

INSPECTION REPORT

Shevington Community Primary School

Shevington, Wigan

LEA Area: Wigan

Unique Reference Number:106413

Inspection Number:182049

Headteacher: Mr L Hodgson

Reporting inspector: Mr O L Thomas

Inspector Number: 16041

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706812

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school	Primary
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Miles Lane Shevington Wigan WN6 8EW
Telephone number:	01257 252859
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mrs J Pye
Date of previous inspection:	December 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members

Mr O L Thomas, RgI

Subject responsibilities

Science, art, physical education
Equal opportunities
Special educational needs

Aspect responsibilities

Leadership and management
Efficiency of the school
Staffing, accommodation & learning resources
Attitudes, behaviour & personal development
Attendance
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
Partnership with parents & the community
Attainment & progress
Quality of teaching
Curriculum & assessment

Mr D W Jones, Lay Inspector

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Mathematics,
information technology
religious education
design & technology, music

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The performance of 11 year old pupils in the most recent national tests in 1999 were above the national average.
- The leadership and management provided by the Headteacher are very effective. He knows his school very well and has an evident dedication and commitment to further improvement. His vision and skills are a significant factor in the school's success.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and this enables pupils to make mainly good progress in their lessons.
- The provision for pupils under five is very good, particularly in the children's personal and social development, and this secures a positive start to their school career.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports very well their preparation for adult life.
- The range of extracurricular activities is extensive and broadens the pupils' perspective of the world.
- The level of pastoral care for pupils is high and the quality of relationships between teaching, classroom support staff and pupils is very strong.
- High priority is given to working in partnership with parents and the wider community. The impact of these links supports pupils' learning very well.
- The school is efficiently run with careful budget planning and very good control of finances.
- The school development plan is a very effective tool to aid and monitor improvements.
- The school gives good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in information technology are below what is expected nationally by the age of 11.
- II. Standards in aspects of English, notably writing, are below what is expected for 11 year old pupils.
- III. The organisation of the timetable for teaching science and the non-core subjects is restricting the depth of coverage, continuity of pupils' learning and importantly, the full use of their literacy, numeracy and

investigative skills.

- IV. Too many pupils lack initiative, skills of independence and communication, and their general knowledge is at times very narrow.

The school's strengths far outweigh the weaknesses outlined but these weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be circulated to all parents, or guardians of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the school has addressed the key issues well.

- V. The teaching of geography has improved to at least satisfactory and is at times very good at both key stages. There are weaknesses in the pupils' own knowledge and understanding of people and places. The teachers are working hard to address these gaps.
- VI. There has been considerable improvement to the school buildings and further beneficial changes are planned to improve facilities for early years pupils. This includes the creation of an extended outdoor secure area to enhance pupils' physical and independent skills. This is a positive and necessary target.
- VII. Procedures for assessments are now good and teachers' planning is at least satisfactory in all classes. The school's pupil-tracking system is very comprehensive and is used effectively to set targets at the end of key stages. There is however, still scope to use the analysis of assessments to fine tune activities more closely to the range of abilities including for pupils with special educational needs.
- VIII. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effects of management decisions are now very good overall. One area still requiring greater focus is a more rigorous approach to the scrutiny of pupils' books to set targets to help them improve their own performance.
- IX. The management of behaviour is now very good and is a strength of the teaching.

The school's capacity to improve

The school is in a very secure position for continued success. This is confirmed by the highly effective and perceptive leadership by the Headteacher, the regular monitoring by the senior management team of the school's targets, the good quality teaching and the school's ability to identify for itself within its long term planning those areas which require further improvement.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
English	B	C	<i>average</i> C
Mathematics	A	B	<i>below average</i> D
Science	A	B	<i>well below average</i> E

N.B. Schools will often appear in different places in a rank order depending on which indicators are used. The above table is based on one indicator only. It gives a summative measure of the average point score of pupils over all levels achieved at the school not just those reaching Level 4 or above. The comparison with similar schools is based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals; at Shevington very few claim to be eligible, and the final figure is well below average; however, this is not an accurate reflection of the pupils' socio-economic circumstances.

The results confirm the school's gradual improvement in test results for pupils aged 11 compared with all schools and with similar schools. The inspection, which judges pupils' attainment across more aspects of their learning than the tests finds a different, less positive picture for the current pupils in Year 6. There is a high proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and a significant minority of lower attaining pupils. In addition, too many of these pupils display immaturity in their attitude to work and their skills of independent working and initiative are limited. There are only a few individuals who are capable of higher attainment.

By the age of 11, most pupils attain broadly in line with what is expected of them in speaking and listening and reading with some evident weaknesses. In writing, less than half of the pupils are working within the expected Level 4 and the depth and quality of writing are not as expected. By the age of seven, pupils attain as expected in all aspects with some weaknesses in writing. The school has identified the weaknesses in writing within its development plan. In mathematics, most attain as expected in numeracy and other aspects of mathematics by the ages of seven and 11. There are some weaknesses in their usage of mathematical skills. In science, pupils attain as expected by the ages of seven and 11 in all aspects of science with some weaknesses in their use and application of skills of investigation, and the use of information technology to store and interrogate data.

In information technology, pupils at the ages of seven and 11 do not attain as expected nationally. There are some examples of good work through the school but the school recognises and the inspection agrees that the teachers' confidence and competence to teach the subject and the limited resources available restrict pupils' attainment and progress. All staff are aware of the need to update their skills and improve resources.

In religious education, pupils attain as expected in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. They make good progress in their knowledge of world faiths; their understanding is adequate.

In the other subjects, pupils' achievements are as generally expected by the time that they leave the school although there are some weaknesses in the pupils' own general knowledge of the world, people and places. Pupils' progress in art is good and progress in swimming is very good.

Children under five in the nursery and reception class make very good progress given their prior attainment, particularly in personal and social skills in the nursery and in literacy and numeracy in reception.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Very Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Very Good	Good	Good
Science	N/A	Good	Satisfactory
Information technology	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Religious education	N/A	Good	Very Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

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

In 100 per cent of lessons teaching was at least satisfactory. In about one third of lessons teaching was satisfactory, one quarter were very good or excellent, and two fifths were good.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy are good overall and at times very good. Strengths of the teaching include secure knowledge of the National Curriculum subjects, very good direct teaching of skills, regular use and explanation of subject vocabulary to extend pupils' knowledge, effective questioning to probe what they know and can remember from previous lessons and very good behaviour management to keep pupils on task. Sessions at the end of lessons are well used to share work, recap and assess learning in literacy and numeracy and at times this also happens in science. Overall teaching quality has improved since the last inspection most notably in English and mathematics. Some issues for improvement arise from scrutiny of planning and pupils' work which need improvement. Tasks which are more closely linked to the range of ability within the classes would benefit pupils, marking of work requires greater rigour to point to how pupils can improve errors and misunderstandings for themselves, especially in spelling and handwriting, and, teachers' planning for the foundation subjects needs to show more clearly and consistently what pupils are going to learn rather than the activities they will complete. The teaching of information technology is not regular enough or sufficiently broad to enable pupils to attain as expected.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour is good overall in lessons but less so at lunchtimes when pupils are <i>not</i> directly under the very good management of teachers. Some older pupils lack self-discipline and maturity.

Attendance	Good overall. A minority of parents do not ensure that their children arrive at school promptly and an equal proportion take license with holiday taking in term time which must affect pupils' progress.
Ethos*	Pupils' attitudes to work are mainly good when captured by the good and at times very good teaching. However, there are groups of pupils who lack initiative and imagination. Relationships are mainly very good and all of the teaching and non-teaching classroom support staff have a firm commitment to the pursuit of high standards.
Leadership and management	The Headteacher and the senior management team have a clear vision for improvement and they lead the school very well. Governors meet their responsibilities for the delivery of the curriculum with the exception of information technology. Coordinators fulfil their roles conscientiously.
Curriculum	Overall broad and very well complemented by extracurricular provision. The balance of the curriculum is weakened by the provision for information technology and insufficient time to cover non-core subjects at depth due to the organisation of the timetable. Assessment procedures are good and their use is satisfactory overall.
Children with special educational needs	Provision for pupils under five is good and overall satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils with statements of need receive good support. Classteachers meet the needs of pupils generally well overall, but there is scope for finer tuning of tasks to better cater for pupils' needs.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. Teaching staff are well deployed. The quality and experience of non-teaching support in classrooms are very good. The accommodation is very good and well used. Resources are good with the exception of information technology.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

· **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
X. The encouragement for them to be involved in school life.	XIX. That they are not well informed
XI. The approachability of the school and the way complaints are handled.	XX. The limited amount of homework.
XII. The information about what is taught and the progress made by pupils.	XXI. The limited range of educational
XIII. The standards of work achieved.	XXII. That some children are given
XIV. The range of extracurricular activities.	
XV. The range and level of homework.	
XVI. The school's code of conduct	
XVII. The pupils' standards of behaviour.	
XVIII. That their children like school.	

The inspection agrees with most of the positive comments made by parents. However:

XXIII. There is scope to raise standards further in information technology and writing.

- XXIV. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and about the school, it is less good at lunchtimes. Too many older pupils lack self-discipline and do not set a good example for younger pupils.
- XXV. Reports to parents about pupils' progress do not fully meet requirements. They are too descriptive and give insufficient information about what pupils know, understand and can do or their children's strengths and weaknesses.
- XXVI. The school makes good provision to keep parents informed about the work which will be covered.
- XXVII. The homework provision is good and supports pupils' learning well.
- XXVIII. The range of extracurricular activities is very good and significantly supports pupils' learning.
- XXIX. There was absolutely no evidence during the inspection of teachers either giving preferential treatment to any child or exercising discrimination in any form.
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KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors, Headteacher and staff now need to:

Raise standards in information technology by:

- XXX. improving teachers' competence and confidence to teach the **full** National Curriculum Programmes of Study through in-service training;
- XXXI. rationalising the current resources for the subject and, as funding allows, improving them;
- XXXII. allocating more time to the direct teaching of information technology skills;
- XXXIII. enabling pupils to use their skills regularly to support their learning in the other subjects.

The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's:8,31,102,116,120,121.

Raise standards and improve pupils' progress in English, notably writing by ensuring that:

- XXXIV. write independently from an early age; pupils are encouraged to
- XXXV. placed on reminding pupils regularly to use the skills they have been taught; greater emphasis is
- XXXVI. direct teaching of handwriting, spelling and in developing pupils' abilities to write longer pieces of work with interesting and imaginative use of language. more time is given to the
- XXXVII. check and edit their own work to improve its content and through teachers' marking comments to correct their own errors and respond to targets for improvements; pupils are encouraged to
- XXXVIII. to pupils' often limited vocabulary, using key words within topics, finding opportunities for them to talk purposefully and listen to each other; additional focus is given
- XXXIX. to reading for understanding and interpretation. additional focus is given

The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's:7,29,86,87,89.

