

## INSPECTION REPORT

Park Road Community Primary School,  
Great Sankey,  
Warrington.

Unique Reference Number : 111192

Inspection Number: 188074

Headteacher : Mrs Helen Long

Reporting inspector : Mrs S. Öyen

7167

Dates of inspection : October 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707057

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## Information about the school

Type of school :	Infant	Junior and
Type of control :		Community
Age range of pupils :	4 - 11	
Gender of pupils :	Mixed	
School address :	Wroxham Road, Great Sankey, Warrington. WA5 3EF	
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Appropriate authority :	Governing Body	
Name of chair of governors :	Watson	Mr P.
Date of previous inspection:	March, 1996.	

## Information about the inspection team

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs S. Öyen Registered inspector	Under fives English Music Physical education	Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Mr M. Beale	Mathematics Art Design and technology History Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs L. Brock Lay inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mr R. L. Garner	Science Information technology Religious education Geography Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development The efficiency of the school

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## Main findings

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards are rising in mathematics, particularly in pupils' ability to handle and use number.
- Reading standards are good. Most pupils like reading and read aloud with good expression.
- The school has a friendly, family atmosphere. Pupils enjoy school - they want to learn and they behave very well. The school successfully promotes self-discipline and good manners.
- The quality of teaching and provision for children under five is good. Many children make good progress particularly in reading and number.
- Much of the teaching is good, but especially at Key Stage 1. All teachers plan thoroughly and use topics well to link subjects in a meaningful way.
- The headteacher is the driving force of the school. She gives clear direction to the school's work. Governors provide critical support and carry out their role responsibly.
- There is a warm, open welcome to parents and visitors. Parents' support and involvement is much valued and links with parents and the community are very strong.
- Financial management is good.

### WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. The attainment of the current Year 6 pupils in religious education falls short of the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus particularly in aspects of Christianity.

In addition, the following points for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- II. The inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting style and presentation quality.
- III. The lack of sparkle and vitality in the Key Stage 2 curriculum and teaching.
- IV. The limited opportunities for pupils to determine their own learning and to be involved in the management and development of the school.
- V. The School Development Plan is not linked to specific aims or to targets for attainment.
- VI. The lack of systems to record the on-going progress of under-fives.

**Park Road is an improving school which is committed to raising standards.** Measures to address the identified weakness 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

Improvement since the 1996 inspection has been very good, despite a lengthy period of staff absences and changes which delayed the compilation and implementation of the action plan. Only three members of staff, including the headteacher and her deputy have been at the school since 1996 and they have had to support new staff as well as initiate curriculum change and school improvement. The headteacher has worked successfully to put in place subject policies and planning and assessment procedures that provide clear guidance for teaching individual subjects. She has also developed a shared approach to school improvement and a heightened awareness of the role of the co-ordinator. She has been well supported by the Governing Body which is playing a more active and critical role in monitoring the curriculum, the finances and the school's achievements.

Training is valued by governors as an integral part of their role and the work of the committees is contributing significantly to the pace of improvement. A sex education policy has been agreed, teacher appraisal procedures are in place and astute appointments have strengthened teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in Year 2, and also given a boost to curriculum development in literacy and information technology. The curriculum has been broadened and information technology is given time and emphasis. Standards at Key Stage 2 are higher than they were, particularly in English, mathematics, science and design and technology.

The headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The School Development Plan addresses most of the minor weaknesses in this report but it does not clearly prioritise long- and short-term targets nor link them to aims or to academic attainment. The vision and strong leadership of the headteacher together with the developing skills and expertise of the subject co-ordinators, governors and senior staff indicate the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

### STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

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

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

The 1999 results show a marked improvement compared with 1998 particularly in mathematics where the percentage of Level 4 attainment far exceeded the target set. In English and mathematics a significant number of pupils reached the higher Level 5. This raises the overall performance profile when comparing results. Boys did particularly well in mathematics with one in three reaching Level 5.

On entry to school, most children's attainment is average for their age. By five, they have made at least satisfactory progress and attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all six areas of learning. A small number are working towards, or are at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in reading, writing and number.

At Key Stage 1, standards have been sustained since the 1996 inspection. In the 1999 national tests and teacher assessments, nearly all pupils attained Level 2 as expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school's performance was in line with the national average in English and mathematics and was above average in science. Teacher assessment indicates that one in three pupils reached Level 3 in science which was well above the national average and that of similar schools. Reading standards are good. However, inspection evidence shows that pupils' writing skills are not as strong as the test results suggest. Too many pupils make careless mistakes in spelling and use of punctuation and do not always use the ideas and knowledge gained in literacy lessons.

Pupils' attainment in information technology is satisfactory. Year 6 pupils' religious education knowledge and their understanding of Christianity do not meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards are satisfactory in all other subjects.



