

INSPECTION REPORT

Nether Alderley Primary School
Macclesfield

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique Reference Number: 111019
Inspection Number: 182488
Headteacher: Mr Andrew Mason

Reporting inspector: Mr Johnny Morris

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707037

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bradford Lane Nether Alderley Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 4TR
Telephone number:	01625 583282
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Fiona Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	13 th – 17 th February 1995

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school achieves high standards in English, mathematics and science and has done so consistently since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership and, together with the other staff, governors and parents, gives a clear direction to the work of the school. National initiatives are implemented successfully.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and over 80% of the teaching is good or better.
- The pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour at all times and their personal development are all very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and it is very good for moral and social development.
- The school's finances are planned and used very efficiently.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. This inspection finds that there are no major weaknesses.

This is an extremely effective and successful school with many strengths. **The governors' action plan will set out how the minor points for improvement detailed in the full report will be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

How the school has improved since the last inspection

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. High standards have been maintained and the school has taken rapid action to restore standards when the national test results have shown any minor variations. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and has made a good start at implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. High expectations are now evident throughout the school and older pupils at Key Stage 2 are set challenging tasks. Curriculum planning and assessment procedures have improved.

The school is continuing to work on two of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection. Short-term accommodation needs have been resolved, and in the spring of 2000 work will begin on a new building. Although some subjects still do not have schemes of work and there is no co-ordinator for design technology, these factors are not having a negative impact on pupils' progress.

The response of the staff as a whole to recent changes in the curriculum and the school's own plans for development indicate a good capacity for further improvement and the maintenance of high standards. The school has agreed targets with the local education authority up to 2003.

• **Standards in subjects**

This 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>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>Average</i>	<i>C</i>
			<i>Below average</i>	<i>D</i>
			<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
English	A	A		
Mathematics	A	A		
Science	A	B		

Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science when compared with the national figures. They are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science when compared with similar schools. Standards are above average in information technology and religious education. The school provides a worthwhile experience in the other subjects of the National Curriculum and pupils make good progress over time.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Very good	Very good
Science	Good	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Good	Good
Religious education	Good	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching is good overall. Just over 80% of lessons are good or better and just over 20% are very good. Teaching is always at least satisfactory. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and expectations are high. Lessons are very well organised and structured to maintain pupils' interest and promote progress.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. Pupils throughout the school behave very well at all times.
Attendance	Very good.
Ethos*	Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn. There is a clear commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	Very good. The headteacher, staff and governors work very effectively together.
Curriculum	Good. The school places good emphasis on literacy and numeracy and teaches all other required subjects. The arrangements for assessment and the use of this information are very good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for the small number of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. There is very good provision for moral and social development, good provision for spiritual development, and satisfactory provision for cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing is good. The accommodation is just adequate and major building work is planned in 2000. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.
Value for money	Good.

**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

- II. The children like school.
- III. The school achieves good standards of behaviour.
- IV. The school encourages pupils to participate in more than daily lessons.
- V. The school is approachable when there are problems.
- VI. The school promotes positive attitudes and values in the pupils.
- VII. The school encourages parents to be involved in the life of the school.
- VIII. The school enables good standards of work.

What some parents are not happy about

- IX. There is not enough information about what is
- X. The school does not encourage parents to be
- XI. There is not enough homework.

The inspection supports the parents' positive views of the school. Good information is provided for parents overall and many parents are involved in the life of the school. The provision of homework is at least satisfactory throughout the school and it is good in Years 5 and 6.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points should be considered as the basis for an action plan:

1. Improve pupils' library skills by re-organising and making more use of the library (paragraphs 17, 69 and 148);
2. Improve the provision for pupils' cultural development by providing more opportunities, particularly in music and art, to prepare them for adult life in a multicultural society (paragraphs 40, 53, 129, 140 and 154).

The headteacher and governors may also wish to consider the following further minor points:

Schemes of work (paragraphs 29, 132, 142 and 148);
Policies (paragraphs 45, 46 and 47);
Monitoring teaching (paragraph 56);
Accommodation (paragraphs 62, 63, 74 and 159);
Teaching of physical education (paragraphs 25 and 159).

2. INTRODUCTION

2. Characteristics of the school

- 1 The school governors have very recently approved a change of name from Nether Alderley Community School to Nether Alderley Primary School. The school is situated in open country just south of Alderley Edge, in Cheshire. The school is small compared to primary schools nationally. Attainment on entry to the school is above average and nearly all pupils experience pre-school education, many at the playgroup at the school site. The percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals and having special educational needs are well below average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, there were 11 children under five years of age in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. There were 100 pupils in the school comprising 55 boys and 45 girls. Although there is a very small number of pupils with English as an additional language this is nevertheless a higher proportion than in most primary schools. The school has agreed targets with the local education authority up to 2003.
- 2 The aim of the school is stated in the prospectus as being to provide a supportive, happy, secure working environment based on:
 - Warm and friendly personal relationships;
 - Sound teaching methods and high standards;
 - The provision of stimulating books, apparatus and materials;
 - The role played by the school in relation to home and community.
- 1 The school's current priorities for development are contained in its school development plan and can be summarised as:
 - To fully implement the National Numeracy Strategy and address the related staff and resource issues;
 - To address and manage all of the issues associated with the major building work starting in the spring of 2000;
 - To raise standards in writing throughout the school;
 - To meet the targets agreed with the local education authority for literacy and numeracy at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1				
For latest reporting year:				
	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	6	16

National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	100 (88)	100 (94)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	10	8	10
	Girls	6	5	5
	Total	16	13	15
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	81 (88)	94 (88)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

.....

1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2

For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	9	6	15

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	9	9	9
at NC Level 4 or	Girls	5	6	6
Above	Total	14	15	15
Percentage at NC	School	93 (85)	100 (46)	100 (69)
Level 4 or above	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	7	9	8
at NC Level 4 or	Girls	5	6	6
Above	Total	12	15	14
Percentage at NC	School	80 (85)	100 (77)	93 (85)
Level 4 or above	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
Through absence for the latest complete	Authorised	School	3.0
Reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	21
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

2

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- 1 The school achieves consistently high standards in all subjects. The previous report stated that “almost all pupils at both key stages achieve beyond, and some well beyond the national expectations for their age groups.” In the four years since, standards have rarely fallen below these levels. The most significant dips in standards were in mathematics at Key Stage 2 in 1998 and writing at Key Stage 1 in 1999. The school has implemented immediate, wide-ranging measures to assess the reasons and restore standards. These measures were taken despite the fact that the most significant factor was that a small number of pupils had a significant impact on the statistical analysis of the assessment results. The school implemented eight strategies to raise standards in mathematics and the results in 1999 showed the measures were very successful. The current Year 2 group are being closely monitored in English and there are further whole school initiatives taking place to improve writing.
- 2 The 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven year-olds show that standards are well above the national averages in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, the results are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The test results for seven year-olds show that standards are well above average in English and mathematics both nationally and compared with similar schools. They are broadly average in writing both nationally and compared with similar schools. Inspection findings are that current standards are generally consistent with these results, but that standards in writing at Key Stage 1 are higher than last year.
- 3 Pupils listen and speak very well and, from an early age, use sophisticated vocabulary. In its prospectus, the school states that it places a particular emphasis on the acquisition of reading skills. It is successful in achieving this aim and many pupils have very well developed skills for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils are confident, fluent readers who make good use of skills such as skimming and scanning. Handwriting is well-formed and mature in style and pupils think carefully about how they organise their written work. Consequently, presentation is very good in different tasks in different subjects. Pupils use the four rules of calculation accurately with very large numbers. They have a very good understanding of shape and measures and the collection and interpretation of data. At the end of both key stages, pupils have very good recall of facts and understanding of concepts in science.
- 4 Standards in religious education and information technology are above average by the end of both key stages. All pupils use computers well for a variety of purposes. Many pupils at Key Stage 2 are extremely competent instrumentalists and the performance of the school orchestra is exceptional. There are no significant differences between boys and girls at Key Stage 1 in any subject. Although girls achieve better than boys nationally at age 11, in this school boys achieve slightly better than girls in English, mathematics and science.
- 5 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall throughout the school. Attainment on entry is above average and children under five make satisfactory progress so that most of them exceed the recommended desirable learning outcomes. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in English, mathematics, science, information technology, religious education, art and music. All pupils are making very good progress in number work, particularly mental calculation, and they become increasingly clear in explaining how they solve problems involving more than one calculation. Progress in geography and history is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Progress in design technology and physical education is satisfactory at both key stages.
- 6 The main factors which contribute to this positive picture of pupils’ progress are:
 - Consistently good teaching;

- The school working effectively towards targets agreed with the local education authority;
- Effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies;
- Measures taken by the school to address identified variations in standards;
- The pupils' very good attitudes to learning;
- Very good relationships between adults and pupils and amongst pupils;
- Very good behaviour;
- Good support from parents during school hours including the 'Thursday clubs';
- Good homework set at the end of Key Stage 2.

