

INSPECTION REPORT

**ALDERMAN BOLTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Latchford, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 133677

Headteacher: Mrs L Buckley

Lead inspector: Mr C Kessell

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 255307

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	277
School address:	Longdin Street Latchford Warrington Cheshire
Postcode:	WA4 1PW
Telephone number:	01925 633262
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Cann
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Alderman Bolton Community Primary School opened in September 2002 and serves the Latchford area of Warrington. This is a mixed community of private and rented accommodation. The school is about average in size. The majority of the pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds, although a very small number of other minority ethnic groups are represented. There is only one pupil who uses English as an additional language. The school has not received any travellers, refugees or asylum seekers. The number of pupils who either join or leave the school during the academic year is about average. At 34 per cent, the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above average. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils are assessed as having special educational needs; this is above average. Seven pupils have statements of special educational need relating to learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and physical disabilities. Children start school with attainment that is well below that expected for their age. The school is involved in the *Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools* and the *Sure Start* initiatives.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20695	Mr C Kessell	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; Geography; History; Religious education; English as an additional language.
9333	Mr K Schofield	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
18709	Ms N Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Information and communication technology; Personal, social and health education; Special educational needs.
2785	Mr J Bird	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Physical education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, and gives satisfactory value for money, but it has serious weaknesses in teaching and learning which lead to some pupils underachieving, including a minority of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Pupils' achievement overall, is satisfactory. Despite weaknesses, particularly in Key Stage 2¹, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. It is consistently good in the Foundation Unit. Standards in Year 6 are well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. The leadership and management of the headteacher and other key staff are satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are well below average. Standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Weaknesses in teaching and learning lead to some pupils underachieving. Long-term staff absences have not helped this situation. Although there is some good teaching through the school, the proportion of good or better teaching is not high enough.
- Children receive a good start to school life in the Nursery and Reception classes. The Foundation Unit provision is very good.
- Pupils in the school are well cared for by teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Attendance levels at the school are below average. Although the school is doing its best to promote good attendance, a minority of parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly.

The school has not been inspected previously, therefore a judgement cannot be made on how the effectiveness of the school has improved since its last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	N/A	N/A	E	E
mathematics	N/A	N/A	E*	E*
science	N/A	N/A	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses. The data shown above, indicates that when compared to all schools, results in the 2003 national tests for English, mathematics and science in Year 6, were well below average. The result in mathematics, was in the bottom five per cent nationally. The data also indicates that pupils did not achieve as well as they should have in relation to the standards they achieved at the end of Year 2. Again, the results in mathematics come into the bottom five per cent. Girls performed significantly better in national tests than the boys in Year 2 and in English in Year 6, although the judgement is based on data for only one year. The boys performed better in mathematics in Year 6 and this is different to the trend found nationally. The pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards that are still well below average in English, and mathematics and below average in science. Although these pupils are currently making satisfactory progress, their progress in the past has been patchy and generally

¹ Key Stage 2 represents Years 3 to 6. Key Stage 1 - Years 1 and 2. The Foundation Stage (Unit) contains Nursery and Reception children.

unsatisfactory. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average; they not as high as last year, but the current year group has a higher proportion of pupils with SEN. In religious education and information and communication technology (ICT), standards are similar to those expected at the end of Year 2. They are lower than expected in Year 6. The majority of children in the Reception classes are unlikely to achieve the learning goals they are expected to reach by the time they start Year 1 but have achieved well in relation to their prior attainment.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Their attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour are sound. The pupils' attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although the majority of lessons are satisfactory or good some unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2. Weaknesses in the quality of teaching lead to some pupils underachieving. There are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations, in the levels of work provided for different ability groups and in marking. Better use could also be made of assessment information. Non-teaching staff make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the Foundation Unit. All of the adults work very well as a team and the children are supported well.

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. The Foundation Unit curriculum is very good. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, as are links with the community. Links with other schools are good. There are good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There are weaknesses in the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness. The leadership and management of the Foundation Unit are very good. Governance of the school is satisfactory. The school fulfils its statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents are happy with the school, although they do have concerns about the number of teachers that some classes have had, and not all parents feel that their children learn as well as they could do. The inspection team would support these views. The majority of pupils like being at school and agree that other children are friendly. However, when responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a significant number had concerns about the behaviour of other pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science through the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to prevent underachievement by any groups of pupils.
- Continue to work hard to promote good attendance and focus on those parents who do not ensure that their children attend regularly.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although some pupils have underachieved. Standards are below and well below average in English and mathematics in Years 2 and 6. In the most recent national tests, the girls have performed significantly better than the boys, at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, the boys have done better than the girls in mathematics but not as well in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are not high enough particularly in English and mathematics.
- A minority of pupils including some with SEN do not achieve as well as they could do.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
- The pupils currently in Year 6 did not make as much progress as they should have in the early stages of Key Stage 2.

Commentary

1. The Nursery-aged children in the Foundation Unit enter school with levels of attainment well below those expected. Many are identified as having speech and language difficulties and work regularly with the visiting speech therapist. The children enter the Reception class with levels that are below those expected for their ages. Although a few children are on course to reach the expected levels, most are unlikely to reach them by the time they enter Year 1. However, achievement is good in relation to their prior attainment.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores² in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (N/A)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.9 (N/A)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.7 (N/A)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The national test results in 2003 for pupils in Year 2 indicated that, when compared to all schools, standards were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools³, standards were well above average in all three areas of learning. Despite achieving satisfactorily, the current Year 2 pupils are attaining standards that are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The present Year 2 has a larger proportion of pupils with SEN and learning difficulties.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (N/A)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.2 (N/A)	26.8 (26.6)
science	27.1 (N/A)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

² Average points scores - The average points scores table compares the school's performance with the national results. The calculations are arrived at by using the total of all test scores gained by pupils and dividing the total by the number of pupils with a test result. This calculation is carried out for each subject tested.