· **QUALITY OF TEACHING**

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

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

Overall, teaching is satisfactory. It is at least satisfactory in 98% of lessons. It is good in one lesson in two and very good in one lesson in ten. Teaching is mainly at least good and often very good for pupils in Year 2. For children in the reception year, the teaching is consistently good and very good in one lesson in three. The teacher and nursery nurse work well as a team and there is particular strength in promoting children's personal and social development. There is strength in the teaching of physical education, particularly at Key Stage 2 and at both Key Stages 1 and 2 in teaching the skills of practical investigation and problem-solving in science and design and technology. A common strength is the very good quality of lesson planning. However, the teaching at Key Stage 2 often lacks the vitality of that for the younger children for whom learning is frequently challenging and fun.

· **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good; pupils behave well and <del>can be trusted to</del> act sensibly; they know what is expected of them and they are polite and caring towards others.
Attendance	Good; above the national average. Pupils are keen to be at school on time and lessons start promptly.
Ethos*	Good; as stated in a school aim, pupils <i>"love learning in all its forms"</i> – they want to do their best even when the work is mundane; when their interest is fired they really apply themselves and work well with others.
Leadership and management	Very good; the headteacher is the driving force behind improvements and initiatives; governors are very committed and actively involved in determining the way forward.
Curriculum	Good; appropriate emphasis is given to literacy, numeracy and information technology; the Key Stage 2 curriculum lacks sparkle and dynamism; comprehensive assessment systems track pupils' attainment, although there is little tracking of the under-fives' progress.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision and management; pupils' individual education plans have realistic targets which are used well to plan work; pupils with behavioural needs make good progress due to the good quality of support by all staff.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; very good provision for moral and social development through the family atmosphere; pupils' views are welcomed and valued; tolerance and respect for others are integral to the school.
Staffing resources	Satisfactory; sufficient qualified teachers for the number of pupils.

and attractive buildings and grounds; recent purchases have much accommodation enhanced the variety and quality of books. Value for money Good.

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

#### · THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

##### **What most parents like about the School**

- VII. Their children like and enjoy school
- VIII. The "open door", warm welcome and positive atmosphere which make it easy to talk to staff about problems or their children's progress
- IX. The way they are encouraged to help and support their children's learning
- X. The way they are kept informed of events and what their children are learning
- XI. The improvement in standards and the commitment and enthusiasm of the staff

##### **What some parents are not happy about**

- There were no aspects identified by a significant number of parents but the following were commented on by a few :
- XII. The low number of extra curricular
  - XIII. The mixed age classes
  - XIV. The lack of teacher availability to incidents of poor behaviour

Parents commented on the credit due to the headteacher and staff as the school is "*more settled and organised*" and "*standards are getting better*".

Inspection findings support in large part the parents' views. Pupils are happy at school and there is a high level of concern shown for pupils' progress and welfare from all teaching and non-teaching staff. Staff are committed to the school and much has been done to keep parents informed about events, changes and how they can be involved in learning at school or at home.

The school is considering ways to extend lunchtime or after-school activities. Parents' concern about lunchtime support are unfounded. The headteacher is on hand at lunchtimes to oversee the conduct of pupils and incidents were dealt with efficiently and effectively during the inspection.

Staff and pupils are generally coping well with mixed-age classes although the school is right to consider a range of teaching and learning strategies to ensure pupils of differing attainment make optimal progress.

## · **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To continue to raise standards and improve the quality of education the Governing Body, headteacher and staff should :

1. take immediate steps to bring the attainment of Year 6 pupils in line with the expectations outlined in the Cheshire Agreed Syllabus by ensuring that pupils :
  - know key facts about Christianity;
  - understand some of the links between Christianity and other faiths.

[ see paragraphs 22 and 162 in the main report ]

In addition, the following minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan :

- the inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting style and presentation quality;

[ see paragraphs 18 and 129 in the main report ]

- the lack of sparkle and vitality in the Key Stage 2 curriculum and teaching;

[ see paragraphs 40, 44, 49, 132 and 152 in the main report ]

- the limited opportunities for pupils to determine their own learning and to be involved in the management and development of the school;

[ see paragraphs 28, 34, and 62 in the main report ]

- The School Development Plan is not linked to specific aims or to targets for academic attainment;

[ see paragraph 82 in the main report ]

- the lack of systems to record the progress of children under five towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes.

[ see paragraphs 47 and 55 in the main report ]

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## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. Park Road Community Primary School is in Great Sankey, a western suburb of Warrington about two miles from the town centre. The school serves an area of well established private housing and unemployment levels are low. Two per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is much below average. Families have a choice of several schools in the locality and most pupils come from the immediate area.