• **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 1 Pupils have maintained the high standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- 2 At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and make a significant contribution to the standards attained. There is a strong work ethic within the school and pupils are highly motivated to learn. Pupils of all ages settle quickly to their written work. They listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to answer questions or make observations of their own during whole-class discussions, *for example in the literacy hour*. Pupils are confident in talking about their work. They are proud of their achievements and produce work that gives them personal satisfaction for their efforts. Pupils show a strong interest in computers. Pupils with special educational needs are generally confident and keen to make progress.
- 3 At both key stages, standards of behaviour are very good in class and around the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and very willing. There are clear expectations of good behaviour, which pupils understand and respect. They take good care of the school environment and show respect for and pride in the high quality of work and displays. Lunchtimes are sociable, well-ordered occasions, despite the cramped conditions in the dining area. Pupils move to and from assembly in an orderly and quiet manner. Bullying is not an issue in the school. There have been no exclusions.
- 4 The quality of relationships is very good and makes a significant contribution to the high standards of group work and whole-class discussions. Pupils support each other well. Boys and girls collaborate well in group work in lessons and in paired work using a computer. Pupils work very well together and there are numerous examples of pupils co-operating productively in all subjects. *For example, a group of Year 1 pupils organised themselves very well as they played at going to the dentist. They took turns to be the dentist or a patient fairly and the quality of their role-play was very good as a result. Mixed age groups of pupils work harmoniously. For example, a group of pupils from Reception to Year 6, observed working in the school garden during the 'Thursday clubs', allocated the tasks without fuss, shared tools and equipment sensibly and older pupils helped younger pupils when necessary.*
- 5 Pupils' personal development and their contribution to the school community are very good. They value the house system. Pupils are effectively encouraged to develop independent learning skills through a wide range of activities, *for example when carrying out research for topic work*.
- 6 Pupils are trusted to work in groups without direct teacher supervision within the class. Independence and responsibility are fostered very well through the school house system. *For example, house captains in Year 6 organise a programme of inter-house football and netball matches, arranging dates, times and teams; pupils referee these matches.* Pupils show initiative in the wider community, *for example by organising regular fund-raising events for both international and local charities.*
- 7 The response from pupils to the literacy and numeracy hours is very good. During literacy lessons, pupils are very involved in their work and show high levels of interest in the text and in word work. Discussions during these sessions are often of a high standard, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In both literacy and numeracy, pupils enjoy having the opportunity to express a view that may be different from that of the teacher. Teachers value these responses.

8 Pupils' ability to extend their own learning through research is good. *They make effective use of computers, reference books and dictionaries, and pupils find information in a particular book using contents and index pages.* However, they are not familiar with library classification systems or how to select a book on a particular topic from the school library.

17 **Attendance**

9 Attendance is very good. The level remains consistently high and is better than that found in most primary schools nationally. Instances of unauthorised absence are very low. Governors make very clear their stance on holidays taken during term time, but some parents do remove their children from school, usually for extended weekend breaks.

10 Almost all pupils are transported to school by car and arrive in good time. The very small number of instances of late arrival is generally caused by heavy traffic.

11 Lessons begin on time. The pupils respond without hesitation to the end of playtime signal, line up by class and enter the classroom in a calm and orderly fashion. No time is lost in having to wait for children to settle. All of these positive factors contribute well to the pupils' progress.

20 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

20 **Teaching**

- 12 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons and it is good or better in just over 80%. Teaching is very good in just over 20% of lessons. It is very good in mathematics and music, satisfactory in physical education and good in all other subjects. There were no significant differences between key stages. The quality of teaching is a significant factor in the high standards achieved by the pupils and the progress they make.
- 13 Two significant strengths of the teaching throughout the school are the methods that the teachers employ to directly teach new knowledge and skills, and the way in which lessons are structured and organised. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Hour and made a good start at implementing the Numeracy Hour. Lessons in other subjects often follow a similar structure with a whole class session at the start, a period of individual or small group tasks and a whole class evaluation of what has been learned. *For example, a Key Stage 1 science lesson involved whole class recall of existing knowledge about human senses, very good teaching of new facts about hearing, written tasks well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils and an effective review of what the pupils' had learnt.* In the very best lessons there are a few clear objectives which are explained to the pupils at the start of the lesson.
- 14 Teachers have high expectations that all pupils will learn and make progress. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 and plan lessons well. All classes are mixed age. Different activities are planned for different groups of pupils in terms of both age and prior attainment and these are well matched to the pupils' different needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported that teachers did not always match tasks to pupils' needs closely enough, particularly for higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2. All pupils are now presented with stimulating and demanding tasks. Teachers and parent volunteers plan effectively for the needs of different pupils during the mixed-age 'Thursday clubs'.
- 15 Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. The teachers know the pupils well and great importance is placed on interactions in the classroom. Praise is used appropriately to encourage and to recognise achievement. Behaviour is of such a consistently high standard that teachers rarely have to correct pupils. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond quickly to the calm, but firm, correction when it is used. Some pupils at Key Stage 1 occasionally call out, but it is always made clear that they need to raise their hands and wait. A few pupils in Key Stage 2 are reported by the school to be "more difficult", but there was little evidence of this during the inspection and when behaviour was inappropriate it was managed very well. The school is successfully implementing a programme to improve the behaviour of one pupil with special educational needs.
- 16 Day-to-day assessment is good and there are high expectations of presentation throughout the school. Teachers use questioning effectively to check what the pupils know, understand and can do. Pupils' work is marked, pupils' attention is drawn to significant errors and comments are made to help pupils improve or respond to the content of their writing. In all classes, topic work is collected in special workbooks, which the pupils decorate themselves. Photographic records are kept of some topics and educational visits. These procedures celebrate and value the pupils' work. However, in physical education lessons, teachers do not make sufficient use of pupil evaluation of their own and others' performance, to help them think about how they might improve.
- 17 The teaching and curriculum are planned and delivered very effectively to develop and use the key skills of literacy and numeracy across all subjects. At the same time, work in other subjects contributes to the development of writing and number skills. *For example, writing tasks in science, information technology and geography help pupils understand how writing is structured and presented differently for different purposes. Work in science and design technology involves practical application of pupils' understanding of numbers and measurement.*

- 18 Homework is satisfactory throughout the school. It is good in Years 5 and 6, and all pupils have homework books, which contain a good amount of completed work in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- 27 **The curriculum and assessment**
- 19 Since the last inspection, the school has made successful adjustments to curricular planning and assessment procedures so that work is now closely matched to pupils' prior attainments. The continuous and progressive development of skills between year groups and key stages is improved and is now good. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been strengthened so that the implementation of schemes of work is effectively monitored.
- 20 The curriculum for the children under five is good. It is broad and balanced and gives children a wide range of experiences. There is a strong emphasis on the development of their personal and social skills. These are promoted by well-planned activities and a very caring atmosphere. Children are prepared well for their work in Key Stage 1.
- 21 The breadth and balance of the curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are good. The school has allocated appropriate amounts of time to literacy and numeracy and to the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Statutory requirements for sex and drugs education are met fully. Personal and social education is given a high priority. Staff have ensured that all subjects of the curriculum maintain their status by linking subjects, where appropriate, to a whole-school programme of topics and themes.
- 22 Curriculum planning is good. All staff follow a common format for recording their planning and this successfully ensures a consistent approach at both key stages. Teachers' planning for the year and for each term ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum. Planning for each half term is very thorough. Teachers identify relevant learning objectives in each subject and these are translated into effective activities in the teachers' planning for each week. Where subject schemes of work are in place these help teachers plan effectively for the mixed age classes, developing knowledge and skills progressively across year groups and key stages. This progressive development of skills is also assured, in the subjects as yet without full schemes of work (design technology, history and geography), by teachers exchanging a considerable amount of information and planning the work together well.
- 23 Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is good. Close attention is given to meeting pupils' personal needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All staff, effectively led by the special needs co-ordinator, assess pupils' difficulties carefully and accurately. Individual education plans contain manageable targets to meet the identified needs.
- 24 The provision for literacy is good. The literacy hour is well established and effectively used in all classes. The provision for numeracy is good. The numeracy hour is in place and many of its elements were implemented ahead of requirement. Focused work in mathematics is resulting in an improvement in standards.
- 25 An unusual feature of the school's provision is the 'Thursday clubs'. The organisation involves pupils working with different teachers and parent volunteers, in mixed age groups from Reception to Year 6. The wide range of activities extends the curriculum well and gives good support, particularly to the work in science, information technology, art and design technology.
- 26 The provision of extra-curricular activities is good and caters for a wide range of interests. Additional sporting opportunities include football and netball coaching, cross-country running and sports sessions for both infants and juniors taken by staff from a local leisure centre. Pupils take part in friendly football and netball matches with other schools. These arrangements are successful in further extending pupils' skills and providing opportunities to take part in competitive sports.
- 27 The procedures used by the school for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good,

particularly in English, mathematics and science. There is a helpful policy, which clearly describes when and how assessments are to be made. Individual portfolios are kept for each pupil containing samples of their written work. A small number of each pupils' topic folders are kept each year to assist with assessing attainment and progress. Results of national and commercially produced standardised tests are systematically recorded for each pupil on a regular basis. In subjects where assessment procedures are not formally identified, *such as history and geography*, teachers make effective judgements about pupils' attainment and progress based on their knowledge of the National Curriculum levels of attainment, regular appraisal of pupils' work and discussion with their colleagues.

- 28 Teachers use the information they gather each term very effectively to make adjustments to their planning in order to raise standards. Results of end of key stage national tests and assessments, along with the results of internal assessments, are analysed closely and used to set realistic targets for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Targets are also set for each pupil and include pupils' own assessments of what they need to do to improve. These arrangements make a significant contribution to the standards attained throughout the school.

