

INSPECTION REPORT

Elton Primary School
Elton

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique Reference Number: 111225

Headteacher: Mr W E Edge

Reporting inspector: Mrs Joan Boden
OIN: 12301

Dates of inspection: 15th - 18th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707064

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Salisbury
Date of previous inspection:	March 1995

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Mrs Doreen Shotton		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency
Mrs Sue Walker	English Art Geography History	
Mr Patrick Horn	Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs The moderate learning difficulties unit	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision
Mr Stan Cooper	Science Information technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	Curriculum and assessment

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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards of attainment have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The pupils work hard. Their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school.
- The pupils get on very well together and relationships between the pupils and all adults are very good.
- There are very good opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility.
- There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- The school has a strong commitment to all pupils achieving their full potential.
- The children under five are prepared well for starting school.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. Although the curriculum has improved, it is not sufficiently balanced to ensure that all subjects have appropriate time allocations.
- II. Pupils in the moderate learning unit miss out on some subjects.

This is a good school that serves its pupils well. Its many strengths far outweigh the few weaknesses. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan that will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement in many areas since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, and this has resulted in much improved progress and standards of attainment. Teachers' planning has improved and work is matched accurately to the needs of individual pupils. Good assessment procedures have been introduced so teachers know what the pupils have learnt and what they still need to do. The pupils are provided with challenging targets based on these assessments. A very good homework policy has been introduced and this means that the pupils can practise their skills in readiness for moving forward, particularly in English and mathematics. The weakness in the balance of the curriculum, identified in the last report, still remains.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

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

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

The table shows that standards in English and science are in line with the national average and with the average achieved by pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards in mathematics are above both the national average and the average achieved by pupils from similar backgrounds. These figures include the pupils in the moderate learning unit. Standards of attainment in information technology are in line with the national average. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Cheshire Agreed Syllabus. Standards in art are above those expected of pupils of the same age. Standards in geography, history, music and physical education are in line with those expected of pupils of the same age. Standards in design and technology are below those expected of pupils of the same age.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	n/a	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information Technology	n/a	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	n/a	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	n/a	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Teaching was at least satisfactory in 96 per cent of the lessons seen. In 24 per cent it was very good and in four per cent it was excellent. The quality varied, particularly in Key Stage 2, where there was a small proportion of unsatisfactory and poor lessons. Although most of the teaching is good, the variability between classes means that the overall impact on pupils' progress and attainment, by the end of the key stage is satisfactory.

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. The pupils are always polite and helpful.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is slightly above the national average.
Ethos*	Very good. The school has a strong commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	Good. The school is well led by an effective headteacher supported by a strong deputy and governing body. Together with the staff they share a clear long-term vision for the development of the school.
Curriculum	Satisfactory overall, but lacking in balance and time allocations. The pupils in the moderate learning unit do not have equal access to all subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with moderate educational needs.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for moral and social development is very good. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There are sufficient numbers of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. Arrangements for staff training are good. The accommodation and resources are good.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

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

THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school

- III. The staff are approachable and welcome them into the school.
- IV. Their children enjoy school.
- V. Their children achieve high standards of work.
- VI. The teachers and the site maintenance officer work hard to provide extra-curricular activities.
- VII. Their children get regular homework.

What some parents are not happy about

- VIII. There is too much emphasis on testing.
- IX. Two parents' evenings are not enough.

Inspection findings support all the positive views expressed by the parents. The testing that the school does is a necessary part of assessment. The results of tests are used well to match work accurately to the pupils' needs.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards of attainment further, in all subjects, and to improve the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve the effectiveness of the curriculum by:
 - achieving a better balance in order to meet the school aims more closely;
 - reviewing the lengths of lessons and matching the time allocated to the tasks;
 - increasing the taught time in Key Stage 2;
 - ensuring that the pupils in the special unit receive their full curricular entitlement in all subjects.
(Paragraph Nos. 34. 87)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. This is a larger than average primary school catering for pupils from 4 to 11 years. There are 312 pupils on roll. There is a base for 12 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. This is an area provision and the pupils, who are referred by the local education authority, come from a wider area than the school's usual catchment area. The school does not have a nursery class. Children enter the reception classes and begin full-time attendance in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 44 children under five. Very few children attend nursery classes before they enter the school, but the majority have pre-school experiences in one of the local playgroups.
2. The local area is mixed socially. Most of the pupils live near to the school in privately owned houses. Pupils' attainment on entry covers a wide span of ability but overall, it is average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is in line with the national average. Three per cent of the pupils have statements of special educational need. This is well above the national average.
3. The school's aims are clearly focused on all-round education. They include providing a caring environment and an enriched education which delivers the National Curriculum and is broad, balanced and relevant. The main targets set out in the school development plan are to improve standards in literacy and numeracy.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
for latest reporting year:	1999	25	28	51

3. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	24	25
	Girls	26	26	28
	Total	46	50	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87(66)	94(70)	100(62)
	National	82(80)	86(81)	87(84)

3. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	21	17	23
	Girls	25	24	27
	Total	46	41	50
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84(71)	68(62)	94(74)
	National	82(82)	86(85)	87(86)

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	28	21	49

3. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	15	17	19
	Total	36	40	43
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	73(74)	82(45)	88(58)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

3. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	23	23	23
	Girls	15	19	19
	Total	38	42	42
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	77(50)	85(44)	85(50)
	National	67(65)	69(65)	75(71)

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

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

3. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised Absence	School National comparative data	% 5.5 5.7
	Unauthorised Absence	School National comparative data	0.1 0.5

3.

3. Exclusions

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

3. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	28
	Satisfactory or better	96
	Less than satisfactory	4

3. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

3. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

3. **Attainment and progress**

4. Children enter the reception classes with levels of attainment spanning a wide range. Although the baseline assessment tests indicate that levels of attainment on entry are below those found nationally, inspection evidence is that, overall, the majority have levels of attainment in line with those found nationally. Children under five make satisfactory progress and, by the time they are five, the majority of them achieve the desirable outcomes in all the areas of learning.

5. By the end of Key Stage 1, National Curriculum tests and assessments show that pupils' attainment in reading is in line with the national average and with the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 2 in writing was well above both the national average and the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and writing throughout the key stage. The trend is one of improvement after a period of low attainment.

1. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards in English in line with both the national average and the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The trend is one of steady improvement. Attainment follows the national trend with girls achieving higher than boys. The literacy hour has had a clear impact on the pupils' ability to empathise with characters and to extract information from texts. They write in a good range of styles and organise their writing well, using paragraphs and a good range of punctuation routinely.

2. In mathematics, standards of attainment have improved significantly in the past year. In Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments indicate that all the pupils reached the expected level 2. This is well above the national average and the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. Over one-fifth of pupils reached the higher level 3. This is above the national average and in line with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. This is a significant improvement after a period of low attainment. In 1998, the performance of boys was three months below expectations and the performance of girls was seven months below. The evidence of the inspection is that the present Year 2 pupils are achieving standards in line with the national average.

3. In Key Stage 2, the 1999 National Curriculum test results indicate that overall performance is above the national average and above the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected level 4 and the higher level 5 are both above the national averages and well above the averages achieved by pupils in similar schools. As with Key Stage 1, the trend is one of significant improvement after a period of low attainment. In 1998, the performance of boys was five months below expectations and the performance of girls was nine months below. Inspection evidence is that standards of attainment of the present Year 6 pupils are now in line with the national average. Throughout the school, progress is satisfactory. The majority of pupils develop good mental skills and use these effectively to solve problems. In Year 5, pupils find perimeters by applying a formula, and are able to use decimal notation. In Year 6, some higher attaining pupils are able to simplify equations, and other pupils understand improper fractions and can convert them into mixed number fractions.

4. In science, the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessments indicate that standards of attainment are above the national average. This is a significant improvement on the previous year when attainment was well below both the national average and the average attained in schools with a similar intake. In Key Stage 2, the National Curriculum tests indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 4 was above the national average and in line with the average achieved

by pupils in similar schools. Overall attainment was in line with the national average and with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. This is a very significant improvement following a period of declining standards. In 1998, standards were well below both the national average and the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. Inspection evidence supports the results of the tests and assessments.

5. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of forces. They know, for example, that forces can balance each other and they understand the effects of gravity and friction. They can identify the reproductive organs in plants and many can explain the process of plant fertilisation.
6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information technology and, by the end of both key stages, standards are in line with national expectations. In Key Stage 1, pupils assemble text on screen and edit and redraft their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, they can generate and interrogate databases, adding and amending data. The majority can combine text and graphics well. They use CD ROMs effectively for research and can cut and paste extracted material into their own work.
7. Progress in religious education is satisfactory throughout the school. By the end of both key stages, the majority of pupils achieve standards in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Pupils throughout the school acquire a satisfactory knowledge of the features of the main festivals of Christianity, particularly Christmas and Easter and those of Islam, particularly Eid Ul Fitr. They recognise artefacts associated with different religions and identify them correctly.
8. Pupils make good progress in art and achieve standards above those expected of pupils of the same age. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils produce high quality drawings. They are familiar with the works of a good range of artists, and give opinions on their works.
9. In design and technology, although pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress, overall progress is unsatisfactory and the standards of work achieved, by the age of 11, are below those expected of pupils the same age. Although some good quality work is produced, the pupils make unsatisfactory progress because insufficient time is allocated to the subject.
10. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in geography, history, music and physical education. In all these subjects, they achieve standards in line with those expected of pupils of their age. In geography, they use plasticine to demonstrate different mountain formations and can talk about mountain formation using an appropriate technical vocabulary such as 'fold' and 'crust.' In history, pupils know about ancient civilisations.
11. Although some pupils make good or very good progress in lessons, progress for the majority, over time, is satisfactory because of the variation in the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2.
12. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good support they receive in lessons. Although the attainment of the pupils in the special learning unit is below national expectations, it is in line with their abilities, given their learning difficulties. They make good progress.
13. In both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their literacy, numeracy and information technology skills. They are given good opportunities to develop these skills across the curriculum.