³ In this example, similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

3. When compared to all schools, the national tests results in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 indicated that, standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science. The results in mathematics were in the bottom five per cent. The national data also indicated that pupils did not achieve as well as they should have in relation to their prior attainment at Year 2. When compared to similar schools, as defined by the proportion of free school meals, standards were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Although the percentage of pupils likely to achieve the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science might rise this year, the current Year 6 pupils are still attaining standards that are well below average in English and mathematics. They are currently making satisfactory progress but they have not achieved satisfactorily in previous years since Year 2. As a result of a long-term staff absence, the current Year 4 pupils have made inconsistent progress over the current academic year. The class has been taught by a large number of temporary and supply teachers through the year, and this has had a negative affect on their progress. Weaknesses in teaching have also prevented some pupils in other classes from making the progress of which they are capable.

4. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress when work is well matched to their needs and they receive good support. This is not always the case. Occasionally, pupils with SEN make insufficient progress because too little attention is paid to their individual needs.

5. The data available to the school indicates that the gap in performance between boys and girls is wider than that found nationally at the end of Key Stage 1; the girls do much better than the boys in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 2, the girls did better in English, with the boys performing better in mathematics. Differences in gender performance were not noticeable during the inspection and, as the school has limited data, it is difficult to judge whether this is an overlying trend.

6. Although 90 per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children were making good progress, this view is not borne out by the inspection findings. Some parents at the pre-inspection meeting had concerns about their children's learning and the inspection team would share these concerns.

7. The inspection focus was on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science along with religious education and ICT. Standards in religious education and ICT are similar to those expected for the pupils in Year 2, but lower than expected at Year 6. Other subjects were sampled as part of the inspection process but there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in all of these subjects. Discussions with pupils indicate that standards in geography and history are similar to those expected for pupils in Year 2, but that there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge of these subjects in Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

8. Except for the very young children, no significant strengths or weaknesses are apparent among pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities. However, the levels of attendance and pupils' punctuality are a cause for concern.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Attendance is below the national average and this has a detrimental affect on the opportunities for teaching and learning.
- A significant minority of pupils fail to arrive on time at the start of the school day.
- The school has invested a great deal of effort in improving attendance and punctuality.
- The school deals effectively with behavioural problems including all forms of harassment.

Commentary

9. Attendance is below the national average. This impairs the opportunities for teaching and learning among the significant minority of pupils concerned. As a result, the progress made and the quality of education is adversely affected for these pupils.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	1.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

10. Lack of punctuality is coupled closely with low levels of attendance. In some classes, up to one-third of the pupils arrive late at the start of the school day. Although this short delay may seem insignificant, the cumulative effect over the school year is enormous. The school has recognised the problems associated with the low levels of attendance and the adverse effects of poor punctuality. A massive effort has been made by the school to make improvements and, in the current year, there has been some success. However, without the caring involvement of parents, the school is likely to find it difficult to sustain progress. In newsletters, parents are reminded about the relationship between attendance and their children's learning. Similarly, parents are always reminded about the educational disadvantages of taking holidays during term time.

11. Careful and on-going analysis has helped the school to identify more effective ways of achieving improvements. As a positive approach, incentives are in place to reward individual pupils with certificates each term and classes with a weekly trophy for the best attendance. They see the class results displayed as bar charts when they enter the main school hall. Pupils are keen to win the class award and certainly do not want to be the worst performers.

12. As a preventive measure, administrative staff contact families on the same day as an unexplained absence occurs. In cases of persistent absence, the school initially takes action by meeting or writing to parents. When very low levels of attendance arise, the school works closely in collaboration with the educational welfare officer, who often makes visits to the homes of absentees.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	97.9	10	6
Mixed – White and Asian	0.4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0.4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0.4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0.4	0	0
Chinese	0.4	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

13. Contrary to the perceptions of some parents, the school manages behaviour well and no harassment or bullying was evident during the inspection. Staff members deal quickly and effectively with the rare incidents that warrant their attention. In comparison with the previous year, shown in the table above, the number of exclusions has declined.

14. The children in the Foundation Unit show positive attitudes to learning. Induction procedures are very good, which enables the children to quickly settle into school. The development of personal and social skills is consistently encouraged by all adults in all activities. This results in children getting on well with each other and being able to work independently. By the time they leave Reception most children work well together and develop good relationships with each other and the adults who help them. Behaviour is consistently very good.

15. Pupils with SEN show satisfactory attitudes to learning. However, a few have difficulty getting on with their classmates and display challenging behaviour in classes. When this happens, the adults who work with them manage them firmly but sensitively.

16. Lunchtime supervisors organise a successful physical activity programme called '*Phys Kids*' (physical activity kids). In interviews with pupils, it became clear that pupils know what to do in the event of observing inappropriate behaviour, and they also help to keep watch over their own behaviour in the playground.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school offers its pupils a sound curriculum.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses. The proportion of good teaching needs to be higher if pupils are to make better progress. The use of assessment information to support the needs of individual pupils is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Unit is consistently good. This allows children to achieve well.
- Weaknesses in teaching and learning cause some pupils to underachieve. Some teachers could have higher expectations.
- Assessment information is not used well and pupils have a limited understanding of how they can improve their work.

Commentary

17. Although 90 per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching was good a number of concerns were raised at the parents' meeting, including the high number of staff absences, and whether all pupils are given work that is appropriate to their needs. These views are supported by the inspection findings.

18. Teaching and learning is good and sometimes very good in the Foundation Unit. Teachers and assistants work well together as a team and provide good support for the children. The very good use made of the information collected on individual children results in their undertaking activities, which accurately fit their individual needs. Because of this, the children quickly develop positive attitudes to learning and work with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They concentrate well as they work on the interesting activities they are offered. Learning is good because all adults have high expectations that children should complete their activities and behave well at all times. The teachers develop clear profiles on the children, based on the national guidance, which track their progress effectively through all areas of learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	1 (3%)	13 (38%)	17 (50%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

19. Although the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in the Foundation Unit, the picture in Key Stages 1 and 2 is mixed. Although some good teaching was observed during the inspection, analysis of pupils' previous work indicates that for a majority of year groups, teaching and learning are no better than satisfactory. As a result of a long-term staff absence in Year 4 and the resulting high number of temporary and supply teachers that have taught in that class, teaching and learning for this group of pupils has not been consistent and has resulted in unsatisfactory achievement for these pupils.

