

INSPECTION REPORT

Stapeley Broad Lane CE Primary School
Nantwich

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique Reference Number: 111269

Headteacher: Mrs P A Williamson

Reporting inspector: Mr J A Ayerst

Dates of inspection: 29th November – 2nd December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707071

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

Type of control: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Broad Lane
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Wilkinson

Date of previous inspection: 10th – 13th July 1995

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Ayerst, Registered Inspector	Geography, information and communications technology, art, music.	Attainment and progress; teaching; leadership and management; staffing; the efficiency of the school.
Brian Silvester, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities.	Attendance; support, guidance and pupils' welfare; partnership with parents and the community.
Pat Wootten	English, design and technology, history.	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; accommodation and learning resources; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
John Messer	Mathematics, science, under 5s, history, physical education, special educational needs	Curriculum and assessment.

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good, particularly for the under-fives and in Key Stage 1, and there are some examples of excellent teaching.
- The attitudes of pupils to learning and the relationships in the school are very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Standards in English at Key Stage 2, and in mathematics and science at Key Stage 1, are good.
- Pupils and teachers have a strong commitment to high standards.
- Attendance is well above the national average.

Where the school has weaknesses

Brighter pupils do not make satisfactory progress in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2.
 There is insufficient emphasis on investigative science and on the practical application of mathematical skills.
 Assessment is not used consistently to inform teachers' lesson planning and lesson plans do not always identify the skills and understanding that are to be developed by pupils or groups of pupils in the class.
 Specific targets for learning are not clearly identified or shared with pupils or parents.

The many strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses, but the weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Most of the issues raised in the last inspection have been successfully dealt with and the school has made satisfactory improvement. Since the last inspection schemes of work have been developed for each subject and the school is in the process of developing its assessment procedures. At present, however, assessments do not inform teachers' planning with precision and the matching of work more closely to pupils' differing abilities is not yet consistent, particularly for the more able pupils. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained and the accommodation of the school has improved considerably.

The school progress so far indicates a capacity to make satisfactory progress in its further improvement and to meet the realistic targets set.

Standards in subjects

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

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

The differences between comparisons with all schools and those with similar schools in mathematics and science are because, while the numbers achieving the national average are high, few pupils achieve the higher grades. It should be remembered, however, that the numbers of pupils taking the tests are very small and that results are likely to vary widely from year to year. For example, in the previous year the performance of pupils at Key Stage 2 was above the national average in comparison with all schools and in line with the average for similar schools in all three subjects.

The evidence of lessons seen during the inspection and pupils' work indicates that in the present Year 2 and Year 6 standards of attainment are above the national expectations for end of both key stages for English and mathematics, and for science at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards for science at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with expectations. Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology is above expectation for the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with expectations for the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is good in history and religious education at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in art at Key Stage 2. Standards and progress in other subjects are generally satisfactory, but there is insufficient evidence to judge progress in design and technology and in geography at Key Stage 2.

Quality of teaching

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

Teaching is good or very good in 53 per cent of lessons and satisfactory or better in 93 per cent. Seven per cent of lessons are unsatisfactory. The good and very good teaching occurs mostly in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and in the Reception class. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurs at Key Stage 2.

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	Consistently very good in lessons and around the school.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.
Ethos*	Pupils have a very strong work ethic. They are anxious to succeed and have high expectations of themselves.
Leadership and management	The leadership and management of the school are good.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and provision is satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but it is not used consistently, and in sufficient detail, to plan for progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Opportunities to explore other cultures and to raise awareness of our multicultural society are limited.
Special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory and pupils make good progress in reception and Key Stage 1 and sound progress in Key Stage 2.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Sufficient staff, resources and accommodation, which is mostly used well.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards are considered high across the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents consider that pupils are too

curriculum. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships are very good. • Very good behaviour. 	rly in the younger classes.
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The inspectors agree that standards are high in some subjects, but would point out that potentially higher attainers do not do consistently well in all subjects. Relationships and behaviour are very good. At times, there is considerable pressure on pupils to achieve well, not all generated by the school. For most of the time this is appropriate, but inspectors consider that pupils' aspirations for improvement need to be better targeted.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To raise further the standards of work and the good quality of provision apparent in many aspects of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

Disseminate the good teaching practice evident in the school to ensure consistency of quality across all classes, particularly in the use of assessment to:

identify the knowledge and skills to be learnt by individuals or groups of pupils
 inform teachers' lesson planning
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 26 and 31)

Fully implement arrangements to use assessment data to:

set individual learning targets for all pupils with clearly specified aims and time spans
 share targets with pupils and their parents
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 31 and 39)

Raise expectations and improve progress in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, by increasing the emphasis on teaching:

the practical application of mathematical skills across the curriculum
 investigation and experimental science
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraphs 10, 12, 100, 101 and 109)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

Monitor more systematically the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and the recording of their achievements.
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraph 39)

Increase opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities and to use initiative.
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraph 19)

Seek to improve pupils' progress in art at Key Stage 2.
(This weakness is mainly discussed in paragraph 120)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

Stapeley Broad Lane CE Primary School is a small, but growing school serving the parish of Wybunbury and the surrounding area. Most pupils come from the catchment area, but a few come from further afield. In the school's natural catchment area the socio-economic spread is very favourable. Only 1.1 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. While the gender mix varies from year to year there are almost equal numbers overall in the school. There are no pupils for whom English is a second language. All pupils have pre-school experience when they come to the school and many have begun to read and write.

The headteacher has been at the school for five years and was in post for the last inspection. In that time there has been an increase in numbers from 99 to 180. There are six classes with a year group to each class to Year 3, and two year groups to each class for Years 4, 5 and 6. Children start at the school in the September before they are five. There is one intake of under-fives each year. At present, there are twenty-nine pupils in the reception class. Average class sizes are 30; the two largest classes, in Years 5 and 6, have 32 on roll. Most teachers have been at the school for some time and are well established, but some have been recently appointed to meet the increase in numbers.

The school's assessments of pupils on entry indicate that attainment on entry is above average. There are three pupils on Stages 2 and 3 of the special needs register and none on Stages 4 and 5.

The school expresses its aims in the school prospectus. The school's ethos is 'built on Christian values'. Among a number of aims the school strives to:

- instil values of self-motivation and respect for others;
- encourage children to develop a social consciousness within a caring, disciplined environment in which traditional values of courtesy and consideration are stressed;
- develop lively, enquiring minds;
- help children to acquire knowledge, skills and practical abilities for now and the future;
- encourage and expect children to achieve their full potential;
- involve parents in the learning process;
- expect children to appreciate achievement in the arts and the sciences; and
- place emphasis on the development of numerate and literate children.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	17	11	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	25	24	25
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (87)	86 (87)	89 (96)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	25	25	25
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (87)	89 (96)	89 (91)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	6	4	5
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	11	9	10
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	100 (89)	82 (78)	91 (89)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	6	6	5
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	11	11	10
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (89)	91 (89)
	National	68 (65)	(65)	(72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days
(sessions) missed
through absence
for the latest complete
reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	3.6
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.0
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils
(of statutory school age) during
the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	11
Satisfactory or better	93
Less than satisfactory	7

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

In the 1999 national tests for the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils reaching the national standard, of Level 2 or higher, was above the national average in reading and in line with the average in writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was average in reading, but below average in writing and mathematics. At Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or higher, was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The numbers achieving higher grades was above average in English, but below average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, pupils' performance was well above average in English, but well below in mathematics and science. The numbers of pupils taking the tests are, however, very small and results are likely to vary widely from year to year. Over the last three years, pupils' performance overall has been well above the national average at the end of both key stages. While there are differences in boys and girls achievements from year to year, they balance out and are broadly similar over time.

From the evidence of lessons seen and from their work, pupils' attainment is above the national expectations for end of both key stages for English and mathematics, and for science at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards for science at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with expectations. Since the previous inspection standards have remained high in English and have improved in mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology is above expectation for the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with expectations for the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is good in history and religious education at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in art at Key Stage 2. Standards and progress in other subjects are satisfactory, but there is insufficient evidence to judge progress in design and technology and in geography at Key Stage 2.

In general, children's attainments on entry to the reception class are above average. They make good progress and, by the time they are five, the majority of children reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds in the six areas of learning specified in national guidance, most exceed expectations in language and literacy. The reception class provides a good foundation for work across the curriculum at the start of Key Stage 1.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in English at Key Stage 1 and mostly good progress at Key Stage 2. During Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening, becoming increasingly confident and articulate. In Year 2, pupils express their ideas clearly and use a good range of vocabulary. In Key Stage 2, they speak with maturity on a range of subjects. Most pupils, at both key stages, listen attentively. Pupils in Key Stage 1, make sound progress in reading. They become increasingly fluent and confident and develop strategies to interpret unfamiliar words. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and by the end of the key stage they read a wide range of texts with confidence. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing overall in Key Stage 1. In Year 1, progress is good in spelling and sentence structure, but handwriting and punctuation are not always well developed. Most pupils write with confidence and for a range of purposes. In Key Stage 2, most pupils make good progress in writing. The best work shows an extensive vocabulary, which is used effectively to create vivid images in the mind of the reader.