18.

18. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

14. The children in the reception class have settled well into the daily routines of school life and are developing good learning habits. This is particularly commendable as many of them are just over

- four years old and they attend on a full-time basis. Their behaviour is good and they have a good understanding of the school's code of conduct.
15. In both key stages, most pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and have a positive effect on their progress. They show interest in lessons and take pride in their written work. They are keen to learn and the majority are able to sustain concentration over considerable periods. For example, in Key Stage 2, when classes continue all afternoon without a break. Pupils supplement their learning in class by private study and research at home, according to their age and development.
16. Pupils' behaviour is very good and is even better than at the previous inspection. They are courteous and helpful in class and about the school. They handle books and equipment with care and respect. They listen well to their teachers and to each other. Lunchtimes are well-ordered and pleasant social occasions. The pupils are kind to each other and include everyone in their games. The pupils know that bullying is not acceptable and are confident that any incidents will be dealt with effectively. There have not been any exclusions in the past year.
17. Relationships between pupils and between all adults and pupils are very good. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. Pupils work collaboratively in groups, listening well to the views of others and discussing their ideas sensibly. They applaud and celebrate the successes of other pupils. They relate well to staff and feel comfortable taking their problems to them. This was something that the parents at the meeting appreciated.
18. The personal development of pupils is very good and has improved since the previous inspection. Many pupils take on responsibilities in the classroom such as putting out books, taking messages and tidying up. Outside, they tend the gardens and clear litter. They are thoughtful about the consequences of their actions, as demonstrated in a Key Stage 2 class considering the effects of bullying.
19. The Action 2000 Project is extremely commendable. Year 6 pupils apply to join the scheme and those chosen elect their own chairperson, secretary and other officers to take the project forward. They call meetings to discuss what needs to be done in the school, such as furnishing the library. They raise the money to do this, for instance, by writing to local companies for sponsorship and making very good presentations to explain their ideas. For example, these pupils approached a local firm and, after showing the director around and explaining their ideas, received a substantial cheque and free cabling. This project, as well as other initiatives of pupils, makes a significant contribution to the life of the school and to the pupils' personal development. It prepares them well for adult life.

24. **Attendance**

20. The rate of attendance is satisfactory at slightly above the national average. It has improved since the previous inspection. There is very little unauthorised absence or lateness. Registers are marked accurately and in an orderly fashion and lessons start and finish on time.

25. **Quality of education provided**

25.

25. **Teaching**

21. Across the school, 96 per cent of teaching seen in lessons was satisfactory or better. Of this, 56 per cent was good or better, 28 per cent was very good or better and four per cent was excellent. This is a dramatic improvement since the last inspection when only 70 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better. All the key issues relating to teaching have been met. Four per cent of the teaching seen was less than satisfactory and of this, one per cent was poor. Despite the fact that the

teaching is good overall, the inconsistency within year groups means that the impact on pupils' attainment and progress is satisfactory. The good and very good teaching occurred in most subjects. Excellent teaching was seen in religious education, physical education and under fives.

22. The quality of teaching for children under five ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. The lead teacher has an excellent understanding of the learning needs of very young children, and she plans the work very well to enable all the children to achieve their full potential. Learning objectives are identified clearly and assessment is used effectively to match work to the needs of children of differing attainments. An excellent lesson on the senses was seen where the teacher captured the children's interest by playing 'pass the parcel' using their fingertips to guess what was inside. Very good questioning was used well to check the children's understanding of the words 'hard' and 'soft', and to encourage them to think further. Occasionally, there is not enough teacher intervention with the younger children and they wander off task. This means that they do not always make enough progress in the planned activities.
23. The quality of the teaching seen in Key Stage 1 was at least satisfactory, with just over half the lessons seen good or better, and just over a quarter very good or better. One excellent dance lesson was seen. This made such an impact on the pupils that they carried on their work when they went out to play. Two of the teachers are new to this age range. While the quality of the teaching seen was good overall, and pupils made good or very progress in some lessons, the impact on pupils' progress over time is satisfactory.
24. The quality of teaching seen in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of the lessons seen. Just over half were good or better and nearly a third were very good or better. An excellent religious education lesson was seen in the special unit. The teacher used the Christmas story very well to illustrate how times have changed over the past two thousand years.
25. The quality of teaching is very variable. While most of the teaching seen was good or very good, there is a small but significant incidence of unsatisfactory and poor teaching in Key Stage 2. This occurs within three year groups and has a negative impact on pupils' progress over time. In the better lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well to develop pupils' learning. Their enthusiasm catches the pupils' imaginations and makes them want to succeed. Tasks are explained clearly and are matched well to the needs of all pupils. Expectations are high and lessons have good pace so that no time is wasted. Unsatisfactory and poor teaching is characterised by low expectations and work that is not matched to pupils' prior attainments. The pupils are given too much time to complete simple tasks. When this happens, the pupils lack motivation, the pace of work slows and insufficient progress is made.
26. Teachers are beginning to take good account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and some very good teaching was seen in these lessons. However, not all teachers apply the required structure of the lessons and the pupils do not always make enough progress in all the elements.
27. There is a very clear homework policy that is implemented consistently throughout the school. This makes a significant impact on pupils' progress. Parents at the meeting were full of praise for the extra work that their children do in preparation for the end of Key Stage 2 tests.

The curriculum and assessment

28. The quality of the curriculum for children under five is good. It is broad and balanced and based appropriately on the desirable learning outcomes. It covers well all the areas of learning and provides the children with a good foundation for the statutory years of schooling. The quality of the curriculum for both key stages is satisfactory overall. It contains all the National Curriculum subjects and meets their requirements. It also meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus

for religious education. There are good policies on sex education and drugs education and these are implemented well through an effective personal, social and health education course.

29. The balance and structure of the curriculum, in both key stages, are unsatisfactory. The previous inspection noted that the curriculum was broad but not balanced. There has been some improvement but it is still unbalanced. In this respect the curriculum does not meet the school's aims. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies but in an attempt to make these more effective, it has provided extended blocks of time for these subjects. The extra time provided is reducing time available for other subjects yet is not improving significantly the quality of literacy and numeracy. The school is only covering, in this extended time, the same amount of work that is covered in a shorter time by most other schools. Further, the extended periods require long periods of concentration. This places a strain on pupils, particularly the younger ones. The practice of placing two such periods together, so that a whole morning is spent on either literacy or numeracy, makes great demands on pupils, especially those who find one or other of these subjects difficult. The balance is made worse by the fact that the school has less time in class in Key Stage 2 than that recommended for pupils of this age.
30. The school meets satisfactorily its aim for equality of access to the curriculum for the majority of its pupils. It has a good policy on equal opportunities and this is reflected both in subject policies and classroom practice. Boys and girls often work successfully together in pairs to produce their work and such pairs are even prepared to sing to their classmates in Year 6. Sport is well integrated and there is a girl in the school soccer team. A few pupils with special needs are withdrawn for additional literacy from other areas of the curriculum. Where this provision is made from the local authority, such as speech therapy, the school has little choice, although it is conscious of this and is trying to get the times varied to reduce the impact on any particular subject. There are instances, however, where this is the result of internal arrangements. The pupils from the special needs unit are well integrated into the work of the school for many subjects and these pupils take a full part in its life. However, their integration for music and physical education, for example, means that they miss lessons on a regular basis. This means that they do not receive their full curriculum entitlement to all subjects. This is a weakness.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils have individual education plans that identify appropriate areas of development. They could be improved, however, by making some targets more specific and shorter-term, which would make the process of monitoring progress easier. Parents are invited to take part in assessment arrangements. The school places a high priority on pupils with special needs and subject policies all reflect this priority and the work is planned effectively to match their needs.
32. Subject planning is good. This has improved since the last inspection. All subjects have schemes of work and most have adopted the national published schemes. Long-term and medium-term planning is good and this supports good continuity of learning experiences that allow pupils to develop their knowledge and skills progressively. The school's planning operates on a two-year cycle so that pupils in two age groups are focusing on the same work at any time.
33. A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum provision. The sporting activities include, in addition to the normal sports, a gym club and a skipping club. The school takes part in local competitions. Cross-country running is a strong feature of this school and the site manager makes a notable contribution to this. There are after-school clubs such as gardening, art, recorders and first aid. There are frequent visits to local places of interest and annual residential courses for pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6. These are planned at the beginning of the year to maximise the benefits of the improved relationships between staff and pupils. The school makes good use of outside speakers. The local Parents Against Drug Abuse are particularly effective.
34. The previous inspection reported that there was no baseline testing or interim tests to act as benchmarks to measure progress, that there were no central records and that assessment was

insufficiently used, either to evaluate the quality of the curriculum or to set more challenging tasks for higher attaining pupils. The report identified several key issues relating to assessment for the school to address. The school has made significant advances to reach the good practice currently achieved and all the key issues have been met very well.

35. Assessment procedures are good. There are good assessment and marking policies, that are implemented well. Most work is marked extensively with helpful comments indicating where pupils can improve. Baseline assessment is used well when children enter the reception classes. Good assessments are made of the children's attainments in all the areas of learning, and the information is used well to carry their learning forward.
36. In both key stages, regular and effective assessments are made of pupils' progress in the core subjects as they move through the school. Good records are kept centrally and are used as a basis for development. Pupils' work is monitored and moderated by senior managers and subject co-ordinators. These records, together with a teacher's comments and a target for improvement, agreed with each pupil, are passed on to the next teacher when a pupil moves class. Reading records, on the other hand, are minimal and are not used effectively for providing guidance for pupils or as a means of communication with parents. School targets for improvement have been agreed with the local authority and these were exceeded last year. Homework is set regularly and is used very effectively to extend the work done in class.
37. The use of assessment to inform planning is good. Most lessons are planned well with work matched to the varying levels of attainment in the class. Assessments, such as end-of-unit tests, are used to ensure that this planning is effective. The central records are also analysed to identify under-achievement by individuals, classes or any gender differences. These records, together with teacher assessments, are used well to place pupils into sets across the two-year groups in each band in English and mathematics. This setting is effective, and constant monitoring enables pupils to move between sets in order to have work that matches their current attainment. This helps higher attaining pupils to be suitably challenged by the work and to fulfil their potential. Currently the school is making additional provision in mathematics for three pupils working well above the normal level found in a primary school.