20. A minority of teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Too often, insufficient attention is paid to the wide range of ability that is found in all classes. Although most teachers follow the recommendations of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, they do so with varying degrees of success. Teachers do not consistently set different levels of work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Even when they do, extension activities are not always provided for pupils who finish their work quickly. Time targets are not given, so that pupils do not have a clear understanding about the amount of work they are expected to complete in a designated period of time.

21. All the good lessons seen during the inspection had particular characteristics that enabled pupils to learn effectively and develop their understanding of a subject or make effective gains in their knowledge. These lessons always had pace and no time was wasted. Pupils had a good understanding of what they were doing through the sharing of lesson objectives or good clear and precise instructions for an activity. Work was appropriately matched to the pupils' needs and inappropriate behaviour was managed well. Although good teaching was found mainly in the Foundation Unit, it was also observed in Years 2, 4 and 5. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, too much time was spent in dealing with inappropriate behaviour, which meant that significant numbers of pupils did not make enough progress. These lessons were not conducted with sufficient pace, and activities were often not well matched to pupils' needs.

22. The support for pupils with SEN is variable. When they receive work that is well matched to their needs they do well. However, this is not always the case. Teachers do not consistently use assessment information when they plan lessons. As a result, pupils with SEN, often receive work that is either too hard or not challenging enough. In most classes, targets identified on pupils' individual education plans are not referred to in lessons or when marking work. In addition, teachers' marking does not always successfully inform the pupils what they need to do in order to improve. When this happens pupils' achievement is not as good as it could be.

23. Satisfactory assessment procedures in reading, writing, mathematics and science have enabled teachers to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. Although teachers use this performance information to place pupils into ability groups within literacy and numeracy lessons, they do not use it effectively when planning lesson activities. As a result, many pupils, including those with SEN do not consistently receive work, which is accurately matched to their needs. Learning for all abilities is affected when this happens, and this is unsatisfactory.

24. Recently developed assessment procedures are now in place for all foundation subjects. By the end of the academic year, if the assessment sheets are filled in consistently, these will satisfactorily inform teachers of the National Curriculum Levels the pupils have reached. Target setting in literacy and mathematics is in its early stages of development. There is no consistent format and teachers do not effectively promote pupils' targets in literacy and mathematics lessons, or in the marking of pupils' work. At present targets are doing little to raise standards. The marking

of work is inconsistent. For example, some teachers do not systematically mark all pieces of work. When this happens, pupils do not know how well they are doing. Comments in books indicate that teachers' expectations are often too low. In addition, pupils are given too little guidance on how to improve their work. In many classes, teachers do not insist sufficiently on neat presentation.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. Pupils with SEN are satisfactorily catered for. All statutory requirements are met. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very good curriculum offered to the children in the Foundation Unit provides them with a very good start to school.
- There are some weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Commentary

25. The school provides a satisfactorily planned curriculum, which embraces all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and includes a daily act of collective worship. The current curriculum, which is planned on a one-year cycle, has been running for two terms. Because it has not been monitored effectively, pupils in Year 6 have repeated some work in mathematics, science and geography. Some pupils in Year 6 miss physical education lessons if they are working in 'booster groups'. The school has not systematically thought through the difficulties that can occur when classes have to be re-organised and developed into mixed aged classes.

26. Visitors make an important contribution to the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, teaching pupils about the importance of healthy living and keeping oneself safe. Others help with English, physical education, art and design and science. During lunchtime and after school, pupils of all ages, have the opportunity to take part in a satisfactory selection of extra-curricular activities, including physical education, music, art and design, design and technology and drama. All pupils have opportunities to take part in visits into the local and wider community. Such visits help pupils to develop their social skills as they live alongside their classmates.

27. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Activities are interesting and thoroughly planned according to the national guidance. In addition, they are carefully designed to promote and reinforce learning in many areas. There is a very high emphasis on the development of basic language, and personal and social skills in all the children do. Resources are good and effectively support all areas of learning. The outside area is secure and is satisfactorily used to promote learning.

28. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with SEN are satisfactory. Individual education plans generally have clear targets, but a few contain vague targets which make the rate of progress difficult to measure. Reviews are completed regularly, and parents are adequately informed.

29. The accommodation is satisfactory. Most parts of the school are well maintained and displays are generally of good quality and reinforce learning in all classes. The two halls are used well, in particular for extra-curricular activities. The spacious Foundation Unit is situated across the playground from the main school and has a secure area for outdoor activities. Resources for learning are satisfactory. The number of teaching and non-teaching staff is satisfactory in all classes. However, long-term absences, in a number of classes, have affected the quality of learning for some pupils. All adults work effectively together as a team, understanding other's roles as well as their own. Non-teaching staff, compliment the work of the teachers and make a significant contribution to the children's good achievement in this part of the school.

Care, guidance and support

A safe and caring environment is maintained for everyone in the school. Advice and guidance for pupils is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school makes very good provision for care, welfare, health and safety in the Foundation Unit and good provision for pupils in the other parts of the school.
- Induction arrangements for children coming into the Nursery and Reception classes are very good.
- Pupils' access to well-informed advice and guidance is inadequate.

Commentary

30. The care and welfare of pupils has a very high priority and is well co-ordinated, particularly for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Through the quality of its leadership, the school caters attentively for the needs of everyone. Child protection procedures are well understood and implemented by the permanent members of staff, who have had up-to-date training. Procedures for accidents and emergencies are good, with many members of the staff trained in first aid. Caring practices extend to lessons and, as part of the PSHE curriculum, pupils learn about such things as citizenship and their relationship with the wider community.