Standards of literacy are generally good and facilitate learning across the school. The literacy hour is firmly established and makes a positive contribution to the progress and attainment of all pupils.

In mathematics, pupils make good progress during both key stages in all areas of the subject, other than using and applying mathematics, where progress is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, pupils build confidence in mathematical calculation. They begin to count in twos and tens, create number patterns and double and halve numbers. Mental mathematics is practised daily. During Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop mathematical skills, such as the calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They learn how the value of a digit changes according to its place in a number and how fractions, decimal fractions and percentages relate to one another. The speed of mental calculation improves and pupils develop their own strategies to solve problems. Pupils understand the properties

of two-dimensional shapes. They draw simple conclusions when interpreting graphs and pie charts, but their ability in this area lacks depth. Pupils' ability to estimate, to handle data and to use mathematical skills in practical situations is less well developed.

The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully. Particular emphasis has been placed on the development of mental mathematics. Initiatives introduced through in-service training and monitoring have improved teaching of the subject. This has had a positive impact on attainment and progress and pupils' numeracy skills provide good support for their learning across the school.

Pupils make consistently good progress in Key Stage 1, in all elements of science. By the time they are seven, pupils know the difference between a vertebrate and an invertebrate. They understand that push and pull are both examples of a force, and that applying a force can change some objects. They experiment and find out about the properties of materials. Progress in Key Stage 2 is more erratic, but overall it is satisfactory. Pupils know about the main constituent parts of plants and about the bones in the human skeleton. They have a developing knowledge of how their bodies work. They know about the solar system and the phases of the moon. Their knowledge is developing satisfactorily, but their understanding of how to select appropriate equipment to set up experiments to test their hypotheses are less secure. This key skill, the investigative aspect of the subject, which underpins the others, is under-developed.

Standards of attainment in information and communications technology are above national expectations for the end of both key stages in word processing and data handling. Control technology is in line with expectations for the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations for the end of Key Stage 2. Since the arrival of new computers the school has not been able to set up the necessary resources for control technology at Key Stage 2. The equipment is on order and is expected to be in place shortly. Overall, progress is good for pupils under five and at Key Stage 1, and satisfactory at Key Stage 2.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the reception class and in Key Stage 1 and sound progress in Key Stage 2. Progress for these pupils is not as consistent in Key stage 2 as it is in Key Stage 1 because tasks for the older pupils are not always adjusted sufficiently to meet their particular learning needs. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards which are appropriate in the context of their prior levels of attainment and, by the end of each key stage, most attain standards which are close to national expectations of seven and eleven year olds.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

The previous inspection reported the school as an orderly safe and caring community. Mention was made of the positive effect of good behaviour on pupils' learning and that pupils are self-confident and courteous. These statements also reflect the current situation.

Pupils of all ages show very good, positive attitudes towards learning. They are very conscious of the need to work hard and improve their attainment. Most pupils listen intently and are very keen to answer questions and demonstrate their attainment. A very good example of this was seen in the Year 1 literacy class, when pupils were spelling weather words. Almost without exception pupils settle quickly to their tasks, concentrate well and work industriously. In many lessons pupils are excited by their work, there is much animated discussion and learning is fun. Most pupils give thoughtful reflective answers during discussions. A good example of this was seen in a religious education lesson in Year 3, when pupils were discussing the season of Advent.

1. Pupils' behaviour is very good, both inside and outside the classroom. This contributes to an orderly learning environment and provides a good foundation for personal development. Pupils are very polite and welcoming to visitors. They fully understand and respond well to the school's high expectations of behaviour and effort. Classroom rules are understood and there is very little need to remind pupils to keep to them, although there is occasional restlessness among a few of the oldest pupils. Pupils move around the building very quietly and sensibly. They respect property and share equipment sensibly. Pupils play happily together in the playground and are aware of other people's space. Bullying is very rare and none was seen during the time of the inspection. There were no exclusions in the previous year.
2. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils get on well with each other and with the staff. The

staff set a good example in their relationships with each other. Boys and girls work and play well together and conflict is rare. They support each other in lessons and offer support when appropriate. Older pupils are sensitive to the needs of the younger pupils and several examples were seen of help being given. Pupils show respect for the teachers and other adults and there is a high degree of mutual regard.

3. Pupils respond well to the opportunities for personal development. They listen well to each other and respect other people's viewpoints. They develop an increasing understanding of other beliefs. They are able to articulate their feelings and concerns including the pressure to achieve, which they feel in Year 6. They have a very good understanding of being 'masters of their own destinies'. Pupils are very keen to help and undertake their duties sensibly. Few opportunities, however, are provided for older pupils to use their initiative, undertake additional responsibilities or contribute to the life of the school or wider community. When such opportunities are given however, pupils respond very positively. They take their roles as monitors for such things as, library and computers, very seriously. The elected representative for road safety and recycling are proud of their roles and conscious of the fact that they represent the school in this county initiative.
4. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to succeed and work hard to complete the tasks which they are set. They are well behaved and form good relationships with adults and other pupils. There is no obvious distinction in class between those pupils who need extra learning support and those who do not; pupils are rarely withdrawn from the class for support as their needs are met successfully in the classroom. Pupils possess an appropriate degree of self-assurance and most are confident in their ability to succeed.

Attendance

Pupils enjoy coming to the school and this is reflected in the very good attendance figures, which make a positive contribution to the pupils' attainment and level of progress. In 1997/98 the level of attendance was 96.4 per cent, which is well above the national average. There were no unauthorised absences. In 1998/99 the attendance continued to be very good and almost two per cent higher than the level at the time of the last inspection in 1995. A prompt start is made to lessons and the school day. The punctuality of the pupils is very good, with many pupils arriving early and settling to work before registration.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

The quality of teaching is mostly good. In 93 per cent of lessons seen, the teaching was satisfactory or better, and it was very good or excellent in 11 per cent. Seven per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. In general, the quality of teaching is higher in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes, where 81 per cent of lessons are good, very good or excellent. Teaching at Key Stage 1 has improved since the last inspection, but standards have fallen at Key Stage 2. In the current inspection 33 per cent of lessons at Key Stage 2 are good or very good, compared with 80 per cent on the previous occasion. Standards of teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology are generally higher than in other subjects. Teaching of children under five is mostly good and occasionally very good or excellent.

The very good and excellent lessons are rigorous and challenging, and teachers have very high expectations of pupils. In an excellent mathematics lesson for the under-fives, for example, assessments from the previous lesson were used to identify clearly the learning aims for different pupils in the class. Strategies were chosen to challenge pupils and promote good progress, but at the same time learning was fun. The lesson moved at a brisk pace and pupils enjoyed the practical activities.

In good lessons, tasks are matched to pupils' attainments and the lessons move at a good pace. A good variety of strategies are used, which match the content of the lessons and the presentation of material is imaginative and engaging. In a good English lesson, for example, the teacher set clear expectations of the pupils at the beginning of the lesson by describing the learning to be covered and then, at the end of the lesson, reviewed its success. Assessment was used well as the lesson progressed.

In all lessons, relationships are good and teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. Staff are caring and considerate of their pupils and value their contributions. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of most subjects; this is particularly evident in English, mathematics and science. The quality of the homework, in terms of extending the pupils' learning and improving their progress, is mostly good. The quality of marking is satisfactory.

Lessons that are satisfactory usually lack the rigour of good lessons and this is more apparent at Key Stage 2. Often, the content of the lesson is planned but the learning aims, in terms of the skills and concepts to be developed, are not identified. Where they are identified they are not always well focused on different levels of attainment in the class. In these lessons, assessment is used less effectively. Consequently, higher attainers are not sufficiently extended and their progress is constrained. In the very few unsatisfactory or poor lessons, planning is poor and the lesson content does not sufficiently promote progress. As a result, in poor lessons, pupils become restless. In some unsatisfactory lessons, teachers lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject.

In general, the structure of the literacy hour leads to well balanced lessons and teachers use the time effectively. The lessons have good structure, pace and balance. A similar, but more recently introduced strategy, is improving the teaching of numeracy, particularly in mental calculation.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2. It is good where pupils are provided with tasks that enable them to experience success. This occurs where activities take account of the full range of ability in each class and adjustments are made to match tasks to pupils' varying stages of development. Here tasks for lower attaining pupils are adapted to meet their needs and they are enabled to make good progress. There are occasions, mostly in Key Stage 2, where lessons do not take enough account of pupils who need extra learning support. In these situations, pupils with special educational needs struggle to meet the teacher's requirements and frequently fail to produce as much work as the other pupils. When this happens time is not used to best effect and the progress that pupils make is constrained. In their short-term lesson plans, teachers rarely describe how tasks will be designed specifically to meet the learning requirements of pupils with special educational needs. The plans indicate how tasks will be matched to the needs of different groups within the class, but not how the pupils with specific needs will be taught. Pupils beyond Stage 1 of the nationally agreed Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans, which include long-term, usually termly, targets for such pupils. These targets are broad and are not always broken down into short-term daily or weekly targets. Information about what skills pupils have mastered are not recorded clearly and precisely. It is difficult, on these occasions, for teachers to know precisely what needs to be taught next. This lack of precision slows the progress that these pupils should make.