42.

42. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

38. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. All elements are enhanced by the residential educational experiences arranged for all pupils on an annual basis. Almost all pupils take part in these experiences which enhance their development.
39. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. The previous report judged that the quality of assemblies was a strength of the school. This standard has been maintained. The acts of collective worship are well planned and meet statutory requirements. They are of a predominantly Christian nature and provide good opportunities for guided reflection and prayer. They also include elements of other world religions and give pupils insight into beliefs and values held by other people. In a class assembly for Year 6 pupils, good opportunities were provided for the pupils to reflect on issues of growing older, of the human life cycle, and of meaning and purpose in life.
40. In lessons, the pupils are encouraged to express their own hopes and fears, and to express their sense of wonder in the world and the events happening around them. For example, the older pupils have good opportunities to reflect on the wonders of nature when they study how the human body works and how flowering plants reproduce. The school has recently arranged for in-service training for staff, and an audit has been produced to identify opportunities to develop spirituality through the subjects of the curriculum, and this has a positive impact on the provision.

41. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The school has a very clear framework of values that are explicit in the aims of the school and are effectively implicit in the daily life of the school. The pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The staff provide very good role models and use praise effectively to recognise and celebrate appropriate behaviour. The 'Good Work Assembly,' to recognise and reward good standards of work and effort, provides a good incentive for the pupils to behave well and work hard. However, during the inspection the impact of this assembly on the pupils' self-esteem was diminished because one teacher led it with only one other adult present. The pupils are given opportunities appropriate to their age, to discuss issues relating to right and wrong, particularly with regard to the choices that need to be made about their behaviour and their relationships with others. In one lesson observed, an incident of minor misbehaviour was discussed fully and this helped to reinforce the pupils' sense of right and wrong.
42. The provision for the pupils' social development is very good. The very good relationships with all the adults in the school, and with each other contribute well to their social development. The teachers value the pupils' ideas and this gains the trust and co-operation of the pupils. From an early age, they are given many opportunities to co-operate with each other and to work in groups. Good opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Taking part in games and competitions helps them to value the discipline of the rules and accept the notion of fair play. The school has very good arrangements to enable pupils to take responsibility appropriate to their age. In a reception class, on their birthday, each child has the responsibility for calling the register and the rest of the children are expected to respond politely, addressing the child by name. The pupils in Year 6 apply for posts of responsibility, and fulfil a wide range of jobs well, such as switching on the computers in the morning, acting as librarians, closing security doors. In addition there is a rota for year 6 pupils to help the pupils in Key Stage 1 at lunchtimes.
43. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils know and celebrate their own cultural traditions and are well aware that other people have different cultures and traditions. The whole life of the school leads pupils to accept and value differences. Good opportunities are provided to listen to and appreciate a wide range of music. In art, they study the work of a good range of artists. They are introduced to a good range of children's literature. The work in school in this aspect is enhanced effectively by visits to museums where the pupils can find out more about their cultural heritage. The pupils gain a good awareness of the richness of cultural diversity through their work in religious education when they study different religions. Visitors to the school make a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development. Recent events have included a demonstration and discussion on Indian dance, visits by an orchestra, and by theatre companies.

48. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

44. The school's provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is very good. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. It continues to be a strength of the school. Pastoral support is very good. All the staff know the pupils well and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence by praise and encouragement and by personal example. The pupils feel happy and secure and enjoy coming to school. This was emphasised by the parents at the meeting and through the questionnaire.
45. Pupils' progress is monitored very well and appropriate targets are set together with teachers, so that pupils know what they are aiming for. The personal development of pupils is encouraged to the full and their capabilities are developed carefully. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs. There are good records of achievement which are used to celebrate pieces of good work done by the pupils. Targets, which are usually general in nature rather than subject specific, are regularly agreed with pupils and recorded in their personal organisers. These,

together with the pupils recording their acquisition of information technology skills, allow pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning.

46. The procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Pupils who behave especially well or who make a special positive effort are recorded in a praise book and these instances are commended in school assemblies. Few pupils need reprimanding, but if unkindness or bullying occurs, the circumstances are discussed with those concerned and resolved promptly.
47. The procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good. The registers are scrutinised each week to identify any concerns, and missing reasons for absence are pursued. The Education Welfare Officer responds to any families who need extra support. The school encourages full attendance and emphasises its value effectively by awarding certificates for excellent attendance.
48. The school has very good policies for child protection and health and safety, and procedures are very good. Teachers know and care for the pupils very well. Together with the teacher governor, the site maintenance officer conducts regular safety audits and risk assessments. Fire practices are held twice each term and are logged. Fire appliances are appropriately certified and the testing of electrical appliances is in order. First aid procedures are very good. The school is kept very clean and any hazards are attended to promptly. The school provides a caring environment in which pupils feel safe and secure and can achieve their full potential.

53. Partnership with parents and the community

49. Parents' involvement with the school is good and has been maintained and developed since the previous inspection. A significant number of parents help in classrooms and on visits. The teachers support and guide these helpers well and appreciate the work they do. They make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting emphasised their strong support for the school. The questionnaire indicated similar views.
50. The school provides good information to parents through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, newsletters and parents' evenings. There are also special meetings to inform parents about literacy and numeracy, and the school operates an open door policy for parents to come into school to speak to teachers. The parents can buy books from the school to support their children's learning and help them to revise for the end of Key Stage 2 tests. Pupils' annual reports to parents are variable. They give specific detail of what pupils can do in most subjects, but do not always specify the standards achieved or set targets for future development. There is a good home-school contract that the parents appreciate and support well. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association, which is appreciated by the school. It obtains sponsorship from local firms and raises valuable funds from events such as the Christmas Fair, as well as organising social events such as bingo and discos.
51. The school has good links with the local community. For example, the local vicar conducts assemblies and the pupils visit the church. The school holds a pensioners' day when pupils provide the entertainment. The curriculum is enhanced by visits from the police, who talk to the pupils about 'stranger danger' and by visits from the local fire service. There are strong links with local secondary schools and pupils have good induction before they transfer at eleven. Although local industries support the school effectively by making donations, opportunities are missed to develop these links to provide curriculum enrichment.

56. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

56. **Leadership and management**

52. The quality of leadership and management is good overall with very good features. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The good support provided for teachers leads to satisfactory progress for the majority of pupils.
53. The quality of educational leadership and direction is good. The headteacher provides a sensitive and caring approach to routine and pastoral matters. He is supported by a hard working deputy and committed teachers. He has a good overview of what the school needs to do to move forward and has created a good management structure that provides good support for teachers. Roles are clearly defined and all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, carry out their responsibilities well.
54. The quality of support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development is good. The senior management team monitor teachers' planning very effectively. There is a good system of monitoring teaching by direct observation in classes. The constructive feedback that teachers receive guides them well in moving forward. The headteacher is well aware of the weaknesses in teaching and has taken the very good decision to move stronger teachers to parallel classes to provide the necessary support. This also provides good professional development for the teachers as they gain the experience of teaching a wider age range. Newly qualified teachers have good opportunities to observe good practice in other classes.
55. The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is good overall. The main aim is to provide a secure learning environment where all the pupils can achieve their full potential. Target setting and regular reviews enable resources to be directed at specific weaknesses, for example, focusing on spelling following analysis of the Key Stage 2 English test results. The success of this is shown by the significant improvement in pupils' spelling. Although the school is successful in meeting most of its aims, the aim to deliver a balanced curriculum is not met. This is a weakness.
56. The management of provision for children under five is very good. The early years co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning very effectively. The lead teacher in the reception class gives very good support to her colleague who is new to this age group. Planning is very good with clearly identified learning objectives based appropriately on the desirable learning outcomes.
57. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school although the written policy does not meet statutory requirements. The school has a good policy for early identification and intervention. The individual education programmes are based on identified needs and inform teaching satisfactorily. Good records are kept of pupils' progress. Parents are involved appropriately and appropriate links are maintained with outside agencies. The management of provision for the pupils in the special learning unit is good. However, they do not receive their full curricular entitlement to all subjects.
58. The effectiveness of the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Good opportunities are provided across the curriculum for the development of these skills. However, not all teachers apply the required structure of the lessons. In addition to this, some of the lessons are too long, and the progress made in the lessons does not justify the time spent.
59. Planning for whole school development is satisfactory but not sufficiently long-term. Although the headteacher and the governing body have appropriate long-term aims to improve further the standards achieved, the school development plan does not go beyond the current year in sufficient detail. For example, although subject policies have been identified for future review, there is no detail about how these subjects will be developed.