Review the organisation of planning and time allocated for teaching science and the non -core subjects to:

- XL. provide greater depth of coverage in teaching knowledge, skills and understanding;
- XLI. create flexibility for staff to plan for the use of literacy, numeracy and investigative skills in the other subjects and for learning to become far more relevant, meaningful;
- XLII. enable pupils to pursue a topic for a longer period so that they may improve the quality of their work and the range of their knowledge;
- XLIII. allow pupils to use their initiative more often and to show independence in learning and investigation;
- XLIV. create more time for pupils to talk purposefully about what they have learned and to give

teachers greater opportunities to assess gaps in learning more carefully;
XLV. reduce the burden on teachers of planning and resourcing for all subjects within the week.

The main references to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's:7,31,76,111.

Other minor weaknesses which the governors will want to address can be found in paragraph no's:32,35,36,49,51,55,69,74,97,153.

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INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Shevington Community Primary School is situated close to the M6 motorway in the large urban village of Shevington, on the outskirts of Wigan. Since the last inspection in December 1994, the school population has decreased dramatically from 368 pupils owing to the fall in the birth rate in the Shevington area. There being no proposed new housing developments and the fact that the area is served by five other primary schools, the governors have reduced the school's standard number from 57 to 30. The decline of the school population has had an effect on the annual budget, the result of which has meant a reduction in the teaching staff from 15 to nine teachers. The use of the school building is also being rationalised for efficiency and impact. The reduction in numbers has not had a totally negative effect; by reducing the number of surplus places the school raised capital to improve facilities in Key Stage 2, raised as an issue by the previous inspection.

2. The 195 pupils on roll represent a comprehensive intake, most pupils come from either the large council estate in the centre of the village or the mix of privately owned houses in the surrounding area of the school. There are weaknesses in the pupils' attainment on entry in speaking, listening and literacy skills. Some have limited personal and social skills. The majority of children have experienced some form of pre-school education prior to entering the reception class. The school has a 30 place nursery, children are taken in from the age of three; 31 pupils are in the reception class, most of whom were under five at the time of the inspection. Not all of the pupils in the nursery move onto the reception class at the age of four. The school admits pupils to full-time education at the beginning of the year in which the child's fifth birthday occurs.

3. There are 39 pupils on the register of special educational needs, three of whom have Statements of Special Educational Need. The five per cent of pupils identified as eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, but this figure is not an accurate reflection of the pupils' socio-economic circumstances.

4. The school aims to:

XLVI. recognise the work of each individual pupil and their right of access to a broad, well balanced and relevant curriculum based on the National Curriculum;

XLVII. realise the child's personal potential by developing positive social and moral values, intellectual and physical skills and a positive self image;

XLVIII. provide a high quality education in a supportive environment based on the concepts of care, consideration, cooperation and personal development regardless of social circumstances;

XLIX. recognise that the interests of the child are best served when the school and parents

work as a partnership based on mutual respect.

5. The school's priorities and targets are set out clearly in the 1999 - 2000 school development plan and include:

- L. to meet national test targets set by the school for the years 2000 - 2002;
- LI. refine the literacy hour and improve standards in literacy;
- LII. refine and deliver the numeracy hour;
- LIII. increase the use of information technology across the curriculum;
- LIV. generally raise standards in all curriculum areas;
- LV. refine the annual monitoring programme;
- LVI. review child protection procedures;
- LVII. review job descriptions;
- LVIII. improve play facilities;
- LIX. remodel facilities to create an early learning centre of excellence;
- LX. extend the play area for reception;
- LXI. consider the partnership with local colleges of education;
- LXII. agree a workable programme of student training.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	15	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	22	21	25
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88(91)	84(100)	100(94)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	14	15	14
	Total	22	25	23
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88(88)	100(94)	92(97)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
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¹ Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	15	15	18
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	35	33	38
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	81(64)	77(67)	88(74)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	15	18
	Girls	19	18	20
	Total	32	33	38
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	74(64)	77(60)	88(81)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

• **Attendance**

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Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised	School	0.3
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

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• **Exclusions**

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Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:	Fixed period	Number
	Permanent	0
		0

• **Quality of teaching**

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Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	27
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

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• **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

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• **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

• **Attainment and progress**

6. There has been a general trend of improvement in the school's test results over the last three years. In the most recent national tests for 11 year old pupils in 1999 the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 or above was above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 has been increased in all subjects as a result of specific intervention by the school. In relation to similar schools the school's results are in line in English and mathematics and above in science. The school has made full use of the national booster funding and plans to do so again this year. In addition, the school 'set' pupils for literacy and numeracy across its then parallel Year 6 classes and this enabled more specific targets to be set for the pupils. Due to reorganisation of the year groups as the school roll has declined, the current pupils are not set. However, it is the school's intention to reconsider using this strategy in future. Very detailed assessments are made of test results over time using the school's tracking system. This has an evident effect on improving pupils' progress and subsequently raising standards. The national test results for seven year olds showed that reading was above the national average, mathematics well above and writing in line. This placed the school above similar schools in reading and mathematics but below in writing as too few pupils attained at the higher Level 3.

7. The inspection finds a somewhat fluctuating and less positive picture of pupils' attainment by the age of 11. The cohort is not so able as last year, contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, very few higher attaining pupils and a significant minority of pupils who lack a positive work ethic and maturity in spite of the good teaching they receive. In English, standards are about in line with national expectations in speaking, listening and reading for just over half of the pupils. In writing, more than half the pupils attain below what is expected of them nationally. Far too many pupils are currently not working within the expected Level 4. By the age of seven, most pupils attain as expected in speaking, listening, reading and writing. There are weaknesses in pupils' abilities to read for understanding and writing at both key stages. By the age of 11, writing is shallow and lacks quality in punctuation, depth and presentation. In mathematics, most pupils attain as expected in numeracy by the ages of seven and 11, with some weaknesses in their abilities to apply what they know to solve problems. In science, seven and 11 year old pupils attain as expected in their knowledge and understanding of the natural world and scientific phenomena. They are able to carry out experiments devised by the teacher. Their abilities to set up their own lines of enquiry are less secure. Since the last inspection standards have improved in geography, but declined in aspects of English and in information technology. It is fair to say however, that the previous report only commented on a limited aspect of information technology and in reality standards are not significantly different now. They are still too low. The pupils' abilities to use their acquired literacy, numeracy and investigative skills across the curriculum are broadly adequate but there is scope for considerable improvement. The organisation and timetabling of the curriculum are a hindrance.

8. In information technology, pupils do not attain as expected nationally by the ages of seven and 11. There is evidence of spasmodic use of information technology for word processing but systematic teaching of skills and the use of information technology in the other subjects is very weak. This is attributable to two main factors; the teachers' own, acknowledged lack of competence and confidence to teach the full National Curriculum Programmes of Study, insufficient actual teaching time and inadequate resources.

9. In religious education, pupils aged seven and 11 attain in line with the local agreed syllabus in

their knowledge of the major world faiths including Christianity, their understanding is adequate.

10. In the other subjects, by the ages of seven and 11, pupils have a generally good knowledge and set of skills and techniques in art, a sound knowledge and understanding of the design, making and evaluation process, a broad knowledge of history and good singing skills, but composition of and listening critically to music are less strong. In geography, pupils acquire suitable knowledge of mapping skills and understanding of themes, for example, the weather, but their knowledge and understudying of people and places and the wider world is generally unsatisfactory and at times surprisingly poor. Pupils' skills in physical education are at least satisfactory and their progress in swimming is very good.

11. The implementation of the literacy project has been thorough. The school's own audit of literacy teaching through close monitoring of teaching and learning has already identified writing as the key weakness and plans are in hand to address this. The numeracy strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress, particularly their mental agility skills. The monitoring of outcomes of learning and tests is assisting in identifying weaknesses. The school acknowledges within its development plan the gaps in pupils' attainment in information technology. Staff have already attended update training and more is planned for. The school has not yet been allocated its National Grid for Learning funding and this is causing some frustration as staff are eager to proceed with improvements.

12. On entry to the school pupils' attainment is weak in speaking, listening and literacy skills. Some have limited personal and social skills. However, the school's provision ensures these young children make very good progress in the nursery and reception classes.

13. Pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall in lessons and directly attributable to the mainly good and at times very good teaching they receive, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The pupils' progress is at times hindered by their own responses, which although when stimulated by the teaching are mainly good; pupils do lack initiative and a thirst for learning which makes the teachers' work more difficult and ultimately restricts progress at times particularly in Year 6. There are few higher attaining pupils in the school but these make generally good progress overall as do pupils with special educational needs. There is scope to fine tune more tasks more specifically to individual pupils to both challenge and support them more directly.

14. The school has set targets for raising standards and the tracking of progress is a positive and significant feature in identifying where improvements are needed. The school's priorities rightly focus on raising standards. The Headteacher and staff have a clear commitment to continued improvement and the school is well placed to focus on weaknesses and remedy them.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

15. The pupils' attitudes to their learning, their behaviour and personal development are good.

16. The behaviour of pupils throughout the key stages varies from good to very good, with a minority of pupils in Key Stage 2 whose unsatisfactory behaviour hinders lesson progress. During a science lesson Year 1 pupils were learning how sounds are made. They displayed concentration and perseverance in completing the task and took responsibility for their progress. During literacy hour for pupils in Year 5 a similar response to their learning was observed. In a science lesson for Year 6 pupils they were learning about materials and their properties. The poor attitude and silly behaviour of a group of boys hindered lesson progress.

17. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and about the school is mostly good. They know the rules for

good conduct and pupils respond well to firm guidance and the teachers' high expectations. However, there is a need for development of self-discipline particularly among older pupils. The conduct of a significant group during lunch was exceptionally poor and revealed a clear lack of maturity. The behaviour management of the lone midday assistant made no impact on the poor behaviour observed and no support was offered by teaching staff who entered the dining hall.

18. The quality of relationships between the pupils and between pupils and staff is very good. The pupils were observed in many lessons working cooperatively and sharing. They relate well to teaching staff who display a strong pastoral commitment to the pupils.

19. There is a strong element of caring and social conscience within the school. The pupils support a range of charities throughout the year and they are continuing to support the education of a Filipino child. During religious education lessons comparing Christianity with other world religions, they are mostly interested and respectful of the beliefs and values of other cultures.

20. Those pupils who are under five years are adapting well to school life. During a story teaching knowledge and understanding of 'Our Bodies', the children showed very good levels of independence and self-discipline, and listened well to the story. They are well behaved and have good listening skills.

21. The school has maintained the good standards of behaviour and attitude evident during the last inspection. The quality of these aspects and their personal development makes a good contribution to their attainment and progress.

Attendance

22. The level of attendance by pupils is consistently above 90 per cent and the majority, arrive at school on time. There is a small but persistent element who, arrive late and during the inspection some pupils only arrived after assembly had commenced. School registers are completed promptly and in accordance with guidelines. A significant feature of authorised absence is pupils on holiday during term time. This has adverse implications for the continuity and progress of their education. Governors have not met their responsibility for the publication of attendance levels.

