but has not observed lessons. Assessment is at a very early stage of development and no portfolio of work is available. No recent training for design and technology has taken place. Staff in Year 6 have undertaken considerable training for the creative arts project and this is impacting on the standards older pupils achieve.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are similar to those found in most schools. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the standards for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and improved those for pupils at the age of seven.

113. Teachers in Key Stage 1 use the local area well to develop pupils' awareness of the characteristics and features of the area in which they live. Their understanding of this is extended to a locality outside their area by the end of Year 2. Pupils show sound knowledge about the distant locality they have studied. They know that the island they have studied through the Katie Morag story is in Scotland and that it is a small island. They begin to use pictures and photographs to compare and answer questions about the similarities and differences between Northwich and the Island of Struay. In their discussions pupils are beginning to use geographical vocabulary like main land, pier, seaside and bay to describe the specific features that give a place its character.
114. This sound base of knowledge and understanding is broadened and extended effectively in Key Stage 2. Year 3 pupils use the map of the local area to find specific geographical features and public buildings whereas in Year 4 they use a key confidently to locate different parts of the world on a map. They identify India accurately on a world map and locate Chembakolli, the area they are studying. Pupils' work on Chembakolli shows that they are developing a good understanding of how the climate and physical features of a locality affect the lives of people. Their work on the River Nile links to what they have learned about Ancient Egypt in history. They know that the two parts of the Nile has its sources in two different countries of Africa. By the age of 11, pupils are able to carry out geographical enquires. For instance, pupils in Year 6 research the force of the river flow through a field study of the nearby River Weaver. Pupils gather information and work out the mean of the time it takes oranges to flow down the river. They record this and draw conclusions from their work. Through activities such as this pupils are given good opportunities to extend their skills in other subjects. Older pupils in the juniors use web sites to gather information for their studies.
115. The teaching overall is satisfactory in both key stages. Some good lessons were observed at each key stage. In one good lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher challenged pupils' understanding of how to gather information from pictures and photographs to identify similarities and differences between Northwich and the Island of Struay. The children could do this confidently. In another good lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher used good questioning strategies to enable the pupils to solve the problem of how to transport water from one place to another. Lessons such as these help to raise pupils' enthusiasm and give them the opportunity for investigations and research. However, this is not always the case and opportunities where the pupils are given opportunity to pose questions and find answers through independent research are less frequent.
116. Teachers use the nationally recommended guidelines and a published scheme to plan the subject. Lesson evaluations and ongoing teacher assessment are used to plan the next stage. However, there is a lack of a whole school approach to assessment and recording of pupils' progress. The school is aware of this and this is an area identified for further development. Resources are satisfactory to teach the subject and staff and pupils make effective use of these. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership.

HISTORY

117. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are similar to those found in most schools. The school has maintained the standards since the last inspection and improved the opportunities pupils have to extend their writing skills in history.

118. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 and therefore no overall judgements are possible on the quality of teaching. Teachers use visits and local resources well to make learning about the past fun for their pupils. Pupils in Year 1 develop an understanding of chronology by placing people and events in order. They show a sound understanding of what life was like during their grandparents' time by interviewing them and other older people in the community. In Year 2, pupils extend this study to learn about life in the past before living memory. Through the study of history, pupils are given good opportunities to extend their writing skills. In their writing they imagine what life must have been like in hospitals around Florence Nightingale's time and write in character to convey this message through letters to people at home. They do this very well and many bring aspects of the past alive through imaginative and creative writing about the conditions in hospitals in those times. They use sources of information such as pictures and photographs to gain information about the past.
119. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to build their understanding of chronology by developing their understanding of how the past can be represented at different periods. Pupils in Year 3 show a sound understanding of the life of Ancient Egypt. They know that Ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphs as a means of communication. By the age 11, pupils are developing an in-depth knowledge about the period of the Ancient Greeks. They recall some of the main events, people and customs during that time. They use their knowledge about some of the beliefs and rituals to develop their own story about a journey to paradise. They collect information from different sources such as artefacts, photographs and the website to learn more detail of the particular period they are studying.
120. The teaching of history in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Teachers use their questioning effectively to gauge pupils' understanding of what they have learned as well as to extend their knowledge further. In a lesson in Year 3, the teacher used pupils' knowledge about how people in Ancient Egypt lived, to compare the diets at that period with pupils' own diet. The class used props and artefacts well to gain at first-hand what life was like at that time. Teachers display good subject knowledge and use objects, photographs and other resources effectively to make learning fun. This was evident in a very good lesson in Year 6 when the teacher used pupils well to demonstrate the infantry formation of a phalanx used by the Ancient Greeks. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to develop and extend their writing skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The marking of pupils' work shows the high expectations teachers set for their pupils. This is consistent throughout school.
121. Teachers plan well and closely to the programmes of study. This ensures that pupils develop their skills of historical enquiry systematically. However, opportunities to undertake more in-depth historical investigations independently through the use of artefacts and visitors are at its early stage of development. Teachers evaluate lessons and use their own assessment information well to plan for the next stage in pupils' learning. Assessment is not formalised to enable the school to have a consistent recording system to track pupils' progress within and between year groups. Pupils in Key Stage 2 had the opportunity to talk to a visiting archaeologist from Liverpool University and learned about the way that artefacts are used to gain information about the past.
122. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has monitored and evaluated standards in history and as a result has identified areas for improvement. Resources are satisfactory and pupils and staff make effective use of them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards in information and communication technology are above average. This is a broadly similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Completion by all staff of nationally funded training, a very well planned, progressive curriculum and increased provision of resources, including computers in the suite and learning programs, have placed the school in a strong position to raise standards even further.
124. By the end of their time in Key Stage 1 pupils have developed a range of skills enabling them to use the keyboard and the 'mouse' with confidence. They can input text and save and retrieve it. They create repeating images in the style of the artist William Morris. They can create time lines from varying periods of history exploring simulation techniques. Pupils record results from science experiments and choose appropriate graphs to represent their findings. Older pupils in Year 3 use ICT successfully to create Egyptian wall pictures. They write text, varying the font size and colour, and insert graphics. Word processing is used for a range of purposes, and across the curriculum in science, history, geography and English. As part of their work in creative activities, the oldest pupils use ICT skills to produce attractive, informative illustrated booklets about Chester Cathedral. They produce the 'St Wilfrid's Times', a newspaper, using a wide range of fonts, highlighting techniques and all enhanced by the inclusion of graphics. Pupils extract information from CD-Roms to aid their research findings and they are confident in reviewing their work, re-drafting, and thinking about the overall quality of their presentations. Pupils use information technology to control other things such as robotic devices.
125. A feature of the good teaching was the obvious enthusiasm and confidence that teachers demonstrate and, in turn, engender in pupils. Lessons are well planned, time is well used and the brisk pace is effective in maintaining high levels of interest. Pupils enjoy the work and respond well. About four fifths of pupils have access to a computer at home and are enthusiastic about using the technology. They support each other and share skills. This happened in the lunchtime computer club where pupils explored mathematical games using ICT skills. Many parents support pupils well through homework activities and the school is currently exploring the possibilities of parents being involved in running an 'after-school' computer club. Leadership and management of the subject are enthusiastic and supportive. Staff are introduced effectively to new software and given chances to try it out. The co-ordinator plans to develop systems of monitoring teaching and learning, and standards achieved, so that he is better able to measure the impact that training and increased provision of resources has on standards.

MUSIC

126. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average for pupils' ages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection for pupils in Key Stage 2. No judgement was made at that time for pupils in Key Stage 1. Activities outside of lessons, such as recorder groups and for some pupils, tuition by peripatetic teachers in piano, guitar and strings, mean that a significant minority of pupils achieve highly in playing instruments and in reading standard notation.
127. Singing is a high priority in the school and the standard of singing in hymn practices and assemblies is good. Pupils in Key Stage 2 sing very well with clear diction and

sustain melodies well. The school has successfully produced its own CD Rom of pupils singing a wide range of songs and hymns.