60. The governors take their duties seriously and provide good support in the running of the school. Good procedures are in place for them to monitor the progress and impact of initiatives. The governors with responsibilities for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs monitor developments and progress in their areas very effectively. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties well.
61. The quality of the school's ethos is very good. The very good relationships between the pupils and all adults and between the pupils themselves contribute well to creating a secure learning environment. Very good quality care is given to the pupils' pastoral needs. The pupils respond positively to this by working hard. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting said that their children are eager to please their teachers because they recognise how hard they work.
62. The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection. Parents at the meeting expressed this view. Others who could not attend the meeting made a special point of talking to inspectors, during the week, to voice their appreciation of the improvements. While they appreciate the improvements in the appearance of the school, the main point was their pleasure at the raising of standards. Those with older and younger children could compare what the younger ones are doing now with what their older ones were doing five years ago. One parent summed it up by saying that her child in the reception class now is doing what her older child did in Year 3.
63. The school has good capacity for further improvement. There is sufficient expertise within the management structures, good insight into what needs to be done, and a shared sense of determination to succeed in order to bring about further improvement.
68. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
64. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and other classroom staff generally match the demands of the curriculum. Classroom support staff and parent helpers work effectively with teachers to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Some pupils benefit from the teaching of a visiting music teacher. The site maintenance officer and cleaners provide a clean, safe environment for the pupils. Lunchtime arrangements run smoothly with the help of caring supervisors. The school secretary provides good support for the headteacher.
65. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. The school ensures that teachers are trained satisfactorily to cover the subjects for which they are responsible. Induction procedures are good. There is a good system of mentoring for newly qualified teachers and for those new to the school. Appraisal procedures are well established and contribute well to staff development. Staff development is driven appropriately by the needs specified in the school development plan.
66. The accommodation is good overall. In Key Stage 1, classrooms are spacious. There are two large halls, one of which is carpeted. However, the open plan layout in Key Stage 2 sometimes makes the delivery of the curriculum difficult because of the noise from adjacent teaching areas. This makes it difficult for the pupils to concentrate on their own lessons and, sometimes, it impedes progress. The high quality environment, with papered walls and fitted carpets, supports learning well. The pupils enjoy being in school and appreciate their surroundings. As a result they work hard. Outside accommodation is very good. There are good-sized playgrounds as well as a large grassed area that are used well for sports and physical education. In addition to this, there are gardens and wildlife areas that contribute well to the pupils' learning.
67. The learning resources are good overall and have improved since the previous inspection. In most subjects there is a good or very good range of good quality resources. Resources for history, geography and design technology, resources are adequate. The ratio of computers to pupils is, currently, below the national average. The school recognises this and has ordered a further six

computers.

72. **The efficiency of the school**

68. The overall efficiency of the school is good. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection.

69. The quality of financial planning is good. The school development plan contains appropriate forward projections of spending that include spending on training and subject co-ordinators budgets. The school has effective procedures for financial planning. The governing body has a designated committee for finance and personnel who receive regular information about a range of financial issues. There is a knowledgeable chair of the finance committee and the governing body monitors the budget carefully and maintains a clear overview of expenditure. By prudent management the school has found sufficient funds to wallpaper and carpet the school throughout. This has contributed effectively to the ethos of the school. The headteacher and governors fear that there may be a fall in pupil numbers as older pupils in particular transfer to other primary schools to enable them to enter the secondary school of their choice. This will have an effect on levels of attainment and levels of funding. They are taking appropriate steps to deal with the situation.

70. Teaching staff are deployed effectively so that good use is made of their experience and expertise. The school has wisely ensured that there are effective teachers in all key stages to support less experienced colleagues. Particularly good use is made of staff talents to provide a wide range of extra curricular activities. Good use is made of support staff to support pupils. Money for pupils with special educational needs and specific grants to support literacy are spent appropriately.

71. The school makes good use of the accommodation. The recent adaptation of the library in Key Stage 2 have been effective and have opened them up for pupils to use independently. This is an improvement. The school makes good use of its library area in Key Stage 1 as a base for parents who work in the school. The structure of the timetable, with mornings used to teach literacy and numeracy, means that the two school halls are not used efficiently for teaching purposes.

72. Resources are used well overall. The school uses the locality and the loan service from the local education authority to enhance provision and this is effective. The school has benefited from parents and children assiduously collecting tokens from supermarket offers to improve their book stock.

73. Within the school, both financial control and administration are good and the school secretary provides effective support for the headteacher and staff. There are effective administrative procedures to control and monitor income and expenditure. The recommendations of the most recent audit have been implemented appropriately. Daily routines are well established and contribute to the smooth running of the school. For instance monies are quickly and efficiently collected by pupil monitors and processed by a clerical assistant with minimal interruption to classroom life.

74. When the very good attitudes, relationships and behaviour of the pupils, the good teaching, the very good provision for moral and social development, the very good ethos, the average attainment and the satisfactory progress are set against the average attainment on entry and the average costs, the school gives good value for money.

79. **Provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties**

75. The unit has capacity for 12 Key Stage 2 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection 11 pupils were on roll. All the pupils have statements of special educational need and are referred by the local education authority following an assessment of need. No pupils are

disapplied from the National Curriculum and there are no modifications. The unit is an area resource and pupils are transported by taxi from outside the school's normal catchment area. There is one full-time teacher and one full-time classroom assistant.

76. The unit is very well integrated into the life of the school and is regarded as just another class rather than a separate unit by all staff and pupils. The school has a policy of acceptance and integration and is successful in fulfilling the aspirations of the policy. All the pupils have an identified integration class that they join for art, music, physical education and other subjects according to individual need. One is totally integrated into the school, and one other pupil joins her class for the literacy hour. Good use is made of the unit provision for two pupils in the rest of the school for literacy and numeracy hours.
77. The attainment of the pupils is below national expectations, but is in line with their abilities, given their learning difficulties. They make good progress.
78. The pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. They are very keen to learn and to do their best. They are able to sustain their concentration and work well at the tasks set. They respond well to challenge and are confident. They are always willing to volunteer ideas and listen to the ideas of others. They accept failure realistically and sensibly, and celebrate their own successes and those of others. Their behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. They treat the buildings, equipment and people with care and respect. They are always polite.
79. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with that of the rest of the school population. This reflects well on the pupils as the transport provided by the local education authority means that it is not possible for them to be late and still get to school.
80. The quality of teaching is always at least good, sometimes very good, and on one occasion during the inspection, it was excellent. It is well planned and prepared and based on a thorough assessment of the pupils' previous learning. Class and group teaching is effectively enhanced by well-planned individual support by the classroom assistant. Both the adults manage the pupils very well, and the pace and variety of the lessons ensure that pupils are on task and that time is used well. They know their pupils well and have high, and appropriate, expectations. Where excellent teaching was observed, the pupils developed a sense of awe and wonder during a religious education lesson, and were truly excited by their experience. They used their imaginations well, and their response was not limited by their learning difficulties. The good practice of changing classes, by the unit teacher and teachers from the main school raises the esteem of the unit in the eyes of all the pupils in the school and provides additional variety in teaching styles for the pupils in the unit.
81. The pupils have good individual education plans, and the work towards their targets is very well planned and prepared. Very good and comprehensive records are maintained. Formal annual review arrangements meet statutory requirements.
82. The pupils do not have access to a full and balanced curriculum. This is a weakness. The effective delivery of some subjects is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, under the present arrangements. The pupils are taught science, design and technology, history, geography, and information technology as one group. The group includes pupils in Years 3,4,5, and 6 and progression and continuity in learning is not assured. The timetable is unsatisfactory because it is not balanced. It allocates every morning to literacy and numeracy, and includes a whole afternoon equivalent of religious education and another of science. The integration of pupils into their year group classes for art, music and physical education means that they miss parts of the planned curriculum on a regular basis. The pupils in Year 5 miss the only design and technology lesson of the week while they take their swimming lesson, and so do not have access to this subject.
83. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is in line with that of the rest of the

school population, and is very good overall. The pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, behave very well and enjoy very good relationships with all adults and pupils in the school.

84. The leadership of the unit is good overall. The school makes every effort to involve parents in the education of their children. They have been successful in establishing and retaining good relationships, despite the fact that the unit is an area resource and very few of the pupils live within the school's usual catchment area.
85. The headteacher, governors, senior management team and all the staff of the school are fully committed to the principle of fully accepting the pupils on the roll of the unit as members of the school community. They take a justifiable pride in the very successful integration of the unit. The unit is very well led by the teacher responsible, with a very clear and consistent sense of educational direction which is in accord with the school's declared aims and principles.
86. The staffing of the unit does not meet the guidance provided by the DfEE Circular 11/90 that recommends that the pupil to teacher ratio and the pupil to support assistant ratio should be 10 to 1. The current ratio for both the teacher and the classroom assistant is 12 to 1.
87. The accommodation is very good, and provides good opportunities for two members of staff to work with the whole class, groups or individuals at the same time. The space is well designed to enable some areas of the accommodation to be used to provide a high degree of visual stimulation, while in other areas the degree of stimulation can be controlled effectively by staff to provide very good conditions in which successful learning can take place. The location of the accommodation, in a central part of the school, is good. It helps the school in meeting the aim to ensure that the pupils on the roll of the unit are not isolated. A weakness is the open access to another classroom and the distraction of the noise from that room that sometimes inhibits learning. In one lesson observed, when a story was being told to the class, the teacher was forced to leave the room to work in the foyer in order to obtain a quiet atmosphere appropriate to the needs of the teaching and learning task. Resources are good and are used effectively.
- 92.

92. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

92. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

88. Children enter the reception classes and begin full-time schooling in the September following their fourth birthday. The majority have had some pre-school experience at playgroups. At the time of the inspection, there were 44 children under five.

89. The majority of children enter the school with levels of attainment in line with those found nationally. They make satisfactory progress in the reception classes and, by the age of five, the majority achieve above the nationally approved desirable outcomes in personal and social development, and in line with the desirable outcomes in all the other areas of learning.

94.

90. The two reception classes share one room and the teachers work effectively as a team. One of the teachers is new to the reception class this year. The very good planning by the lead teacher ensures that all the children share the same carefully considered learning experiences. Very good use is made of support staff and parents. They are well briefed about the activities and the expected learning outcomes and make a very good contribution to the children's progress.

95. **Personal and social development**

91. The children are prepared well for starting school by the very good induction policy. In addition to the home visits by the reception class teachers, the children have good opportunities to get used to school by attending for a week on a half-time basis. The security that they feel from their very early days aids their development, which is built upon during their first year in school. They build successfully on their social skills by playing and working together, demonstrating increased self-control and a willingness to share. They have positive attitudes to their work and the majority stay on task even when they are not supervised directly. They try hard with their work and are keen to show it to visitors. They relate well to each other and to all adults. They seek help confidently when this is necessary.

92. The quality of teaching in this area is good. The high expectations of good behaviour and the

consistent approach by all the adults to encouraging independence means that the children learn quickly to attend to their own personal needs. Good attention is paid to encouraging the common courtesies of saying 'please' and 'thank you' and the children respond well to this. Very good opportunities are provided for social development from the earliest days in school. Weekly Round Robin assemblies enable the children to see other parts of the school and be taught by other teachers. This has a positive impact on their confidence in meeting people. Their full involvement in plays and assemblies further develops their confidence and raises their self-esteem.