- **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

- **Teaching**

23. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages with instances of very good and excellent teaching.

24. In the early years classes in nursery and reception the teaching is overall very good. The teachers show a clear understanding and have a secure knowledge of how young children learn and of their needs. They provide an appropriate range of practical experiences to support learning. For example, in using the need to wash hands after painting to teach children how to use pump soap containers and clean their hands thoroughly. In literacy the teacher uses puppets to great effect to motivate the pupils to read. The lesson pace and range of activities support the children's interest in reading and their progress. In mathematics the range of activities to reinforce counting to ten is broad, stimulating and very well prepared and ensures good progress by the pupils. Planning is thorough and detailed, emphasising appropriately personal and social skills' development and this is regularly shown in teaching when the children are required to be independent and responsible. There is clear progression in the planning which moves from the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes to the targets of the National Curriculum. Assessments are accurate and regular and are clearly informing planning for groups and individuals and identifying pupils with special educational needs. The teachers make the most effective use of the high quality skills of the trained support staff. Both teachers have established clear routines and have high expectations for the children to follow them.

Together they provide a secure, warm and caring environment. Parents are actively encouraged to work in partnership with the staff. This is supported well by the Family Literacy Programme in cooperation with Wigan College. Classrooms are well displayed and show the breadth of the curriculum areas. 25.

The quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall, with instances of very good teaching in both key stages in English, geography, mathematics, history and religious education. Strengths of teaching include, secure knowledge of the National Curriculum subjects, very good direct teaching of skills, regular use and explanation of subject vocabulary to extend pupils' knowledge, effective questioning to probe what they know and can remember from previous lessons and very good behaviour management to keep pupils on task. Sessions at the end of lessons are well used to share work, recap and assess learning in literacy and numeracy and at times this also happens in science. Overall teaching quality has improved since the last inspection most notably in English and mathematics.

26. The teaching of literacy is good overall. Lessons are well structured and follow the format of the recommended hour closely. The choice of texts to stimulate pupils is good and the plenary session is a regularly well used and given suitable time to reinforce the learning objective and check on pupils' progress. The direct teaching of skills and the very close attention given to explaining word meanings is a strength of all literacy teaching. In the best lessons, for example in Year 2 when the pupils are learning to read, write and follow instructions about 'Hibernating Hedgehogs', the teacher's very good behaviour management keeps pupils focused, the pace of the lesson is swift, whilst effective questioning, probing, and a requirement for pupils to explain their answers carefully enables the teacher to assess who is understanding and who is not. 27. The teaching of numeracy is good overall, well structured with direct teaching. Mental agility is given due emphasis. Some over-reliance on commercial texts restricts the opportunities for open ended investigations and this is also true in science where at times activities are very directed by the teacher to the extent that pupils cannot follow their own lines of enquiry. 28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The individual educational plans are used to address the pupils' specific learning needs but there is scope for further fine-tuning of tasks to support and reinforce particular weaknesses. 29. There are some aspects of teaching which can be improved further. These are noted from scrutiny of pupils' work and include higher expectations for presentation, more regular direct teaching of handwriting, and a greater emphasis when marking pupils' work on how the pupil can improve and correct their errors rather than the teacher doing it. Although teachers regularly remind pupils about general issues before they commence work, there is a need to be vigilant in this as pupils do not readily transfer their skills without regular reinforcement. 30. Teachers give regular homework and this is productive to the learning. It is used in lessons and comment is made on the quality of homework. **The curriculum and assessment**

31. The school provides a good curriculum for its children who are under five and a sound

curriculum for the rest of its pupils. It does not, however, meet statutory requirements for the curriculum in information technology, which is unsatisfactory. The school does meet the requirements for the remainder of the National Curriculum and religious education. At Key Stage 2 there is not sufficient balance in the curriculum with the school too rigidly endeavouring to keep a balanced curriculum on a weekly basis rather than over a longer period of time. This has the effect of compartmentalising the work in very small units, which does not necessarily help pupils in their long term learning and does not allow sufficient depth of understanding to be achieved. The school has not sufficiently explored the “blocking” of curriculum subjects over a longer period of time in order to create more effective links between subjects for their mutual support.

32. Plans are in place for all subjects and the school is aware that some are a little dated. To this end it is examining the nationally recommended schemes of work in order to see how helpful they might be to the school. Where planning is well established it is beginning to have a positive effect on the progress pupils make. For example, the school has been effective in its implementation of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These plans have been put into good effect and the school has been able to make steady progress in improving its results year on year. The planning for numeracy does not always give teachers as much support as it might, as daily plans do not always appear to have clear objectives and do not always show that the teacher is planning work for the different ability groups in the class.

33. The school has appropriate plans for sex education, health education and drugs awareness. The school nurse has often been involved in aspects of health and sex education and the police have been helpful in the area of drugs awareness. The very recent visit of the “Life” caravan gave pupils a good deal of relevant and helpful information upon which to base many of the important decisions they will be making in later life. This curriculum prepares the pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development.

34. The curriculum for the children under five is good. The school plans well to meet the recommended areas for learning and there is a smooth transition to the National Curriculum as children reach their fifth birthday.

35. With the exception of information technology the school provides satisfactory access for all pupils to the National Curriculum. There are times in mathematics, however, when there is further scope for extra challenge in the work of the higher attaining pupils. Although the numeracy and literacy classes contain pupils who often work in ability groups, their work in mathematics does not always reflect these differences. Work for the lower attaining pupils is often set clearly in the plans and helps them make progress. The same is also the case for some of the other subjects taught in the top two classes in the school. Here, planning is carried out jointly and pupils are taught history and geography, for example, on a two-year programme. Whilst there is nothing wrong with this type of planning, the individual work of the two different year groups does not always show enough recognition of their differing abilities.

36. The pupils who have special educational needs receive a good curriculum when they are under five and a satisfactory curriculum in the rest of the school. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils on the register of special needs and the targets set for them are appropriate. The class teachers and the special needs coordinator regularly review the plans and parents are kept well informed of progress. Overall the pupils with higher levels of needs, especially those pupils who have statements of their needs, receive good support. Even though class teachers work tirelessly to support other pupils on the register, with little extra adult help in class, the support these pupils receive is often insufficient for their needs.

37. Sound schemes of work support teachers by giving satisfactory and sometimes good and clear guidance on the work that should be covered. This overall view ensures good progress in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding at Key Stage 1 and for the pupils under five, and satisfactory progression for those in Key Stage 2. Currently, nationally recommended plans for information technology are being considered. These will not be an immediate answer to the shortcomings of the subject, where basic skills in all strands of the programme have to be addressed.

38. The school has worked hard on its medium term planning. Whilst this has clearly improved, there is still a weakness in the planning for the shared Year 5 and Year 6 work, where planning and teaching show introductions and level of work expected of the two groups of pupils which are too similar. Weekly and daily plans for literacy work are good, and although the weekly plans for numeracy are good, the daily plans do not give enough clear focus on learning objectives in order that teachers might direct their teaching more accurately at the needs of the pupils.

39. The parents are pleased with the progress made in homework and believe that the school has achieved a good balance in the work it sets. Homework makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress, where they complete it, and the homework diary is a good method of communication.

40. A range of additional activities very well supports the curriculum. A good number of pupils learn musical instruments and take part in the choir. Badminton, football, netball and gymnastics are offered after school as club activities and many pupils enter competitive events. Visiting professionals from the world of drama, music and art visit the school and pupils are taken to places of interest which support their education. Regular visits are made to a Roman site, Drumcroon Arts Centre, Wigan Pier and Croxteth Hall. All of these activities give good support to pupils' learning and help them make progress. Extended opportunities for pupils to stay at centres such as the Lake District centre also give pupils good opportunities to become more self-confident, self-reliant and help them work as part of a team.

41. There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils' achievements in their work. The school makes good use of a number of tests in order to check pupils' progress over the time they are in the school. This allows the class teachers to group pupils according to ability when necessary but it is not used consistently enough for adapting day to day work for them. Where work is altered for small groups of pupils in the classes, those pupils invariably make better progress. In order to give support to teachers and allow them to have a clearer view of the levels of achievements expected by the National Curriculum, the school has a number of files of work which have been discussed and accurately levelled against national standards.

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· **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

42. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The development of their moral, social and cultural values is very good.

43. The pupils are introduced to spiritual values through the curriculum across a range of subjects. During a lesson for literacy in Year 5 they read about the 'Magic Box' and thought about the precious things, such as love, that they could put in the box. In a geography lesson for Year 2, the pupils' sense of awe and wonder was apparent as the teacher revealed articles in a parcel from Australia. Their spiritual development is supported through the teaching of religious education when they learn about the diversity of traditions and beliefs. Collective worship is used to provide the pupils with opportunities for reflection and to share and celebrate each other's success. Provision for worship is in accordance with statutory requirements.

44. The school's provision for the development of pupils' moral values is very good. The well structured behaviour policy includes a code of conduct that is based on consideration for others and emphasises right and wrong behaviour. The code is displayed throughout the school and is supported by a home/school agreement. These provisions have the support and approval of parents.

45. The quality of their relationships has a positive influence on pupils' attainment and progress. In lessons the pupils are cooperative and sharing and they have good pastoral relationships with teaching staff. During their learning they were observed taking responsibility for their own progress. Their sense of community is supported by opportunities to interact with other schools and through a range of visits to outside venues.

46. Through a broad range of curricular activity the pupils are introduced to their own and other peoples' cultures and traditions. The school's displays of charts, photographs and maps give the pupils a perspective of where their home area is in relation to regional, national and international boundaries. In religious education they are comparing the major religions of the world with Christianity. In history they have studied Celtic and Roman Britain, the Tudor era and Victorian times as well as life in Britain during World War II. Cultural visits have included the Drumcroom Art Centre, Croxteth Hall Museum of Childhood and Wigan Pier. The school has received visits from the Ludus Dance Troupe and the Aztec Theatre Group of Dance and Drama. Following a study of the artist Jagjit Chuhan Year 4 pupils painted pictures following the style of the artist. The pupils enjoy a range of extra curricular activity including sport and dance.

47. The provision for development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values has a very good impact on their attainment and progress. The school has maintained the very good provision found on the previous inspection.

48. Pupils who are under five years of age are making very good progress in their development. In lessons they show good levels of self-discipline, kindness to one another and a strong sense of fair play. They attend key stage and whole school assembly and worship, where they participate in hymns and prayers.

· **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

49. The school's provision of support, guidance and pupils' welfare arrangements is overall good. A strength of this provision is the quality of pastoral relationships which are very good and give a firm base for its delivery. Whilst curriculum planning is satisfactory, procedures for assessment and recording are good. Class teachers follow policy guidance to plan progress, set targets and assess achievement. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils of differing abilities is satisfactory. The school has good procedures to monitor behaviour which help to maintain overall good standards. However this provision does not extend to the behaviour of pupils in the dining hall where behaviour is unsatisfactory. Monitoring of records of attendance is the responsibility of class teachers. These arrangements do not impact on the level of holiday taking in term time or persistent late attending by pupils.