The curriculum and assessment

Within the context of national requirements for increased focus on literacy and numeracy, the school makes good provision for its pupils through a broad, well-balanced curriculum. Provision for all subjects meets statutory requirements, except for a minor issue concerning swimming at Key Stage 2. The time devoted to teaching music is below average and there is an under-emphasis on the practical application of mathematical skills and the investigative aspects of science. Religious education is taught according to diocesan guidelines and the Cheshire Agreed Syllabus, and was the subject of a separate inspection reported elsewhere. The act of collective worship meets statutory requirements. In response to the last inspection, policies are now in place for all subjects of the curriculum including personal and social education, sex education and drugs awareness. Schemes of work are developing from national guidance and schemes developed by the local education authority. The quality of the schemes of work varies. The schemes for English and mathematics, based on the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy, are good and appropriate time is provided. Some schemes of work, notably that for science, are broad outlines of the topics to be taught in each year group, but they are underpinned by good national guidance combined with schemes provided by the local education authority. Other schemes, such as those for history, design technology, art and music, define the broad areas of learning that will be covered each year, but do not describe how the progression of skills, knowledge and understanding will be taught. Most schemes of work are implemented effectively.

Teachers ensure that the tasks they set are broadly matched to the differing needs of pupils, so that all have

equal access and any withdrawal for extra support, which is infrequent, or for individual music lessons, does not threaten their entitlement to the full curriculum. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs meets their needs through adequate individual education plans and appropriate grouping within class, where tasks are adapted to the needs of the group. In addition to the statutory curriculum, time is provided for French and for aspects of personal and social education. French is taught regularly to those pupils who wish to learn the language and this enriches pupils' learning opportunities. Personal and social education is not taught regularly according to a specific programme that promotes skills successively, but is taught as and when teachers feel that the time is appropriate. A good range of instrumental music tuition, including brass and woodwind, extends provision for those pupils who want to learn to play. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits to museums, such as the local salt museum, and places of interest connected with the topics studied, such as the River Weaver. Pupils also have many opportunities to attend a variety of after-school clubs, including music, sports and drama that are well supported. Homework is set regularly in English and mathematics, which provides a valuable extension to the curriculum.

Assessment procedures are good for the under-fives and satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the reception class, good baseline assessments provide detailed information about children's achievements on entry to the school. Children's progress and attainment are carefully monitored and evaluated. Good records are kept and the teacher in the reception class is adept at using the information gained to plan the next steps in learning. There is a considerable amount of assessment in core subjects. Pupils take interim non-statutory National Curriculum tests and reading is tested regularly. Pupil profiles are developed, which give a great deal of information about pupils' attainments. In mathematics, a clear system for tracking pupils' progress is used, which involves specific descriptions of skills to be taught and highlighting these descriptions to indicate skills mastered. In science, several teachers maintain a detailed commentary of each pupil's attainment and progress. This builds into a useful profile to inform reports to parents, but it is not easily accessible in terms of readily determining which skills have been mastered and which have not. In English, although much assessment is carried out, recording and analysis are insufficiently rigorous to provide data for use in future planning. At the end of each week, for example, lesson plans for English are reviewed and notes are made on pupils' performance, but the information gained is not used systematically in all classes to create subsequent learning objectives. Assessment data is not used in any subject to define precise short-term targets for the next stages in learning. Assessment procedures in the non-core subjects of the National Curriculum are not sufficiently developed to inform teachers' planning. Information from statutory tests and assessments are used well to gauge the school's overall performance and to set broad targets at school level to demonstrate improved performance.

The practice for assessment, recording and reporting for pupils with special educational needs is sound. Each child's progress is reviewed each month and, if sufficient progress has not been made, consideration is given to further action. Satisfactory individual education plans are written for these pupils, but the targets, which are included in the plan, are broad, long-term targets. These broad targets are not broken down into specific short-term learning targets so that progress towards achieving the main target is assured. No pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the range of extra-curricular programme offered by the school.

Overall the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing issues concerned with the curriculum and assessment, which were raised in the last inspection.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

As reported in the last inspection, the school continues to place high value on the spiritual and moral development of its pupils. Overall provision for pupils', spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound although provision for moral development is good. Collective worship complies with statutory requirements and provides a good opportunity for the school to come together as a community and promote its values.

Teachers make satisfactory plans for spiritual development in religious education. Good opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to question and relate to their own experiences. For example, in the lessons about Advent and Noah's Ark. Spiritual development is also seen in subjects such as science, during work on magnetism, and in history, when pupils expressed awe at the fact that a piece of

Roman road could be more than two thousand years old. However, opportunities are mostly incidental and not planned for effectively. Pupils experience stillness at the start of collective worship but there is insufficient emphasis or time for focused reflection, or opportunities for pupils to share their thoughts.

5. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. The school has very high expectations of behaviour and effort and pupils have a very clear understanding about right and wrong. They know what is expected of them. Rewards such as house points are effective and sanctions are clearly understood. Pupils are expected to move around the building quietly, behave well at all times and work hard in lessons. The school operates as a very calm ordered community, which is conducive to learning. Team games in lessons and in competition against other schools provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about fair play and the need for rules. Participation in county initiatives, such as the recycling initiative, provides good opportunities for pupils to be involved in moral issues.
6. Provision made for the social development of pupils is sound with some good features. The adults set a good example in their relationships with each other and with the pupils, and this is reflected in very good pupil relationships. Adults value each child; they know them well and provide good support and encouragement. Good opportunities are provided for the oldest pupils to live and work together on residential visits, and sound opportunities are given for pupils to work together in lessons such as literacy and art. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and belongings from an early age, and there are some opportunities for pupils to undertake further responsibilities, such as acting as monitors for the computers and library. A few older pupils act as school representatives on county recycling and road safety committees, and a representative group of pupils has contributed ideas to the development of the Millennium Environmental Area. Some pupils have the opportunity to act as House Captains. However, there are insufficient planned opportunities for all the older pupils to undertake increasing responsibility, contribute to the life of the school or use their initiative.
7. Provision for pupils to learn about their own culture is sound with some good features. The curriculum in art and music provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the work of famous artists and composers. Music used during collective worship provides further enrichment. Pupils take part in choral concerts and visit a local home for the elderly to entertain them with carols. The school has close links with Wybunbury church and the pupils visit the church to take part in the major Christian festivals. They contribute money to the 'Jar of Grace' charity giving, organised by the church. Visits to places of interest, such as museums and the Roman remains in Chester not only enrich the curriculum, but also provide good opportunities for pupils to understand their own cultural heritage. The study of the origins of language in literacy and the study of classical literature, such as Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' all provide further enrichment. Occasional visitors, such as a recent visit by a Ghanaian lady and the study of other world faiths in religious education, make a good contribution. However, opportunities for pupils to learn about the beliefs and traditions of other cultures are limited. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about non-western art and music, and the contribution made by other cultures to science, technology and mathematics.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The school gives good support and guidance to its pupils. Class teachers use a range of internal and external tests to assess pupils' academic progress. The personal development of the pupils is monitored by the class teachers and is referred to briefly in the pupils' annual reports, but monitoring of pupils' personal development is not sufficiently detailed or consistent. Overall, the school's procedures for monitoring progress and personal development are satisfactory, but the results of monitoring are not used to set specific individual targets that are shared with pupils or parents.

The identification of pupils with special educational needs takes place soon after entry to the school and support is provided rapidly according to pupils' requirements. This usually takes the form of amending teaching programmes and lesson plans. Support procedures are flexible and pupils are entered on the register of pupils with special educational needs and removed from it according to the progress they make. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in monitoring their own performance or keeping track of their progress towards targets.

The school has an appropriate behaviour policy. It is based on the principles of assertive discipline and contains a suitable range of rewards and sanctions. Each class has its own set of class rules, which the pupils

helped to formulate. Parents are very happy with the standard of behaviour in the school. The school has a good policy and strategy for dealing with bullying. Incidents of physical bullying are rare, but when they do occur, they are dealt with speedily and in accordance with the policy. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are good, and have a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

Teachers, the school secretary and the headteacher monitor attendance, in accordance with the attendance policy. Parents are contacted if there are any concerns, usually on the same day. Registers are marked regularly and properly. The school emphasises the need for good attendance and punctuality. Term time holidays are discouraged. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good.

The school has a good child protection policy. The headteacher is responsible for its implementation and has received the required training. All members of staff are informed of the procedures to adopt if they have any concerns.