97. **Language and literacy**

93. The children make satisfactory progress and, by the age of five, the majority attain the expected learning outcomes. A small minority attain above this. They develop good skills of listening and, by the time they are five, they listen and respond well to stories. They recognise and name letters of the alphabet and know the sounds they make. They enjoy books and know how they are arranged. They know that words and pictures carry meaning and the higher attaining children can read simple words in the text. The majority can write simple words and some of the higher attaining children can write simple sentences unaided.

94. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. Where it is good, the teacher takes good opportunities, both planned and unplanned, to talk with the children about their work and encourages them to extend their answers when necessary. A well-structured programme of writing encourages the correct formation of letters from an early stage. The provision of a writing corner supports the children well in developing their writing and appreciating that writing is used for a variety of purposes. During the inspection, the children were writing party invitations.

99. **Mathematics**

95. The children make satisfactory progress and, by the time they are five, the majority attain the desirable learning outcomes. A good variety of practical activities develop the children's abilities to count, sort, match and classify according to shape, size and colour. The children are developing a satisfactory understanding of numbers. The majority can count accurately up to 20 objects. They have a good understanding of comparative terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. They know colours and shapes and recognise and make repeating patterns.

96. The quality of teaching varies between satisfactory and good. Where it is good, the teacher has high expectations of the children and makes sure that they complete the learning tasks set. Good use is made of incidental opportunities to reinforce learning. Songs and rhymes are used to good effect to practise counting.

101. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

102. The children make satisfactory progress and, by the time they are five, the majority attain the desirable learning outcomes. They talk meaningfully about their friends and families and events in their lives. They are acquiring a sound understanding of the passage of time through museum visits and by talking about the past with adults. A recent example of this was when parents were involved in 'Toys From The Past', when the children compared their toys with those of their parents. Through local visits, they acquire a satisfactory awareness of the purposes of some of the buildings in the area, such as the church and the shops. They know that adults have babies and that these in turn grow into adults. They recognise and name a wide variety of living things and can group them according to simple criteria, such as the number of legs. They use computer programs confidently to support their learning. They can use a mouse confidently to select icons or use a program to draw letters that are well formed for pupils of this age.

97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with good features. Good opportunities are provided for

first-hand experiences through local walks and visits further afield, such as the visit to Chester Zoo where the children encountered a wide variety of animals. A visit to Delamere Forest to choose the Christmas tree contributes well to the children's understanding of plant growth and provides good opportunities to involve them in practical decision-making in choosing a tree that is not 'too big', 'too small', 'too wide' or 'too expensive'!

103. **Creative development**

98. The children make satisfactory progress and, by the time they are five, the majority attain the desirable learning outcomes. They have good imaginations and bring their experiences into role-play, for example when they take the part of the farmer with the animals. They enjoy dressing up in animal costumes and 'frightening' inspectors. They sing and perform action songs well. In music lessons, they use percussion instruments effectively to enhance their performance. Their drawings and paintings show an appropriate level of maturity.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with good features. There is a good range of activities to promote creative development. For example, they can choose to work in the music corner or the role-play corner. Their choices are guided well to ensure that they experience all the activities. A very good feature of the teaching is the involvement of adults in role-play situations. Where the teaching is less secure, there is not enough teacher intervention and they wander off task. In both classes, good attention is paid to teaching particular skills, such as folding and cutting, that help the children to develop their own ideas.

105.

105. **Physical development**

100. The children make satisfactory progress and, by the time they are five, the majority attain the desirable learning outcomes. Most children demonstrate fine manipulative skills in their control of the mouse and in their use of pencils. They can fold paper accurately as they demonstrated when they made paper fans. When they use crayons and pens to colour, the majority can stay inside the lines. Writing skills are at least satisfactory and, sometimes, good. They have satisfactory spatial awareness and gross motor skills.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The activities are carefully devised to include the use of pencils, paint brushes, scissors, construction kits and computers. Good care is taken to ensure that all the children experience all the activities.

102. Although the school does not have a secure outside play area, the timetable is managed effectively to provide for the use of large play equipment on one morning per week. Although this is not entirely satisfactory for such young children, the lack of opportunity is not having a negative impact on their physical development.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

108. **English**

103. The National Curriculum test results for 1999 indicate that in Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 2 in reading was in line with the national average and with the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The proportion attaining the expected level 2 in writing was well above both the national average and the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The trend is one of improvement after a period of low attainment.

104. In Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with both the national average and the average attained by pupils in similar schools. The trend is one of steady improvement.

105. Inspection findings agree with the latest assessment results in both key stages. Standards in English have improved since the last inspection.
106. By the end of both key stages, standards in listening are good overall. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen effectively to their teachers and to other pupils. They pay attention when they are part of a large audience, for example, in assembly. In Key Stage 2 they pay great attention to their teachers' instructions and explanations. In both key stages, standards in speaking are in line with what might be expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils talk freely about their work, answer questions which adults ask and pose simple questions about the tasks which they are asked to do. They talk confidently about what is good about their work, for example, in 'Good Work' assemblies. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can express opinions confidently about the characters in the books they read, and support those opinions with facts from the text.
107. Standards in reading are in line with what would be expected nationally. Pupils in Year 2 read a satisfactory number of known words and use their developing letter knowledge appropriately to work out unknown words such as 'tank' or 'ditch'. They use appropriate language such as 'title' and 'author' when talking about the book covers. Pupils in Key Stage 2 read a good range of texts, including Shakespeare and Dickens, but are surprisingly unaware of a range of authors. The literacy hour has had a clear impact on pupils' ability to empathise with characters and to extract information from texts.
108. Standards in writing are in line with what would be expected. Pupils write in a good range of styles and for a variety of real purposes, especially at the upper end of the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 write clear instructions of how to draw a face or a house, which could be used with children in the reception class. Higher attaining pupils produce a detailed sequence that the teacher translates into drawings. Pupils in Year 6 write thoughtful poems such as 'I dream of ...' to accompany their art work, and they write letters to local companies and letters of application for their posts as monitors.
109. Standards in handwriting, grammar and punctuation are average overall. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' writing is well spaced and the majority of pupils use capital letters and full stops appropriately. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to write in a joined style. Basic spelling is developing appropriately. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils write in ink in a joined style. An examination of previous work shows that, by the end of the year, pupils use a good range of punctuation, and use paragraphs to organise pieces of writing. At present many pupils have such items as their personal targets for development and this is appropriate, particularly for those pupils who are expected to achieve level 5. Work is routinely well presented throughout the school. The school has correctly identified that pupils' ability to spell is below the national average and has taken appropriate steps to address this. In Key Stage 2 it is mostly unfamiliar words with many syllables, that present the greatest challenge to pupils.
110. Progress is satisfactory overall, although it is variable as pupils move through the school. Throughout the school national data shows that girls performed better than boys over time but no evidence of this was seen during the inspection. The setting of pupils in Key Stage 2 is effective overall, but the progress that they make is clearly related to the quality of teaching that they receive. The best progress is made by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 who are in the top set and this is borne out by the increasing number of level 5s which the school is achieving. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive good quality teaching from the support teacher and the school uses the expertise among the staff to provide an effective 'Reading Recovery' programme after school.
111. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily overall. It has had a clear impact on the texts that pupils now study and the quality and range of writing that they do. The school has a clear plan that covers all the elements of the English curriculum during lessons.

However, timetables show that lessons last for more than the scheduled hour. The use of one hour and twenty-five minutes to teach spelling every Monday morning is inappropriate and does not aid pupils' progress. In a few lessons, for example the lower set Year 5 and 6 lesson on extracting information about dialogue or action, the extra time was used well to enable pupils to make progress as much reinforcement and extra adult support was required to complete this challenging task.

112. Pupils make effective use of their literacy skills to help their work in other areas of the curriculum. Research skills are used well in both geography and history. Work scrutiny and work on display, for example on Macbeth, shows that pupils use information technology to word process pieces of work. This is effective in producing attractive pieces of work that the pupils value.
113. The quality of the pupils' response is good in both key stages. They have at least positive attitudes to literacy. They present their work well and take pride in what they do. They are keen to share what they have achieved. They are interested in the stories that they read and appreciate the humour in them. They show good care for books and displays around the school. They use dictionaries independently in other subjects across the curriculum.
114. The quality of teaching varies from unsatisfactory to very good. Forty-two per cent of the lessons seen were good or better. However, the unsatisfactory teaching and some features of the teaching that was judged to be satisfactory overall, mean that pupils do not always make enough progress. Examples of very good teaching were seen in both key stages. Teaching was most variable in lower Key Stage 2, where it ranged from unsatisfactory to good. The least challenging teaching was seen consistently in the teaching of spelling.
115. The best lessons have a secure link to what pupils have learnt before, tell pupils what they are going to learn in current lessons and make effective links to the following lesson. Where teaching is very good there is at least good subject knowledge, the lesson moves along at a brisk pace and activities challenge pupils. This was seen in Key Stage 2 when pupils produced a detailed sketch map of the village, complete with all the place names from a short piece of text. In Key Stage 1, pupils were challenged to produce an effective set of instructions, for use with younger pupils, on how to draw a house. In good and very good lessons, the final minutes of the lesson are used purposefully to reinforce what the pupils have learnt. Where teaching is unsatisfactory or has unsatisfactory features, the pace is slow and work is not matched to the needs of pupils. Throughout the school, homework is used purposefully to aid pupils' progress.
116. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and works effectively with teachers in Key Stage 2 to obtain an overview of the school. Resources are of good quality and the school has markedly improved the range of its reading materials since the last inspection. Books, including those that pupils have published themselves, are displayed invitingly in bookcases, baskets and troughs around the school. The libraries around the school are attractive places that pupils use regularly. Pupils in Key Stage 1 keep a reading diary and pupils in Key Stage 2 maintain a reading log of books they have read. In both instances, adults indicate when they have heard pupils read. However, there is a lack of detailed reading records, which indicate how well pupils' skills are developing, particularly in the guided reading sessions.