2. The number on the school roll has risen to 185 from 148 in 1996, when the school was last inspected. However, the year groups vary in size from 17 to 38 and this year, to keep class sizes fairly equitable, four of the six classes have mixed age groups. Class size varies from 28 to 32 with the reception year children in a class of 30. All the reception year children start school in September and there is a programme of Summer term visits and part time schooling for the initial few weeks.

3. At the time of this inspection, 27 of the 30 children were under the age of five. All had been in school on a full-time basis for only two weeks. Children's attainment on entry to school is as expected for their age and a small number are above average with a good level of general knowledge and a good command of language. Most have had some experience of pre-school education.

4. There are currently 26 pupils (14 per cent) on the school's register of special educational need. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need and 15 other pupils receive support from outside agencies. Eleven pupils are from ethnic minority families and nine pupils have English as an additional language.

1. The mission statement identifies Park Road as a school "*where children's enthusiasm, motivation and sense of discovery are celebrated as key routes to learning*".

2. The school's 15 aims place high emphasis on personal and spiritual development with the prime aim being "*to love learning in all its forms*"; other aims address qualities of curiosity, lively enquiring minds, self-reliance and independence and highlight the school as a caring community where pupils can "*achieve the highest standards possible as appropriate for themselves as individuals*."

3. The Governing Body's and school's priorities for this year are to raise standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2; to improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation; to improve the tracking of pupils' progress and to develop target setting. Longer-term aims are to revert to seven classes, one class per year group, and in time to have two classes per year group.

## Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	17 (6)	8 (12)	25 (18)

  

7. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	14 (6)	14 (6)	14 (6)
	Girls	7 (11)	7 (11)	7 (11)
	Total	21 (17)	21 (17)	21 (17)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84% (94%)	84% (94%)	84% (94%)
	National	82% (80%)	83% (81%)	87% (84%)

  

7. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils At NC Level 2 or above	Boys	13 (6)	16 (6)	16 (6)
	Girls	7 (11)	8 (11)	8 (11)
	Total	20 (17)	24 (17)	24 (17)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80% (94%)	96% (94%)	96% (94%)
	National	82% (81%)	86% (85%)	87% (86%)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	17 (14)	6 (13)	23 (27)

  

7. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	15 (4)	15 (6)	15 (5)
	Girls	5 (10)	4 (6)	4 (8)
	Total	20 (14)	19 (12)	19 (13)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	87% (52%)	91% (44%)	87% (48%)
	National	70% (65%)	69% (59%)	78% (69%)

  

7. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	15 (4)	16 (5)	16 (5)
	Girls	5 (8)	5 (6)	4 (7)
	Total	20 (12)	21 (11)	20 (12)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	87% (44%)	91% (41%)	87% (44%)
	National	68% (65%)	69% (65%)	75% (71%)

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

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)			%
missed through absence for the	Authorised	School	4.5
latest complete reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

7.

## 7. Exclusions

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

## 7. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	10
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

7.

#### **Attainment and progress**

1. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils reach the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. A significant minority of pupils reach a higher level. Since the last inspection standards have risen in English, mathematics and science and are more uniform across the subjects than indicated in the 1996 report. The results of the 1998 national tests indicated a fall in standards but the 1999 results were markedly better and continue the upward trend. The improvement in standards was best in English and mathematics where pupils' average points score places the school well above the average for all schools nationally in both subjects. When compared with schools which have a similarly very low number of pupils eligible for free school meals (two per cent), the score is broadly in line with the average. However, comparisons are largely unfair as the school is being compared with others in much more affluent areas of the country.

2. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests in English, mathematics and science, most pupils reached Level 4 as expected for their age and roughly one in five attained Level 5. The school met and exceeded its targets for attainment in English and mathematics. In mathematics, results far exceeded the target. These good standards reflected both the potential of the cohort but also the good progress made in Year 6. Directed teaching and targeted learning by the classteacher, headteacher and parents followed an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and skills. Inspection evidence shows that current Year 6 pupils are making satisfactory progress but their attainment is not as high as the previous cohort and the school is conscious that the Level 4 attainment targets for 2000 may not be achieved, especially in English.

3. On entry to school, the children's overall attainment is generally as expected for their age and a small number are above average with a good command of language, a good level of general knowledge and well developed personal and social skills. This is confirmed by the results of the baseline assessment and the teacher's own records.

4. By the age of five, and certainly by the end of the school year, the children have made at least satisfactory progress and the majority have attained the national standards (Desirable Learning Outcomes) in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In personal and social development they make good progress and at five, are confident and independent learners. A small number of children get off to a really good start in reading, writing and number work and at the age of five are working towards, or have attained Level 1 of the National Curriculum. The good standards noted in personal and social development in the 1996 inspection have been sustained.

5. Progress in learning and speaking English is good for pupils who have English as an additional language. They quickly acquire key words and phrases due to the support of pupils, staff and support workers. First language support also enhances pupils' progress in number and knowledge and understanding of the world.