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

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The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for spiritual development is good. Assemblies and lessons, in religious education and English, develop the pupils' sense of spirituality and morality, particularly through the effective use of stories linked to themes. Assemblies are mainly Christian in nature but stories from other faiths are included at times. The teachers successfully foster respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.

- 30 Provision for moral and social development is very good. Pupils are taught and understand right from wrong. Teachers set a good example to pupils in their behaviour and relationships. The consistent application of the school's succinct and clear policy for behaviour promotes the pupils' moral development well. The school very successfully promotes a strong sense of a whole school community. Pupils understand the need for rules. The 'Thursday clubs' provide good opportunities for pupils of different ages to work together productively. The system of houses promotes healthy competition and opportunities for individuals to take on responsibilities. Throughout the school pupils are provided with opportunities to take responsibility for simple tasks at an appropriate level for their age from taking messages to helping in the canteen at lunchtime. Sporting activities and educational visits, including outdoor adventure activities, develop the pupils' sense of teamwork and self-confidence. Within the classroom, pupils are expected to be responsible for their own learning materials. From an early age they help give out and collect materials. The school supports at least one charitable organisation every term and this develops the pupils' understanding of the needs of others. In recent years, representatives of Action Aid, Barnados and Age Concern have spoken to the pupils.

- 31 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school has good links with local churches of different denominations, and visitors have included a Bolivian missionary and a speaker on Judaism. The school teaches about different cultures through the religious education syllabus. Places and issues studied have included Africa, Bolivia, The Third World and "global concerns". The school makes good use of the local area to teach pupils about their immediate environment at both key stages. In geography, Key Stage 1 pupils compare the local area with the seaside and Key Stage 2 pupils visit a nearby city environment such as Stockport, Manchester or Liverpool. This and other work in geography and history, sporting activities and other educational visits successfully develop the pupils' sense of their own cultural heritage. Some opportunities are taken to explore the diversity of art and music, but these are insufficient. Although pupils have looked at Chinese and Aboriginal art for example and use is made of African rhythms in music, opportunities are missed, across the curriculum and in these subjects in particular, to prepare pupils' for the multi-cultural nature of society and contemporary experience.

32Arrangements for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils are very good. The school provides a caring and secure environment for the pupils. All children have some pre-school experience of a nursery or playgroup and this, together with the school's good induction arrangements, helps new pupils to settle quickly and adapt to the school environment and its routines. The pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtimes. Pupils feeling unwell or who have medical needs are cared for effectively. The school provides conditions in which learning opportunities are maximised and personal development is assured.

33The school has very good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. Pupils participate in self-assessment activities. Targets identified by teachers are discussed with pupils and parents. There are effective arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. There is good liaison between teachers when pupils transfer from one class to another. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education through more formal arrangements for homework, the maintenance of homework diaries and the expectation that they should be properly equipped for lessons. The school's very positive support enables high standards to be achieved.

34There are very good arrangements for recording and monitoring attendance. The time allowed for morning registration is used constructively, *for activities such as quiet reading and mathematics tasks*. The governors' position that holidays should not be taken during term time is related to parents through various information packs and letters. However, the school does not have a specific, separate attendance policy.

35The school's policies and ethos very successfully promote high standards of behaviour. There are "Three Golden Rules" which are displayed around the school and consistently applied by staff. These were produced by Year 5 and 6 pupils in 1998/99 and are included in the home-school agreement. There are additional rules for the playground and specific learning situations *such as using computers and pottery*. There is a succinct, clear whole school policy for behaviour and all pupils wear the recommended school uniform and kit for physical education lessons. Misdemeanours are generally not of a serious nature but when necessary they are recorded and dealt with appropriately. The playground is shared by pupils of all ages without difficulty. Very positive relationships were observed during the inspection and pupils spoken to found staff very approachable. Nearly all parents say that their child likes school and that they do not perceive bullying to be a problem. Pupils are able to play and learn in a calm and very orderly environment.

36In practice, the school has satisfactory arrangements for promoting the health and safety and general well-being of its pupils. Whilst the governors have a documented health and safety policy they have no formal arrangements for monitoring and reviewing related issues. The school has good arrangements for a range of issues such as first aid, recording accidents and emergency evacuation. The school makes good efforts to raise pupils' awareness of safety issues within the curriculum and in general. *For example, as part of a county initiative, a Year 6 pupil has been appointed Junior Road Safety Officer. He gives monthly road safety advice during assemblies and is currently involved in a poster competition for infant children - "Be Safe, Be Seen".*

37Although the local education authority's procedures are followed for out of school visits, the school does not have its own policy for off-site visits and activities. There has been no training for staff on risk assessment. This should be provided in order that the school can work towards fully implementing risk assessment procedures.

38Arrangements for child protection are adequate, but should be improved. Whilst, in practice, the school refers to the local education authority's procedures relating to child protection issues it has no documented child protection policy nor has there been any recent training for staff.

47 **Partnership with parents and the community**

- 39 The overall range and quality of information provided for parents are good. Appropriate material is provided for parents of children entering the school. All parents receive a range of materials, *for example the prospectus, homework policy and information about the literacy hour.* Annual progress reports are informative and meet requirements. Parents' comments made on the reply forms provided with their child's annual report are almost always extremely positive. Many express thanks and give credit to the work of the school. There are good opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress during the course of the school year, both formally and informally. There is good liaison between the school and parents of pupils with special educational needs. The vast majority of comments made by parents are very positive, but a very small number would like more information about the curriculum. The school takes sensitive account of parents' views. *For example, parents were recently canvassed on the new format of the Governors' Annual Report, and the school is reviewing the information it provides about the curriculum. Advice was sought from all parents regarding the content of the home-school agreement.*
- 40 Parents have high expectations for their children to succeed at school. Their involvement in their child's learning and the life of the school is very good. Attendance at parents' evenings is excellent and there is good involvement with homework. Almost all of the parents have entered into the Home-School Agreement. Many parents are actively involved in the work of the school. A significant number of parents help in the organisation and running of the 'Thursday Clubs'. Very good practical assistance is given to the regular swimming lessons by parents and a grandparent. Resources are provided by parents to assist in the delivery of the curriculum and clubs such as the gardening club. There is also very good assistance with information technology equipment. The work of the active Parent Teacher Association is well supported by parents. The Association organises a range of fund raising events which encourage family involvement. The school values the positive support and assistance given by parents.
- 41 There are good links between the school and the community that contribute significantly to the pupils' learning and personal development. Solid relationships have been developed with other schools in the area. The school subscribes to the Wilmslow Schools Partnership Agreement. The headteachers' group arranges joint meetings for governors and there is liaison over policies and curriculum development. The Small Schools' Association arranges inter school sporting events and joint projects. Year 6 pupils are supported in their preparation for the next phase of their education through opportunities to visit the main local high schools for taster days, occasional workshops and performances.
- 42 The spiritual life of the school is enhanced through close contacts with local churches. Pupils are involved in church festivals and local ministers regularly visit the school. At Christmas, pupils entertain parishioners. During the week of the inspection the school orchestra was taking part in a musical evening at the local Methodist Church together with other schools to raise money for the BBC Children in Need appeal. The school serves its community well by hosting a playgroup and an after-school club.
- 43 The school has a particularly well-established relationship with a large local company, which has provided very good practical and material assistance to the benefit of the pupils' education. The company also sponsors an occasional science club for this and other schools within the cluster group. A local garden centre provides plants for the 'Thursday gardening club' and hosts regular visits by groups of pupils. The school greatly appreciates the support it receives from these and other areas of business and industry.
- 44 Educational visits are regularly arranged. The pupils' studies in history and geography are particularly well supported by these. *Through a recent visit to Stockport Museum and Air Raid Shelter, pupils have learnt about and experienced aspects of life during World War II, such as*

rationing, dietary habits, games, household equipment and the way of dress. However, there are limited links which would support the pupils' cultural development and help to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society.

53 **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

53 **Leadership and management**

- 45 The headteacher provides very high quality, strong, purposeful leadership to the work of the school. There is a clear educational direction for the school, evident in daily practice, which is fully supported by the very hard-working classroom staff and the committed and articulate governors. There is a commitment to achieving and maintaining high standards. Targets have been agreed with the local education authority up to the year 2003.
- 46 The governing body and its committees are properly constituted and meetings are held and minuted correctly. Governors are acutely aware of their responsibilities and legal obligations. They consider carefully information from the local education authority and Department for Education and Employment to keep themselves fully informed of changes. The governors play an active role in development planning. There are designated governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Governors visit the school during the day when they are able, given their professional commitments, and attend social functions and parents' evenings as well as their formal meetings. Similarly governors attend training courses when possible, *for example recently in literacy, home-school agreements, pay and new governor training.*
- 47 There is good support and monitoring of the curriculum. This is achieved by all the teaching staff working closely together to ensure that all pupils receive interesting developmental learning experiences. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have led staff in the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours. Literacy and numeracy are given considerable emphasis, but staff carefully plan the whole curriculum together. There are very helpful position statements for literacy, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education drawn up by the respective co-ordinators. Support and monitoring of teaching is good. However, this tends to be carried out rather informally within the close-knit small team of teachers.
- 48 The school very successfully implements its school aims, values and policies. These are outlined in the prospectus and the succinct whole school aims and rules are particularly evident in daily practice. Most of the parents are highly supportive of the school and describe it as a good, very good or even excellent school.
- 49 The school development plan is a very effective tool for improvement. It contains a comprehensive, but manageable, range of targets in the main areas of the school's work of management, curriculum, staffing and buildings. Timescales are set, responsible individuals are identified, resource and training needs are estimated and costed, and success criteria are defined for each objective. It is closely linked to the school's own initiatives in individual subjects, targets set by the local authority (in literacy for example) and the major building work planned to start in the spring of 2000. The final development plan is produced after close consideration of the headteacher's draft by the staff and governors and is timed to dovetail neatly into the financial planning cycle. A minor weakness is that the objectives are not clearly prioritised.
- 50 The school ethos is very good. The school is friendly and welcoming. Pupils are confident and happy. There is a clear commitment to hard work and caring relationships. Teachers expect pupils to achieve good standards and pupils' respond very well to the positive atmosphere.
- 51 The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. All of the key issues raised have been addressed through the action plan, or to some extent have been replaced and developed further through the recent national initiatives and targets set by the local education authority's monitoring process. The response of the staff to recent changes in the curriculum and the school's own plans for development, indicate a good capacity for further improvement and for the maintenance of the high standards.