There is an appropriate health and safety policy. Annual risk assessments are completed and a written record is kept. Fire drills are held termly and equipment is checked annually. There are two qualified first-aiders and all accidents are recorded. The health and safety issues identified at the last inspection have, as far as the school is able, been addressed, but the main road past the school still gives cause for concern. Some additional signs have been erected on the road outside the school, but this busy, fast road remains a health and safety concern. Parents have formed an action group to try and get speed reductions. Road safety is taught in the school and two Year 6 pupils act as road safety officers.

Visiting specialists to the school include the nurse, doctor and dentist. Healthy eating is encouraged at lunchtime by the operation of the 'traffic light' system of green for 'healthy' food and red for 'unhealthy' food. The school's procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well being, health and safety are good.

Partnership with parents and the community

The school's partnership with parents and the community is sound. The information provided to parents is satisfactory. Regular, good quality informative newsletters are sent out to parents. There are termly opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Information evenings on curricular matters, such as literacy and numeracy, are held for the parents. The pupils' annual reports give information on all the required subjects studied by the pupils. Some of the comments, though, relate more to what the class has done and not what the individual child can do, or needs to do, to improve.

All the required statutory information is supplied to parents and they are informed at the beginning of each year of the schemes of work for each class. Parental involvement in their child's work and the life of the school are good.

From the earliest point of identification, parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and are welcomed into the school to meet staff and to discuss their children's progress and development. Parents are invited to attend the school's reviews of their child's progress and good avenues of communication have been established.

8. The Friends of the School are very supportive and hold a number of fund raising and social events. The funds raised are used to enhance the school. Recently new staging and a sound system have been bought.

9. The use of homework is good. The school has recently implemented a detailed homework policy which mainly consists of reading and numeracy work, with some research and preparation work for the older pupils. The reading or homework diary is used as a form of communication between the home and school. Parents have a high expectation of their children and parental support for their child's work at home is generally good. Parents are invited to special events, such as productions, assemblies, Nativity plays and sports days. Parental help in school is encouraged and up to ten parents help on a regular basis, with a variety of tasks. Parental work in class is planned and guidelines are given.

10. The school's links with its community enrich the school's work and make a satisfactory contribution to

the pupils' personal, social, spiritual, sporting and artistic development. There are good links with the local church. The vicar serves on the governing body and takes an assembly every week. The pupils visit the church twice a year for services. Pupils sing for old age pensioners at Christmas and collect money at Harvest Festival time for charity. The local Women's Institute has adopted a scheme to improve the school grounds as their Millennium project. The pupils have been involved in the design of the scheme.

11. The school plays football and netball against other local teams and the Crewe Alexandra Football Club gives training in basic skills. Local commerce assists with the school's fundraising, sponsors sports kit and donates services. Pupils do visit a local supermarket but, other than this, links with local commerce are not well developed.
12. The last inspection report in 1995 stated that the school had a 'supportive parental body and positive links with parents, the parish and the community'. This is still the case.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

As reported in the last inspection the quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides good leadership, which is determined and resolute. With the support of governors, she sets a strong, positive ethos. Before decisions are made all aspects of the school are carefully considered and there is wide consultation. The headteacher sees herself as a leader of a team and staff clearly feel themselves to be part of that team. The school works positively towards its stated aims and has achieved many of them. Management frameworks are all in place. Schemes of work, policies and professional codes are good.

The governing body is effective and very supportive of the school. Some governors visit the school regularly. The governors are mindful of their responsibilities and are serious about their role. They have specific responsibilities and undergo some training.

The aims, values and policies of the school are reflected through its work; for example, in pupils' very positive attitudes and their very good behaviour. Relationships in the school are good and there is a strong sense of working towards high standards, with which pupils also identify. Curriculum co-ordination is of mostly good quality. Subject policies, schemes of work and long and medium-term planning are mostly of satisfactory, and sometimes good, quality. The co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, the headteacher monitors teaching regularly. Assessment outcomes are monitored, but the school does not keep a record of added value. Exam results are carefully analysed; targets are set for the school and fed into the school's development plan. School targets, which are realistic and achievable, are set and agreed with the local authority.

The special educational needs policy fully complies with the national Code of Practice and this area of the school's work is managed well. The school sets targets only for pupils with special educational needs and these are not sufficiently detailed. Overall, however, the school makes good provision for children with special educational needs who are under five years old and sound provision for such pupils in both Key Stages 1 and 2. There is a co-ordinator and a governor with a particular responsibility for special educational needs. The governor meets teachers at least once a month to review pupil's progress and to consider what further action is required.

The school development plan is an effective, comprehensive and well constructed document. It is a useful tool for taking the school forward over the long and medium-term. Each area of the school is reviewed and discussed. Targets are set and strategies for development laid out. Timings, costs, responsibilities and success criteria are identified. In the previous inspection Stapeley was judged to be 'a good school with a number of outstanding qualities'. Most of the issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, but there is still room for improvement in the standards achieved by higher attainers in Key Stage 2. The targets set for school improvement are realistic and the school has the capability to make satisfactory progress towards those targets.

The day-to-day administration of the school is effective. The school is organised and orderly and pupils are safe

and secure. Relationships with all adults in the school are good and contribute to the purposeful working environment. Statutory requirements in terms of policies and reports are met.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The school has sufficient qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the school's curriculum. The pupil teaching ratio is broadly average for a school of this size. There is only one support assistant, who is appropriately employed, mostly for reception children. The hours provided for support are broadly average, but there is no support for pupils with special educational needs, because there are none with statements. All staff make a good contribution to the extra-curricular life of the school.

Arrangements for the induction of new, and newly qualified staff are good. Colleagues provide mentoring support and the headteacher monitors their teaching, so that the support can be properly focused. Opportunities for staff development are good and the arrangements reflect the requirements of teachers and the school's priorities for development. There is no formal system for appraisal, but there are informal arrangements. Teachers have recently undertaken training in the National Literacy and Numeracy programmes and this is having a positive effect on raising the quality of provision. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provision is well qualified and experienced and maintains a good oversight of the school's provision.

The school's accommodation has been improved considerably since the last inspection although many of the weaknesses identified, such as lack of space for small group work or quiet study, still remain. The recent completion of a new kitchen has completed the refurbishment of the main building. The school has adequate accommodation to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively, but there are no suitable rooms in the school should pupils need to withdraw from class for extra learning support. There is a good sized hall, hard playing areas, which are large enough to allow pupils of all ages to play safely, and a good sized level field attached to the school. There is access for wheelchairs to each area of the school.

The need for one class to be accommodated in a single temporary classroom makes key stage co-operation difficult and creates problems with movement of resources such as the music trolley. Similar problems with resources are experienced by the classes in the other two temporary classrooms. Very good use has been made of all available space in the main building and well thought out, carefully mounted displays of pupils' work in classrooms and in the public areas create a stimulating and welcoming learning environment. The space available for the library is very restricted and this affects its usefulness. There are plans to create an environmental study area in part of the school grounds. This is a millennium project funded by the local women's institute. Pupils have been involved in the planning of the area.

13. There are sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum effectively. There is a good range of resources available for literacy, including a range of guided reading books and big books, as well as a good range of dictionaries and fiction books to support pupils' learning. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. There is a sound range of reading material and associated learning materials are readily available. Resources are well maintained and accessible, although storage is a problem. Equipment for art, music and design and technology is stored in the hall, which creates problems with accessibility. The school is part of the National Grid for Learning and there is a computer in every classroom.

The efficiency of the school

At the time of the last inspection the school was bringing its finances into order and was judged to be giving good value for money. Standards of financial management and the quality of financial planning are now good. The school development plan sets out effectively the financial plans and priorities for the next two years. The governors' finance sub-committee prepares and monitors the budget and reports to the full governing body. The governors are well briefed by the headteacher.

The school pays for external account keeping from the local authority. This is effective, but there is sometimes a time lag, which leaves the school without accurate information. For example, the budgetary information for the inspection needed revision to correct inaccuracies. At present, the school is making appropriate use of its healthy reserves. The schools' income is higher than average. Much of this is due to substantial contributions from parents, which enhance curricular provision. Overall, the monies are efficiently used and the level of provision is good

On the whole, teaching staff and classroom assistants are used well and efficiently; they are well managed and mostly deployed according to need and expertise. There is, however, a lack of classroom assistance in most classrooms because the one assistant is mostly, and appropriately, deployed in the Reception class. There are no special educational needs support assistants, but appropriate use is made of all allocations to support pupils with special educational needs.

An area of concern about teacher deployment is the decision to use less experienced teachers in key areas. Effective use is made of learning resources and mostly good use is made of the school's accommodation, but the timetable is constructed in such a way as to constrain the use of the hall for music, which affects progress in that subject.

The quality of financial control and school administration is good. The finance officer and the headteacher oversee all matters of finance and governors have ready access to all information. The most recent independent audit made a few minor recommendations, which were quickly and effectively addressed. The day-to-day school administration is efficient.