50. The school's behaviour management strategies and procedures are comprehensive and effective where applied. Parents are familiar with these arrangements which, include a home/school agreement and have their strong support. There are effective procedures to monitor or resolve issues related to bullying. Although the school has produced a handbook for midday assistants, which gives guidance and strategies for behaviour management, some staff do not apply the strategies.

51. Very good provision is made for child protection, which includes two members of staff nominated as child protection officers. Training for this aspect is up to date and relevant, and all members of staff are familiar with current advice. Risk assessment is carried out annually by a school governors sub committee. The school's provision for retaining medicines in a kitchen refrigerator is not secure and is accessible by young pupils.

52. Arrangements to promote the health and safety of pupils are very good, the school provides a safe secure learning environment. Within the curriculum pupils are taught how to be healthy and this is supported through visits by the 'Life Education Caravan' for all year groups. Further visits from the police, teach the pupils how to be safe from drugs. Those pupils who are under five are taught in a separate building. Access is by coded locks and is monitored by closed circuit television

53. The school has maintained overall the high level of provision previously found for this aspect.

Partnership with parents and the community

54. The school makes very good provision for partnership with parents and the community. The very positive features found during the previous inspection have been maintained.

55. The parents are well informed about the school through its prospectus and regular newsletters. They are welcomed into the classroom at the start of the day and the school actively seeks to involve them in its activities and their children's work. To support and encourage parents to be involved, the school is currently running a family literacy programme that teaches them how to help with their child's learning. Parents have three formal opportunities during the year to meet with teachers and discuss their child's progress. The quality of annual reports of pupils' progress are not entirely satisfactory. Teachers' comments in respect of foundation subjects are not specific and no advice is given on targets. Parents voice strong approval for the school's provision to involve them in their children's work. Pupils keep homework diaries which inform parents of their activities and in which they can endorse their comments. Parental support was observed in the classroom during the inspection. The 'Friends of the School' association is very active in supporting the school through social activities and fund raising. The provision for parents' involvement has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

56. The school functions as a true community school with a range of community activities taking place on site. These activities include after-school clubs, a 'Drop In' room for young mothers of pre school children and a playgroup. There are close links with other schools in the Wigan area. Links with the community make a very positive contribution to pupils' attainment and personal development.

57. Parents of those pupils who are under five years of age have good access to the school and are welcomed in the morning when the children are settling into their lesson.

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• **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

• **Leadership and management**

58. The overall quality of leadership and management by the Headteacher, senior management team and governing body is very good.

59. The school has a clear set of aims and a strong sense of purpose which promote the quality of learning, equality of opportunity for all pupils, standards of achievement and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. These aims and purposes are shared and agreed to by staff and governors. Parents support and recognise the values of the school positively.

60. The strong leadership by the Headteacher provides clear educational direction for the work of the school. He knows his school well and has an evident commitment to a sustained programme of improvement. His vision and skills are a significant factor in the school's success. He is highly supportive of his staff and has worked hard to maintain a corporate approach to planning.

61. Strategic planning and organisational management by the Headteacher and senior management team in partnership with the governors, as valued in the previous inspection report is still working effectively. Despite a lengthy major building and refurbishment programme, good progress has been made in addressing the issues and recommendations raised in the previous inspection report and in the implementation of government initiative, such as The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

62. The governing body takes an active and critical role in holding the school to account through a well structured committee framework. Individual members have particular skills and strengths that are of value to the school. Through regular visits governors are able to gain first hand knowledge of the effect their decisions have on the day to day life of the school. The healthy and challenging climate for discussion and decision-making previously mentioned still exists.63. The governing body meets its statutory obligations except for the delivery of all aspects of information technology and in the quality of the annual progress reports to parents. The school development plan is a very comprehensive document. It is curriculum driven and is an effective management tool. In terms of its structure and value as a working document, it is an example of good practice. The governors and staff contribute to the development process fully. Planning targets are realistic and appropriate reference is made to costing, time scales, evaluation and success criteria.64. The quality of support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum has improved and is now good. Development planning and the monitoring and evaluation of the effects of priorities on the quality of education provided are very good. Future targets, as outlined in the school development plan, will involve coordinators gaining first hand knowledge of the delivery of their subjects within classrooms and in the use of information gained to consolidate strengths and overcome weaknesses. One area still requiring greater focus is a more rigorous approach to the scrutiny of pupils' books to set targets to help them improve their own performance.

65. The school has a very positive ethos. All of the teaching staff and classroom support assistants have a firm commitment to the pursuit of high standards. Teachers and non-teaching staff work very well together which has a positive effect on the pupils' personal development and progress throughout the school. The routine administration and organisation of the school are very good. The clerical, administration and caretaking staff make visitors to the school most welcome. They provide high quality support for the day to day running of the school from which both the staff and pupils benefit. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The open door policy exercised by the Headteacher and staff is much appreciated by the parents.

• **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

66. There have been significant changes in the character of the school since the last inspection, resulting from the dramatic fall in the school population. The decline in the number of pupils on roll has severely reduced the annual budget. This has caused the need for a reduction in the teaching staff from 15 to nine, the rationalisation of the buildings and re-designation of roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher and teaching staff to match the demands of the curriculum.

67. Teachers are effectively and appropriately deployed taking into account their experience and qualifications. The staff have coped with the necessary changes well. There is a high degree of goodwill and clear evidence of cooperation and mutual support amongst staff. All staff have appropriate job descriptions which reflect the responsibilities they undertake. Future planning has allocated time for coordinators to extend their role to monitoring of the delivery of their subjects. The non-teaching staff are well trained and make a valuable contribution to the pupils' academic and personal development. However, the amount of support available to pupils with high levels of special educational needs is often inadequate to sustain a satisfactory level of progress within class lessons. The role of special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is met by the Year 5 teacher on a part time basis. The caretaker and cleaning staff work very effectively taking good care of the buildings and promoting tidiness and a caring attitude within the pupils. There are a sufficient number of mid-day supervisors who work both in the dining room and in the playground.

68. All members of staff have been appraised. In addition, due to the need for managing the rapid changes in the nature of the school and the implementation of government initiatives a process of staff review has been introduced and used well. A comprehensive programme of staff development and in-service training firmly linked to the agreed priorities identified within the school development plan meets both the personal needs of staff and school needs. This process has also involved individual members of the governing body.

69. There have been considerable improvements made to the accommodation since the previous inspection when the condition and nature of the buildings were raised as a key issue. The refurbished classrooms are spacious and enhance the quality of the learning environment. There are specialist rooms for practical activities, art, music, information technology, two halls, a separate dining room and spacious library. The school is generally making effective use of its new accommodation, although the organisation of a number of classrooms requires further attention to improve their impact on the pupils' quality of learning. Ventilation in some of the refurbished classrooms is unsatisfactory and recognised as an issue by the Headteacher and staff.

70. Learning resources available for the delivery of most subjects are good, with the exception of information technology. The library is well stocked and used effectively by the staff and pupils. Allocation for funding of resources is made by arrangement with the coordinators taking account of the targets in the school development plan.

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The efficiency of the school

71. The governing body, working in partnership with the Headteacher and staff and using a long term £100,000 refurbishment programme provided by the local education authority, have ensured that all the key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed, and that good improvements have been made.

72. Financial planning is very good. The governing body has established and maintained a healthy contingency fund to offset any contribution which may be required in the future to its planned development; for example, the creation of an extended, outdoor secure area for early years' pupils. Financial control is very good. The governors' finance committee keeps a watchful eye on the budget, and keeps the governing body well informed of the financial situation. They receive good information from the administrative officer and the Headteacher, and use it well to monitor the financial situation. Good value for money is sought in purchasing resources, and all avenues for extra revenue are explored. Routine administration and school organisation are efficient and effective. All members of staff are aware of budget limits and work within these.

73. The school development plan is a very good document which clearly reflects the aims of the school and agreed priorities. Progress in implementing the plan is monitored regularly by the Headteacher and senior management team. This safeguards the school's ability to identify for itself within its long term planning those areas, which require further improvement.

74. Teaching and non-teaching staff are well deployed and good use is made of the Headteacher's time and that of the senior management team in monitoring staff and curriculum development. Efficient use is made of supply teachers to enable non-contact time to be given to individual members of staff to undertake agreed initiatives such as monitoring of the literacy and numeracy strategies and in running workshops for parents. However, only limited time has been given to the SENCO for her to fulfil her role. She has had no opportunity to gain first hand knowledge of the attainment and progress made by pupils with special educational needs within class lessons. Target setting and the writing of individual education plans are negotiated in her own time. Limited specialist support also means that pupils with high levels of special needs often receive no additional support within lessons in the non-core subjects.

75. Staff training and curriculum development initiatives are targeted closely to the school's priorities, and issues arising from staff reviews. These funds are well spent. Very good use is made of external support agencies, visitors, educational visits and extra-curricular activities to broaden the experiences of the pupils.

76. The school makes efficient and effective use of its accommodation and resources in the implementation of the curriculum and in the personal development of its pupils. Time is generally used well throughout the day. Sessions start on time and lessons are well structured especially for literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of plenary sessions. However, the balance of the curriculum is weakened by the provision for information technology and insufficient time to cover non-core subjects at depth due to the organisation of the timetable.

77. Given the quality of education that is provided, the attainment and progress made by the pupils and the high quality of teaching the school gives good value for money.

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PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

78. The school has a 30 place nursery, children are taken in from the age of three, and there were 31 pupils in the reception class, most of whom were under five at the time of the inspection. The provision for all children under five is very good overall and provides a secure and positive start to their school careers. Both classes provide a broad and balanced curriculum from which children make very good progress in the targets of the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes. A significant proportion of children are below average attainment on entry, particularly in their ability to speak, listen carefully, in personal and social skills and literacy and numeracy. Staff make thorough observations of the children to assess their needs and keep comprehensive records. A recognised baseline assessment scheme is efficiently used. The quality of teaching is very good overall and is very well supported by skilled and well qualified nursery and classroom assistants and is detailed elsewhere in this report. This signals an improvement since the last inspection.