60 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 52 Staffing is good overall. The school has a sufficient number of teachers and support staff who are suitably qualified and experienced. The staff work very well together, they are mutually supportive and there is a strong emphasis on teamwork. There are designated co-ordinators for all subjects except design technology, where all teachers share the responsibility. The school's arrangements for the induction and support of new teachers are informal. Teachers have satisfactory opportunities to develop their professional skills. Recent training has been predominantly focussed on literacy and numeracy. Professional development also includes non-teaching staff. There is an annual review for each member of staff, and the needs of both the individual and the school are recorded.
- 53 The accommodation is just adequate for the delivery of the school's curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has worked closely with the local education authority to try to address issues raised in the previous report. Work on a new building is planned to begin next year, but inspectors can only comment on present arrangements. All teaching takes place in mobile classrooms. There are no separate facilities for reception children and toilets are also housed in a small mobile block. There is no running water in classrooms which makes the organisation and conduct of some activities difficult. *For example, all pupils engaged in messy activities, particularly in art, have to go to the external toilets to wash their hands.* This has additional implications for the supervision of pupils, particularly young children, when climbing the steps leading to and from their classroom and the toilets, and especially when the weather is wet. There is no suitable room for the school nurse to use when conducting health screens and current arrangements are inappropriate.
- 54 Indoor physical education takes place in the permanent building (which dates from 1822). There is a small hall which restricts the range of activities. Adjacent to the hall is a small library area, but this is at some distance from the classrooms and presents problems with supervision during lesson time. The small play area was resurfaced soon after the last inspection. There is a good environmental area and this is safely fenced off. The small playing field and surrounding trees offer good opportunities for sport and environmental work but problems arise with drainage during the winter months.
- 55 Learning resources are adequate. Given the nature of the buildings and lack of general storage, each class retains its own equipment for most of the planned activities.

64 **The efficiency of the school**

- 56 The school's systems for financial planning are very good. Educational developments are supported by careful financial planning. There is a clear match between the school's targets for development and the allocation of funding, training and resources. All funds designated for specific purposes are correctly used and, from January 2000, national 'class-size funding' will be used to finance an additional part-time teacher. The school governors have good policies in place for financial matters *such as Teachers' Pay and a Charging Policy*. The school has responded positively to the recommendations of the most recent external audit. No serious weaknesses were identified by this audit.
- 57 The budget currently has a 10% carry forward and the projected carry forward for the next financial year is 5.9%. These figures are higher than is usually found in primary schools, but they arise from extremely diligent and thoughtful planning, given the school's current situation. A small but significant element of the school's current staffing is met by funding outside the delegated budget. Some carry forward is, therefore, earmarked by the governors to maintain these staffing levels, which they have agreed in order to meet the pupils' needs. From the spring of 2000, there will be an extended period of major building work on the site. Although this is not to be funded directly by the school, it will clearly involve considerable disruption to the school and a larger than usual contingency is prudent.
- 58 The school makes good use of the available teaching and support staff. Good use is made of the part-

time music specialist. The classroom assistant, who is a qualified nursery nurse, plays a significant role in the teaching of children under five and at Key Stage 1. The headteacher takes the Year 5 and 6 class all day every Monday and works closely with the teacher who takes the class for the rest of the week.

- 59 Despite the difficulties relating to accommodation, the school makes extensive efforts to make the best of what it has and overall does so successfully. Classrooms, the hall and other areas are enhanced by good quality displays, which illustrate and celebrate the pupils' work. The playground, sports field and garden area are used well for recreation, sport and environmental studies. The staff make the best possible use of the hall for physical education lessons. Decoration, cleaning and maintenance are of good quality. The school is litter free.
- 60 During lessons, learning resources are generally used well. Books and other materials are well cared for. The library area is under-used. Computers are used well for specific information technology teaching and to support learning in other subjects. Resources beyond the school, including visits to museums, are particularly well used to enhance the teaching of science, history and geography.
- 61 Efficient financial control and school administration ensures smooth running of the school. Day-to-day administration is managed very well by the part-time secretary and the headteacher. Written records are fully in order and pupils' records and order processing are undergoing computerisation.
- 62 The school costs are very high. However, taking into account the standards achieved, the progress pupils make, pupils' attitudes and behaviour, the quality of teaching and the quality of management, the school provides good value for money.

71 **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

71 **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

63 At the time of the inspection there were 11 children under the age of five. Baseline assessment information and classroom observations show that attainment is above average on entry to the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. The children make satisfactory progress overall and exceed the nationally recommended desirable outcomes for learning by the time they are five.

64 The provision overall is good. The class teacher and part-time assistant (who spends a significant proportion of her time with this class) meet the needs of the younger children well. Due consideration is given to the areas of learning for children under five and work in literacy and numeracy is carefully planned in accordance with the national initiatives. The quality of teaching is good and shows a good understanding of young children's needs. Lessons are planned well, with separate activities carefully matched to the different needs of the Reception children and Year 1 pupils in nearly all lessons. There are high expectations of both work and behaviour. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good.

65 The classroom and small indoor play area are well organised and used to provide the children under five with opportunities to investigate and explore learning resources and materials and participate in imaginative play. The facilities outside are rather limited. However, the children do have some opportunities to play on the bikes and cars with the children who attend the pre-school playgroup. The plans for the new building include consideration of a separate outdoor area for children under five.

74 **Personal and social development**

66 Children under five have very good attitudes to learning. They benefit from the well-organised induction programme and settle quickly into school routines. They show good levels of concentration for their age and participate enthusiastically in the activities provided. Their behaviour is very good.

67 The personal development of children under five is very good. They respond very well to the many opportunities they are given to be responsible, *for example taking messages to other teachers, clearing away at the end of lessons or selecting the resources they need to complete a task*. The children are confident and happy, and they take turns and play fairly. They talk confidently to visitors. In assemblies, they sit quietly or join in as appropriate. Their levels of co-operation are very good when working in pairs or larger groups. They work by themselves very effectively.

76 **Language and Literacy**

68 Children make good progress because they listen well. They acquire vocabulary quickly and answer questions well. They speak clearly using well-formed sentences, *for example "When I came back from Turkey my cat was bigger than when I went"* and use their wide vocabulary well in different contexts, *such as 'camels' and 'shire horses' when discussing living things*. They make good progress in early reading and writing tasks. The children show care, interest and enjoyment when handling books. The children are already learning that some books contain information and others stories. They are beginning to write simple, but well formed, sentences of their own, or to complete ones that the teacher has started for them. Some children use some capital letters and basic punctuation correctly.

77 **Mathematics**

69 The children are learning to count confidently and do so with their older classmates up to 20. They complete simple addition problems of numbers, objects and small amounts of money. They are learning about shapes and colours. They make good use of words relating to number, shape, colour

and size including comparative terms.

78

understanding of the world

Knowledge and

70

Most of the children know the days of the week and that “this month is November”. They name a good range of living things and firmly assert what they can do that teddy can’t! From a very young age, children use computers confidently. They use the mouse and keyboard well to write, draw and move items around the screen. The children are learning about the life of Jesus. In the ‘Thursday clubs’ the children learn a range of skills and techniques alongside older pupils, *for example computer skills, sewing skills and the use of different construction kits to make models such as rockets or space buggies.*

79

Physical development

71

Pupils are developing their fine motor skills very well through all classroom activities, whether the children are closely directed by an adult or they are exploring resources and playing imaginatively. They are developing a sense of balance and learning to climb, move around and jump on the floor and the big apparatus in the hall. They make some gains through using large wheeled toys but these opportunities are limited.

80

Creative Development

72

Children are learning about colours and shapes. They are discovering how to make different marks using pencils, brushes and crayons. They enjoy hymns, simple songs, nursery and number rhymes and join in with singing and actions with enthusiasm.

81

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

81

English

73

Since the previous inspection, the good standards in English at both key stages have been successfully maintained. Standards in literacy have improved, particularly at Key Stage 2. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 statutory tests, results were well above the national average and when compared with similar schools. These results represent a significant improvement since 1998 and are largely due to the effective use of the literacy hour and improvements in teaching. Inspection evidence supports teachers’ assessments that indicate that the current Year 6 pupils are likely to maintain these high standards.

74

In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, results for reading were well above average in comparison with national averages and when compared with similar schools. Results in writing were broadly average both nationally and when compared with similar schools. The pupils currently in Year 2 have been closely monitored since September and adjustments made to the school’s approach to writing. Inspection evidence supports the teacher’s assessments that pupils are likely to attain similar results in reading, and that a greater percentage of pupils will attain higher levels in writing.