6. Standards at Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national tests and teacher assessments in reading, writing, mathematics and science, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2, as expected for their age, were close to the national average. Eight out of ten pupils reached Level 2 as expected for their age in all four subjects. A significant minority of pupils reached the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics but in science, one in three pupils did well for their age and this was well above the national average. In all four subjects, a number of pupils failed to attain Level 2 or their attainment was in the lower Level 2 band. When all attainment is taken into consideration, the average points score for reading and writing is broadly in line with the national average but below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, reading is below the average and writing and mathematics are well below average. However, comparisons are largely unfair as the school is being compared with others in much more affluent areas of the country.

7. These results are not as high as in 1998 when nearly all pupils reached the level expected for their age. The average level achieved was very high in reading and mathematics and well above the national average in writing. Unlike the national picture, the boys did better than the girls in reading and equally well in writing. On average, boys were six months' progress ahead of the girls in reading. Inspection evidence shows that the Year 2 pupils are on line to attain Level 2 and a significant number are again likely to attain the higher Level 3 in reading and science in the National Curriculum tests and assessments in 2000.

8. Standards of listening and speaking are good at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils were judged to be underachieving. Pupils throughout the school are confident, fluent conversationalists and willing to speak before an audience. Circle times, assemblies, class and group reading times and evaluation sessions foster pupil's progress in explaining and justifying their opinions.

9. The school's strategy for literacy is satisfactory. Reading has been given high priority in school development over the last two years and the school works in strong partnership with parents to develop the pupils' word recognition strategies and their appreciation of text. From starting school, pupils make good progress in reading. Families hear their children regularly and the school's purchase of a very good collection of fiction, poetry and non-fiction books has widened the range available to pupils and been a positive factor in fostering a love of reading.

10. The literacy hour is helping pupils to look at the structure of texts and to develop a range of strategies to understand them. In all year groups, pupils are making good progress in interpreting text. Many Year 1 pupils are already confident, fluent readers who use good expression when reading aloud. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are competent, accurate readers who cope equally well with fiction or non-fiction texts across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory, if slower, progress but also develop a good awareness of story content.

11. Writing standards are satisfactory overall at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils make good initial progress. Higher attaining writers at Key Stage 1 do not always reach a high enough standard due to insufficient directed teaching in how to improve their use of punctuation and how to develop their ideas. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in learning the "mechanics" of punctuation, grammar and spelling rules and most apply these consistently in their writing in English and other subjects. Pupils' attainment in using language for written effect is less marked. Year 6 pupils' writing is well organised but does not have the same literary quality and flair in the use of lively language seen in the chapters of the book "Redfire", written with the support of the literacy co-ordinator in the previous school year. Although pupils write legibly, handwriting styles vary and the standard



of presentation is inconsistent in work across the curriculum.

12. The school's numeracy strategy is satisfactory. Standards are satisfactory at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has identified the need to boost pupils' number skills.

The rehearsal of number bonds, counting patterns and multiplication tables is increasing pupils' facility in handling number and in solving problems, especially at Key Stage 1. Year 2 pupils' enthusiasm for number is a direct result of the focus on number and has in turn a positive effect on their progress. Standards in number, especially in mental arithmetic, are improving. At the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils have a secure facility with number which they use in solving number problems in mathematics and other subjects. Pupils recall number facts quickly and explain their reasoning and strategies when solving a problem. By eleven, pupils have a sound understanding and competence in using the four rules of number in a range of mathematical situations. Pupils also have a sound understanding of shape, space and measures and data handling.

13. Standards in science are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2.

Standards have improved since the 1996 inspection when pupils' attainment was judged to be below the national expectation. Pupils have well developed scientific skills and scientific knowledge. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the key principles of a fair test. By Year 6 pupils are well aware of the need to consider variables and procedures to ensure a test is fair. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 largely due to the good quality of teaching and interesting activities which motivate the pupils. The balance between teacher-directed work and opportunities for pupils to have a go promotes both scientific knowledge and skills. The consistent use of guiding questions such as "What do we know?" supports pupils' progress and pupils with special educational needs often do as well as the others. Many Year 1 pupils are already at least a year's progress ahead and are working towards Level 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 in acquiring scientific knowledge.

The revisiting of topics ensures that by the end of Year 6, pupils have sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.

14. Standards in information technology meet national expectations. Standards have risen since the 1996 inspection largely due to the higher profile of computers in the classroom and the frequent teaching of specific skills alongside the introduction of new software.

Pupils use computers in most subjects to find out information using CD ROM, to play word and number games, to word process their writing and to handle data. Progress at both key stages is satisfactory but Year 3 pupils' progress is boosted by the specialist expertise of their teacher. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and often good progress when they are assisted by a friend or allowed time to practise their skills. Year 6 pupils have had little opportunity to develop skills in controlling and modelling but the recent purchase of relevant products addresses this gap.