Personal and social development 79. The children in both classes have made very good progress since they started school and in the reception class many are well on the way to reaching the standards expected before they are five. In the nursery the children share the equipment and play together well. For example, when working on the computer one child shows another how to use the mouse to move the 'munchman' around the screen. The timetable is organised so that children have both quiet and active sessions, requiring them at times to sit for longer periods and listen carefully. Most do this well when listening to the story of the 'Farmer, the Badger and the Squirrel'. They are gradually learning under the teacher's good direction that they should not shout out and that they are one of many and need to take turns. In the reception class children are given more responsibilities. In the morning the children have clearly established routines which they follow well. For example, they use their trays and the lunch table spontaneously to store their belongings. At the end of sessions children are expected to tidy away and most show suitable independence in doing so. When sent to work on tasks many children settle well and show self discipline. Some children are taking longer to learn the formalities of school life. For example, they need the vigilance of the teacher to calm their enthusiasm when puppets are used in literacy. When working in the hall the children's enthusiasm at times bubbles over into excessive noise and some do not listen well to the teacher's request to walk quietly back to the classroom. There is overall a very good balance of teacher's expectations for the children to work things out for themselves and adult guidance to help them move forward in a structured way.

Language and literacy

80. Many children are working well towards meeting the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this important area and preparing to enter the National Curriculum. During the range of activities in the nursery, adults are encouraging children to talk and explain what they are doing. This is a vital step for these children as their abilities to talk are limited. They are learning early skills of letter formation when they trace the letters of their name in paint, they can make marks to represent their thoughts and some are able to form some or all the letter of their name. In the reception class the children know words related to the story of the Big Hungry Bear. They listen animatedly. Most know that a sentence begins with a capital letter, they follow the text from left to right and can identify initial sounds and many letters of the alphabet. The most able children can recognise some key words and ask questions about the story. The children are quick to offer words which begin with 'r'. Overall they make very good progress in early reading skills and practising and forming letters in the sand. The children can use a mouse on the computer to listen to a talking book and when studying the book some can find the 'ing' sound within words. Most can write their name, with some letters correctly shaped and oriented. The teaching for this aspect is very good.

Mathematical development

81. Pupils make good progress towards attaining the standards expected by the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Some are already working within the National Curriculum. In the nursery the young children can match shapes to holes, use numbers to count objects sometimes correctly and recite nursery rhymes which involve counting. In the reception class practical activities are used very well to develop counting and ordering skills. For example, using a teddy and the theme of a tea party the children have to find another teddy to add to the table and count the total. The activity was extended very well by then adding two more teddies and so on. Most children can count in sequence to ten and identify numerals in different contexts. The range of tasks includes, throwing bean bags onto a ladder and counting the score, identifying how many skittles have been knocked and scoring throws into a 'bull's eye'. Number rhymes are used well to reinforce the activities. Opportunities are also given for the children to replicate patterns using up to three colours on a pegboard. Overall the range of mathematical experiences prepares the children well for the targets of the National Curriculum. Teaching quality is very good.

Knowledge and understanding of the world82. The children's general knowledge is limited on entry to the school and is very well supplemented by the learning activities. They learn about growing things in the nursery including how babies, plants and animals grow. They are recognising that a computer is a source of information and that they can move objects around on the screen. In the reception class the children observe leaves and plants, closely identifying shapes and colours. They use the knowledge of their own families to consider growth in more detail, naming family members and learning words related to them. The children are encouraged to use their senses well in exploring the world around them. The quality of teaching is good.

- **Physical development**

83. The children progress well within the recommendations for this area. They can manipulate pencils, paintbrushes and tools with reasonable accuracy and developing skill. In the nursery many still need help with fasteners, buttons and ties. This improves in the reception class and the children are more adept at fastenings. They pedal tricycles safely and can use push and pull toys confidently. In the reception class most can skip, jog, and march to the teacher's instructions. They can copy actions, and use space reasonably well. Some move quite well to rhythm whilst others have clumsy movements which are not yet well coordinated. There is some noticeable difference in the movements of boys and girls, for example, girls have good conforming control but more boys have exuberant movements not conforming as well as the girls. The quality of teaching is good and enables good progress to be made towards the targets of the National Curriculum.

- **Creative development**

- 84. By five the children have well met the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area. In the nursery the children mix colours, draw round shapes, make string patterns, mosaics and use a good range of paper and materials to make pictures. For example, they have freely painted some lovely, bold images of their mums and dads, for example, this is my mummy with a baby in her tummy and their favourite things. In the reception class the children have observed their own features in a mirror before painting pictures of themselves. They print with leaves, mix primary colours and use footprints they made for counting in mathematics. When moving in the hall the children listen to the music and use their bodies to act out movements. Puppets are used well to motivate the children and they use their imaginations to enable the puppets to read to them. The children sing well together. The quality of teaching is good.

- **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

- **English**

85. The most recent test results for 11 year old pupils showed results above the national average. In

comparison to similar schools results were broadly in line. Results for seven year olds were well above national averages in reading but average in writing. In comparison to similar schools they were above in reading but below in writing because the proportion gaining the higher Level 3 was low. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls and the trend overall in results is one of steady improvement over the last three years. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 by the age of 11 has increased.

86. The inspection finds that pupils attain as expected nationally overall in speaking, listening and some aspects of reading, but reading comprehension and writing are below what is expected by the ages of seven and 11. This represents a decline overall in standards since the last inspection although test results have improved. The nature of the cohorts must be a significant factor in this change as teaching has improved also. 87. By the age of seven, pupils can listen carefully to the teacher they listen less well to each other. Most can follow instructions under the teacher's very good direction and insistence for careful listening. In mathematics, they listen to calculate sums and then offer answers quite quickly. In geography they are eager to offer what they can recall about their 'Travelling Teddy's' visit to Oman. Some can use sentences well and they bring their previous knowledge and understanding to contribute about the teddy's visit to Australia. A significant number make good progress in explaining and making deductions when studying photographs. By the age of 11, pupils are capable of listening but do not always demonstrate it. Their responses are generally satisfactory when for example, they discuss evaporation in science, and give their ideas about where to put a solution for best effect to study the process. Some can predict well and they use subject vocabulary and specific terms to describe features of a river in geography. Pupils' progress in broadening their vocabulary is good due to the very good time spent by teachers in introducing and explaining new words. This is necessary and too many pupils have limited vocabulary. There are weaknesses in the pupils' speaking and listening. Too few develop their ideas thoughtfully, describe events in detail or convey their opinions articulately. For example, when required to write a newspaper article there is considerable difficulty by a good number in verbalising their limited ideas or expressing lucid views about topical issues such as fox hunting or building motorways where people live. The weakness stems from both an inability to articulate and a limited general knowledge.

88. By the age of seven, pupils can read text to follow instructions. They read from word to word with reasonable accuracy when finding out about 'Hibernating Hedgehogs'. They recognise words out of context, use their knowledge of letter blends to build new words and practice the pronunciation of unusual words. A small number of pupils are learning to refer to text to check their understanding and to find information. Pupils read scheme readers and free choice books. Many younger pupils are given support at home with reading. By the age of 11, pupils have broadened the range of texts they read and many can distinguish between classic and modern texts. Most have a rudimentary understanding of characters, plot and the significant points of the story. The most able read expressively and fluently with accurate understanding and the ability to predict. Almost all other pupils read with literal understanding but too few use skills of inference and deduction. Most pupils know how to use a dictionary to support spelling and they use them too infrequently in daily work. The higher attaining explain with clarity how to use the library but other pupils struggle to explain in detail and certainly do not refer to clear systems known to aid them although they know how the purpose of a contents page and index when searching for information. The local librarian has been involved in introducing the Dewey system to pupils but this has not yet been reinforced sufficiently in their day to day to learning. The range of books is good and pupils particularly benefit from group reading sessions within the literacy hour where they have opportunity to share what they read and analyse what is happening in detail. Book reviews are completed. Fewer older pupils read regularly at home. The school is part of the Wigan College's Family Literacy programme which aims to raise parents' awareness of what their children are doing in school and the importance of literacy. The sessions are run very well and those parents attending find great benefit from joining in. Parents at the pre inspection meeting also expressed their view of the value of the scheme. 89. By the age of seven, most pupils attain as expected in writing with some weaknesses. They can retell a story in their own words, with most common words spelt correctly; some make

plausible attempts spell unknown words but too many pupils expect adults to write words for them to copy. There is scope for pupils to use their knowledge of letter strings to attempt spellings without adult support. Pupils do not readily refer to their simple desk dictionaries to solve spelling problems for themselves. They know how to form letters correctly but few are working well towards using a joined and fluent script. Punctuation is not a strength of pupils' writing in spite of the careful teaching and reminders. Writing skills are used adequately across the curriculum for example, to write personal accounts, answer questions in science about living things and they are used well to describe how to make a winter home for hedgehogs and to describe who Florence Nightingale was and how she helped people. By the age of 11, most pupils do not attain as expected in all aspects of writing and the quality of too much work is disappointing in length, content and presentation. Few pupils systematically write in joined and fluent script to aid their speed of note taking and spelling. Spelling and punctuation are weak. Pupils do not retain taught skills well nor transfer them to other work. Although pupils do plan and draft work there is too little evidence that they really understand the editing process as a tool for improvement. Higher attaining pupils use paragraphs, direct speech, interesting vocabulary and are able to summarise and paraphrase well. Pupils complete standard English exercises, plan pieces of journalistic writing, compare accounts of writing by John Keats, Christina Rossetti and write biographical accounts of Roald Dahl's life from the perspective of his mother. They can devise questions and answers in imagined interviews with pop stars and write a playscript using Olde English in the style of William Shakespeare. In spite of these useful examples and other wide ranging work offered to encourage pupils to write, the quality, range and depth of writing are not good enough and as the school has identified for itself are a priority for improvement. Greater focus on using taught skills is required across the subjects of the curriculum.

90. Progress and teaching are inextricably linked and in lessons both are at least good and at times very good. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are well supported by the classteachers' intervention and questioning. Their progress could be improved if tasks were fine tuned more closely to the pupils' specific learning difficulties in their individual educational plans, for example, spelling. The few higher attaining pupils make good progress linked to higher expectations and challenges presented to them. 91. Pupils respond well to the structure of the literacy hour and the teachers' clear and interesting introductions to lessons and the very persistent requirement for good behaviour. Most older pupils had shown initiative when asked to search out an interesting newspaper article which had captured their attention. Some were reticent to read out their examples. Most pupils settle to the tasks set for them in the independent section of the hour well, but there are those who lack skills of independence when working and need the teachers' watchful eye to make progress. There is considerable variance in pupils' responses between classes, and some teachers have to remain ever vigilant to keep pupils on task, particularly the oldest pupils. The pupils' capacity for personal study linked to usage of skills and the ability to transfer what they know requires regular reinforcement. In Year 6 too many pupils lack concentration and the pride to finish work well. All pupils enjoy and benefit from the sharing sessions at the end of literacy lessons. 92. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages with very good teaching in both Key Stage 1 classes. Teaching quality has improved since the last inspection where unsatisfactory teaching was identified. No teaching was judged unsatisfactory in this inspection. All teachers, without exception have taken onboard the planning for the literacy hour to a good standard and demonstrate a secure knowledge of the subject. Some is very good. The hour is effectively implemented with close attention to the use of time, very good behaviour management and very good explanation and emphasis on word meanings and extending vocabulary. For example, in Year 2 the teacher introduced a picture of a beehive to the pupils and focused carefully on words such as 'label', 'illustration' and 'diagram'. There was very effective direct teaching of labelling techniques, specific attention to pupils' misconceptions and good intervention and praise for pupils' efforts. The subject matter motivated the pupils very well and resulted in good quality and correctly finished work. Plenary sessions are well used in all classes to revisit the lesson objective and check progress against it. For example, when Year 5 were reading and comprehending a poem called 'The Magic Box', the teacher skilfully introduced and recapped on terms such as onomatopoeia and alliteration.