75

Results in reading, at the end of Key Stage 1, have remained well above the national average between 1996 and 1999. Over this period, results in writing have been above the national average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have remained consistently above the national average, with a marked improvement between 1998 and 1999.

76

In speaking and listening, standards are well above average at both key stages and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen carefully to one another and to adults. Their responses to questions are articulate and

well ordered. They ask questions of their own very clearly to satisfy their own curiosity. They do not hesitate to experiment with new words and make good progress in developing and extending their vocabulary. Pupils enjoy talking about the work they are doing and characters in stories and they describe experiences and events accurately. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are very articulate when expressing their views and opinions. Their contributions to whole-class discussions are often thoughtful and imaginative. They are highly motivated to find out about new words and use a thesaurus effectively to extend their choices.

- 77 Progress in reading is good throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in reading are well above average. Many pupils are fluent readers. Pupils make thoughtful predictions about story lines. They employ a range of strategies when encountering difficult words, such as using their knowledge of phonics, making informed or contextual guesses or splitting words. They give reasons why they have selected a book and comment on the author, title and illustrator. They are aware of differences between fiction and non-fiction books. Many pupils read freely and clearly enjoy the activity.
- 78 By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in reading is well above average. Pupils have an extensive knowledge and experience of both fiction and non-fiction. Pupils' book reviews include well considered opinions and a good understanding of characterisation. *In one conversation with a pupil, for example, she expressed concern that film versions of stories are not always true to the original text and that characters are not always as she perceives them.* This strong interest and enjoyment in books and pupils' high standards of reading make a significant contribution to the standards attained in all areas of the curriculum. The learning environment is enriched by a wide range of good quality literature.
- 79 By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is above average. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils have the opportunity to write for a wide range of different purposes, such as book reviews, letters, poems and stories. They soon learn how to construct a sentence and where to use full stops and capital letters. *For example, Year 1 pupils wrote well-constructed sentences as they described the sequence of events in making a sandwich.* By the end of the key stage, pupils are confident writers, competently using word banks and dictionaries when they need help. Handwriting is well formed and letters joined into a neat script. Standards in spelling are good. However, as indicated by the results of national tests, pupils' overall standards in writing are not as high as their standards in reading.
- 80 By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is well above average and pupils make good progress. The range of writing continues to be very wide. *For example, pupils write instructions and newspaper articles and compose poems in several styles. Pupils write imaginative descriptions, make summaries of larger texts and successfully develop the skills of note taking, drafting and self-evaluation. Year 6 pupils showed very good knowledge and understanding of summary as they reduced several lines of text from an extract from The Jungle Book to a single sentence. Other pupils in the same class made notes as they read a passage from 'A Christmas Carol' and then used these effectively to give their views and opinions about events and characters in the story.* Most pupils have developed a mature use of vocabulary and a fluent style of writing. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the correct use of grammar. Most pupils' handwriting is legible, mature and well formed.
- 81 The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress in reading and writing. They benefit from the focused work in the literacy hour. Activities are well matched to their needs and they are well supported by adults. They work towards specific targets and receive a considerable amount of encouragement.
- 82 Pupils' attitudes at both key stages are very good and have a significant impact upon the standards attained. They clearly enjoy the structure of the literacy hour and most pupils are keen to produce work of good quality in both content and presentation. They remain on task for appreciable amounts of time and are enthusiastic about what they do. *For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils became very engrossed in the images created by a poem they were studying and responded keenly to the teachers' questions with their own ideas. They settled quickly to their writing tasks and, as a result of their*

motivation and interest, produced good quality poems of their own in a similar style. Pupils work well together in shared literacy tasks and help each other with spellings and grammar.

83 The quality of teaching is good overall and at both key stages. Three-quarters of the lessons seen were good. The intensive programme of literacy training and the positive attitudes of the staff to the literacy strategy have had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. Staff are now sufficiently confident to make minor modifications to the structure to match it more closely to the needs of individual pupils or to their own class management style. At all times, expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high. In the best lessons, pupils are successfully encouraged to use correct vocabulary and to speak in complete phrases or sentences. Teachers promote a wide range of skills during lessons. *For example, in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class, the teacher successfully promoted comprehension, discussion and speaking and listening skills during story time.* Teachers are very successful at valuing what pupils have to say and this is a significant factor in helping pupils to become confident, articulate speakers. Specific skills, such as handwriting, are taught well, with step-by-step instruction, good use of teachers' own examples and opportunities to practice and refine the skills learned. Teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm is significant in motivating pupils to improve. Where there are shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons, teachers have not matched the activities well enough to pupils' prior attainment and some pupils are not able to complete their work or are not sufficiently challenged.

84 A good range of assessment procedures is in place. The subject co-ordinator and teachers assess and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the literacy hour on a regular basis. They have identified that writing at Key Stage 1, and extended writing at both key stages, are not receiving sufficient attention. As a result, the school has made effective adjustments to the curriculum planning and timetables to increase opportunities for these aspects outside the literacy hour itself. Staff employ a wide range of standardised tests, as well as the results of national tests, to effectively assess pupils' attainment and progress. Targets for improvement are discussed with individual pupils and shared with their parents at an open evening and these arrangements are helpful in encouraging pupils to do better.

85 The subject knowledge and expertise of the co-ordinator is well developed. She has successfully led the school in the implementation and monitoring of the literacy hour and in assessing the problems that have arisen. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy framework and the school English policy well in planning their lessons and this ensures a continual and progressive development of skills between year groups and key stages. Reading skills are well developed through shared texts, group reading and the teaching of a phonic programme of single sounds and blends. Staff are particularly successful in applying pupils' literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science, history, geography and religious education, where research and a variety of ways of writing are successfully used. Book resources are of generally good quality and quantity.

94 **Mathematics**

86 The school has achieved high standards in mathematics at both key stages every year since the previous inspection in 1995, with the exception of Key Stage 2 in 1998. The significant drop that year was largely due to a number of lower attaining pupils and was not due to any weakness in the school's provision. In a school of this size, the performance of a very small number of pupils can have a very significant impact on the statistical data. Nevertheless the school drew up and implemented action to raise standards in mathematics before the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in full this year.

87 In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 statutory tests, results were well above the national average and when compared with similar schools. These results represent a very significant improvement since 1998 and are due to the good quality teaching and careful monitoring of the curriculum and the pupils' progress. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, standards in mathematics were well above average both nationally and when compared with similar schools. There are no significant differences between boys and girls at Key Stage 1. Although girls achieve better than

boys nationally at age 11, in this school boys do slightly better than girls.

- 88 The inspection finds high standards in the school consistent with last year's national tests at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils use very large numbers and all four rules of computation confidently. Pupils quickly say what half of any number up to 100 is including odd numbers. They manipulate numbers with up to three decimal places correctly. They use a range of measures, including centimetres and grams, accurately. The highest attaining pupils have a good understanding of co-ordinates and of mode, mean and average. Lower attaining pupils in the current Year 6 make some mechanical errors in their calculations, but they already have a satisfactory understanding of work at the level that they are expected to achieve by the end of the key stage.
- 89 By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils add tens and units with a carry accurately, count in tens and order numbers up to 100. They understand odd and even numbers. The majority of pupils are at a very similar level and the differences between higher and lower attainers are minimal. Pupils understand how to draw simple block graphs and what they represent. They have a good knowledge and understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes including cones and cylinders. They estimate length well, using both standard and non-standard units of measurement, can tell the time at least to the half hour and sort objects into those that are heavier or lighter than one kilogram.
- 90 All pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1. All Year 1 pupils make good progress in counting, addition and subtraction, and apply what they know well to money work. They are beginning to recognise patterns in money problems. Very few pupils need reminders to put a letter 'p' after a sum of money. Year 2 pupils have made good progress since September moving on from units only to tens and units work. Higher attaining pupils have learnt how to calculate change from 50p mentally and are beginning to explain how they do this. *For example, one pupil says "20 and two 10s is 40, add 5 and 2 is 47"*.
- 91 All pupils make good progress during Key Stage 2, particularly in number. Higher attaining pupils in Year 3 understand how to use the symbols for greater than and less than, and are making good progress in multiplication, division and digital and analogue time work. Lower attaining pupils in Year 3 have made substantial gains this term in addition and subtraction of numbers up to 100, but they are still making errors in carrying and borrowing. The majority of the Year 4 pupils are learning their multiplication tables successfully and find all or most of the different numbers that can be made from the same four digits. *They are applying their knowledge of number well in real life applications such as bus and train timetables.* All pupils use tallies to collect data. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand more complex fractions and negative numbers, *for example in the context of temperature.* During the inspection pupils in both Year 5 and 6 made good gains in more complex fractions. Specifically, Year 5 pupils made good progress in equivalent fractions and Year 6 pupils in improper numbers.
- 92 Pupils' response is very good. All pupils listen carefully during whole class sessions and are keen to answer questions, particularly in mental calculation work. Pupils complete a substantial amount of written work in mathematics over time. Presentation is good overall and by Year 6 it is often exceptional. From a young age, pupils use the squared paper in their exercise books well. However, a very small number of pupils do not appear to take quite as much care as they do in English and science.
- 93 The quality of teaching is very good overall. The scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans shows this standard to be maintained over time. All lessons were judged to be good or very good and it was very good in four of the six lessons observed. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well. Lessons are well planned and structured. All lessons feature a short period of good quality, whole class mental calculation. The teachers effectively provide opportunities for many pupils to show them what they know and understand. In the very best lessons the teachers convey their own interest and pleasure in numbers to the pupils. Teachers always mark the pupils' work and there are examples of good quality comments to help pupils in all classes. *For example, the teacher showed a Year 4 pupil how to avoid errors when adding sums of money by writing the numbers in neater columns.* Homework is used very well to reinforce pupils' learning in Years 5 and 6.