128. From the reception class onwards pupils learn a variety of songs and a wide repertoire of hymns that they sing from memory. They memorise words quickly when learning new hymns and rhymes. In Years 1 and 2, pupils build on their knowledge of rhymes and songs. Teachers use well-known rhymes such as 'Twinkle, twinkle little Star' as well as instruments to develop pupils' understanding, for instance, of high and low sounds. Pupils use a variety of percussion instruments and recorders in their lessons. They learn to name instruments such as a xylophone and a glockenspiel and explain the differences in the sounds that metal and wooden instruments make. They learn to sing question and answer songs in two parts and do so successfully as, for instance, when they made a recording of, 'A mouse lived in a Windmill'.
129. Pupils make steady progress in playing instruments at Key Stage 2 and this progress accelerates for the oldest pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into class music lessons so that they make satisfactory progress. Pupils learn to maintain a steady pulse and to add a rhythmic pattern over it. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils develop a good understanding of musical terms such as pitch, dynamics and timbre reinforcing this in all lessons. As a result by the time they reach Years 5 and 6 many pupils can explain or illustrate these terms on percussion instruments. Not all pupils have the opportunity to listen to and compare a wide range of music from other cultures or by well-known Western composers in their lessons, although this was a good element in the opening section of a good lesson seen in Year 6. In most lessons seen there were missed opportunities for broadening pupils' knowledge and enjoyment of music and to support cultural development by listening to music of different kinds.
130. The development of pupils' composition skills is limited until the end of Key Stage 2 when they begin to plan and score their own work in a group composition. A good example was seen of composition and improvisation work in a Year 6 lesson when pupils worked well collaboratively on a composition using a repeated pattern of notes. They played and evaluated their compositions confidently. The lesson made a good contribution to the pupils' social development.
131. Pupils at both key stages enjoy their music making and most have enthusiastic attitudes to lessons and behave very well. They develop confidence in performing as they move through the school, and are keen to participate. Pupils take care of the instruments and use them enthusiastically but sensibly.
132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but varies, depending on the confidence and expertise of the teacher. Some good teaching occurs in Year 6, and when teachers teach as a team in singing practice at Key Stage 2. Teachers use their own expertise well and accompany pupils proficiently with guitars and a flute. This sets good examples to pupils and demonstrates instrumental playing well. However, not all teachers are confident in the teaching of music. Teachers plan their lessons carefully. When teachers are less confident, lessons are not always well timed, sometimes lack enthusiasm and pace and the musical content is limited. This slows pupils' progress. In the best lessons the pace is lively, teachers use questioning well to check for understanding and use a variety of activities to make learning fun and effective.
133. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good understanding of teaching music and good ideas for its development. She is

enthusiastic and keen to raise the overall standard across the school. Until recently teachers used the nationally recommended guidelines for teaching music but the school has now augmented the guidelines with the Manchester Primary Music programme which gives support to teachers in planning their lessons and includes a wide selection of taped music resources. This has not been in use long enough to have had an impact on pupils' knowledge of music from other cultures. Whole school in-service training is planned for the coming term to raise all teachers' confidence in the subject. Resources for music are satisfactory overall. They are in good condition, well organised and readily available.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average for pupils' ages at seven and 11. The school has continued to maintain the standards from previous inspections. All pupils achieve the standards expected in swimming at the end of Key Stage 2 (to swim 25 metres). There is no difference between boys and girls in the standards achieved. In the only infant lesson observed, the Year 1 pupils demonstrated twists and turns and curling movements. They were able to travel along the apparatus and dismount with a forward roll, and remember to tuck their heads in safely. They listened carefully to instructions and were aware of the need not to get in the way of the apparatus when others are using it. Pupils are beginning to appraise their own movements and those of others. They are able to extend and demonstrate their gymnastic skills in the Key Stage 1 gymnastic club held after school.
135. Within Key Stage 2 pupils prepare for the main part of lessons by warming up and stretching their muscles carefully, and in Year 6 the teacher helped them to assess if they are doing these movements correctly. By Year 4 pupils are able to change speed as they curl and stretch whilst moving, working with a partner and making these movements into sequences. In Year 5 they develop these skills further. They work in mixed pairs in movement sequences to develop weight-bearing and travelling skills using different parts of the body, showing control and improvisation with the body in flight. Pupils can match and mirror their partner's movements well. Pupils in Year 6 practise skills to make a variety of passes when playing hockey. They know how to hold and use the hockey stick and practise passing the ball accurately as they move. The teacher challenges the pupils to refine their skills, to pass more accurately and discusses how they will use these skills in a game. As a result they work at a higher level with some pupils achieving good levels of performance.
136. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with very good teaching in Year 6. There was no unsatisfactory teaching as observed during the last inspection. Where teaching is best teachers have very good subject knowledge, high expectations of what the pupils should achieve, and make this clear to the pupils so they know what they need to do to achieve well and to improve. Teachers intervene very well as they observe, assess skills and discuss how to improve and refine the work. This coaching results in pupils achieving a higher level of performance. In a very good lesson pupils were well directed and managed by the teacher. A range of good questioning and evaluation was used to help pupils evaluate what had been achieved. The brisk pace of the lesson ensured that there was adequate time for practice and that the pupils worked hard and behaved very well throughout the lesson.
137. Where teaching is less successful, the pace of the lesson is slow as too many pairs demonstrate their sequences to the class which results in other pupils becoming restless. In other lessons at both key stages, some pupils' silly behaviour or taking too long to change are not managed effectively enough by the teacher.

138. Management and resources are satisfactory. Outdoor and adventurous activities are included for Key Stage 2 pupils during a residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre. The standards in physical education are helped significantly by a good range of after school activities and team games which are well attended by pupils.