31. Effective co-operation between the headteacher and the education welfare service helps ensure that welfare issues are brought to the attention of agencies that offer help. Office personnel, kitchen staff and lunchtime supervisors, also help to create a safe and happy environment. The non-teaching staff is certainly highly regarded by the pupils and they feel at ease when approaching them for personal advice. The tuck shop and school lunches encourage pupils to eat healthily, and the school is working towards achieving a *'Healthy School'* award.

32. The school has very good induction arrangements for children joining the Nursery and Reception classes. Arrangements for supporting children and their parents when they start in the Nursery class are very good. Home visits provide teachers with information which they can use to help and support children when the children first enter school. Because of this, children settle quickly and adjust well to the school routines.

33. This early good partnership with families is not sufficiently built upon and strengthened as pupils move through the school. The school recognises the need to foster relationships with parents in order to involve more of them in helping their children to achieve well.

34. Outside agencies are used adequately to support pupils with SEN.

35. The school does not have rigorous procedures for monitoring pupils' development in order to provide well-informed support, advice and guidance. There are no systematic records showing examples of pupils' work or methods for enabling pupils to assess their own performance. Marking of work varies from one teacher to another.

36. Although pupils and many members of the staff have constructive relationships with each other, these relationships are not consistent throughout the school. Those standing in for teachers with a long-term illnesses do not always become sufficiently familiar with the needs of the pupils they teach.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's attempts to extend its links with parents have not met with much response and the majority remains uninvolved.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The majority of parents are not involved in the life of the school.
- Good procedures are in place to ensure satisfaction and to deal with any concerns and complaints.
- Links for the transfer of pupils to the secondary school are good.

Commentary

37. An extensive effort has been made by the school to involve parents in the life of the school. It has met with some success from a small minority, such as the parent-teacher association which has raised funds for equipment. However, except for the parents' association and the small number of parents who come into the Nursery and Reception classes, parents are not often seen in school. Nevertheless, parents believe that staff members are approachable, and there is an open door policy.

38. The school has recognised the importance of extending the links with more parents, so that it can enhance the level of attendance and punctuality. With the refurbishment of the former infant school, there are plans to offer events that encourage parents to find out more about what their children learn in school.

39. When parents actually contact the school, they receive a helpful response. The school has good procedures and maintains careful records about any parents concerns and complaints. Records show that only one parent has escalated a complaint to the chair of governors since records began in 2002. In the first instance, parents are encouraged to approach class teachers with their enquiries about their children and this action usually provides the right solution. The headteacher always endeavours to respond to any unresolved problems or to more strategic concerns. At the pre-inspection meeting and in the parents' questionnaire, the vast majority of parent agreed that they comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.

40. Parents of pupils with SEN are soundly informed about their children's progress in relation to targets on their individual education plans.

41. The school has very good links with the high school to which the great majority of pupils transfer. In addition to exchanging information, visits are arranged. Collaborative schemes are in place to share teaching resources for activities, such as, drama, science and physical education. Work placements have been provided for college and secondary school students and, in the last year, a teaching student has worked in school. In addition to assisting students, the school gains by having more support in classes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. Management is satisfactory despite some weaknesses, in the monitoring of provision for pupils with SEN. Governance of the school is satisfactory. The school fulfils all of its statutory requirements.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The Foundation Unit is very well led and managed.
- Strategic planning is good.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The school's structure for regular self-evaluation is unsatisfactory.
- The performance management of staff is making little contribution to school improvement.
- The management of SEN is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

42. Since the opening of the new school, the headteacher has placed a strong emphasis upon the development of a shared vision and effective teams. All staff are aware of their roles in improving the achievement of the children. The school development plan rightly identifies the need to develop the role and influence of middle managers in the school. However, there is a need for the collective leadership of the school to focus rigorously, and with a greater sense of urgency, on the improvement of academic standards.

43. The quality and usefulness of strategic planning is good. It is based in an audit of the school's current situation. The audit has been consultative and has taken into account feedback from monitoring visits by the local education authority, data about the achievement of the pupils and information from the school's own monitoring activities. The development plan clearly recognises the key improvement priorities of the school and identifies appropriate actions to achieve them.

44. The quality and rigour of the school's self-evaluation is unsatisfactory. Some monitoring and evaluation does take place. For example, some lessons are observed and feedback is provided, teachers' planning is seen and there has been some scrutiny of pupils' work. However, the self-evaluation activities are insufficiently embedded into the management of the school. They lack a structure which ensures that they take place regularly and that the outcomes of self-evaluation activities have an impact upon the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement.

45. Although a system for staff performance management is in place, it is not rigorous enough and is not sufficiently linked to strategic planning and self-evaluation, so that it can make an effective contribution to the improvement of the school. There is a need to develop the role of middle managers in performance management, to improve the link between personal objectives and those of the school and to ensure that appraisal is rigorous.

46. The Foundation Unit is very well led and managed. There is an excellent team effort, where all adults work successfully together to provide a high quality of education. All systems are clear and understood by everyone. As a result, all children receive a good start to school and achieve well.

47. There are weaknesses in the management of SEN. The procedures for monitoring how well pupils are achieving within classes are not rigorous enough. Not all classroom assistants are aware of targets on pupils' individual education plan' and most teachers miss opportunities to reinforce these targets during lessons and when marking pupils' work. These weaknesses result in some pupils with SEN not doing as well as they should in a number of lessons across the curriculum.

48. The governance of the school is satisfactory overall. Some of the governors are new to the post and are keen to understand and properly fulfil their responsibilities. The governors, who are well led by the chair and vice-chair, make an appropriate contribution to the work of the school, both as members of various committees and as individuals. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Although they are supportive, the governors are aware of the need to challenge what is going on in the school both formally and informally and have set up a school development plan monitoring group, which will take a close look at the progress the school is making against development objectives. Governors fulfil their statutory duties, including agreeing performance targets. The principles of best value are applied when securing goods and services and procedures are developing to consult with parents and pupils about how the school is doing. Although the governors are familiar with the academic-performance comparisons they can make against other schools, they have not explored other comparisons such as spending levels.