122.

122. **Mathematics**

117. Standards of attainment have improved significantly in the past year. In Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments indicate that all the pupils reached the expected level 2. This is well above the national average and the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. Over one-fifth of pupils reached the higher level 3. This is above the national average and in line with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. It is a significant improvement after a period of low attainment. In 1998, the performance of boys was three months below expectations and the

performance of girls was seven months below.

118. In Key Stage 2, the 1999 National Curriculum test results indicate that overall performance is above the national average and above the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected level 4 and the higher level 5 are both above the national averages and well above the averages achieved by pupils in similar schools. As with Key Stage 1, this is a significant improvement after a period of low attainment. In 1998, the performance of boys was five months below expectations and the performance of girls was nine months below. Inspection evidence is that standards are now in line with the national average by the end of both key stages.
119. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the place value of numbers and can order numbers up to 100. They use apparatus well and use sensible strategies to find answers to problems. They identify and describe two-dimensional shapes, and draw accurately different shapes, using a defined number of squares. They discuss and explain their work and use appropriate mathematical language. They respond appropriately to questions such as, 'Why is a square different from a rectangle?'
120. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop and use their own strategies for solving problems. They have a good understanding of place value and can multiply and divide whole numbers by ten. They have an appropriate understanding of fractions and can convert improper fractions to mixed number fractions. They can calculate the areas and perimeters of simple shapes. They can collect data and draw up a frequency table, and they understand the terms 'mode' and 'median.'
121. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The work is matched well to the pupils' abilities in Key Stage 1, and the setting of pupils in Key Stage 2 ensures that this continues for the older pupils. The teachers know their pupils well, and this, together with good use of assessment and the effective monitoring of test results, makes a positive contribution to the standards achieved. As pupils move through the school, they develop good presentational skills, and use their mathematical knowledge and skills effectively in other subjects, such as producing graphs in their geography and science lessons, and working on a database on computers to produce pie charts.
122. Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to learning and these make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. They are well behaved and listen well to their teachers. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They are always keen to contribute ideas and are prepared to listen to others. There are good relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils. They treat their books and apparatus with care and respect. Most lessons challenge the pupils to improve and they respond with enthusiasm.
123. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It varies from satisfactory to very good. It was good or better in 66 per cent of the lessons seen and in 33 per cent it was very good. The variation in the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, means that the overall impact on pupils' progress is satisfactory rather than good. Teachers plan and prepare the lessons well, and have appropriate subject knowledge. They give clear instructions and explanations of the tasks and what is to be learned. They manage the pupils well and the organisation of the classrooms and the teaching methods are well matched to the subject. Teachers and pupils have very good relationships. The friendly and supportive approach by the teachers creates a good climate for learning.
124. In the good and very good lessons the tasks set were varied and interesting and the lessons moved at a brisk pace. The good use of the teachers' assessment of previous learning meant that the tasks were matched well to the needs of the pupils. In the lessons that were judged to be satisfactory overall, the pace was sometimes too slow and the teaching lacked urgency. In one lesson, the teacher was insufficiently assertive and this led to pupils not paying sufficient attention. Good use

is made of homework, particularly in preparation for the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum assessments and tests.

125. The school has adopted the methodology of the National Numeracy Strategy, and has provided appropriate in-service training for staff. However, the methodology is not applied consistently throughout the school. Some lessons lack an effective introduction and are too long. In some instances this results in a lack of pace and briskness in the lessons, and time is not always used efficiently. There is a very good scheme of work produced by the local education authority, which ensures that there is breadth and balance in the subject and continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The scheme of work, together with the good planning and thorough preparation by teachers makes a positive impact on the standards achieved.
126. The previous report judged that there was insufficient direct teaching, that monitoring, assessment and recording was weak and ineffectual, and included concerns regarding the co-ordination of the subject. The school has addressed these issues successfully. There is now an appropriate balance between direct teaching and group or individual work. The assessment and recording, and the monitoring of the results of assessment, together with good planning is now good and is a strength of the subject.
127. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is supported well by the headteacher and provides clear direction and support. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. The setting of pupils in Key Stage 2 provides a sharper teaching focus and this also has a positive impact on standards. Good use is made of teacher assessment information and test results to place pupils in appropriate sets and to move them should the need arise.
128. The pupils benefit from the school's effective use of additional funding to provide 'Booster Classes' to move pupils from level 3 to level 4, and to move other pupils from level 4 to more advanced work. There is a good supply of good quality resources and these are readily accessible. The effective use of these resources makes a positive contribution to the standards achieved.
134. **Science**
129. In Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum assessments indicate that standards of attainment are above the national average. This is a significant improvement on the previous year when attainment was well below both the national average and the average attained in schools with a similar intake.
130. In Key Stage 2, the 1999 National Curriculum tests indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 4 was above the national average and in line with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. Overall attainment was in line with the national average and with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. This is a very significant improvement following a period of declining standards. In 1998, standards were well below both the national average and the average achieved by pupils in similar schools.
131. Inspection evidence is that standards of attainment of the present Year 2 pupils are in line with those expected nationally of pupils of this age. They have clear ideas about forces and how they produce movement or change the shape of objects. They understand the conditions necessary to support life and can identify and group materials using their properties.
132. Inspection evidence supports the findings of the latest test results in Key Stage 2. Attainment overall, by the end of the key stage, is in line with that expected of eleven year olds nationally, but some are achieving above national expectations. These pupils know that forces can balance each other and understand the effects of gravity. They can identify the reproductive organs in plants, know about pollination and many know the process of plant fertilisation. Aspects such as solubility are explored well experimentally, and they can separate mixtures by filtration. Pupils know the

need for fair tests and some are able to identify the factors involved. Experimental results are clearly tabulated and the pupils can draw and interpret graphs well. They are able to record their results in a database and use the program well to display their results.

133. Progress is satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils in Year 1 can separate natural and manufactured articles, they know about the conditions needed for plant growth and know that light can be split into its component colours. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 can investigate successfully the effects of friction and know that air resistance is a type of friction. They know the need for tests to be fair although they cannot always put this into practice. They know that pulse rate changes with exercise. Pupils in Year 5 understand the terms condensation and evaporation and their place in the water cycle. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the work planned to meet their needs, and make at least satisfactory progress.
134. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They handle equipment carefully and share sensibly. They are interested in the subject and sustain their interest over sometimes prolonged lessons. Many take a pride in their work and presentation improves steadily to be of a good standard by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy their work in science especially the practical work. They are eager to respond to questions and generally work hard.
135. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall although there was one lesson seen that was poor. Of the other lessons seen, half were satisfactory and the other half were at least good. One of those was very good and in this lesson, seen with Year 2 pupils, the teacher used skilful questioning to establish how the force of the wind could be seen. Then, capitalising on the good relationships with the class, the teacher set up a washing line to the delight and amusement of the pupils, who then went on to say how the wind would move the clothes and dry them. The high expectations of the pupils and the brisk pace allowed time for the pupils to use a water bath to explore the force of the 'wind' on toy yachts and the force of water on turbines. In the poor lesson, the classroom management of a practical lesson had not been thought through or planned properly and the learning objectives were not reached, as the pace was too slow. Generally, lessons are well planned, often with work matched to prior attainment. The joint planning and work in teams allows good levels of equipment to be prepared. Most staff have good relationships with the pupils and most lessons are well organised and managed.
136. The scheme of work is based on a national scheme and is planned very well to ensure continuity and progression. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are excellent. The excellent use of optional and end-of-unit tests enables accurate records to be kept. A piece of work from each pupil is annotated and levelled and excellent use is made of this to set specific individual science targets. Work is marked with good comments and guidance on how to improve.
137. Leadership in this subject is excellent. The co-ordinator has clear aims and provides clear direction. Direct monitoring supports teaching very well and teachers' skills are extended by appropriate in-service training. Team planning is effective and very well supported by the co-ordinator. Good use is made of information technology to support the subject and still further uses are being explored. The co-ordinator's main strength is the extensive work done on managing and using the assessment systems to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. There is a good supply of good quality resources and these are used very effectively to support learning.
143. **Information technology**
138. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with that expected nationally of pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 2 can use a 'paint' program confidently to select colour and pencil size and use these and 'flood fill' competently. They can assemble text on the screen well and some extensive drafting and re-drafting of text and some well-laid out poetry was seen during the inspection. They

can save and print their work without help.

139. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with that expected nationally of eleven year olds, but some elements of the subject are not fully developed. Keyboard skills are not as well developed as they should be because the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise. Pupils in Year 6 and in Year 5 can generate and interrogate databases, adding and amending data. They use their collected data well, asking such questions as, 'Do taller people weigh more?' They can control a screen cursor to follow a series of commands but not with the degree of complexity expected of this age. Most pupils are able to combine graphics and text well. They research material competently using CD ROMs and can cut and paste extracted material from the program into their own work. A modelling program is used well to explore possible furniture layouts in rooms.
140. The previous inspection indicated that standards were satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but were less secure in Key Stage 2. It noted that there was insufficient database work in Key Stage 2, and that there should be more demanding work for these pupils using publishing and word-processing packages. There has been an improvement in the standards achieved and in the depth in which elements of the subject have been covered.
141. Progress is satisfactory in both key stages. Year 1 pupils learn to assemble text directly onto a screen. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 can use a database to find information competently. They can control a screen turtle, using a simple series of commands. They produce good quality pictures using tools such as 'spray can'. These pupils use font styles to good effect and can assemble text into a newspaper layout. Digital cameras are used well to support their work in history. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good and the machines are used extensively to support learning in the unit.
142. The response of pupils to their work is good. They share access to the computers fairly and help each other to complete tasks. They sustain their interest well and enjoy their time on the machines. They use the machines with care, and behaviour is good. They can be relied upon to practise their skills without any direct supervision. In lessons, pupils are attentive and respond well to questions. Many take a great pride in the finished appearance of their work.
143. The curriculum is organised appropriately into lessons where new skills are taught and time is allowed in other subjects for pupils to apply and practise these skills. The direct teaching seen during the inspection was always at least good and occasionally very good. All the staff observed had good levels of competence and confidence in using the programs and gave clear instructions on their use. All the lessons had clear learning objectives, were conducted at a good pace and the time was used very effectively.
144. The school has recently adopted the national scheme of work and this has been implemented well. There is a good policy and a good range of software supports the scheme. Procedures for assessment are good. Good quality records are passed to subsequent teachers as the pupils move up the school. The information gained from assessments is used well to plan further work.
145. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is a specialist with clear ideas for the subject's development and is beginning to incorporate the new communication aspects into the work. She provides good support for her colleagues both in the planning and in providing individual training when necessary. Assessment is monitored well and pupils are involved in recording their own acquisition of skills.
146. The quality of machines is good but their quantity is limited and below the national average. The number of computers is limiting the time that each pupil can spend on the machines and this is showing in the limited keyboard skills seen in the inspection. The school is aware of this and has

additional machines on order.