94 The school has carried out effective analysis of assessment information and taken extensive action to try to address identified weaknesses. The co-ordinator has given a good lead to the successful introduction of the numeracy hour. The scheme of work, teachers' plans and pupils' workbooks all show good coverage of the different aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study and well-planned progression of skills and understanding. Good use is made of different resources and methods including commercially produced workbooks, number books and practical activities and resources. Occasionally teachers do not provide sufficient tasks to develop the pupils' use and application of their number skills in real life situations.

103 **Science**

95 Results in science have been consistently either above or well above the national averages at both key stages every year since 1995. In the 1999 statutory tests for eleven year-olds, results were well above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. In the 1999 teacher assessments for seven year-olds standards were average both nationally and when compared with similar schools. There are no significant differences between boys and girls at Key Stage 1. Although girls achieve better than boys nationally at age 11, in this school show boys achieve slightly better than girls.

96 At the time of the inspection standards in Year 2 and Year 6 were well above average. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have a very good understanding of the procedures and conventions used in scientific experimentation and investigation. Their written reports include good conclusions and evaluations. They have good skills of observation and prediction. All pupils use scientific vocabulary confidently and accurately and have recall of a wide range of facts.

97 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of fair testing for their age. They carry out simple test and investigations carefully and record their results well, *for example when testing people's reaction speeds and investigating plant growth*. They know some of the key features of plants and 'mini-beasts' and understand the life cycle of a ladybird. They have extensive knowledge of the parts of the human body and their main functions. Year 1 and 2 pupils correctly recognise a range of recorded sounds with no visual cues. Most pupils in mixed-age groups show a good understanding of the effects of cold temperatures and over-watering on plant growth (in the 'Thursday gardening club').

98 Progress is good during Key Stage 1. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 are learning how to sort and classify. *They write a good range of things that a child and a teddy can and can not do as examples of living and non-living things*. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have made substantial progress through the 'My Body' topic. They have learnt about body parts, skin and bones, muscles, the heart and human senses. Some of this work has been very challenging and contains elements of the Key Stage 2 programmes of study. Pupils have clearly understood complex materials for their age and not been over-stretched by this work. This is best seen in their very good recall of what they have previously learnt, *for example biceps and triceps are in your arm and a baby has 300 bones!*

99 Progress is good during Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, consolidate and further develop what they have learnt at Key Stage 1 and show a deeper understanding of fair testing, *for example when investigating the 'waterproofness' of different materials*. Pupils in Year 6 acquire new facts well and record these accurately. They recall previous work very well, *for example when revising magnetism and forces*. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good understanding of scientific principals and phenomena, *for example that a smoother surface creates less resistance (in the context of friction) and that some materials are conductors and others insulators (in the context of electricity)*. They are not surprised to discover that changing the number of batteries, in a simple circuit, results in either a very dim light or a blown bulb!

100 Pupils' have very good attitudes to learning in science. Behaviour is always at least good and at

times exemplary. Throughout the school, pupils work very well in small groups, sharing resources and reaching agreement amicably. All pupils complete a good amount of work over time and some pupils write extensively, *for example current Year 2 pupils write a great deal on different aspects of the 'My Body' topic.* A few younger pupils call out in whole class discussions – but this is entirely due to enthusiasm! This is very well managed by the teacher.

101 The teaching is good overall. There is a very good emphasis on experimental and investigative science. The quality of the presentation and content of the science topic books, including the pupils' decorations on the covers, show that teachers and pupils take great pride in science. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work. Lessons are well structured and conducted at a good pace. A common feature of the very good lessons is that the teacher acts as a good model for young scientists through her questioning and demonstrations.

102 Inspection evidence is that the co-ordinator and other teachers are successfully maintaining the high status of science as a core subject in the National Curriculum during a period of great change, particularly in English and mathematics. Work in science makes a good contribution to literacy through the variety of written tasks set including recording experiments, descriptive text and development of vocabulary. It also contributes well to numeracy through the use of measurement of temperature and forces and the collection and analysis of data in different grids, charts and graphs.

111 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

111 Information Technology

- 103 Pupils achieve good standards in information technology, although they are not as high as in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is above average. The judgements are based on observations of pupils during lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' records and discussions with pupils, particularly those in Year 6. There have been improvements in the number of computers in the school and the use of information technology across the curriculum since the last inspection.
- 104 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the different ways in which computers can be used, but they have limited knowledge of other uses of information technology in everyday life. All pupils know how to send e-mail and how to use the Internet and CD-ROM for research. They produce high quality word-processed letters, stories and poems using a good range of features such as positioning the text. They use the computer to enter data and produce different charts and graphs such as block graphs and pie charts. They know how to give instructions to the Roamer programmable device. In the 'Thursday IT Club' Year 5 and 6 pupils support and instruct younger pupils in a range of activities in a very mature manner.
- 105 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers in the classroom confidently. They know how to switch the computer on and off safely and how to take care of floppy discs. Higher attaining pupils word-process poems to a very high standard for their age, using different letter styles, sizes and colours. They pay great attention to laying out their poem accurately. Pupils use sophisticated vocabulary to explain what they are doing. *For example, one described the drawing program's spray tool as an airbrush.* Lower attaining pupils write simple programs for the Roamer.
- 106 Pupils make good progress as they move from year to year and key stage to key stage. They learn about and make good use of more and more features of a word processor. The youngest pupils at Key Stage 1 learn how to write their name, make a picture or use a shape program to build a tower. Pupils early in Key Stage 2 start to learn about special keys on the keyboard. Throughout the school, pupils use a variety of educational programs, particularly in English and mathematics, and this consolidates and develops their basic keyboard and mouse skills.
- 107 Pupils enjoy information technology activities and work at a good rate on set tasks. They are careful with the equipment and work very well in pairs. They are confident and keen to learn. Many pupils use computers at home and this reinforces their work at school - although some of them describe most of their home experiences as "playing games"!
- 108 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Although only three lessons were observed this judgement is supported by the observation of pupils using computers in other subjects. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge of the subject and teach new skills well. Good use is made of computers on a day-to-day basis in a range of subjects, *for example English, mathematics and geography.*
- 109 There is a helpful, well thought out position statement for the subject prepared by the co-ordinator. She gives a good lead to developments in the subject and the school is clearly trying to keep pace with this rapidly developing subject. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessment and recording and these are developing well. All pupils have a folder which contains examples of "I Can Do IT" sheets which serve as a useful record of pupils' skills and the pupils are expected to help complete these and the class "computer log" which records the regularity and range of their experiences.

118 **Religious Education**

- 110 Standards of attainment in religious education, by the end of both key stages, are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection.
- 111 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good awareness of the importance of belonging to a group, such as a family or a school. They know the importance of respect and value for others. They know some Bible stories, *for example, the stories about Noah's ark and about Moses in the bulrushes*. They show awareness that the Bible is a special book for Christians. Pupils understand that people have different beliefs and worship in different ways. They have a satisfactory knowledge of festivals from other cultures and religions. Pupils have covered a wide range of themes and topics, many of which help them to make thoughtful observations and comments in their written work and in discussions, *for example when writing about how to help people in Kosovo*.
- 112 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils show a good knowledge of the life and ministry of Jesus, together with stories from the Old Testament. These stories are used effectively to promote a very good moral code and to foster a belief in the power of God. Pupils regularly and confidently express their own feelings, beliefs and values. *For example, some Year 6 pupils talked openly about a range of world problems, such as destruction of the Earth's resources and conflicts in several parts of the world. They showed a mature understanding of these problems as they talked about their beliefs*.
- 113 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school in developing an understanding of some of the religious traditions of the world. They make good progress in planned lessons on Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism, in addition to their main focus on Christianity. *For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils showed good knowledge and understanding of the importance of special journeys to people and linked this successfully to the concept of pilgrimage. After learning about the Golden Temple of Amritsa and its importance to the Sikh religion, many pupils spoke and wrote thoughtfully about special journeys that they would like to undertake and what they would mean to them*. Pupils of all ages often make good progress in the development of spiritual awareness as a result of their confidence in talking in front of others about their feelings and beliefs. Values and beliefs to influence pupils' lives are being successfully established.
- 114 Pupils' attitudes in lessons and assemblies are very good. Pupils listen attentively, participate enthusiastically and enjoy stories and the activities planned for them. *For example, pupils from both key stages sat listening intently as the headteacher told them about how blind people read by using Braille. Many pupils were visibly moved as they heard about the terrible accident that befell the young Louis Braille*. Consistently very good behaviour contributes significantly to pupils' learning. Pupils take great care over the presentation of their work and are proud of their workbooks and folders.
- 115 In lessons, the quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers use appropriate stories and activities, which relate to their own lives. *For example, Reception and Year 1 pupils showed great sympathy for Mary on her journey to Bethlehem, travelling on a donkey and having to give birth to baby Jesus in a stable. Many appreciated that modern day travel and living conditions are much more comfortable*. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this makes a significant contribution to the standards attained. Teachers use questions well and provide opportunities for many pupils to contribute during lessons. The open and confident way in which pupils share their views and express their beliefs is largely due to the value that teachers give to pupils' contributions. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and successfully link religious education lessons to other subjects. The quality of teaching in assemblies, which contributes to the provision for religious education, is often good. It is best when teachers give pupils appreciable amounts of time for personal reflection.
- 116 The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has successfully organised the locally agreed syllabus requirements to fit the school programme of class topics and themes. This is significant in making many of the religious education themes more relevant for pupils as they study them in the context of other subjects, *such as English, history and geography*. Resources are carefully chosen to support teaching.