Financial information for the year September 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	400,304.00	Balance from previous year	N/A
Total expenditure	385,756.00	Balance carried forward to the next	14,548.00
Expenditure per pupil	2027.00		

As the school opened in September 2002, only 7/12 of the financial year was completed. Expenditure per pupil has been estimated for a 12 month period.

49. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it are properly used to provide for the needs of its pupils. The school and governors make good use of the support provided by the local education authority. Governors meet their statutory duty to agree and regularly monitor the school's budget. There is a clear cycle of financial planning and, using information regarding projected expenditure and pupil numbers, the governors are in a secure position to plan for the future. They understand the implications of using financial reserves to set next year's budget and appreciate that difficult decisions will have to be made in the future regarding staffing levels, and improving learning resources and the school's accommodation.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

50. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school has recently developed a Foundation Unit where 46 part-time, Nursery-aged children and 35 Reception children work alongside each other for a large proportion of the day. At other times, they work within age groups. A few parents who attended the parents meeting were critical about these arrangements. The inspection team does not think that the parents' concerns are justified. The Foundation Unit is strength of the school. The curriculum is very well planned, with interesting activities which enable all children to achieve well. Induction procedures are very good and ensure that the children settle in quickly and happily. They enjoy coming to school and confidently move around the spacious area where they spend their day.

51. Information collected when the Nursery-aged children enter the school indicates that a significant number are identified as having speech and language difficulties. A few children achieve slightly higher standards on entry to the Reception class but the majority are well below the expected levels because of the low levels of attainment on entry to the Nursery. The school has funded a speech therapist for the last few years because of this. She visits weekly and works closely with the teachers and the children. At present, she works with just under half of the current Nursery-aged children and about a third of the Reception-aged children. Apart from a few children, the Reception children in the Foundation Unit are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the time they go into Year 1. However, they have achieved well in relation to their prior attainment on entry to school. Teaching is consistently good. Activities are very well planned to develop learning in all areas. Personal and social skills and language development are promoted well in all activities. Assessment procedures are very good. All adults continually collect useful information on the children and make very good use of it when they plan activities. The school uses the national guidance to develop profiles on all children and these clearly show the progress each child makes. A few children have been identified as having SEN and a number of children are in the process of being monitored, in particular regarding speech and language difficulties. All receive high quality support. One child has been identified as having English as an additional language and is supported well. There is a secure outdoors area, which is used satisfactorily. Resources for learning are good in all areas.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good. This area is high focus in all activities.
- All adults support learning well.
- The children develop positive attitudes to learning and achieve well.
- Behaviour is very good.

Commentary

52. Children achieve well. However, because of their low level on entry to school, the majority of children will not reach the expected levels by the end of Reception. Behaviour is very good. Adults do not miss opportunities to promote the development of personal and social skills. No anti-social behaviour was seen during the inspection and this is because all adults have high expectations regarding getting on with each other. As a result, the children are confident and get on well with everyone with whom they come into contact. Teaching is good. Relationships are very well developed and the children's attitudes to learning are good. This is because the dedicated team of

adults who work with them values everything they say and do. From an early age, they are expected to work well together in pairs and small groups and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. Previous work and planning shows satisfactory opportunities to develop the children's knowledge of different types of celebrations and different religions.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is at least good and sometimes very good.
- There are good links with the visiting speech therapist, which results in some very good teaching.
- The children respond positively to all activities whether adult focused or child initiated. Behaviour is very good.
- Adults support the children very well.
- Speaking and listening skills are very well promoted in everything the children do.

Commentary

53. A few children are on course to reach the expected levels by the beginning of Year 1 but most children are unlikely to. Limited language skills on entry to school affect the levels many of the children reach. However, all children achieve well and some children achieve very well. This is because the teaching of language and literacy skills is consistently good. The visiting speech therapist works closely with the teachers, and children with specific language difficulties receive small group teaching, which is of a very good quality. This support enables the children to develop language skills, in particular confidence when speaking. In addition, speaking and listening skills are very well promoted in all activities. The children have very good opportunities to develop reading and writing skills. As a result they pick up pens, pencils and crayons confidently. Reception aged children were seen listening carefully as an adult showed them how to write letters correctly. They went on to achieve well as they used white boards sensibly and confidently. Nursery-aged children were seen working with good independence as they used glue sticks to make 'envelopes' for the pictures they were drawing. All attempted to explain what they were doing, although some spoke only in short phrases because of their limited vocabulary. All children confidently attempt to write their names. Older children are encouraged to 'sign in' at the beginning of the day. This is developed from an earlier activity where the younger children recognise their name card as a way of self-registering each day. Such activities promote personal independence and contribute to the development of reading and writing skills. Most children develop positive attitudes to reading. Many children were seen sitting quietly and looking at books carefully. However, many children have difficulty naming basic objects they see as they tell a story, because of their limited vocabulary. Very clear reading records show the low levels many of the children are working at. The adults work hard at promoting the development of reading skills at home. Children have regular opportunities to take library books and reading books home. Adult expectations are high regarding behaviour in all activities and all children respond very positively to this, whether working in an adult-focused group or working in a small group or independently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good.
- Very good relationships enable the children to work well together as they develop number skills.
- Behaviour is very good.
- The children achieve well because adults do not miss opportunities to reinforce number skills in all activities.
- The children are very well supported by all adults.

Commentary

54. Teaching is good. All adults promote basic number skills well in all areas. For example, the number two was reinforced effectively as the children placed two paper cases inside each other, for extra strength, when they made jellies. Very well-resourced role-play areas, where children have opportunities to play imaginatively, make a good contribution to the understanding of number and the language associated with it. Children visit the 'Garden Centre', set up in their classroom, and count frogs and fishes in the 'Aquarium Area'. They buy ice creams from the 'Ice Cream Stall' and develop a basic idea of counting with pennies. Activities such as these also help the development of children's personal and social skills. No opportunities are missed to teach and reinforce basic number skills. The children cut out and colour in shapes, learning the colours and the names of the shapes as they do so. Constant adult support produces good learning. By the end of Reception, most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels but have achieved well in relation to their prior attainment. Behaviour at all times is very good because adults expect them all to get on well with each other, share equipment and generally behave well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good.
- Activities are varied and very interesting and reinforce teaching in many other areas.
- The children achieve well.