15. In religious education, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those outlined in the Cheshire Agreed syllabus. However, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below expectation, especially in pupils' knowledge of Christianity. In the 1996 inspection report no concern was highlighted over pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school is aware that Year 6 pupils progress during Key Stage 2 has been inconsistent. The curriculum has changed and the school accepts that this may have led to gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall.

16. In art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, standards are generally as expected for pupils' ages at both key stages. The criticism of the 1996 report that pupils were under achieving in art is no longer applicable. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in all subjects but in many lessons, such as in physical education at Key Stage 2, progress is good due to the structured teaching of skills by the co-ordinator.

## **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

17. This is an area of strength. Pupils' attitudes and personal development are good. Standards of behaviour and quality of relationships with others are very good. This contributes to the overall good quality of learning and to pupils' personal and social development. Parents' oral and written comments indicate that this is an area which has improved since the last inspection.

18. Pupils have a good attitude towards their work and are attentive and willing learners in nearly all lessons. Many work hard and are keen to get on with their task. In some lessons however, particularly at Key Stage 2, this compensates for mediocre teaching. Pupils like and enjoy school; they are eager for lessons to start and generally sustain their concentration well, even when the task is routine. They respond very positively to lively teaching and challenges. Year 2 pupils were totally absorbed in guessing the rhymes in "My Uncle Paul of Pimlico" and sat open-mouthed waiting to hear the dictionary definition of "refrain". This high level of involvement continued in group work and pupils made good progress. Even when the pace of the lesson is slow, or some pupils lose concentration, they usually keep "half an ear" and know what is happening. They enjoy finding out and being active. On the one wet lunchtime, pupils in all classes set themselves challenges and concentrated hard on computer and board games such as "Battleships" and "Connect four". The pupils admit to being bored when the work is too much paper-and-pencil. When given a practical task, such as Year 6 pupils deciding their own area to investigate within the topic "Light", their enthusiasm becomes evident. In discussions, pupils are usually confident and willing contributors as they know the teachers will respect and welcome their comments.

19. The personal and social development of children under the age of five is very good. The reception class children have quickly settled into school and acquired good working habits. They know the routines and where things are kept. They choose their own activities and some spend considerable time when building complex structures using construction kits. After only a few weeks, they are confident in going round the school to take the register and have lunch with older pupils. They are generally well behaved and tolerant of others' actions, taking their lead from the teacher and other adults. The children clearly enjoy school and there is much shared news, laughter and smiles.

20. In Key Stages 1 and 2 behaviour in and around the classroom, is very good and contributes much to the quality of learning and the school ethos. Pupils are polite, well mannered and calm and sensible when moving around the school. They are interested and listen carefully to their teachers and classmates. Pupils' self-discipline is good and they follow the school rules. Only when the quality of teaching falls does behaviour sometimes become a problem. On these few occasions, pupils, mainly boys, become very restless, fiddle with items and are blatantly slow to respond to instructions. However, they quickly become involved if their attention is caught and their interest fired. They are also chastened by comments from the headteacher. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

21. Pupils' relationships with each other and the staff are a strength of the school. There is a relaxed atmosphere of mutual respect and ease in each other's company. Pupils show the same high level of respect to visitors and support staff as they do to the headteacher and class teachers. Boys and girls get on well together and the views and opinions of all are respected. Older pupils take care of the younger ones. Year 6 pupils were looking forward to playing games with the reception class children during the wet lunchtime. Pupils work well together, sharing ideas as well as resources sensibly and naturally. They use their reading partners to check their work and help each other with spellings. In literacy hours, and particularly in music and physical education lessons, they co-operate very well in organising, developing and presenting group work. However, in other subjects, pupils have limited opportunities to apply their initiative and decide and organise their own learning.

22.Many school and class activities have a good effect on pupils' personal and social development. In class discussions, many show a good awareness of issues and worthwhile ideas. In conversation with the inspectors, pupils of all ages passed mature, sensible comments about the school and how they felt it could be improved. Although pupils contribute to the running of the school by doing routine tasks such as returning registers to the office, running the tuck shop and preparing the hall for assemblies, their abilities and independence of thought are not as well used in other aspects such as contributing to the management and improvement of the schools, as in a school council.

## 29. **Attendance**

23.Attendance is good and above the national average for primary schools. Pupils' attendance during 1998/9 was 95.5 percent overall and a scrutiny of registers for the autumn term to date shows that the school is on target to achieve a similar result in the current academic year. This maintains the attendance rate at the time of the 1996 inspection. There is no unauthorised absence and authorised absence is mainly due to sickness with a small amount being the result of parents taking children on holiday in term time.

24.Pupils like school and parents confirm that their children like to get there on time. Very few pupils are late for school which enables registration periods to be conducted efficiently and lessons to start promptly.