93. The coordinator manages the subject very well and has an incisive grasp of what needs to be done it. Through identification of weaknesses in writing the percentage of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 at Key Stage 2 doubled from 1998 to 1999 in the national tests. Resources have been improved. The coordinator has monitored teaching and learning and formalised the outcomes, sharing the way forward for improvement with colleagues. The subject delivery meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is very well complemented by visits to the theatre, visiting actors and groups to the school. The school is well placed to address the weaknesses outlined. **Mathematics**94. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above in the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 was well above the national average when compared with all schools and above the average for similar schools. This shows a significant improvement on the results of the previous year and an improvement since the last inspection. The trend over the last four years is a rising one. Boys are now performing better than girls.

95. The inspection evidence shows that the majority of current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve the national target of Level 4 by the end of Year 6. A significant minority of pupils would not attain this level, although a minority of pupils would achieve the next higher level. The main differences, when compared with the previous year, are that the school does not now have a system of setting for mathematics and there is a much larger group of pupils in this current year who are on the special needs register.

96. The results of the National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 showed that every pupil achieved the expected Level 2 or above. This is well above the national average and again shows that the school had maintained its year on year improvements in mathematics. The inspection evidence shows that a significant majority of the current Year 2 pupils is on course to achieve similar standards, but that a minority of pupils who have special needs would not necessarily obtain at this level.

97. Overall, progress in lessons is often good, where pupils can remember and understand new ideas and can put into practice their new skills. Over longer periods of time, progress is satisfactory, as some of the pupils do not have good recall of previously learned work. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs, in spite of the best efforts of their teachers, is sometimes unsatisfactory. Teachers do not have regular access to other adult support in mathematics lessons. It is, therefore, only as a result of good planning of work specifically for these pupils, that their progress can be satisfactory. This planning is noted in some, but not in all of teachers' work.

98. Pupils do not always make satisfactory progress in using and applying their mathematical understanding to problem solving. Whilst the pupils have access to investigations in their lessons, these are too much directed by the teacher, or more especially by the core mathematics book. There are not enough opportunities for real investigation, driven by the interests of pupils. This is especially so for the higher achieving pupils who tend to be working at similar work to other pupils. The work is not necessarily prescribed for them in particular, but only through the speed of their work do they achieve slightly better results, covering more, but not necessarily different work. Very recent work in Year 6 using decision trees begins to allow pupils to draw on their previous knowledge, use their language skills to explain their thinking and see where this activity might have other applications.

99. Work in number in Key Stage 1 shows pupils making good use of their numeracy skills in making mental calculations. Children in the reception class can count to ten and can sequence the numbers when they are mixed up. Pupils in Year 2, from the scrutiny of previous work, are able to provide number bonds in order to make up 20, such as $12+8$ or $7+13$. They have a good idea of place value and understand how to add together three different units, such as $6+7+5=18$. They know which numbers are odd and even, and the higher attaining pupils can order numbers to 100. By Year 6, pupils understand the connection between fractions, decimals and percentages. They know that one-quarter,

0.25 and 25% are all connected to each other.

100. In their work on shape, space and measure, pupils make sound progress. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know and can name both two and three-dimensional shapes. They know the differences between a pentagon and a hexagon and can name a cuboid and a pyramid. They have experience of measuring mass. In Year 5 pupils are seen understanding the links between 750 grams, 0.75 kilograms and three quarters of a kilogram. They know the relationship between centimetres and kilometres and can draw shapes to a simple scale.

101. Progress in data handling is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 are given imaginary data on birds and from the data they are able to calculate the percentages of different birds against the total number represented on the graph. They make sound progress in their work on probability, and in a previous test they are noted as understanding the continuum of chance from things being certain to others having no chance at all. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson are seen constructing graphs from information given in their core books. Here they pay due care to the scale and to the accurate drawing of the information.

102. Pupils are able to apply their numeracy skills appropriately across other curriculum areas. They use accurate measuring for some of their work in design and technology and in science they use graphs to record some of their work. In an investigation on how water percolates through different soils, the pupils drew graphs to show the amount of water that passed through the soil and the time it took. Their use of information technology to support their work in mathematics is unsatisfactory. No use was made of computers in the mathematics lessons observed during the inspection.

103. Pupils show good and sometimes very good attitudes to their work in mathematics. This was the case at the last inspection. They enjoy their work. In the lesson where the response was very good, pupils settled quickly to their tasks and were very secure in the routines of the numeracy hour. The vast majority of pupils worked well independently and with partners and were prepared to wait for shared resources. This very good progress, along with the very good teaching in the lesson, ensured that good progress was made. No unsatisfactory responses were noted during the inspection, although a very small number of older boys were noted as being off task on a number of occasions.

104. The quality of teaching is good overall. Two out of the nine lessons were very good, five were good and two were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, although there were elements of unsatisfactory teaching noted. Where the lessons were very good, they showed teachers having good subject knowledge and the ability to teach well the skills and knowledge needed for pupils to gain a good understanding of the work. In these cases, the planning showed clearly that the teacher had planned work for all ability groups and had set them different and appropriate tasks. This was seen in a Year 5 lesson on measuring mass and in a reception class lesson on number work. In the good and very good lessons, the teacher made use of good systematic questioning in order to check what pupils could remember about previous work and to probe their understanding of the new work. The very brief mention of teaching in the last report gives no clear picture of how good teaching was at that time.

105. Currently the school has strengths in its planning and its assessment work in mathematics. There is a good system of tracking pupils' progress through the school, although currently the school has yet to closely analyse its National Curriculum assessment results in order to see where it might make improvements to its curriculum or teaching. Whilst the planning for mathematics follows the National Numeracy Strategy, the lack of specific objectives for daily lessons does sometimes prevent teachers from focusing accurately enough on what they want pupils to learn. Equally, they do not always share the learning objectives with the pupils so that at the end of each lesson the pupils can talk about what they have been learning instead of simply what they have been doing. The too rigid adherence to the various core books for mathematics by some of the teachers, whilst giving them

support for their teaching, does mean that practical and investigative mathematics is too much driven by the books and not by the pupils.

• Science

106. The number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above in the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 was well above the national average when compared with all schools and above the average for similar schools.

107. The inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to achieve the national target of Level 4 by the end of the key stage. This less positive picture is due to the high proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and a significant minority of lower attaining pupils within the year group. There are only a small number who are capable of higher attainment.

108. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that pupils' attainment was above the national average at the expected Level 2. Currently the majority of Year 2 pupils are attaining in line with the national average with a significant number likely to achieve above the national expectation by the end of the key stage.

109. Pupils in Year 6 understand and use fair testing procedures well, for instance when investigating which out of six different solutions contain dissolved materials or when finding how well plants grow in different conditions within a controlled experiment. They have detailed knowledge of the structure and function of the different parts of a plant, and of the human body. During discussions they recall information about electricity, sound and materials, and have a working knowledge of the solar system, and the classification of liquids, solids and gases. Pupils in Year 2 with help conduct investigations into the use and sources of electricity. They understand the function of the major organs of the human body. From growing seeds, they understand the conditions required to support life in plants, and also the basic requirements for their own healthy eating.

110. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Targets set by the school sensibly take account of the varying levels of attainment between the different year groups.

111. Progress is satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Year 1 pupils were observed making good progress in developing their understanding of how sounds are made and in recording their findings accurately. Year 3 pupils were seen when involved in investigating which paper towel was most absorbent. They were required to make predictions based on their prior knowledge and developed their understanding of how to conduct a fair test well. Year 4 pupils made satisfactory progress in recording their knowledge of the position of the major organs of the human body making appropriate reference to three dimensional models when needed. Correct scientific terms and precise vocabulary were used by Year 5 pupils when called upon to share their knowledge and understanding of different materials and their properties. They made satisfactory progress in using their knowledge and understanding of evaporation to suggest ways in which they could investigate which liquids were pure water and which were solutions. Investigative work is carried out within a structured programme of activities which are generally planned, prepared and resourced by the teachers. There is only limited opportunity given for the pupils to determine their own line of enquiry, this hinders their progress in applying their knowledge and understanding.

112. Pupils are interested in scientific activities throughout both key stages. Even those pupils who lack self discipline settle down to the tasks and are well motivated. They work well both independently

and in groups, sharing equipment and ideas well. They concentrate and persevere with tasks when required, using equipment and apparatus sensibly. Work is generally presented satisfactorily, pupils use their numeracy skills well to record their findings accurately by the means of bar graphs and venn diagrams. Older pupils are able to research independently, using a variety of texts, although information communication technology resources have limited use made of them.

113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Key Stage 1. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and understanding of the aspects they teach, and particularly of life and life processes, evident in the high level of pupils' knowledge and understanding. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work, allowing them to teach successfully. Planning is detailed and covers the subject requirements. Lessons are well prepared and resourced. Introductions are often creative and stimulating which has a positive effect on the pupils' concentration and motivation. Assessment is on-going during lessons through keen observation, skilful questioning and effective plenary sessions. Teachers encourage the pupils to develop a feel for fair testing procedures, and to take responsibility for their work. They systematically remind pupils to predict and to hypothesise before they conduct an investigation, which strengthens their subsequent learning.. Lessons generally have good pace and time is given for pupils to reflect on what is happening before having to determine their findings.

114. The delivery of the subject has been the focus of a review since the previous inspection. The policy statement, which now incorporates the use of the QCA scheme of work for science is a well informed document. The subject is efficiently managed and resourced and good use is made of the accommodation, school grounds and the environment to give the pupils a broad and balanced curriculum. During the inspection very good use was made of the visiting, 'Life Experience Caravan', run by a charitable organisation to extend and enrich primary pupils' scientific experiences.

115. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The topic cycle generally works well, although further consideration needs to be given to the working of the two year cycle as used with Years 5 and 6 to safeguard the match of work to the needs of the older pupils, especially for the more able pupils.

• **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

• **Information technology**

116. The information technology curriculum fails to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school is currently only adequately addressing some of the strands of the subject, a position it was in at the last inspection.