Taking into account the income provided for the school, the attainment of pupils on entry, their overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, the satisfactory progress they make and the good quality of the education provided, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Prior to starting school all children have experienced some form of pre-school education in local nurseries or play groups. Attainment on entry is well above that normally expected of four-year-olds in early reading and language skills. Achievement in mathematics, logic and social skills, is above expectations. At the time of the inspection, twenty of the twenty-eight children in the reception class were still four years old. Provision has been extended since the last inspection, when children did not enter the school until the term in which they became five years old. They now come to school at the beginning of the academic year in which they reach the age of five.

Personal and social development

Children make good progress in personal and social skills and by the time they are five the majority of children reach the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds in this area of their learning and a substantial minority exceed national expectations.

Children listen attentively and take turns in discussions. They persevere at their tasks and behave very well, co-operating with each other in, for example, outdoor play. The children form good relationships and interact well with each other and with adults. By the time they are five children attend well to their own personal needs, such as dressing and undressing for physical education.

The teaching of personal and social development is good. The teacher has high expectations of children's behaviour and promotes personal and social development through setting challenges for the day, such as entering the room quietly or not disturbing others while they are working. Routines for the personal and social development of children are well established in each activity and they effectively support the children's sense of security and growing confidence.

Language and literacy

The provision for language and literacy is good and children at all stages of development make very good progress in this area. By the age of five, children exceed the nationally agreed desirable learning outcome for five-year-olds and a few are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. By the age of five they listen well and several can speak fluently and articulately, using a wide vocabulary. Most have a well developed sense of humour, which is encouraged effectively by the teacher.

By five years of age, the children recognise their own name, the letters of the alphabet, their associated sounds and some words. Children enjoy books, understand how books are organised and they can discuss them well. Their knowledge of children's authors is exceptional. They sound out individual letters and read some words. Children play-write at length and they use 'writing' in a variety of role-play situations, for example, as doctors writing prescriptions, or receptionists making appointments. Some children write their name using upper and lowercase letters.

The teaching of language and literacy is very good. It is lively and imaginative and every opportunity to develop language is used well. The teacher has good subject knowledge and asks challenging questions to extend children's understanding and selective questions to bring in those who are more reluctant to contribute. The teacher makes very good use of her individual assessments and plans carefully to meet the literacy needs of every child. Management of adult support is less effective, however.

Mathematics

Children under five make good progress in mathematics. By the time they are five the majority of children reach the nationally agreed desirable outcome for five-year-olds and a few are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Development of early mathematics takes place through a balanced

programme, which covers the areas of number, shape, space and pattern. Children develop mathematical skills through a range of practical activities. They enjoy number challenges and ask appropriate questions using the terms 'more than' and 'less than' to guess the number, which the teacher has selected. Children are increasingly confident in their use of number and mathematical language and count up to 100 in tens and up to 20 in twos with confidence.

The teaching of mathematics is good. The teacher plans well, with precise objectives, and uses whole-class and group work to meet the needs of individual children, so that all are challenged. There is very good organisation to ensure the involvement of all children and very good pace and variety to keep children's attention.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is extended daily. Through a range of experiences they make good progress and most achieve the desirable outcome by the time they are five, in this aspect of their learning. The class hospital gives children a good understanding of how X-ray machines can take pictures of bones and how the stethoscope is used to examine the heart and lungs. They have a good sense of chronology and have painted large pictures of human stages of development from babyhood to old age. Children have access to sand, water, dough, paint, role-play activities and construction toys on a regular basis and staff frequently draw attention to environmental features such as the weather. Children use the computer regularly and use a variety of programs, find letters on the keyboard and perform operations confidently, such as clicking on a file with the mouse. They are currently building up a good class database indicating gender, colour of eyes and hair, favourite foods and favourite colours.

The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is good. It is lively and imaginative and high expectations are maintained. The lessons are well planned and interesting, with clear learning objectives. Good use is made of the classroom assistant to support learning in this area.

Physical development

Children make good progress in their physical development and by the time they are five the majority of children reach the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds in this area of learning. Many children are well co-ordinated and agile. They move confidently with control and co-ordination, and are aware of the space of others. They have physical education lessons in the school hall and access to an outside play area. A well chosen variety of materials and equipment is available daily.

The teaching of physical development is very good. The teacher has high expectations of children's physical control and also of their behaviour in these sessions. She has a relaxed but authoritative manner and she interacts with children to encourage, to give safety reminders and to make the most of language opportunities. Activities are well organised and the coloured small apparatus is used expertly to group children. They do not always listen carefully to instructions, however, and when all the others had changed their beanbags for balls one child was still using his bean bag. All the others bounced their balls and caught them but his would not bounce however hard he threw it to the ground. Not all pupils have well developed reasoning skills.

Creative development

Children make good progress in their creative development and by the time they are five the majority of children reach the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds in this area of learning. They use different materials to create pictures and models and have made a big bold classroom alphabet wall frieze using black felt-tipped pens and colour washes. A large class alphabet book in the same style complements this. This purposeful use of their creativity means that the results of their work can be used productively in other areas of learning. The children use a variety of percussion instruments to make music. They sing songs and rhymes, and they listen and dance to a variety of music. Children often express their ideas through role-play; during the inspection this was

through role-play in the class hospital.

The teaching of creative development is very good. Lessons are well planned and the curriculum is wide. Children are offered a good deal of support and encouragement to express their ideas and to extend their language skills as they work.

The leadership and management of the under-fives curriculum is good. The reception class offers a secure environment and the curriculum is well planned to cover all areas of learning and to meet the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs. The resources and accommodation are satisfactory. There is sound teamwork between the teacher and the classroom assistant. There is good information for new parents and they receive a good introduction to the school. There is good assessment and record keeping, which informs lesson planning. Firm foundations are laid in the reception class for future learning. The provision for the under-fives is a strong feature of the school.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

Pupils' attainment is above the national expectation for the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Statistics from the latest national tests show that at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was above the national average in reading and in line with the national average for writing. In reading and spelling, almost half the pupils attained above the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils' attainment was at, or above, the national average. Almost half the pupils exceeded the expected levels. Since the last inspection in 1995 high standards of attainment have been maintained. Attainment is above, or well above, the national average at both key stages. Overall, pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2.

Most pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening, becoming increasingly confident and articulate. Attainment is well above expectations at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils build satisfactorily on the above average attainment on entry. In Year 2, pupils express their ideas clearly and use a good range of vocabulary. They discuss the Christmas story and explain, why they think Henry VIII is dressed as he is, in a copy of a contemporary portrait. They discuss books and authors and defend their opinions. In Key Stage 2, pupils give one minute presentations on a range of subjects such as 'chemicals'. An above average attaining pupil explained his fascination with chemical reaction and the pH factors of indigestion tablets. They speak with maturity about the pressure to do well and the importance of working hard in school. They discuss the value of learning about the origins of language. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, although some of the older pupils in Key Stage 2 are not always as attentive as they might be. Pupils in both key stages are keen to answer questions and put forward their opinions and ideas, but they are less confident about posing questions.

Attainment in reading is above the national expectation for the end of Key Stage 1 and well above expectation for the end of Key Stage 2. The high priority given to reading in the previous report is maintained as are the high standards. Pupils in Key Stage 1, make sound progress in reading, building on the above average attainment on entry. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read with confidence and enthusiasm. They read simple reference books and confidently use dictionaries. They enjoy talking about favourite books and authors. Average attaining pupils read confidently and accurately, and they use dictionaries to locate words. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Lower attaining pupils can read fairly fluently, but sometimes lack confidence when faced with an unfamiliar word. They are unsure how to use dictionaries, but most understand alphabetical order. All pupils have good book knowledge, such as title, author and illustrator. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall, particularly in the lower years, and many attain above the national expectation. Progress of some pupils in the development of research skills slows at the top of the school. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a wide range of texts with confidence. Choices include classics such as 'The Swiss Family Robinson' and Tolkien's 'Hobbit'. Most can locate information in non-fiction books, but some lower attaining pupils have difficulty in scanning and skimming for information.

14. Attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectation and there is some evidence of higher attainment. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment exceeds the national expectation.

In Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress overall, but in Year 1 they make particularly good progress in spelling and sentence structure. Few pupils in Key Stage 1 have a joined fluent style of handwriting and not all form their letters correctly. Lower attaining pupils in Year 2 do not always use capitals appropriately and sentences are not always demarcated with full stops. Average attaining pupils make good attempts at spelling unfamiliar words and are beginning to structure their work well, but basic punctuation is not secure. Higher attaining pupils develop joined, fluent handwriting. Spelling is usually accurate, but simple punctuation is not used consistently. Pupils write for a range of purposes and confidently write their own versions of familiar stories, although some struggle with the idea of writing from a different perspective, as was seen in the Christmas story from the viewpoint of the donkey. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress overall, although progress slows at end of the key stage because of some lack of challenge and weak pupil management. At the end of Key Stage 2, lower attaining pupils attempt a range of punctuation but usage is not secure. Pupils of average prior attainment write with a good sense of audience and use a range of punctuation accurately. Higher attaining pupils' writing is of a high standard. A good range of punctuation is used accurately and there is a very good sense of audience. Extensive vocabulary is used for effect and phrases such as '*. . . a T-shirt with as much glamour as a funeral parlour*', create vivid images in the mind of the reader. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards their individual targets and attain appropriately for their abilities.

15. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes and response is never less than very good. Pupils concentrate well and try very hard, as was seen when spelling 'weather words' in Year 1, when response was exemplary. Pupils behave well and are keen to contribute to discussions. They enjoy their work and much learning takes place with laughter, as was seen when pupils in Year 2 responded to the alphabet poem. In Key Stage 2, response is more variable but good overall. In some lessons, some older pupils are not fully involved or interested and others fuss noisily before starting work. Most pupils have positive attitudes, are well behaved and concentrate well.
16. The quality of teaching is good overall and the standard has been maintained since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, teaching is never less than good and some very good teaching was seen in the lower key stage. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching in lessons is more variable, ranging from good to occasionally unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress over time indicates good teaching in Key Stage 2. Very good teaching in Key Stage 1 is characterised by clear planning and specific learning objectives, very high expectations and very good subject knowledge, very good relationships and a good range of strategies to motivate pupils, as was seen in the lesson about spelling words before writing weather statements. Features of unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2 are, ineffective pupil management strategies, insecure subject knowledge, lack of challenge and time consuming copying of worksheets, slow pace and indiscriminate praise. The quality of marking varies. Some is cursory, but most is supportive and encouraging. There is little evidence of specific learning targets for individuals.
17. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and additional curriculum time has been allocated for extended writing and reading, as a result of which progress is at least sound and often good. The late development of a joined style of handwriting has an adverse effect on attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, and creates a need for major input in Key Stage 2. Policy documentation, which underpins all aspects of English, is sound with some good features. Sound assessment procedures are in place including the Cheshire screening and voluntary standardised tests. The results of these tests are analysed and future levels of attainment predicted. However, the information is not used to set specific learning targets for individuals and groups. Literacy record sheets are completed and passed on to the next teacher. Moderated portfolios of pupils' work in Key Stage 2, lack annotation to provide future reference for staff and record-keeping varies in quality and usefulness. Teachers' reading records do not provide sufficient detail of areas for development and reports to parents do not adequately specify areas for improvement.
18. English makes a sound contribution to pupils' social, moral and cultural development through opportunities for pupils to work together and study a wide range of literature including poetry, moral tales and classic texts such as 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.
19. The subject is effectively managed by the wellinformed and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has a sound grasp of the literacy strategy and regularly monitors planning and teaching. There is, however, a lack of clarity around precise strategies to raise standards still further. Resource issues previously identified have been addressed and there is a sound range of books to support literacy. The library is very small and, although well organised, it is not used effectively to support research skills.

Mathematics

In the National Curriculum tests in 1999, the school's overall performance was average in comparison with all schools at both key stages. In comparison with similar schools, performance was below average at Key Stage 1, and well below average for Key Stage 2.

The proportion of eleven-year-olds who attained the national target of Level 4 was average, but the numbers achieving the higher Level 5 standard was well below average. The cohort of eleven pupils who took the Key Stage 2 tests is relatively small, however, and statistical comparisons should be treated with caution. Nevertheless, there are clear indications from both last year's results and the previous year's, that fewer higher attaining pupils actually attain the higher standard than should be expected.

Inspection findings are at variance with the test results. Observation of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work, shows that currently attainment, by the end of both key stages, exceeds national expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' performance at the end of both key stages was deemed to be in line with national expectations. The variance between test results and inspection findings is partly because the current Year 2 and Year 6 groups have a different proportion of higher and lower attaining pupils from the previous year. It is also because the teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy and the recently introduced setting for older pupils in Key Stage 2, are having a positive effect upon the pupils' performance and standards.

The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully. Particular emphasis has been placed on the development of mental mathematics. Through in-service training, and a degree of monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and the headteacher, improvements have been initiated in the teaching of the subject.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards that exceed national expectations in number, shape, space, measuring and data handling. Most are beginning to use mathematical language with confidence when discussing their work, but only the higher attaining pupils choose the appropriate operations to solve problems. Most pupils count in twos and tens and divide objects into halves and quarters. They give change from £1 and play in the 'Rainbow Cafe'. Pupils of lower ability find half of a number of objects by sharing and counting practically. Pupils know the properties of common two-dimensional shapes, and they measure using non-standard units. They measure length accurately using centimetres. Most pupils satisfactorily create tables or tally sheets from data they have collected, and produce appropriate graphs of the most popular crisp flavours. They use data handling skills effectively with the help of computer programs, in other subjects, but their ability to apply their mathematical skills in practical situations is, however, not generally as well developed as the other aspects of the subject.

20. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment are above national expectations in number, shape, space and their knowledge of measures. Pupils' ability to estimate, to handle data and to use mathematical skills in practical situations is less well developed. Many are beginning to use their range of skills to solve problems using their own strategies. For example, they find the inverse operation to check answers in addition and subtraction sums. The four rules of number are used confidently to make calculations. There is good work in fractions, including equivalence in Year 3 and adding and subtracting for older pupils, but pupils are less confident using decimals. Most pupils use graphs and pie charts to draw conclusions, but their ability in this area lacks depth. Several pupils use good common sense in estimating, but skill in estimating measures is insecure.
21. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are commensurate with their prior attainment. In both key stages, science and information technology lessons encourage the development of data handling skills.
22. There is good progress in both key stages in all areas of the subject, other than using and applying mathematics, where progress is satisfactory. Progress overall, however, is more erratic in Key Stage 2, where there are instances of unsatisfactory progress. The youngest pupils learn to count using objects and quickly learn the names and order of numbers up to and beyond twenty. Mental mathematics is practised daily in Year 2 and pupils learn strategies to improve their expertise in rapid recall of number facts. There is a gradual build-up of skills during Key Stage 2. The basic rules of number are learned well through the use of aids, such as multi-link cubes, number lines and number squares. The

speed of the pupils' recall of mental mathematics questions and problems improves as teachers teach a range of strategies on a daily basis.

23. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They listen carefully to instructions and answer willingly in oral sessions. Pupils are keen to volunteer to demonstrate work on the board. They behave very well indeed and settle down quickly to work, especially when the class teacher ensures that they fully understand the task. There is good concentration in group or whole-class sessions. Pupils work independently when work has been planned to challenge them at their own level. They show respect for the opinions of others and for school resources, collaborate well in group work and share apparatus willingly.
24. The quality of teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, two thirds of lessons seen were good and a third was unsatisfactory. The scrutiny of work shows that in Key Stage 2, the younger pupils and those in the top set make better progress than the others. The best lessons show that most teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the mathematics syllabus and they use the organisational methods, suggested in the National Numeracy Strategy, well. There are also instances when the teacher's knowledge of mathematics is not secure and explanations lack clarity. When planning is very good, there are clear learning objectives and precisely outlined activities for pupils and teacher. The objectives are sometimes explained carefully to the class. Work is planned for pupils of different attainment levels, including questions during the mental mathematics session. There is good use of questioning to assess the pupils' understanding and to challenge pupils to think for themselves. A simple, yet very effective device, the number stick, is used well throughout the school. The best work arises when the teacher has high expectations of behaviour, concentration and attainment. In some lessons, not all pupils are engaged in discussions and group work is not planned for the full range of abilities in the class. The timing of lessons is generally well organised, but at times the introductory session is too long and the review session at the end of lessons is not given enough time. Some lessons have less impact when insufficient reference is made to the real world. Homework is set regularly and this has a positive impact upon attainment and progress.
25. The school's adoption and thorough application of the National Numeracy Strategy is an important factor in the improvements in standards of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the quality of learning in both key stages effectively. The school also uses a good system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This regular assessment helps teachers to know what has been learned and what needs to be taught next. These factors indicate that the school is well placed to make further improvements.

Science

Pupils attain standards in science that exceed national expectations for the end of Key Stage 1. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with expectations of eleven-year-olds. These findings, which relate to the current pupils in Years 2 and 6, differ from last year's test results. National Curriculum teachers' assessments for seven-year-olds in 1999, showed that the proportion of pupils who attained the national target of Level 2 and above, was average when compared with all schools, and well below average when compared with similar schools. The performance of pupils in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, was below average when compared with all schools and well below average when compared with similar schools. As the number of pupils in the Year 6 group taking the tests is so small it is not possible to place any great emphasis on the results. They are, however, an indicator and it is clear that, whilst higher attaining pupils do well at the end of Key Stage 1, this is not the case at the end of Key Stage 2, where higher attaining pupils under-achieve in the tests.