31.

## 31. **Quality of education provided**

### 31. **Teaching**

25.The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with many good lessons throughout the school and across the curriculum. This contributes well to pupils' positive learning attitudes and to the ethos of the school.

26.Across the school, teaching is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons. It is good in half and very good in one lesson in ten. However the profile of teaching differs in the key stages. For children in the reception class, the quality of teaching is consistently at least good and very good in one lesson in three. At Key Stage 1, the teaching is good in two lessons out of three. The teaching at Year 2 is a strength of Key Stage 1 as lessons are consistently at least good and very good in one in three. At Key Stage 2 the teaching is satisfactory. It is good in just under half of lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged that "many lessons have major shortcomings" at Key Stage 2. The criticisms about merely keeping pupils occupied and lack of confidence in teaching the National Curriculum no longer apply. The one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection foundered on the lack of challenge and unclear organisational procedures.

27.A common strength of the teaching throughout the school is the teachers' conscientious approach and their attention to planning and preparation. They expect the pupils to learn and prepare materials and lessons well. Much planning is very detailed and identifies clearly what pupils are to learn. However, at both key stages the teachers do not build well enough on pupils' skills to manage themselves. There are too few opportunities for pupils to decide how they will organise their learning and develop their own ideas. In music, physical education and design and technology teachers plan tasks for groups to organise and carry out. This is less evident in other subjects.

28. National guidance is being used effectively to plan work in literacy and numeracy and all teachers have a secure understanding of the subject programmes of study in the National Curriculum. The use of computers is integral to most lessons and at Key Stage 1, pupils are encouraged to use the tape recorder. Pupils are being taught skills as needed and a good model is shown in the use of the computer by teachers to print labels and captions for displays and classroom areas.

29. There are strengths in the teaching of English, science, design and technology, and physical education at both key stages. As the music, information technology, religious education and physical education co-ordinators teach their own subjects at Key Stage 2, there is good consistency in approach as well as cumulative development of ideas, skills and knowledge and often high expectations of performance. A good example of this was the work on a sequence of movements using gymnastics apparatus in separate lessons for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils. The teacher's constant tuition on how to perform jumps and turns, his setting of targets and the evaluation of how pupils could improve, ensured that all pupils made good progress and there was evident higher quality in the work of the Year 6 pupils.

30. For children under five, the quality of teaching is good, particularly in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. The teacher has a good understanding of young children and how they learn and her planning provides a useful outline of the sessions led by adults. However, it does not identify clearly what children are to learn from the activities set up around the room. The enthusiasm, ideas and skill of the teacher and nursery nurse in organising and managing the class ensure all children make good progress in these areas. The teacher uses well her expertise in design and technology to develop pupils' skills in joining, constructing and making with a range of materials and tools.

31. The reception class teacher and the nursery nurse work very effectively together and collaborate well with the adults who support children with particular needs. They regularly discuss the children's progress and the teacher uses her knowledge of each child to cajole, encourage or intervene as appropriate. Even when working with a group, she keeps a good watchful eye on all the children and is skilled at bringing things to an end before the children lose interest. She provides a good model of fairness and her quiet authority and warm approach create a positive atmosphere where the children thrive. She and the nursery nurse are skilled at questioning children and in giving them time to think and reply. Good use is made of games and practical activities to foster learning and the teacher is very adept at reviewing what has been done and taking every opportunity to teach. Counting rhymes to organise and settle the children are a good example of this.

32. At Key Stage 1, there are many strengths in the teaching especially in Year 2. The vibrancy of the classroom, the challenge of the activities and the enthusiasm in the teaching ensure that Year 2 pupils find learning fun. The Year 1 and 2 teachers plan themes together and there is good continuity of practice, sharing of ideas and approach. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and encourage pupils to find their own resources and take responsibility in the classroom. Higher attaining pupils are being given suitable challenges in English and mathematics. The teachers are hard-working and prepare well for lessons. Good use is made of class books to record procedures such as pupils' use of the computer and role play areas. The Year 2 teacher's enthusiasm for, and her expertise in, art is well seen in the quality of display and the progress made by the pupils in her class. The teachers mark the pupils' work thoroughly and often use comments and questions to show what pupils need to do next.

33. At Key Stage 2, the teaching is more staid without the sparkle and vitality of Key Stage 1. More experienced staff give good support and advice and this has helped the smooth introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours. However, these do not always have the quick pace needed to really sharpen up pupils' number skills or their awareness of how language works. Pupils are being taught well the "mechanics" of literacy and numeracy. Planning shows attention to targets and learning objectives. The teachers use question and answer sessions effectively to review what pupils know and understand. Thought is given to suitable support materials and one teacher used a well devised sheet to guide Year 4 pupils in their evaluation of the quality of their boxes.