117. Whilst the school has made some progress in its work and pupils have, on occasions, worked in such areas as control and modelling, there is no clear picture of the regular build up of skills, knowledge and understanding which would lead to the work being acceptable. This was borne out by the lack of knowledge shown by the pupils in Year 6. Although the school has a sound development plan for the subject, that in itself does not redress the gaps which have been created over time in pupils' knowledge.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have gained sound use of the mouse in order to access elements of a painting program. Pupils in Year 2 have written a few sentences about school and can paint pictures of fruit to use in their work on healthy eating. Previous plans show that pupils have had access to a programmable-wheeled vehicle and have been into the school hall in order to give it instructions to move around. However, there is a lack of knowledge about what the other application of

information technology are outside school. Although pupils in this key stage are now beginning to work through a better programme of work related to the National Curriculum, pupils who have previously passed through these classes and are now in Key Stage 2, have little basic knowledge upon which to move forward in their learning. A further weakness here is the lack of opportunity for pupils to sort and classify information on screen, and present their findings.

119. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop keyboard skills, but even here they do not know what all the icons and menus are on their screens. Pupils in a Year 6 class do not all know how to centre their work or move their text. Some can, but others cannot use the spellchecker system. They can choose a suitable font for their work and are able to change its size, but their use of graphics is very limited, to the extent that they are unable to create multimedia presentations showing an awareness of their audience. Once again, their use of data handling skills is very limited. Pupils in Year 6 have no recall of using a database to find information about particular things which interest them and have not had enough opportunities to enter their own data on such databases.

120. The biggest gaps in knowledge and understanding occur in the areas of control, measuring and modelling. Although some of the computers do have "logo" programs in which pupils give an on-screen cursor a set of instructions, they make little use of them and pupils have not been able to follow up work from Key Stage 1 in this area. They have not used their information technology systems to sense physical data such as changes in temperature and light, although there was an example of previous groups of pupils using additional technology to create changing traffic lights. Pupils' experiences of modelling programs which help pupils, through simulations, to make decisions, explore patterns and relationships is limited to the use of fairly simple programs such as "The lost frog" and "Merlin's castle". Currently there are many programs, which would link directly to their work in both history and geography, which the school does not have.

121. The progress that pupils are currently making is unsatisfactory. This is as a result of some hardware, which is unreliable and incompatible with others, and a lack of a small number of good programs, which would allow pupils to begin to explore some of the issues mentioned above. Although members of staff have tried hard to gain knowledge and understanding themselves, this is not necessarily school-wide and does not always focus on the direct needs of the whole school. Equally the recent national scheme of work for information technology, whilst being very useful, could not be adopted throughout the school as most pupils would not benefit from it at present, but would need a much greater emphasis on gathering basic skills in a number of different applications.

122. Whenever the pupils have access to computers they are interested, keen to learn and happy to experiment. Pupils in Year 6 type in information about their visit to the "Life Caravan", and several get to the stage of saving and printing their work. They work happily together on the computers and are seen helping each other when problems arise.

123. Although very little direct class teaching of information technology was observed during the week, where it was seen, the class teacher had sound subject knowledge, but was often thwarted by unreliable hardware. Although there are about 30 machines in the school, giving a very good ratio of pupils to machines, there is too great a mixture of computer types to be effective. It must also be said that best use is not always made of the existing computers. No computers were seen in use during numeracy hours, and the computer room was empty for large parts of the day.

124. The very recently appointed subject coordinator has a development plan from the previous year. She is currently working through this plan to see what the immediate priorities should be. The school is aware that the future success of the work in information technology in the school lies in the speedy implementation of this plan.

• **Religious education**

125. Pupils' attainment is in line with what might be expected, given the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 have sound knowledge of the stories Jesus told and know about his early life. They have sound and some good knowledge of other religions such as Islam and are able to make comparisons between that religion and Christianity.

126. Pupils are seen making overall sound progress in lessons and over time, but there were instances where due to good teaching and the positive attitudes of the pupils, good and sometimes very good progress was made in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in lessons, as much of the work is carried out through discussion and not necessarily written into books.

127. There was very little evidence of work in religious education available in Key Stage 1. Planning, however, shows that pupils at this key stage cover satisfactorily such topics as "celebrations". Here they have looked at such festivals as the Harvest and have listed and discussed stories about the sharing of food in the Bible. They have followed themes such as caring and sharing. In a lesson observed in Year 1, pupils were discussing what they felt a friend should be like. They looked at how friends should care for each other and several said that they thought God was their friend.

128. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made some good progress in comparing different world religions with Christianity. They compare the principles of Islam, as noted in the five pillars of wisdom, with the Ten Commandments and discuss the difficulty of keeping to rules. They look at the different forms of prayer and understand about Rakat, the Muslim ritual of prayer preparation. They look at pilgrimages and see the relevance of the Hajj, or visit to Mecca. Although here, the pupils make good progress in their understanding, there is rather too much emphasis on very teacher directed worksheets, where the accent is on copying out facts or of filling in missing words. Not enough emphasis is placed on pupils carrying out their own research. In a lesson seen in Year 5, pupils show a very good knowledge of this work and are able to discuss issues using the appropriate Muslim words. In this lesson they begin to compare the various rites of passage of the faith and begin to make links with Christianity. Year 6 pupils have sound knowledge of stories, which Jesus used in his teaching. They know the stories of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, for example.

129. The quality of the pupils' response to religious education is never less than satisfactory in the three lessons observed. In one lesson it was noted as being excellent. In this lesson, pupils were eager to contribute to the discussion and demonstrate their subject knowledge. Their behaviour was excellent and they listened well to what others had to say. Where this happens it has a very positive effect on the progress they make.

130. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Once again this shows that standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection. Overall it was good. In the excellent lesson, the class teacher had very good subject knowledge and was able to stimulate the pupils and motivate them. Her own subject knowledge was passed on to the pupils very well and she had very high expectations, not only of the behaviour of the pupils, but of how they were

going to respond to the learning opportunities she presented.

131. The scheme of work continues to give good support to teachers as do the good collection of artefacts and resources. A good range of visitors takes acts of worship and they come from a number of local faith groups. Together with the way that teachers take acts of worship, the time spent in these assemblies give sound support to religious education, whilst religious education itself gives good support to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

· **Art**

132. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 2. During the inspection past work, displays, teachers' planning were scrutinised and discussions held with pupils. This evidence makes it possible to give a view that the standards of work seen are as generally expected for pupils of primary school age, with many pupils achieving better standards than reported at the time of the last inspection.

133. In the lesson observed in Year 6 pupils listened attentively during a detailed introduction on the work of Monet. They concentrated hard when producing their own good representations of the artist's garden using a range of media to create similar techniques and effects. Most had a good knowledge of colour mixing which enabled them to achieve the desired range of line and texture. However, a small minority did not know how to mix purple and pink. Pupils made good progress overall in the lesson. They used their technical and expressive skills well to present what they had observed and imagined. Through the school progress is good. Pupils of all ages show eagerness in working with a good range of materials including clay in a variety of dimensions and scales. Year 1 pupils' sunflowers painted in the style of Van Gogh; Year 2 pupils' self portraits produced during a visit to the Duncroon Centre, in the style of the modern artist Mark Hampson, the silhouettes inspired by a science topic on light displayed in the Year 3 classroom, and the crayon pictures in the style of Jagjit Chuhan, the Indian artist and the healthy eating posters produced by older pupils, together with a range of paintings and illustrations in history and the other subjects all show that pupils have the ability to select relevant materials, to experiment with ideas with increasing control and greater awareness and ability to evaluate and improve their work.

134. The overall quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and the one seen was prepared and resourced effectively. The activities provide appropriate challenges for the pupils to respond positively. Assessment is on-going during the lesson, through observation and questioning; often it is used to make a direct teaching point which has a positive effect on the pupils' quality of work for which teachers have high expectations. Through useful discussions the pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and consider how it can be improved.

135. Resources including reference books on famous artists and art in other cultures are good and well managed and used. There is effective use of art to illustrate the pupils' knowledge in the other subjects, particularly geography and history. The subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal and cultural development and its delivery is broad and balanced.

· **Design and technology**

136. It was only possible to observe one lesson of design and technology during the inspection. Evidence from discussion with Year 6 pupils, a close scrutiny of the long and medium term plans together with sight of a small number of completed models, make it possible to give a view of the work in this subject. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are working at a level generally expected for their age, while pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are working largely at their appropriate level, but with a significant

minority working at a lower level. This apparent slight fall in standards is partly due to the draft scheme of work, written in 1994, being outdated. There are also insufficient details in the scheme to ensure that lessons not only build on the skills of previous recent work, but build on the knowledge and understanding gained over longer periods of time.

137. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make a number of models from recycled materials. They make houses for imaginary pets, and models of shops such as the bakers and the fish and chip shop. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils have good opportunities to carry out work in food technology. They cook bread and pizzas and are shown good examples of health and safety. They are able to use their literacy skills in writing about the planning of a special meal for someone, whilst on another occasion they write step by step instructions for making a cup of tea.

138. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good use of numeracy skills when they measure materials for their Viking long boats. They link their models of skeletons with their work in science and in Year 4 build Tudor houses making good links with their history work. In readiness for a visit to Croxteth Hall, pupils make bob and mop caps in connection with their Victorian topic.

139. Weaknesses in the work lie mainly in pupils' lack of writing frameworks for designing, and in their evaluations of their work. Although Year 5 pupils had made autogyros, their conclusions and evaluations were all too brief. Pupils also get too little opportunity to take apart commercially produced items in order to see, understand their construction, and then put into practice the techniques seen when they make similar products.

140. In the lesson observed, the pupils responded well to the positive teaching. Pupils in Year 2 discussed their work at some length and knew exactly how they were going to make their home for Miles the bear. They were beginning to understand the importance of making labelled drawings and were introduced to writing out their tools and materials lists. One boy was designing his house through good use of a computer drawing program, through which he was able to make as many changes as necessary to his screen drawing.

141. The newly appointed subject coordinator is aware that the scheme of work is ready for some revision especially in its references to design and evaluation opportunities. This was noted at the previous inspection and has not yet been adequately addressed.

Geography

142. In geography, by the age of 11, pupils acquire suitable knowledge of mapping skills and understanding of themes for example, the weather. They have a rudimentary knowledge of places and geographical features but their knowledge of the wider world and people is limited.

143. In the lessons seen pupils' progress is very good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall with some good progress at Key Stage 2. In Year 1 young pupils develop knowledge of their own world, they can retrace their journey to school and locate a street where they live on an enlarged map. By the age of seven, pupils are able to locate the British Isles on a map of the world. They can make reasonable judgements about the comparative size of countries for example, Britain and Australia. Pupils know that Oman, Singapore and Australia are 'abroad' and to get to them you would have to fly or go on a boat. In Year 3, pupils are able to plan more complex routes from school to three different places. They are able to use directional language and mark their route on a street map. In Year 4 pupils make accurate plans of their classroom locating who sits where, and who is opposite who. Most pupils use a key correctly to label parts of the room. These pupils have recently been learning about their town within the world. They identify that Wigan is in the North West of England, before starting to compare lifestyles and culture in Wigan with Jodhpur in India. In an introductory lesson on this topic the pupils share what

they know about India. The lesson gives a very good indicator of the pupils' lack of knowledge of the wider world and also of the stereotypical perceptions they have of other people. For example, people in India carry bowls on their heads, don't wear many clothes and they work in the fields. The teacher uses the lesson as an assessment activity, a catalyst to research the facts about India and to stimulate pupils' curiosity. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 increase their knowledge and understanding of geographical features when they study river systems and their sources. Pupils acquire subject vocabulary systematically, for example, they learn what a meander is, and make good progress in their understanding of terms such as, erosion, valley, flood plain and confluence. It is evident in these lessons that pupils have a limited general knowledge and know very little about places locally, nationally or worldwide. They are unable to name famous British rivers and even after very good direct teaching some pupils' progress in understanding the course of a river is minimal.