Pupils make consistently good progress in Key Stage 1 in all elements of science; life and living processes, materials and their properties, physical processes and also in investigation skills. By the time they are seven, pupils know the difference between a vertebrate and an invertebrate. They understand that push and pull are both examples of a force, and that applying a force can change some objects. They experiment and find out that some materials are magnetic and some are not. In work on dissolving sugar in warm water, pupils in Year 2 were awe-struck by the fact that the sugar crystals disappeared. When they tasted the water and found that it tasted sugary, they concluded that the sugar had not actually disappeared but had been broken down into such small particles that they could not be seen.

Progress in Key Stage 2 is more erratic, but overall it is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils name and label the

main parts of a flowering plant, such as the carpel, petal, stamen, sepal, anther and filament. They know about the bones in the human skeleton and have a developing knowledge of how their bodies work. They know about the solar system and the phases of the moon. Their knowledge is developing satisfactorily, but their understanding of how to select appropriate equipment to set up experiments to test their hypotheses are less secure. This key skill, the investigative aspect of the subject, which underpins the others, is under-developed. They have too few opportunities to find things out for themselves.

Pupils respond well to science teaching. They behave well in lessons and are often fascinated by what they learn, especially when given the opportunity to find things out for themselves, for example pupils experiment with magnets and dissolving solids. They co-operate well together and share resources sensibly. A few older pupils become restless and misbehave, however, when the teaching does not fire their imaginations.

26. The quality of teaching science is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The best lessons are very well planned and set out clear learning intentions. Good use is made of time in Key Stage 1; lessons start promptly and proceed at a brisk pace. In Key Stage 2, however, the pace of learning is not always so brisk. Secure subject knowledge and understanding on the part of the teacher is evident in the best lessons at both key stages. Tasks set are generally well matched to the needs and capabilities of pupils, but on occasions in Key Stage 2, tasks are insufficiently structured to enable those who find learning more difficult to experience success, or to provide sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. The review sessions at the end of lessons is used well, because it helps pupils make sense of what they have learned and reinforces their understanding. There are, however, some weaknesses in the teaching of science. There is too much use of 'closed' questioning, which does not help pupils to think or extend their scientific vocabulary, seen for example in a Year 5/6 lesson on how a lunar eclipse occurs. Although some good opportunities are provided for pupils to experiment and observe the results for themselves, the provision is not consistent in all classes. The assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory, but assessment information gathered lacks clarity and is not used consistently enough in both key stages to help teachers plan the next step in teaching.

27. Science is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator, but she has few opportunities to influence practice in Key Stage 2. There is a good scheme of work, which provides good guidance for teachers and a secure foundation for teaching and learning. There is some monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work, but teaching and learning is not evaluated systematically throughout the school. Resources for science are adequate and are well organised.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

Standards of attainment are above national expectations for the end of both key stages in word processing and data handling. Control technology is in line with expectations for the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations for the end of Key Stage 2. At present, since the arrival of new computers, the school has not yet set up the necessary resources for control technology at Key Stage 2. The equipment is on order and is expected to be in place shortly.

In the Reception class, pupils use a variety of early learning programs to learn letters and to sort and set for mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, they continue to use the computer to develop their word skills and they make use of a 'paint program' to produce a picture related to the class topic. They begin to develop good skills in mouse control. The use of the 'Roamer' to develop skills of control technology is referred to in teachers' planning and in pupils' records, but was not seen during the inspection. At Key Stage 2, pupils make widespread use of word processing to support their learning in English. There is good evidence, for example, of pupils drafting and redrafting their writing. They use programs to handle data and display information using simple bar charts and pie graphs. During the change over of computers pupils have had limited recent experience of control technology. At both key stages, pupils know how to save and to print their work. Many have computers at home, which they use frequently and not just for games.

In general, pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, and both genders make good progress at both key stages. They have good, regular access to the computers and they

follow a course of work that is designed to support progress in their skills and understanding. Pupils know how to use the software available well and they cover a good amount of work.

Pupils respond well to information and communications technology. They are responsible in their attitudes to working on the computers. Even the very young ones work consistently and keep closely to task. Usually when they come to a difficulty they solve it for themselves, rather than interrupt the lesson. In paired work they co-operate very well, taking turns and quietly supporting each other. Those observed using the computer were evidently enjoying doing so. They were confident when using the equipment and treated it with respect.

The quality of teaching for information and communications technology is generally good at both key stages. Most teachers have at least adequate skills in the subject. Teaching of the subject is integrated into other lessons and teachers use good strategies to incorporate the work successfully. Careful planning ensures that all pupils have regular access to the computers and that they consistently develop their skills. Records of pupils' work and the frequency of access are kept. The school has a good collection of software so that the tasks provided are varied and appropriate for the pupils. The pace of work is generally satisfactory, mainly because pupils can be trusted to work to their own initiatives, but the pace is generally left for the pupils to determine. Satisfactory assessments are made to indicate when pupils should move onto the next stage of the program. Information and communications technology is used well to support learning in other subjects.

Leadership of the subject is good. The policies provide helpful frameworks, teachers have the benefit of good training and support and the equipment is managed well. Teachers' planning and pupils' work is monitored but the co-ordinator does not monitor teaching. The requirements of the National Curriculum are usually met, but there is a delay at present in the work in control technology at Key Stage 2. New equipment for control technology has not yet arrived. It was not possible to see this aspect of work during the inspection. The equipment is, however, due to arrive shortly.

In the last report provision for the subject was judged satisfactory and pupils were making satisfactory progress. Since then the school has continued to improve the provision for information and communications technology. New, modern computers have recently been installed in all classrooms, the software resources are good in range and quality and teachers have continued to attend training to develop their own skills. Progress is now good overall and attainment is above expectations in most aspects of the subject.

Art

There was limited opportunity to observe art lessons during the inspection but the work on display, and other artwork seen, gave an indication of standards. There are some examples of good work in some topics or by individual pupils. Overall, however, while progress in the subject is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, it is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 and this is a regression from the previous inspection. Many pupils represent their ideas successfully in visual forms in a variety of media and in two and three dimensions. Pupils, including the very young, have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of artists' work and incorporate those styles into their own work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make similar progress to their peers. Work with colour is developed satisfactorily as pupils move through the school, but the focus on the development of drawing skills is not sufficiently consistent. Standards of drawing, at the end of Key Stage 2 are under developed. Pupils respond well to art. They enjoy their lessons and persevere with their tasks. Behaviour is good and discussion between pupils is almost always work-related. Pupils have good opportunities to make artistic decisions for themselves.

There is insufficient evidence to form an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in art lessons, but there are shortcomings in teachers' planning for progress. The content of lessons is planned satisfactorily, but learning aims are not usually identified for groups or individuals within the class. Assessment does not always sufficiently inform planning. The school has sufficient resources for art and they are used well. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and pupils work in a good range of media and scale, but there is insufficient focus on the development of basic skills in the subject.

Design and technology

During the inspection there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching or pupils' progress in design and technology in either Key Stage. It was not possible to observe lessons in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stage 2, understand the design process and are able to design simple nets for gift boxes. Higher attaining pupils measure accurately and make templates to test their designs. Older pupils are beginning to make judgements about 'fit for purpose' materials when making musical instruments from a limited range of materials. In conversation, the oldest pupils talk enthusiastically about work they have done previously including making vehicles powered by different sources of energy.

Design technology and art are closely linked in planning, but the discrete elements of each subject are not always clearly identified. Examples of pupils' work, and of teachers' planning, show that work is planned effectively to cover the requirements of the Programmes of Study. Progression is less securely planned for, because the development of skills is not identified. There is now an outline scheme of work in place, which is an improvement on the previous inspection, but assessment procedures and records of skill development are not sufficiently well developed to inform teachers' planning. There are sufficient resources including small tools and a limited range of materials available.

Geography

It was not possible to observe more than one geography lesson during the inspection as the school's focus is on history for the current term. Judgements are based on the discussions, observations and the evidence of work scrutinised. On the limited evidence available, pupils make satisfactory progress in geography in Key Stage 1. There is insufficient evidence to judge progress in Key Stage 2, but the small amount of work in pupils' books would suggest that the subject has not been visited frequently so far this year. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have grasped important notions about the environment. In the lesson seen in Year 2, pupils had good understanding of the water cycle. They knew how clouds were formed, how water falls as rain and then moves through the cycle and back to cloud. At Key Stage 2, much of the written work is based on the repetition of factual knowledge.

Pupils show interest in geography. All work is carefully presented, well written and with interesting illustration. In the lesson seen, behaviour was good and the pupils supported each other well.

There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. Indication from pupils' work, however, is that there is insufficient focus on the development of geographic skills and limited time is given to the subject. Teachers mark work carefully, but give few comments to help pupils to improve. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory; there are sufficient resources and they are well organised. Teachers' planning is monitored but teaching of geography is monitored rarely. The situation is similar to the last inspection, when it was also possible to see only one lesson.