152.

152. Religious education

147. By the end of both key stages, standards of attainment are in line with the expectations of the Cheshire Agreed Syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress. The pupils in the special unit make good progress.
148. In Key Stage 1, the pupils have sound knowledge of a good range of Old and New Testament stories. They have a very good understanding of Christian symbols, such as the cross and the candle. They know the importance and significance of the symbols and explain, for example, the difference between a cross and a crucifix. They know why a crucifix is so called and they know that Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. They understand that the Christening ceremony is a special event and that other religions have similar ceremonies.
149. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their knowledge of Christianity and compare Christian beliefs and traditions with those of other faiths such as Judaism and Islam. They are very well informed about other faiths. They understand, for example, the importance of prayer in Islam and the role of the Prayer Mat.
150. The pupils have good attitudes to learning. They listen well in class and the vast majority work hard. They particularly enjoy finding out about other faiths and beliefs and show great respect for the followers of those faiths when they are using the artefacts. They enjoy using the CD ROM to explore other world religions.
151. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to excellent. Three of the five lessons seen were good or better. In the best lessons, the teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Their lively approach captures the pupils' interest at the beginning of the lessons and they sustain this interest well by presenting challenging work at a brisk pace. In one of the lessons that was judged to be satisfactory overall, the work did not challenge the higher attaining pupils and they did not make enough progress.
152. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of the pupils well. It presents an imaginative approach to the subject that is meaningful to the pupils. For example, work is recorded in a good variety of ways, such as in art when the pupils reproduce Muslim patterns and calligraphy. Good contributions are made to language and literacy through the use of extended writing, debate and drama. Good use is made of information technology research skills in using the CD ROM.
153. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. It provides them with good opportunities to reflect on what they learn and to express their own beliefs. It makes a good contribution to their moral development in so far as the codes of conduct associated with religious beliefs provide a basis for thinking about moral issues, such as respecting other people' beliefs and treating all people equally. The pupils are also made aware of the richness of cultural diversity.
154. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has very good subject knowledge that she uses well to support colleagues. Pupils' work is monitored effectively either by the senior management team or individual teams. There is a good supply of good quality resources and these are used well to support learning. A good feature is the use of artefacts in effective displays. These contribute well to the pupils' learning.

Other subjects or courses

160. **Art**

155. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. They achieve standards above those expected of pupils of the same age. The standard of their work improves presentation in many other subjects, for example, in the presentation of booklets relating to their residential trips to Conway and Fairbourne. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
156. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work in the style of Gustav Klimt. They produce careful work in black ink. Some pupils make attractive collages in black, red and gold using a good variety of materials. With adult support, pupils in Year 2 learn how to mix red and white powder paint together to produce shades of red. They 'take a line for a walk' and fill in the spaces using crayon pencils in complementary tones. They achieve attractive results.
157. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are skilled in producing quick sketches of a jointed wooden figure in a variety of poses. These pupils produce good quality work based on Chagall's 'The Dream' with carefully blended pastels to produce a hazy dreamy background. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 identify the main primary colours they see in the pictures of Georgia O'Keefe. They state whether shapes are curved or sharp, definite or soft. They give opinions about pictures. Many pupils successfully produce a good range of tones from their colour mixing work. Other pupils draw the shapes of a lily seen through a viewing frame, shading their work in chalk and charcoal. The majority of pupils achieve high standards in this work. A few pupils talk confidently about the ballerinas, in the style of Degas, which they constructed from twisted wire. Pupils' work based on Briget Riley's drawings show that pupils improve their ability to draw in black ink to produce intricate patterns.
158. The pupils' response is at least good and often better. They behave well and concentrate on what they are doing. They persevere with their work and develop it over several sessions. They show initiative in how they develop their pictures and co-operate well to share resources. Pupils in Year 2 took great care with their work and enjoyed the reward of using water to turn pencil crayon into watercolours. Throughout the school pupils' pride in their work is evident.
159. Evidence from the quality of the work on display and lessons seen indicates that teaching is good and sometimes better. Many teachers have at least good subject knowledge. In the best lessons seen the work was very well prepared, was challenging and proceeded at a good pace. The advice which teachers give to pupils clearly improves what they can do.
160. Sketchbooks are used purposefully so that the pupils develop essential skills. The policy of pupils producing a self-portrait for their portfolio on an annual basis produces good evidence of progression in skills from basic pencil drawings to detailed portraits in pastels in Year 6. Resources are good and are easily accessible. The quality of the display around the school adds very considerably to pupils' knowledge of the work of artists from many other cultures and to the ethos of the school.

166.

166. **Design and technology**

161. The organisation of the timetable meant that it was not possible to observe much teaching directly during the inspection and too few lessons were seen to be able to draw any conclusions about the overall quality of the teaching in the school. Only a very limited amount of past work was available. Progress has been judged, mainly from photographs of past work and from discussions with pupils.
162. Progress overall is unsatisfactory. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, this

is not maintained in Key Stage 2 and the pupils do not achieve the standards of work expected for pupils of 11 years old. The time available for the subject is insufficient and this has a detrimental effect on progress. This is in line with the findings of the last report. Year 1 pupils show good skills generally in using scissors and glue and in using needles and threads. In Year 2, they make model playground equipment using straws and card and show a good understanding of triangulation in the way the frames are supported.

163. Some examples of good work were seen in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 design and make five-minute timers using plastic bottles mounted into a frame of their own design. The designs show a good range of solutions and the frames are made satisfactorily. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make electrical powered buggies driven either by a series of pulleys or by propellers. These are tested and evaluated and pupils are then able to modify their designs to improve performance. Information technology is used appropriately when pupils use a modelling program to explore and design the furniture layout of rooms. While these projects are good and enable pupils to develop skills in designing for a purpose, other projects do not provide sufficient challenge or are too prescribed to allow such skill development. Design skills are not developed sufficiently and pupils are not gathering their own evidence or generating a variety of solutions for a problem. Making skills are better than designing skills, but the pupils are not producing step-by-step plans, although they are listing the materials used. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils in both key stages.
164. The response to the subject is good. Year 6 pupils discussed, with enthusiasm what they had done, and said how much they had enjoyed making buggies. Several members of their class had purchased car bodies to fit onto their chassis to improve the finished appearance of their work. Pupils handle and share equipment and tools sensibly and safely. They co-operate well when working in groups and sustain an interest in their work. Although the quality of teaching that was seen was satisfactory, a secure judgement cannot be made. In the lessons seen, the teachers supported the pupils well and encouraged them to improve their work. The overall impact of teaching on pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.
165. The school has recently adopted the national scheme of work but it has yet to be fully implemented. The co-ordinator has had specialist training and is well qualified to help her colleagues institute the new scheme. The time allocated to the subject, which alternates with art, is below average. The subject is well equipped with tools but is deficient in kits that can be used for projects involving mechanisms. The co-ordinator is aware of this and plans to purchase these in the near future.
- 171.
171. **Geography**
166. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards of work in line with what would be expected of pupils of the same age. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
167. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 name successfully the principal buildings in the village, for example, the post office, community centre and the church. When given photographs to examine, one group of pupils confidently gave reasons why bags of rubbish around the station were undesirable. The majority of pupils write simple sentences about what they observe and some provide sketches of their photographs. Pupils take 'Barnaby Bear' home for the weekend and write a diary about areas they have visited and this contributes well to their knowledge and understanding of the locality.
168. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make effective use of their skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology to aid their work in geography. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 consider local environmental problems. They colour a map of the school to identify where there is a litter problem, draw up a tally chart and write a statement about the problem. Scrutiny of previous

work shows that older pupils examine land use in and around Elton. They design a web page for use in interviewing the people of Elton. In studying the contrasting area of Fairborne, pupils in Year 6 use their research skills effectively to find information about mountains. They use plasticine to demonstrate different mountain formations and can talk about mountain formation, using appropriate technical vocabulary such as 'fold' and they are clear about the differences between 'dome', 'plate' and 'folded' formations.