Commentary

55. Activities are well planned and imaginatively thought out in this area. Little direct teaching was seen but previous work and photographic evidence clearly show that teaching is at least good during the wide variety of activities which the children take part in. Children were seen enthusiastically looking at jelly cubes, then making the jellies and later tasting them. Good teaching enabled the children to not only take part in the making of the jelly but also to develop the language to recall what they had done; although some comments were limited, all children were confident to say something. For example, *'It's wibbly wobbly'*, to *'The jelly has changed to a circle'*. All children use the computers enthusiastically and have many opportunities to develop and reinforce skills previously taught in other areas. All adults support sensitively and assist where necessary, which enables all abilities and ages to develop at their own level. Most children have an idea of how to use the mouse to move the cursor around the screen. More able children know how to operate simple programs. As they work on the computers, the children work very well together. The children show a developing awareness of what is needed in order to grow, as they plant seeds in the classroom and then look after them.

Their knowledge of letter names is reinforced as they grow cress seeds in the shape of the initial letter of their name. Simple geographical skills are developed when they visit the local shops to extend their knowledge of the local area. Most children achieve well from their low starting point. However, only a few children are on course to reach the expected levels.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

56. There is too little evidence to make judgements about the provision, teaching or achievement in this area. Good use is made of the hall and playground. Children of all ages use pencils, crayons and paintbrushes confidently, enthusiastically and with increasing control. Adults did not miss opportunities to develop these skills, whether children are working in adult-focused groups or child-initiated activities. In addition, the children cut and mould shapes from soft materials. Children were seen working well together as they made 'Play Doh' snakes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good.
- The children work well together and show positive attitudes at all times.
- Creative development reinforces work in other areas of the curriculum.
- Everything the children do is valued and attractively displayed for all to see.
- Behaviour is very good.

Commentary

57. Only a few children are on course to reach the expected levels because of the low attainment of the majority of children on entry to school. Teaching is good. Adults support the children well enabling them all to succeed. Previous work shows that the children looked at spring flowers carefully before they attempted to draw them. They learnt the names of flowers such as 'daffodils' and 'irises' and used pencils, paintbrushes, paint and wax crayons very carefully to develop accurate observational drawings. This activity cleverly linked in with previous learning about growing and how the seasons change during the year. All children have many good opportunities to sing and build up a repertoire of songs. Limited language affects learning in all areas but most of the youngest children attempt to take part as they sing, '*I'm a little tea-pot*'. All behave very well because they are expected to. The very well-organised and resourced role-play areas, which are developed in the classroom, enable the children to have very good opportunities to play imaginatively. Achievement is good. Adults work hard to develop high quality displays, which clearly celebrate the children's achievements.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are below average in Year 2.
- Standards are below average for speaking and listening and well below average for reading and writing in Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6 in reading and writing.
- Weaknesses in teaching affect achievement in all year groups.
- Staffing problems have affected the quality of teaching in some classes.

Commentary

58. Pupils are on course to reach standards, which are below average by the end of Year 2. Achievement is satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Year 6, standards are lower and are well below average in reading and writing. Although progress is currently satisfactory in Year 6, many pupils have not done as well as they should have in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2. Standards are below average in speaking and listening and pupils have achieved satisfactorily. Standards have declined in Year 2 since last year when they were average for writing and above average for reading, but are similar in Year 6.

59. Pupils' achievement in the development of speaking and listening is satisfactory. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop speaking skills in literacy lessons and across the curriculum. Many pupils have difficulty speaking because their vocabulary is limited. Although opportunities to develop speaking skills are satisfactory, teachers do not always insist on pupils speaking clearly so that everyone can hear them. Not enough attention is paid to the development of listening skills, though good examples were seen in Years 2 and 5. In both of these classes the teachers showed high expectations regarding listening carefully at all times. The pupils responded well to these high expectations and listened attentively.

60. Weaknesses in the teaching of reading affect learning for some pupils. Many pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their reading. The uneven quality of teachers' reading records results in some pupils not knowing what to do to improve their reading skills. Good practice was seen in a Year 2 class, where the teacher made useful notes on individuals as they read. Other teachers were seen missing opportunities to note down written comments. The differences between fiction and non-fiction texts are not effectively reinforced, resulting in pupils of all ages being confused. These shortcomings contribute to the low standards in reading reached by the majority of pupils by the end of Year 6. At both key stages, the pupils are given a satisfactory range of activities that promote many different forms of writing. They write creatively, descriptively and produce instructional texts and poetry, and develop story-writing skills. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of writing skills. However, weaknesses in the teaching of writing have contributed to the low levels achieved in Year 6.

61. The majority of teaching is satisfactory. No good lessons were seen and two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In both cases this was due to weak management of the classes and to work not being appropriately matched to the needs of all pupils; as a result, pupils had difficulty in working independently. There are no significant strengths in the teaching of English. The weaknesses in the quality of teaching affect the achievement made by pupils of all abilities, in all year groups. Teachers do not consistently use information collected on individual pupils when they plan lessons. This results in some pupils being given activities, which are too difficult for them and others, activities which are too easy. Pupils with SEN who have literacy targets on their individual

education plans do not consistently have their targets reinforced in lessons or when their work is marked. Classroom assistants are not always fully informed as to what these targets are and are, therefore, less able to give precise help in lessons. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work clearly shows that, when they mark work, teachers do not consistently give pupils clear guidance how to improve. Targets are set for literacy but teachers do not often refer to these targets in lessons or in the marking of pupils' work. At present target setting is doing little to raise standards in English. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are satisfactory at best.

62. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Assessment procedures have been developed and are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has begun to use information collected on individuals to track pupils' achievement as they move from year to year but this is still in the early stages of development. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups. The range of texts in classrooms and in the upper-school library is limited. However, there is a satisfactory selection of books for Years 1 and 2. The co-ordinator has not done enough to improve the quality of teaching and learning and provide support, particularly in those classes where there have been staffing problems.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. There are no specific strategies for the development of literacy across the curriculum, although pupils have opportunities to write in subjects such as religious education, history and geography. However, weaknesses in the teaching of writing hinder potential progress in the development of writing skills during these lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6.
- Some pupils have not made the progress they are capable of.
- There are inconsistencies in teaching and learning.
- Better use could be made of assessment information and data.

Commentary

64. Standards in mathematics are below average for pupils in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. Although the majority of pupils are currently achieving satisfactorily, some have made insufficient progress during the academic year as a result of weaknesses in teaching, particularly in Year 4. In addition, some of the Year 6 pupils made insufficient progress in previous years. Although a greater number of pupils in Year 6 may achieve the expected level 4 compared with the national test results in 2003, the proportion will not be high enough to raise standards beyond 'well below average'. The Year 2 standards are not as high as 2003, but this is the result of having a higher number of pupils with SEN. This year group has achieved satisfactorily.

65. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress overall, though not in classes where teachers take insufficient notice of their needs. Long-term staff absences have not helped this situation. The most recent test results, indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1, girls perform better than the boys to a greater degree than that found nationally and at the end of Key Stage 2, the boys perform better than the girls. The subject co-ordinator has undertaken some initial analysis of gender performance but, without more evidence over a longer period of time, it is difficult to judge whether there are any permanent trends.

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses that have led to some pupils underachieving. Although long-term staff absence is beyond the control of the school, more should have been done to monitor the progress of pupils where absence has had a detrimental effect. However, despite this there are weaknesses in a minority of other classes that have not been affected by long-term absence. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Analysis of previous work indicates that higher-attaining pupils are producing insufficient work for their ability. The marking of pupils' work is a weakness across all classes. Although, for the most part, work is marked regularly, insufficient information is provided to pupils on how to improve their work or move on to the next stage of learning. Some of the pupils' presentation is poor.

67. Where teaching is consistently satisfactory or better, teachers have a secure understanding of the demands of the National Numeracy Strategy and better attention is paid to providing more appropriate levels of work. Lesson evaluations by the teachers are effective and used to adjust future planning, so that the needs of pupils are more effectively dealt with. In these classes, pupils learn consistently and sometimes make good progress. Their achievement over time is much better than that of those pupils who often receive unsatisfactory teaching.

68. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is a good classroom practitioner but has had insufficient time to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning through the rest of the school. She has undertaken a useful analysis of test results in order to identify weaknesses in learning for all pupils, and for boys and girls. However, this information can only be used effectively if the quality of teaching and learning improves overall. Target setting is in the early stages of development and the monitoring of pupils' achievement is not rigorous enough.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. For example, measuring skills are developed in science and pupils use ICT to collect and record data. However, many of these links occur by accident and mathematical links are not identified when teachers plan their lessons. Given the low standards in the school, this is a potential area for development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in Year 6 are rising.
- Children's scientific enquiry skills are underdeveloped.
- Work is insufficiently targeted upon the learning needs of individual children and groups.
- There are too few opportunities for children to write.
- The presentation of children's work is unsatisfactory overall.
- The quality of marking is unsatisfactory overall.

Commentary

70. Standards in Year 2 are average and the children make satisfactory progress. In Year 6 standards are below average. Although these pupils are currently achieving satisfactorily, there has been some unsatisfactory achievement in the past. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils' progress in science is uneven. Recently, greater attention has been given to science in Year 6 and both progress and standards are rising.

71. It was only possible to observe two lessons, so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall. Teachers' subject knowledge was good and questioning was used effectively to develop pupils' thinking. Behaviour was managed well.

72. All aspects of the science curriculum are in place, and covered. Across the school, children do carry out scientific investigations as a regular part of their work. However, the pupils are not consistently taught to make use of the key skills of inquiry. Not enough emphasis is placed on pupils predicting the outcome of experiments, ensuring that tests are fair, using a range of methods to record findings and evaluating and explaining the outcomes.

73. Sound support is provided for individuals and groups of pupils with specific learning needs through the work of teaching assistants. However, when tasks are set for pupils in lessons, too often, all of the pupils are set the same task. The particular learning needs of individuals and groups are not addressed accurately enough through tasks aimed specifically at their needs. This is often the case for more able pupils.

74. Overall, pupils are given too few planned opportunities in science to write. Pupils' work too frequently comprises worksheet responses and drawings at the expense of very appropriate opportunities to practise and refine writing skills. The presentation of work is unsatisfactory overall. Much of the work seen demonstrates a lack of care and the acceptance of standards that are too low. There is a need to set and require clear and appropriate standards of presentation across the school. The quality and usefulness of marking is inconsistent and unsatisfactory overall. Marking frequently consists of ticks with little written feedback to enable pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do next in order to improve.

75. The subject is currently co-ordinated satisfactorily by the deputy-headteacher in the absence of the subject leader. Assessment in the subject is developing satisfactorily. Teachers undertake assessments of children's progress at the end of each unit of work. Tracking of pupils' progress is to be introduced in science later in the current school year. Analysis of the pupils' standards in the 2003 national tests revealed a weakness in the use of scientific vocabulary. This is now a focus for work across the school. The subject leader had carried out some scrutiny of pupils' work and had visited some lessons, but regular, systematic monitoring and evaluation of the subject across the school are yet to be implemented.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are below average in Year 6.
- Pupils can see how well they are doing when they fill in the 'I can do sheets'.
- Work in the subject is not checked or evaluated by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

76. Pupils in Year 2 are reaching expected standards. All pupils, including those with SEN have achieved satisfactorily. In Year 6 standards are below the expected levels. Although there is satisfactory guidance for teachers to plan lessons, and pupils have experienced what has been planned this year, older pupils are not clear about some of the work they have done in the past. They speak vaguely, at times with little understanding, for example, when explaining how to create a spreadsheet, which they did recently. Most pupils in Year 6 show a satisfactory understanding of how to use the Internet to develop research skills. Achievement is satisfactory.