History

Pupils make good progress in history in Key Stage 1 and in the lower years of Key Stage 2. Progress is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2, but slows towards the end of the key stage. Pupils in Year 1 know how everyday objects change over time. They understand how man employed different means of making light in past times. They write simple statements about candles and lamps, and make good first-hand observational drawings of lamps. In Year 2, pupils develop a good body of knowledge about famous people such as Grace Darling. They put forward opinions about the clothes worn in a portrait of Henry VIII and they use the national grid for learning to call up information about Henry VIII's wives and Tudor costume. They have a good grasp of appropriate vocabulary such as 'reign'; and understand the relationship between clothes and status in times past. Attainment is above expectations for pupils of this age. In Year 3, pupils far exceed expectations in their knowledge and understanding of topics related to the Second World War. They speak confidently about the reasons for evacuation, and about the changing role of women in the war. They relate information gained from interviewing an elderly visitor to their research in books. Higher attaining pupils understand the difference between first hand and secondary evidence. At the end of the key stage, pupils know many facts about the

Roman occupation of Britain and the legacy of that occupation. They are able to gain information from books and CD-ROMs. However, not all pupils make the progress of which they are capable, particularly higher attaining pupils.

Pupils throughout the school show good attitudes towards learning in history as a direct result of good teaching. The previous inspection report also commented on 'pupils' strong interest in history'. Pupils in Year 3 are avid historians, and this is reflected in their search for knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Class 6 present their work neatly and take a great interest in a fragment of Roman road, which caused genuine amazement when it was studied.

Teaching is good overall. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good and in the lower part of Key Stage 2 teaching is very good. Teaching in the upper part of Key Stage 2, is sound. In Key Stage 1, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop investigational skills, by looking at artefacts and copies of contemporary portraits. Teachers have high expectations. Lessons have a brisk pace and resources are well chosen to promote interest and discussion. In the lower part of Key Stage 2, very good knowledge and understanding is reflected in a confident, interesting delivery. Very good teaching, which impacts directly on the attitudes and progress of pupils, is characterised by very good relationships, high expectations, brisk pace and the use of a good range of resources. In lessons where teaching is sound, the expectations of pupils are less rigorous, particularly for higher attainers.

The curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work as they move through the school. History and geography are taught in linked topics but the skills and concepts, which underpin history, are covered appropriately although not systematically. There is some improvement in planning for progression since the last inspection, however, record-keeping and assessment has not improved sufficiently. The time allocated to history is appropriate and good use is made of out-of-school visits to reinforce the concepts of evidence, chronology and change over time. Visitors such as the Major from the Sealed Knot Society and elderly residents, help to bring the subject alive and foster the enthusiasm for learning that is seen throughout the school, and has been maintained since the last inspection.

History makes a good contribution to the cultural development of pupils and occasionally contributes to pupils' spiritual development, as was seen following a lesson about Roman roads. Resources are satisfactory and the school makes good use of loan collections from the library service. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and well informed. She provides effective support for colleagues and monitors planning.

Music

Pupils make satisfactory progress in music at both key stages. Although time is short, the curriculum provided covers the main elements of the subject. At Key Stage 1, pupils sing in time and with satisfactory intonation. They have a good aural memory; they remember long excerpts from a new song and repeat them with accuracy. By the end of Year 6, most pupils listen attentively and understand form and structure. Composing and performing skills are generally appropriate. Skills of pitch and rhythm are satisfactory. In all, standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection.

28. Pupils respond well to the subject and clearly enjoy music making. Behaviour is good and they listen with quiet thoughtfulness. In group work they co-operate very well, they take turns and show warm encouragement for each other.

29. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have more than adequate musical skills and approach practical work with confidence. Tasks are generally set to an appropriate level. The content of lessons is well planned and aims are clear. Most lessons move at a satisfactory pace and resources are used well. Teachers use appropriate methods for music, but there is insufficient focus on progress in teachers' planning and in the arrangements for assessment.

30. The scheme of work provides an effective framework for the subject, but time allocated for music is too brief to allow for the consistent development of musical skills. The teaching of music is not monitored and there has been no opportunity for professional development in the subject in the recent past. A school choir meets regularly at lunch times and there are three recorder groups and a flute choir. Twenty-eight pupils have instrumental lessons. Time for music is below the national average and this

is a constraint on the progress that pupils make. Furthermore the accommodation for the subject is less than satisfactory. Classrooms are used, which are too small for group work and instruments have to be carried around. The timetable does not allow use of the hall.

Physical education

Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Pupils have good control of their movements and a good understanding of the processes, which take place in their bodies as a result of physical exercise. In one lesson, five-year-old pupils could feel their hearts pounding after they had run around the hall and felt their heartbeats slowing as they calmed down at the end of the lesson. Older pupils explain that the heart beats faster in order to pump more blood around the body in response to the muscles' need for more oxygen. They develop good games' skills and send, receive and travel with a ball with increasing control and accuracy. They have a good understanding of the skills of passing and receiving and apply these successfully to simple tennis games.

Pupils' response to lessons is good and they enjoy all aspects of the subject. In dance lessons, older pupils enjoy prowling like a wolf and younger pupils consider it a great treat to use bats and balls. They are enthusiastic and are not daunted by the chill wind that often sweeps across the open playground. Pupils work energetically and respond well to the teacher's directions. They show commitment, are able to sustain effort and have a highly developed sense of fair play. Behaviour is good and boys and girls work well together. They co-operate well and the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' social development.

Due to timetabling it was not possible to observe teaching in Key Stage 1 and so it is not possible to make judgements about the teaching in this key stage. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is mostly sound with examples of good teaching of games' skills. The good teaching included appropriate warming-up activities, a well structured, step-by-step approach to teaching specific skills and good management of behaviour. Lessons are well prepared and are especially effective when teachers identify clearly in their planning precisely what skills the pupils are going to learn. A good example of this was seen in Year 3, where pupils were successfully refining a sequence of throwing and batting skills, which are designed to culminate in simple tennis rallies. The teaching points were made well and pupils could soon appreciate the need for keeping their eyes firmly fixed on the ball. Teaching is enhanced when players from an internationally famous local football club visit the school to give coaching sessions.

Two recently appointed members of staff currently share the co-ordination of the subject. Teachers' particular strengths are used well. For example, teachers with expertise in physical education change classes with a teacher who has expertise in music. A scheme of work, devised by the local education authority, gives good guidance and is used well to inform teachers' lesson plans. However, assessment of pupils' achievements and the recording of their progress is undeveloped, as is monitoring and evaluation of the subject. A range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs and football fixtures against other schools, helps to increase enthusiasm and enhance the standards of attainment of a substantial number of older pupils. The physical education curriculum is broad and balanced. Resources are adequate and are supplemented by a scheme whereby bags of specialist sports equipment, such as 'Kwik Cricket', are exchanged among local schools. Swimming is organised for pupils in Years 5 and 6 every other year. Whilst almost all of the current Year 6 pupils attained the national target of swimming 25 metres when they were in Year 5, there is no provision to ensure that those who do not attain this standard have the opportunity to do so before they leave the school. Since the last inspection provision has improved greatly, especially by the building of a hall, which enables physical education lessons to be taught indoors.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

A team of four inspectors visited the school for a total of fourteen days. Prior to the inspection the registered inspector held a meeting for parents. An analysis was made of 67 questionnaires completed by parents.

During the inspection 45 lessons were observed for a total of 36 hours. Activities such as assemblies, registration periods, extra-curricular activities, play and lunchtime arrangements were also observed.

Three pupils from each class were heard reading aloud. Pupils' behaviour in the playground and around the school was observed. Their work was examined during lessons and samples of their written work were scrutinised. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work during the school day.

Interviews and discussions were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, teachers with curricular and other responsibilities and non-teaching staff. Policy documents, curricular and teaching plans, development plans, attendance registers, pupils' reports, the special needs register and a sample of individual education plans, agendas and minutes of the governing body were scrutinised.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	180	0	16	2

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

7.2

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

25.14

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:

1

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

33

Financial data

Financial year:

1998/9

Total Income	267,433
Total Expenditure	271,160
Expenditure per pupil	1,674
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,020
Balance carried forward to next year	33,293

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

162

Number of questionnaires returned:

67

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	48	41	2	8	2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	51	40	4	3	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	27	46	16	9	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	49	43	3	5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	41	52	5	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	59	39	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	47	48	5	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	47	45	3	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	59	30	8	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	65	34	2	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	55	41	3	2	0

Other issues raised by parents

Parents consider that standards are considered high across the curriculum. They believe that relationships and behaviour are very good. Some parents consider that pupils are too pressured in the pursuit of high standards, particularly in the younger classes.

The inspectors agree that standards are high in some subjects, but would point out that potentially higher attainers do not do consistently well in all subjects. Relationships and behaviour are very good. At times, there is considerable pressure on pupils to achieve well, not all generated by the school. For most of the time this is appropriate, but inspectors consider that pupils' aspirations for improvement need to be better targeted.