125 **Art**

- 117 Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Progress is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Improvements have been made in the breadth of pupils' experiences and the scheme of work. At both key stages, pupils are given opportunities to experience a wide range of media and are successfully taught specific techniques to improve their skills. Pupils make good gains in their control of pencils, brushes, chalks, pastels and clay as they experience well-prepared and planned activities in the weekly 'Thursday clubs'.
- 118 Key Stage 1 pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of colour. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding as they explore mixing in their imaginative paintings. Their work on matching and simple repeat patterns provides a firm foundation for later work in pattern making and printing. Pupils have satisfactory skills of drawing with pencils, and their drawing skills using chalk and pastels are good. Pupils make good progress in their work with paper *as they make interesting collages, for example in the style of Rousseau, and origami figures*. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress as they apply and develop the skills learned in Key Stage 1 to a good range of activities. Pupils' paintings and drawings demonstrate their increasing understanding of shape and tone and how various brush strokes create different effects. *Pottery in the style of Clarice Cliff indicates well-developed observational skills and increasing confidence in using clay*.
- 119 At both key stages, pupils have a growing knowledge of famous artists. Pupils are aware that artists work in different ways. *At the time of the inspection display in the school hall effectively illustrated pupils' work in the style of Rousseau, Picasso, Dali, Hockney and Van Gogh. This 'gallery' gave pupils a very good opportunity to compare the artists' contrasting styles, as well as celebrating the good standard of their own work*.
- 120 Pupils enjoy art and their attitudes to the subject are very good. At both key stages, pupils confidently express their feelings about their work. Key Stage 2 pupils explain the difficulties they encounter and how they might do the work differently next time. They persevere and take great pleasure in their achievements. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. However, opportunities to study art outside Europe are limited.
- 121 The quality of teaching is good. There are examples of good teaching in the 'Thursday clubs'. Planning is thorough and is sometimes effectively linked to the classroom topic. Technical skills are developed progressively. This is a good feature of the club activities, where pupils experience a block of four weeks art work focusing on a particular technique or skill. *For example, a group of pupils from both key stages applied previously learned skills to the modelling of a Christmas table decoration out of clay. They confidently wedged and rolled the clay, used a slip technique effectively to join pieces together and marked the clay with their own designs and effects. They learned about biscuit firing and glazing in preparation for the following week's lesson*.
- 122 The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has good subject knowledge and provides good support and encouragement to staff. The scheme of work is successful in promoting progression of learning across the key stages. The converted toilet block used as a pottery room is a useful facility, but is cramped and uncomfortably hot or cold at times. Resources are well managed and adequate.

131 **Design Technology**

- 123 Overall the school provides a worthwhile experience for all pupils in design technology. The relaxation of the National Curriculum orders has not resulted in a significant decline in standards. There is no subject co-ordinator or scheme of work, but the small team of teachers works closely together to plan design technology activities for all pupils. The 'Thursday clubs' make a significant contribution to the subject particularly with regard to the use of appropriate construction kits by

pupils of different ages.

- 124 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the school. They make good progress in learning specific techniques, *such as sewing and the use of increasingly complex construction kits*. For younger pupils, this experience contributes to their mathematical understanding of, *for example, shape and measures*. For older pupils, it contributes to their understanding of aspects of science, *such as pneumatics*.
- 125 Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in planning, making and evaluating tasks. These tasks develop their understanding of suitability and choice of materials for different purposes, and skills and techniques such as cutting and joining. *For example, at the time of the inspection pupils in Years 1 and 2 were making models of exercise machines, which had to be the right size for given toy figures, using wood, card and other materials. They were also making figures using split pins to create simple movement of the limbs*. These tasks were effectively linked to the class topic of 'My Body' and a recent visit to the local leisure centre.
- 126 Year 3 and 4 pupils have made well structured bridges of different types from recyclable materials based on their good drawings. During the course of the school year, Years 5 and 6 pupils design and make a range of items related to work in other subjects which demonstrate satisfactory use of planning sheets, and good making and finishing skills. However, there is limited recorded evidence of pupils carrying out rigorous evaluation of what they have done and how they may change it next time. Discussion with a small number of pupils confirms that this aspect of the process could usefully be developed. *Examples of work seen included completed good quality Amazonian masks and mathematics games and ongoing papier-mâché World War II helmets. When making model vehicles from wood, pupils use triangle shapes appropriately to strengthen the chassis*.
- 127 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. All pupils enjoy making things and they apply themselves diligently to set tasks. Younger pupils have a good sense of safety, for example when using scissors. Older pupils explain clearly and sensibly what are they doing when talking to teachers and visitors.
- 128 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have sound knowledge of the subject and plan lessons well. Available resources are used well. In the mixed age 'Thursday club' the pupils' use of construction kits is developed effectively by giving them a weekly theme to focus their thinking and using group discussion to talk about what they have achieved. Good links are made with other subjects whilst retaining the integrity of design technology skills and processes. *For example, the Years 1 and 2 work at the time of the inspection was effectively linked to the mainly scientific class topic of 'My Body' and a recent visit to the local leisure centre. Aspects of work in other subjects, such as art, contribute well to the pupils' understanding, for instance their printing based on the work of William Morris and pottery activities*. Skilled and knowledgeable parent volunteers make a substantial contribution to the design technology activities included in the 'Thursday clubs'.

137 **Geography**

- 129 Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. Standards at Key Stage 2 are an improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Improvements have been made to the continual and progressive development of skills at both key stages, but the school has not developed a scheme of work.
- 130 At Key Stage 1, pupils show good standards of presentation in their writing and drawings. They draw maps carefully and colour diagrams neatly. *Examples of pupils' local studies of Wembury and Nether Alderley show a satisfactory understanding of simple mapping and knowledge of the local area*. Pupils make particularly good progress in the development of appropriate geographical language, because teachers successfully extend pupils' range of vocabulary through other subjects, *for example, directional work with programmable electronic devices*. Pupils make satisfactory

progress in their ability to identify similarities and differences. *For instance, pupils make decisions about the holiday destinations that they would like to visit as they compare the facilities and environment at different locations as specified in travel brochures. They confidently consider preferences for weather and features of the countryside in their written work. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their understanding of geographical enquiry as they gather data, for example from weather observations, and draw simple conclusions from their evidence.*

131 At Key Stage 2, pupils make good gains in their ability to consider issues and pose questions about geographical features. *For example, as a result of fieldwork, Year 6 pupils showed a good understanding of the environmental issues involved in keeping river water clean. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' successfully extend their skills of comparing and contrasting different locations. For example, by studying photographs of a Spanish town and of Nether Alderley, pupils made considered observations about similarities and differences in human and physical features. Higher attaining pupils were able to give thoughtful views as to the reasons for some of the differences, identifying climatic variations as a major factor. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show a good understanding of settlement and relate this well to their study of the local village and local towns, such as Stockport. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of a contrasting Third World country is under-developed. The standard of factual knowledge about countries, rivers, oceans and climatic regions of the world is good.*

132 Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They show clear enjoyment in talking about other places they have learned about or have visited on holidays. They talk eloquently about environmental issues. They take great care with, and pride in, the presentation of their work.

133 The quality of teaching is good overall. Examples of geographical work are displayed well in classrooms, giving status to the subject. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose of the tasks they ask them to do. Pupils are successfully encouraged to observe carefully when studying maps and photographs and to apply their previous knowledge and understanding when drawing conclusions from the evidence. Geography is taught through a series of topics that pupils experience in different year groups. Topics are linked effectively to other subjects of the curriculum, *such as mathematics, science, history and religious education. For example, mapping skills are successfully promoted when studying old maps of the local area in history or when calculating co-ordinates in mathematics.* There is no scheme of work to give guidance to teachers when planning their lessons, but effective continual and progressive development of skills is maintained by successful joint planning between teachers.

134 The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is effective in monitoring the work of her colleagues to ensure that aspects of geography are not repeated in different year groups and that appropriate skills are taught. She is aware of the need for a scheme of work and has collected a useful quantity of lesson plans and resources as preparation for the development of a scheme when geography next becomes a priority in the school development plan. Resources are barely adequate but are used effectively. The school environment and the local area are used well and this makes a significant contribution to the standards attained.

143 **History**

135 Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. Standards at Key Stage 1 are lower than those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but this is due largely to the reduced amount of time given to the subject in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils are still prepared well for the more complex work they experience at Key Stage 2, where high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

136 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show their developing sense of chronology when making comparisons between present and past times. They make satisfactory gains in their enquiry skills. *For example, pupils' work on the class topic of 'The Seaside' is to a good standard, when comparing seaside holidays now with those taken by the pupils' grandparents. Pupils write factual accounts*

about events and draw interesting pictures and diagrams. They show a satisfactory awareness of using pictures and artefacts to draw conclusions about life in the past. Pupils benefit from the good use teachers make of resources. Pupils develop the capacity to ask questions of their own and to search for evidence to answer them.