77. Three lessons were observed. There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching in Years 1 and 2 but in the one lesson seen in Year 2, teaching was good. The teacher used an interactive whiteboard well to support the lesson. The pupils later reinforced this knowledge by completing a well-designed computer-generated worksheet, which prepared them well for their next task, which was to use the Roamer - a programmable toy, in the hall. The lesson was prepared effectively and lower-ability pupils and those with SEN were well supported by a classroom assistant. All pupils worked hard and concentrated well. The other lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6 and in these lessons in the ICT suite, teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Pupils showed enthusiasm for the subject but in both lessons, gaps were apparent from previous learning.

78. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and is offering satisfactory leadership. She has a clear vision of how she expects the subject to develop further. For example, she has developed useful assessment procedures for teachers which when filled in, will show the levels the pupils are reaching within the National Curriculum. Good quality 'I can do books' for the pupils, enable them to see how well they are doing. These have recently been developed and at present the co-ordinator has little idea of the standards reached throughout the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

79. Information and communication technology (ICT) is beginning to be used satisfactorily to support learning across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 used the Internet to look for information about different countries that supported the work they were doing in geography. Pupils in Year 2 spoke confidently about using a program where they developed pictures in art and design.

HUMANITIES

80. **Geography and history** were not part of the inspection focus. No lessons were observed but previous work was analysed and discussions were held with pupils in Years 2 and 6.

81. This evidence would indicate that standards in **geography** in Year 2 are similar to those found in most schools but standards are lower than expected in Year 6. The pupils in Year 2 spoke confidently about the subject and were able to distinguish differences between Warrington and other regions and used a sound geographical vocabulary. Pupils in this year group have made satisfactory progress. The Year 6 pupils were less knowledgeable. Although they could explain the water cycle and the journey of a river, their knowledge of places in various parts of the world and different environments was weak. There were significant gaps in their understanding, as a result of weaknesses in the development of the school curriculum. Analysis of pupils' work from other year groups indicated weaknesses in teaching and curriculum coverage. In Year 3, the quality of work was not good and there was evidence of underachievement. The pupils' work in Year 4 was extremely limited and again there was evidence of underachievement. Only in the two Year 5 classes, was there an indication of satisfactory achievement.

82. Inspection evidence for **history** painted a similar picture with pupils reaching appropriate standards in Year 2 and lower than expected standards in Year 6. However, although the Year 2 pupils showed an appropriate understanding of subjects such as the Victorians, their written work indicated shortcomings in teaching, with pupils of all ability expected to undertake the same kind of written work. Year 6 pupils showed a satisfactory knowledge of the Ancient Egyptians but had a much weaker understanding of aspects of British history and the history of other countries.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school has developed a good new scheme of work.
- The pupils show sensible attitudes towards the subject and when discussing Christianity and other religions.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

83. Standards in Year 2 are similar to the expectations outlined in the locally-agreed syllabus. These pupils have achieved satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 6 do not reach the expected levels and there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Although they are currently making satisfactory progress, their achievement over time, has been uneven. Discussions with pupils about Christianity and Islam indicated a good level of respect for the beliefs of others. The subject makes a useful contribution to the pupils' personal development.

84. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there are weaknesses. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that teachers do not take sufficient notice of the different ability groups in their classes. Too often, pupils are expected to undertake the same levels of work. Marking could be better and is not useful in helping pupils improve, particularly with their literacy skills. On some occasions, in some classes, work is not marked at all.

85. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and also a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Her recent analysis of pupils' work was rigorous and accurate and reflected many of the inspection findings. A good scheme of work was introduced at the beginning of the current academic year and teachers' comments on the usefulness and success of different units of work will contribute to a review of the curriculum in July 2004. Appropriate assessment procedures have been introduced for the subject, but it is too early to comment on their effectiveness and impact.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. These subjects were not a focus for the inspection and there was not enough evidence to report on them fully. Children's work was seen in classroom displays and around the school and there were samples of work in **art and design** and in **design and technology**. No lessons were seen in **art and design** or in **music** and only one lesson was seen in each of **design and technology** and **physical education**.

87. In **art and design**, pupils have had suitable opportunities to explore textiles, sketching, painting and three-dimensional work. Overall, the standard of work seen is satisfactory. In Year 2, examples of good work in clay were seen, as well as good quality pupils' paintings influenced by the work of the artists Paul Klee and Henri Matisse.

88. In **design and technology**, the quality of teaching in the lesson observed was satisfactory. Pupils had designed and made a slipper and the lesson focused on the pupils' evaluation of the product and the process. The teacher had appropriately high expectations and rightly emphasised the need for care and detail in the evaluation. With the teacher's support, children did identify the strengths of their work and also how they could improve it next time. Standards of work seen were satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to design and make, often effectively

linked to other subjects and activities. In Year 2, some work in the subject had been part of an integrated study involving science, English and geography. Pupils had designed and made vehicles with a particular focus on axles. The focus in the subject is on the process of developing ideas, designing, making and evaluation.

89. In **music** the quality of singing in school assemblies was satisfactory. There is no evidence of pupils' achievement or standards in any other aspect of the subject. The amount of time given to the subject across the school is too variable and in some classes does not allow enough time for pupils to make progress in their learning.

90. In **physical education** the quality of teaching in the gymnastics lesson observed was satisfactory. The pupils were familiar with health and safety routines, especially in the use of apparatus. Provision in the subject has recently been enhanced by new equipment and training for staff.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

91. The recently developed programme for PSHE is satisfactory and includes the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle and prepares pupils to live in society today. Pupils discuss topics such as *Feelings and Relationships* and *Children's Rights*. A good lesson in Year 5 developed pupils' understanding of the need to respect property. The clearly-defined learning objective was shared with the pupils and then they were given good opportunities to work together and discuss what they would include if designing a public park from derelict land. Pupils practised their speaking and listening skills, as they identified features that they had included. Higher-attaining pupils justified why they had included certain features. Pupils concentrated well and worked hard. Learning was good.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	8
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).