169. Pupils' response is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They behave well during lessons. Younger pupils collaborate effectively in groups. They enjoy looking at the photographs and are eager to point out their likes and dislikes. Older pupils take care in presenting their work. This care is evident in the booklets they have made about their residential trips to Conway and Fairbourne, illustrated, for example, by watercolours of the mountains they visited. Pupils share information and help each other to find extra information without fuss.
170. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and it is now good overall. This has raised standards. In the best lessons, effective questioning establishes what pupils know, understand and can do, and the closing minutes of the session are used purposefully to reinforce the main messages of the lesson. Teachers use their time effectively to talk to pupils about their work and this takes learning forward. Pace is variable. In the best lesson for older pupils, the quick pace of the lesson allowed much to be achieved in one session.
171. There is a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has had a clear impact on raising standards. Geography has a high profile around the school in displays and baskets of pupils' work. There are maps, atlases and globes in and around classrooms and consequently teachers use these resources to support other areas, for example to find Burma in an assembly on Buddha. This is effective in improving pupils' wider knowledge. The school makes good use of residential trips to reinforce geographical knowledge, for example a walk in the mountains before the current topic.
177. **History**
172. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The standard of work is in line with what would be expected of pupils of the same age. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
173. In a Year 2 lesson observed, the pupils named successfully a range of toys from the past. They were clear about the materials that 'old toys' were made from and commented on the fact that children in photographs were playing in the street. Some pupils had written about their favourite toys and their parents had also written about their favourite toys when they were children. This is effective in developing a sense of change over time in the pupils.
174. Pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class extracted information successfully from a range of sources, for example, books, encyclopaedias and CD ROMs. They used this information well to complete a booklet about Henry VIII and his wives. They found information about the fates of the wives, their appearances and the numbers of children they produced. The booklets are well presented. Pupils in a parallel class are less clear about Henry's wives. Pupils in a Year 5 and 6 class complete a worksheet that defines such terms as BC (Before Christ) and the millennium. They begin to place significant events on a timeline that stretches from BC to the present time. The pupils have completed their own personal timelines and a few have constructed timelines that go back a hundred years. Pupils in Year 6 discuss simple facts about the Indus Valley civilisation and how the people belonged to a trading nation.
175. Pupils' response is satisfactory overall but better than this when the teaching is good. The vast majority of pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Pupils in Year 2 clearly remember their lessons about toys and are keen to talk about what they remember. Most pupils concentrate on

their tasks and persevere to find the information to answer questions. Where the lessons are dull, the pupils find it difficult to stay on task and are distracted and do not pay attention by the end of the lesson.

176. Teaching is satisfactory overall with an occasional good lesson seen. Where teaching is good there is good subject knowledge, an interesting task is provided and there is a good pace to the lesson. Where teaching has unsatisfactory features there is a lack of urgency about pupils completing the task. Homework is used effectively with pupils often being required to carry out their own research and to interview their families and neighbours.

177. The school's own resources are just adequate but are supplemented well by loans of books and artefacts to support topics being studied. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Educational visits to such places as the Liverpool Museum and the visits to the school of actors in historical costume are used satisfactorily to give pupils a sense of times past.

183. **Music**

178. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards in line with those expected of pupils of the same age. The introduction of a commercial scheme of work that supports teachers well means that pupils now enjoy a wider curriculum than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' singing skills are good throughout the school. Although there was a tendency to shout when singing in hymn practice, they demonstrated in lessons, in both key stages, that they can control their voices and sing in tune. The Year 1 and 2 class gave a very good performance of singing a two-part harmony. A Year 5 and 6 group learnt a new song and responded well to the changes in key. Pupils playing skills are in line with those expected of pupils of the same age. In the Year 5 and 6 group, the pupils played percussion instruments with sensitivity when composing their work based on the main features of their village. For example, the group building a sound picture of the shops used instruments very effectively to portray the sounds of the door opening, footsteps and the cash register.

179. Some pupils benefit from peripatetic instrumental teaching, for example on violin, clarinet and keyboard. This experience contributes well to their progress. The expertise they gain is shared well in lessons with other members of the class. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to listen to and appreciate a wide range of music. Their listening skills are satisfactory. In one lesson they were able to identify accurately the instruments being played. The good practice of displaying information about the composer whose music is being played during assemblies contributes well to the pupils' learning.

180. The quality of pupils' response is good overall and, sometimes, very good. They enjoy singing and making music. They concentrate well when singing and try very hard to keep in tune. When they are given the opportunity, they collaborate very well in groups. Although one unsatisfactory lesson was seen, the quality of the teaching seen was satisfactory overall and, sometimes, very good. In the very good lesson seen, the teacher had very good subject knowledge and very high expectations. She adopted a lively approach and presented an interesting challenge that made the pupils want to work hard and perform well. In other lessons, the pace was pedestrian and the content did little to excite the pupils.

181. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Good opportunities are provided to perform for audiences, both in school and in the local community. There is a very good supply of good quality resources and these are used well.

187. **Physical education**

182. Throughout the school, pupils attain standards in line with those expected of pupils of the same age. In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to control their movements by varying the speed and type of movement such as marching, rolling and flopping. They are able to join their movements together, and pause between and at the end of a sequence. In Key Stage 2, pupils are able to make simple judgements about their performance and that of others, and to suggest improvements. They can control a ball with their feet while moving at walking pace. Pupils in Year 6 were observed during a dance lesson. They responded very well to the music and worked hard on their dance interpretations. They controlled their movements very well.
183. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils made excellent progress in joining three or four movements together, and continued the activity on the playground at break time, entirely spontaneously. In Key Stage 2, most pupils made satisfactory progress in controlling, passing and receiving a ball. However, the activities were not differentiated and the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged by the tasks set. Pupils in Year 6 make good progress in their ability to improve the quality of their movement, and maintain their concentration.
184. All the pupils have very positive attitudes to physical education. In informal discussions, in the playground and at lunchtime, they are keen to talk about their lessons and their involvement in extra-curricular activities. The pupils in Key Stage 1 pay close attention to their teacher and try hard. They respond well to instructions, and co-operate very well with each other and use their initiative to develop their own work, not copying the movements of others. In Key Stage 2, pupils use their initiative well in collecting apparatus safely and quickly. They are keen to be involved. Both boys and girls become fully engaged in their dance performance and work together well. However, when the tasks set are insufficiently challenging they do not always pay attention to their tasks, or listen to their teacher during instructions. Behaviour while travelling to the swimming baths, and while at the pool, was very good.
185. The teaching of the lesson observed in Key Stage 1 was excellent. The planning and management of the pupils was very good. The lesson included good warm-up and cooling-down activities. There was very good use of demonstration by the teacher and by pupils, with high expectations and effective use of praise. In Key Stage 2, the teaching varied from satisfactory to very good. The satisfactory teaching included good planning and preparation, with effective use of equipment, but the lessons lacked appropriate pace and challenge. In these lessons the expectations of the teachers were not sufficiently communicated to the pupils, and the instructions were not clear, and on some occasions, were not enforced. Where this was the case the teacher was not sufficiently assertive.
186. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, organised at lunchtime and after school. These include games and dance clubs for pupils in Key Stage 1, and cross-country running, soccer, rugby, rounders, cricket, and netball clubs for pupils in Key Stage 2. Both boys and girls take part in all activities. Pupils from the school take part in a good range of competitive sport with other schools.

192.

Swimming

1. The school swimming timetable meant that swimming was observed with the current Year 5 pupils. Further information was provided by the headteacher. Ninety per cent of the current Year 6 pupils are likely to meet the end of key stage requirements. Most pupils in Year 5 are able to swim, and, by the end of the key stage, 90 per cent of this group are likely to reach at least the required standard. The few non-swimmers are confident in the water. The pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress. In the swimming lesson observed, all pupils made very good progress in learning how to swim, how to develop their swimming, and in their knowledge of water safety. The non-swimmers benefit from the caring and supportive approach of their teacher. By the end of the lesson observed, two of them managed to swim a few strokes. For the majority, their lessons with

the school are their first introduction to swimming. The teaching of swimming is very good. The work of the swimming instructor is integrated well with the work of teachers from the school. The lesson observed was well planned, and conducted at a brisk pace, with an appropriate variety of purposeful activities that were explained clearly. Good regard was paid to safety and hygiene. The school has adopted a rolling programme of swimming lessons with different year groups attending each year. This means, for example, that even though some of the present Year 6 pupils have not reached the required standard, they will not have any more swimming lessons. This is a weakness. However, the school enjoys a very good partnership with the parents. The parents are informed when their children have not met the required standard and advised that their children will not be able to take part in the water sports offered at the residential camp. The majority respond positively to this. They appreciate the work that the school does and understand the safety implications. Accurate assessments are made of pupils' attainments and good records are kept. The information is used effectively to group pupils for lessons and to ensure that only those pupils who are competent swimmers take part in water sports. Pupils who do not reach the required standard in school swimming lessons are tested before the residential camp. The school recognises that an earlier introduction to swimming would benefit all the pupils. Planning for the future, when funding permits, includes two terms of swimming in each key stage.

193. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

193. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

1. Five inspectors, including a lay inspector, completed a total of 20 inspector days in school over a period of four days. The inspectors spent a total of 67 hours observing classes at work, talking with pupils and scrutinising the work of a sample range of pupils across the school.
2. While in the school, the inspectors:
 - formally inspected 78 lessons or parts of lessons
 - heard 34 pupils read formally, and many others informally
 - talked to pupils, particularly those in Year 2 and Year 6, about aspects of their work and their views of the school
 - examined a range of work from a representative sample of pupils from each age group, together with their records
 - analysed a wide range of school documentation, including teachers' planning
 - examined attendance registers and the school's discipline records
 - held interviews with the headteacher, some governors, subject co-ordinators, members of staff, and discussions with a wide variety of people involved in the school informally, including parents
1. Nineteen parents attended the meeting that was held prior to the inspection. Ninety-seven completed the questionnaires about the school. The issues raised at the meeting and in the questionnaires were addressed fully during the inspection.

196. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

196. **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
196. YR – Y6	312	12	43	27

196. **TEACHERS AND CLASSES**

196. **Qualified teachers (YR- Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	13.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23.5

196. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	97.5

Average class size:	26
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196. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/1999
	£
Total Income	547,127
Total Expenditure	558,660
Expenditure per pupil	1,703
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,714
Balance carried forward to next year	27,181

196. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 312
 Number of questionnaires returned: 97

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	62	35	1	1	1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	61	34	1	4	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	30	51	15	0	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	29	52	10	8	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	48	9	9	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	45	46	7	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	37	56	4	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	45	42	5	4	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	54	33	11	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	51	40	6	3	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	55	37	3	4	0

* Three parents did not reply to Q3
 One did not reply to Q7
 Two did not reply to Q8
 One did not reply to Q11

Other issues raised by parents

- .Some parents would appreciate guidance on helping their children with their homework.
- .Some parents would welcome another parents' evening mid-way through the year.
- .Some parents feel that there is too much emphasis on testing.