- 137 At Key Stage 2 pupils' learning is built successfully on the interest created at Key Stage 1. They respond well to the interesting activities planned for them. *For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils produced folders to a high standard about The Victorians. Their work contained a wide range of facts and information, as well as studies in depth of particular aspects, such as the working conditions of children employed to sweep chimneys.* By the end of the key stage, pupils show good research skills, successfully selecting and combining information from a variety of sources. *They make good use of a range of non-fiction books and CD-ROMs, successfully skimming and scanning text to extract relevant information. When pupils visited Stockport Museum, they handled artefacts from the Second World War and made detailed notes. These were well used to write interesting passages containing extensive factual information.* Pupils talk knowledgeably about their local area. Pupils recall very well a wide range of facts about historical periods that they have previously studied, *for example, describing accurately the life of children in the time of the Ancient Greeks.*
- 138 Pupils' attitudes are very good. They enjoy learning about the past and using artefacts, pictures and photographs to find out about how people used to live. Pupils take great care over the presentation of their work and the standard of handwriting, maps and drawings in their topic folders is often high. Year 6 pupils show a mature interest in their studies and *talk freely about how they would have felt to be a child, for example, in Victorian times or in Ancient Greece.*
- 139 Although no lessons were seen in history, the quality of teaching is judged to be good at both key stages. The good standards of pupils' written work, factual information and discussions about historical topics indicate that teaching is often good, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and this makes a significant contribution to the standards attained. Literacy skills are generally promoted very well at both key stages and pupils are successfully encouraged to take on the roles of historical figures in their writing. However, the school library is not used well to support pupils' library skills when carrying out personal research. There is no scheme of work in place to help the teachers plan their lessons. Nevertheless, the teachers successfully ensure that skills are taught progressively between years and key stages, by planning together and keeping close to the requirements of the school's programme of class topics. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and provides effective support and guidance to colleagues, helping them with planning suitable activities and providing appropriate resources. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop a scheme of work in order to make the planning process more manageable for colleagues. Teachers make good use of available books and artefacts from museums and other organisations, visitors and school visits to enhance the provision and maintain pupils' interest and motivation.
- 148 **Music**
- 140 Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The school has successfully maintained the high standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
- 141 Pupils at Key Stage 1 use their voices confidently and clearly in a wide range of songs and carols. *For example, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils sang with clear diction and close attention to melody during a hymn practice session. They sang tunefully and with a good awareness of dynamics and tempo.* The standard of singing is above that expected of pupils of their age. Pupils have well-developed listening skills and this helps them to learn new words and melodies very quickly. They play percussion instruments confidently. Pupils make particularly good progress in their awareness of performing as a member of a group.

- 142 At Key Stage 2, the good progress is maintained and the skills pupils acquire at Key Stage 1 are successfully extended through a wide range of musical activities. Pupils sing hymns, carols and songs with good phrasing, diction and sensitivity. All pupils play descant recorders in Year 3 and many pupils progress to playing string, woodwind and brass instruments, as well as treble and tenor recorders. By Year 6, virtually all pupils play both a tuned and an untuned instrument competently and read standard notation confidently. The progress made by instrumentalists is very good. Pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 are given regular opportunities to play together in the school orchestra and their performances are of a very high standard for their ages. They show a very good awareness of timing, dynamics and tempo and a strong feeling for performance.
- 143 At both key stages, pupils know a wide range of hymns and songs and participate wholeheartedly. Pupils enjoy all of the musical activities and respond enthusiastically in lessons. They perform confidently, listen carefully to others and wait patiently for their turn.
- 144 The quality of teaching is very good. The subject is effectively taught at both key stages by a music specialist, who ensures thorough coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study for performing and composing, and listening and appraising. Music skills are taught progressively to each class. The music specialist is supported well by class teachers, who include musical activities in their class lessons and take pupils for singing and recorder practice. Teachers have good subject knowledge and enthusiasm and this is significant in promoting the high standards that pupils attain. *For example, the music specialist led Year 5 and Year 6 pupils through a variety of demanding activities as they composed accompaniments for and sang Christmas music and songs. The lesson moved at a stimulating pace and pupils were called upon to make frequent responses and practice to improve performance. The teacher's enthusiasm and good humour were successful in motivating pupils to want to do well and she shared with them the pleasure gained from performing successfully together.*
- 145 The subject is supported by a good scheme of work. The co-ordinator is very committed to her subject and provides valuable support to all staff. Resources are organised well and are satisfactory in number and quality. There is a good number of compact discs, of mainly classical music, and these are used effectively to develop pupils' listening and appraising skills. However, the range of styles and forms of music and instruments is limited. Very good opportunities are provided in Key Stage 2 for pupils to play instruments other than percussion. Peripatetic music staff provide woodwind, brass and violin lessons, and there are three well-attended recorder groups. Pupils perform concerts to parents, senior citizens and at local functions and festivals and these arrangements are successful in encouraging pupils to practice and attain high standards of musicianship. Music has a secure place in the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' awareness and appreciation of music from around the world.
- 154 **Physical Education**
- 146 Despite the problems with the accommodation and having no specialist on the staff, the school provides a worthwhile, broad experience in physical education. Pupils make satisfactory, steady progress overall at both key stages. There is no evidence to support the findings of the last inspection that "progress is not even as pupils move from year to year."
- 147 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use the large apparatus confidently and make good progress in climbing, traversing, balancing and landing. Higher attaining pupils perform well thought out sequences with good control and agility. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make steady progress in both individual and team skills in games. All pupils make satisfactory gains in ball skills, *for example passing, dribbling, bouncing, trapping and dodging.* All pupils in Years 5 and 6 made satisfactory progress learning and practicing sequences in the one dance lesson seen. However, the quality of movement and balance of several pupils was rather limited.

- 148 The school's provision for swimming meets the statutory requirements at Key Stage 2 and is good overall. All pupils participate in 10 lessons during the school year, Years 3 and 4 in the autumn term and Years 5 and 6 in the spring term. All of the pupils leaving the school in 1998 and 1999 could swim 25 metres. During the inspection, all pupils in the mixed Years 3 and 4 class were observed swimming. All pupils were making good progress in well planned and structured activities. Eight higher attaining pupils, all in Year 4, already swim well and exceed the expectations for their age. Because of the time spent in travelling, the school does not feel that the arrangements for swimming provide good value for money.
- 149 Pupils' have very good attitudes to learning and they behave very well during physical activities. All pupils listen carefully to the teacher and follow instruction very well. They clearly enjoy games, gymnastics, dance and swimming. Pupils work well in pairs and small groups. However, in one lesson some Key Stage 1 pupils, given a copying task, moved too fast for their partners. From an early age pupils have a good sense of safety, *in the water or when working on large apparatus, for example.*
- 150 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are planned and structured well. The teaching of skills in gymnastics and games is satisfactory. There is appropriate use of demonstration by pupils but more emphasis should be placed pupils' evaluation of their own performance. The small size of the school hall and poor drainage of the sports field inhibit the range and frequency of some of the activities which the school can offer. However, teachers make good use of the available accommodation, grounds and learning resources. *For example, in a Years 5 and 6 dance lesson the teacher effectively modified the planned sequence of steps so that pupils could still perform the task within the small space.* Teachers, trained pool staff and parent (and grandparent) volunteers all contribute to the pupils' learning during swimming.
- 151 The policy and scheme of work are satisfactory and provide useful guidance for teachers in planning all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Participation in extra-curricular sporting activities and outdoor pursuits as part of educational visits make a good contribution to the pupils' physical and emotional development.

160 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

160 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

152The inspection of Nether Alderley Primary School was undertaken by a team of three inspectors who, over a four-day period, completed a total of ten inspector days in the school.

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Prior to the inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body and the teaching staff.
- The Registered Inspector held a meeting with 20 parents.
- Documents provided by the school were analysed.

During the inspection

- 52 lessons or parts of lessons were seen, representing 30 hours of classroom observation.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other classroom staff as a group and individually on subject and whole school issues.
- A planned discussion was held with seven members of the governing body.
- There were daily meetings between the Registered Inspector and the headteacher.
- Inspectors examined the written work of many pupils. All of the available work of a representative sample of pupils from each current year group and some work retained from last year was scrutinised.
- Pupils from each year group were heard or observed reading and were questioned on their knowledge and understanding of books. Discussions were held with small groups and individual pupils about aspects of their work in all subjects but particularly in information technology, religious education, design technology, geography and history. Time was spent talking to pupils during lessons, over lunch and at playtimes.
- Brief observations were made of pupils arriving and leaving school, during breaks and lunchtimes and participating in extra-curricular activities.
- Attendance registers were inspected.
- Teachers' planning documents and records were inspected.
- Inspectors attended assemblies.
- Discussions were held with parents.

· **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	100	0	3	3

· **Teachers and classes**

· **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	4.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20.4

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

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	26.5
Average class size:	25

· **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	191526
Total Expenditure	192871
Expenditure per pupil	1988
Balance brought forward from previous year	20864
Balance carried forward to next year	19519

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 82

Number of questionnaires returned: 50

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	50	42	0	6	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	58	34	6	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	26	36	22	2	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	28	48	10	10	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	34	52	10	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48	44	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	42	52	2	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42	44	4	2	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	56	36	0	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	62	34	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	70	28	0	0	0