144. Pupils' response is very good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In the lessons pupils offer ideas, mainly listen well and show some curiosity about the world. In Year 2, pupils respond very well and are engrossed by following the adventures of their 'Travelling Teddy'. They settle quickly and are eager to share their knowledge of the world. Year 5 pupils show independence in completing their work. Year 6 have less maturity, few offer their own ideas and when they work they are overly chatty in spite of the teacher's best efforts.

145. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1, satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and on occasion very good. In the best lessons the teacher creates a very good sense of awe and wonder when opening a parcel from Miles the Teddy who is currently holidaying in Australia. The pupils are charged with excitement and offer predictions and ideas voluntarily. There is some excellent reinforcement of vocabulary and the teacher manages the pupils very well whilst still retaining the drama of the activity. In Year 5 the teaching is also very good. There is absolute clarity when the teacher describes the stages of the river's journey and brings creativity using metaphors to liken the river to a 'ribbon of moonlight'. The introduction is snappy, uses geographical vocabulary regularly and gives extended work to the most able, and adapts work to those with special educational needs.

146. The delivery of geography has improved since the last inspection where it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The delivery is broad and balanced and the weaknesses in pupils' knowledge are allied to their own limited experience and prior attainment about the world.

• **History**

147. Only one lesson was seen in history at Key Stage 2 but other evidence including the scrutiny of pupils' past work, discussions with them about what they know, and scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays enable the judgement to be made that pupils' have appropriate knowledge and understanding. Pupils know about and have studied the major events and eras in British history, from the Celts to Britain since 1930. Interesting displays in the junior hall catalogue some of the good work. Young pupils have studied famous people such as Florence Nightingale and can describe in the simplest of terms who Queen Victoria and 'King' Albert were. Older pupils have a detailed knowledge and understanding about World War II, its origins and main features. They understand and can describe fluently the reasons for evacuation and the details about rationing. Pupils know that England was hard to conquer because of the English Channel, they know why Sheffield was bombed and its importance to the metal industry and that 'blitz' means lightning war. Most know when the war began and ended. Pupils in Year 6 have used their literacy skills with varying success to describe the Diary of Anne Frank.

148. In the lesson seen pupils were interested and stimulated by a video. They listened to each other's questions and worked independently on writing from the perspective of a child during the 'Blitz'.

149. The quality of teaching seen in Year 5 was very good. The teacher was well prepared and promoted a good question and answer session to follow up the use of the video. Pupils' own knowledge and recall from previous lessons was capitalised on and assessed. Very good focus was placed on explaining words, intervening to check on progress and the accurate preparation of resources for the range of need allowed all pupils including those with special educational needs to make good progress.

150. The subject is well coordinated and managed. Resources are good and very good use is made of visits to places of historical interest including Wigan Pier. The subject considerably enhances pupils' knowledge of their own cultural heritage. The delivery of the subject has been sustained at least satisfactorily with some improvement to teaching where seen at Key Stage 2.

Music

151. The school teaches all the elements of the National Curriculum for music, but composition, listening and appraising are not as well developed as singing. Pupils make good progress in their singing and satisfactory progress in composition, listening and appraising. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to the rest of their classmates. This broadly reflects the picture painted at the previous inspection, although some slight fall in standards may well be attributable to the fact that the subject co-ordinator does not now have opportunities to teach music in any other class apart from her own.

152. In both key stages pupils sing well in assemblies and enjoy their singing opportunities. Younger pupils sing rhymes and action songs and Year 4 pupils sing their "Pizza Hut" song all together and in a round, with both groups holding their tune well. Pupils are given good opportunities to add percussion to accompany their singing. Pupils in Year 2 are seen concentrating on their teacher as she conducts their percussion work with a music score written with simple symbols. They practise stopping and starting and begin to gain an understanding of dynamics. Older pupils obtain great fun from singing songs connected both with their Victorian topic and their World War II topic. They sing "We'll meet again" and "Quartermaster's Stores" and emulate some of the songs of the Victorian music hall.

153. Although some pupils have experience of composing, using in some cases picture symbols, this is not built on systematically over their period in school and composition is not followed up often enough with pupils trying to write out their own work.

154. Pupils are taught very often from good quality taped programmes, which in themselves provide them with access to listening and appraising. There are, however, fewer examples of pupils listening to a wide variety of music from other times and cultures in order that they might gain a musical vocabulary so that they are able to discuss their ideas, instead of simply saying that they like or dislike the music they hear.

155. Pupils throughout the school have a number of opportunities to perform their music. They perform in their classrooms to their friends and may often perform in assemblies. Year 3 had previously performed their clapping rhythms to the Headteacher. Larger performances, which include all pupils, are mainly left to celebrations such as Christmas, and their quality is good. The choir and those pupils who receive instrumental tuition in the school, get other good opportunities to perform on bigger occasions. The school choir, which is often about 30 strong, together with a group of instrumentalists, have performed with success at the Wigan Music Festival, at the Shevington High School Proms and in support of Pudsey Bear at Manchester Piccadilly. All of these performances have positive effects on the pupils' attitudes and achievements in their class music lessons.

156. The two lessons seen during the inspection showed teaching to be good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, for which there was some evidence in the last inspection. Teachers were well planned and confident in their own abilities. They organised the pupils well and asked good questions, for example, about musical instruments and about rhythms. Pupils responded well to the teaching and were motivated to be very active in the lessons, concentrating on their tasks and behaving well. This was just as positive as the picture noted in the last inspection report.

157. Although resources are good and the music room well used, the subject does not yet give enough support to pupils' cultural development by providing them with a wide range of music to listen and appraise.

Physical education

158. Standards are as generally expected for primary age pupils, in all aspects of the subject. Many older pupils achieve better than is usually found in swimming. During year 6 pupils continue to have the opportunity to develop their skills in outdoor and adventurous activities through a residential visit to the Lake District.

159. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and their response is similar and sometimes very good. Year 1 pupils enjoyed developing their response to music through dance, by using rhythmic movements and contrasts of speed, shape, direction and level when acting out the role of postman and emerging as a 'wibbly, wobbly jelly' from his bag. Year 2 pupils concentrated well and persevered in improving their throwing and catching skills so that by the end of the lesson they were making good progress towards passing and receiving the ball whilst on the move. Year 5 pupils showed a mature attitude to gymnastic activities, they repeated a series of movements previously performed with good control and accuracy. Pupils made judgements about their own and each other's performance and used their observations to improve the quality of their own performance.

160. Teaching is good at both key stages. Lessons are well planned. The pace and challenge are matched to the needs of the pupils. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour and quality of work and they all pay due regard to health and safety issues. They are creative in the approach and the direct teaching of skills is of high quality.

161. The accommodation is very good in both halls. Resources are plentiful, there is a good range of small apparatus and games and equipment. A range of after-school clubs for older pupils enhances the curriculum. Good coaching is given for a range of activities including gymnastics. In addition, there are football and netball clubs and quick cricket is played in the summer. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

A compulsory survey of swimming provision in the school was commissioned by OFSTED and the results follow.

162. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is very high against the national expectation. Almost half of them swim more than 100 metres, use a number of strokes with good style, and have achieved high level awards in personal survival and water safety. Many of the rest achieve beyond expected levels, and almost all of the rest achieve the national standard. No child has left the school in recent years unable to swim at least 10 metres, including pupils with severe physical disability.

163. Due to the combination of regular and sustained lessons, very good instruction, and the high quality facilities, pupils make very good progress overall, and made good progress in a lesson seen. Although some pupils have learned to swim by attendance at the baths with their parents and family, many rely on the lessons provided by the school. Their progress is regularly assessed and recorded, and they are encouraged to attempt a series of graded tests leading to awards from the local authority, with high level personal survival tests for the most competent.

164. Pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons. They behave well, obeying safety instructions, work hard, practising the taught skills and techniques assiduously with the support and encouragement of the instructors and their teachers.

165. The quality of teaching is very good, based on very good subject knowledge, clear learning objectives, and very good overall management of time and resources.

166. The facilities are excellent, and the school's use of them makes a very good contribution to the school's efficiency.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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LXIII. A team of four inspectors carried out the inspection, one of whom was a lay inspector. The inspection lasted for four full days. Fourteen inspector days were allocated to the school.

LXIV. During the course of the inspection observations of lessons or parts of lessons, registrations, assemblies, breaks and lunchtimes were made. Pupils' work was scrutinised in all classes; the team inspected random samples of pupils' books across the ability range in each class. Approximately 15 per cent of pupils were heard to read formally and many more read within the context of classroom work. In all, these numbered 102 observations.

LXV. The time spent on all lesson observations during the inspection was:-

LXVI. 4.8 hours at under fives

LXVII. 9.8 hours at Key Stage 1

LXVIII. 16.4 hours at Key Stage 2

LXIX. The total time spent on all observations was 70.3 hours.

LXX. Discussions took place with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, all teaching staff and a number of non-teaching staff.

LXXI. All the documentation provided by the school was analysed including the previous inspection report and action plan.

LXXII. Attendance records were examined.

LXXIII. The financial information provided by the school was examined.

LXXIV. Teachers' planning documents were scrutinised along with records of pupils' progress kept by the school.

LXXV. Discussions were held with the pupils, parents and a sub group of governors.

LXXVI. A parents' meeting was held prior to the inspection and the views of 14 parents at this meeting, and those of 59 parents who responded to a questionnaire, were taken into account.

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- **DATA AND INDICATORS**

- **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	195	3	39	10
Nursery Unit/	30	0	1	0

- **Teachers and classes**

- **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

- **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.25

- **Qualified teachers (Nursery class)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	30

- **Education support staff (Nursery class)**

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.5

- **Primary**

Average class size:	27.8
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• **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998-99
	£
Total Income	431285
Total Expenditure	430735
Expenditure per pupil	2051
Balance brought forward from previous year	23611
Balance carried forward to next year	24161

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PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 225
 Number of questionnaires returned: 59

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	39	58	2	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	49	51	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	24	52	22	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	31	63	7	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	27	63	5	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	39	56	3	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	28	56	14	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	37	53	2	7	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	36	59	5	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	32	63	4	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) their school	63	34	3	0	0

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