34. There is a warm, relaxed relationship between pupils and their teachers and this allows free exchange of ideas. Praise is used well to reward and to highlight desired response. The music teacher's praise and evaluation of a groups' musical composition boosted the performance of the Year 5 and 6 pupils.

35. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is at least satisfactory and often good, especially when pupils work in small groups away from their own class. The special needs co-ordinator plans lessons for these groups using the targets in pupils' individual education plans. The directed teaching, reference to targets and warm praise ensures pupils make good progress. When with their class however, the teachers do not always take pupils' level of attainment into sufficient account and the challenge is sometimes too high. Pupils then need much support in making sense of the task.

36. Homework is well organised and used to extend and develop the content of lessons. Pupils take their reading bag home often with several books as well as work in spelling, topic and number.

#### **43. The curriculum and assessment**

37. The quality of the curriculum is good, although the Key Stage 2 curriculum lacks the sparkle and dynamism of that at Key Stage 1. The curriculum overall reflects in large part the school's mission statement in its emphasis on pupils' self-motivation and "sense of discovery". The use of topics such as "Ancient Egypt" unifies work well across classes in each key stage and utilises relevant links between subjects. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them effectively for the next stage of education.

38. In rectifying the weaknesses identified in the last inspection the school has improved the quality of curricular provision and ensured that all subjects of the National Curriculum receive at least the recommended minimum teaching time. The teaching of religious education is in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. Sex education and drugs education have been integrated into a well structured programme of personal, social and health education. The Governing Body is now effectively involved in monitoring the curriculum and receives reports from subject co-ordinators.

39. The curriculum for children under five years of age is good. It addresses the six areas of learning recommended nationally and promotes well the children's progress towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes. It is a sound preparation for Key Stage 1 work, especially in literacy and numeracy but also in design and technology, reflecting the class teacher's specialism. Topics are carefully planned, linked to the Desirable Learning Outcomes and effectively monitored to ensure that children make satisfactory progress. Learning through play is valued and there is a good balance of adult-directed as well as child-chosen activities. The literacy and numeracy hours are being introduced and the children have daily access to guided outdoor play, such as using the climbing frame, as well as playtimes

with the Key Stage 1 classes.

40. The assessment of children's attainment on entry to school is well used to plan work for individual children. Members of staff discuss pupils' progress but this is not recorded and there is little to indicate when and how pupils attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes or Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

41. The school offers a good curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 which is generally broad and balanced. Science, design and technology and Information technology, judged to be under-emphasised in the 1996 inspection, are given sufficient time and curriculum focus. Information technology is taught as part of other subjects and time is allocated and used effectively to teach skills and to introduce new programs and functions.

42. At both key stages, the curriculum is planned on an integrated basis alongside literacy and numeracy. In Key Stage 2, art, design and technology, science, history, geography and information technology are taught on a rota system with linking topics and themes. The curriculum at Key Stage 2, however, lacks many of the active practical experiences such as role play in history and word games in English that typify much of the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Subject skills are appropriately identified and taught in a systematic way. At Key Stage 2 the co-ordinators' teaching of music, physical education and religious education provides effective consistency of approach and continuity in skill development.

43. Appropriate time and attention are given to raising standards in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum includes a daily literacy and numeracy hour for each class in line with national requirements. As writing is a school priority this year, additional time has been allocated to lessons in developing pupils' extended writing but it is too early to judge whether this is effective in raising the quality of pupils' work. Members of staff use National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy frameworks to guide their medium- and short-term planning and requirements are met.

44. Standards of planning at Key Stages 1 and 2 are very good and there has been a clear improvement in planning since the last inspection. There are good policies and schemes of work for all subjects and the teachers use a helpful common format for each stage of planning. The better schemes of work identify what should be taught in each year group. This enables teachers to specify intended learning outcomes and to plan specific activities for different groups of pupils. A development since the last inspection is the way the headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning but there is still no systematic monitoring of practice to check what is done or the quality of how it is taught.

45. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and follows the guidance of the Code of Practice. Individual education plans contain a comprehensive range of targets and teachers plan activities which take them into account. This is seen at its best in the work planned by the special needs co-ordinator for small withdrawal groups in literacy and numeracy. When pupils work with the class, the learning support assistants often record their observations of pupils' progress and response. This is very useful in progress reviews and in setting new targets.

46. The school offers a satisfactory range of lunchtime and after-school activities including recorder group, football and netball clubs. Three members of staff and several parents are involved and during the inspection, 28 Key Stage 2 pupils attended sessions. Parents voiced concern that there was very little for Key Stage 1 pupils, although last year pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefited from football coaching from a parent with an appropriate qualification. The school is considering how activities may be widened for all pupils.

47. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting artists and musicians and by visits to museums and art galleries. Older Key Stage 1 pupils go on a residential visit to Delamere Forest

which enhances work in several subjects particularly geography and science. All these aspects contribute well to pupils' cultural and social development.

48. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection. Teachers have worked successfully to put in place comprehensive systems and an appropriate policy to guide their use. Teachers are beginning to record pupils' progress against key indicators in each subject and to identify class and individual strengths and weaknesses in knowledge and understanding. Statutory assessment procedures are met. The comprehensive baseline assessment for children in the reception year gives detailed information on each child's attainment in the six areas of learning and supports the teacher in the early identification of learning needs. However, there is no system to build on this information and track each child's progress in attaining the Desirable Learning Outcomes and subsequent move into National Curriculum work.

49. The school uses a battery of tests from Year 1 onwards to assess pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy and results are analysed to predict attainment at the end of each key stage, to monitor pupils' progress and to set year group and individual targets. These are collated into termly target books which are shared with parents. The school's focus on using assessment evidence to improve curriculum provision and to raise standards is an area of considerable improvement from the last inspection.

50. Co-ordinators are beginning to compile portfolios of assessed and annotated work in their subjects. The art portfolio is a good example to show progress and to indicate levels of expectation for each year group.

51. There is much good practice in assessment but recently introduced individual records of attainment and progress are time consuming and the school is already considering ways to ensure that their completion remains manageable.

## **58. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

52. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has sustained *"the considerable emphasis on the social and moral development of its pupils and the raising of their self-esteem"* highlighted in the previous inspection. The provision for these aspects is very good. This largely accounts for the tangible ethos of care and concern for the school family.

53. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. In art, design and technology, music and physical education pupils are encouraged to consider their work. They judge how effective they have been in working together, the quality of what they have achieved and they suggest ways in which they could improve. In a science lesson, Year 2 pupils showed great delight as they watched a drop of ink make patterns in a tank of water and their reactions grew as they saw the different effects created by a drop of paint. Staff members take time and care in presenting pupils' work and in creating eye-catching displays. The very effective displays, including a section of the rain forest and an Egyptian tomb, make a good contribution to the way pupils reflect on beauty in nature and on their own lives and those of others in different places and times. In religious education lessons and circle times pupils consider the impact of words and values. Key Stage 2 pupils looked at the messages given in the Sermon on the Mount and explained what they felt they meant. Assemblies do not always give similarly good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their beliefs.

54. The moral development of pupils is promoted very well throughout the school. Staff provide good role models in the way they relate to each other and to pupils. School rules are clear, pupils understand them and the school atmosphere is one where pupils are encouraged to choose and know right from wrong. Pupils are asked to consider the effects

of their actions on others, such as how the inappropriate behaviour of one pupil threatens to spoil the enjoyment of the rest. Part of the very good ethos of the school is that pupils want to do what is right. They appreciate the rewards for good behaviour but act correctly because they know that is what is expected of them.



55. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The headteacher has been highly successful in creating a sense of the school as a community in which everybody's contributions are welcomed and valued. Opportunities are provided for pupils to work and play together and the headteacher takes the lead in encouraging pupils to organise themselves and take the initiative, especially at playtime and lunchtime. Less provision is made in lessons. The consistent, friendly and open approach from all teaching and non-teaching staff reinforces pupils' sense of family. There is also a high expectation that pupils will take responsibility for their own belongings such as their lunch boxes and physical education kit. When answering the telephone, showing visitors round the school or discussing their work, pupils are sensible and thoughtful. Tolerance and respect for others is a strength of the school.

56. There is satisfactory provision for the cultural development of pupils. Pupils' awareness of their own cultural heritage is enriched by curriculum topics, music and art work and a series of educational visits. A visit to Warrington Museum enabled pupils to look at toys from the past and to view Ancient Egyptian artefacts. Links with schools in Ireland and Australia provide an insight into the lives of children in other parts of the world. However, pupils' awareness and understanding of other cultures is inconsistent and less well developed than their knowledge of facts. Although pupils study the similarities and differences between western and eastern cultures, faiths and beliefs, many older pupils are unclear about them. Art and music lessons contribute to an understanding of traditions in other cultures as in Indian art and Egyptian music, but there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of ethnic minority groups who live in Britain and pupils are not generally aware of the diversity of the cultures which exist alongside them.

### **63. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

57. Very good provision is made for pupils' support, guidance and personal well-being. Pastoral care is well considered by staff and is a strength of the school's provision. Parents are justified in feeling happy with the levels of support their children receive.

58. The teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and are aware of their academic and personal achievements. The monitoring of academic progress is good; individual pupil profiles, teacher's records and pupils' Records of Achievement are used well to identify pupils who need extra help and to set targets for them. Personal and social education is delivered through discrete lessons, as part of curriculum topics and as part of classroom and school life. Lessons are usually relevant and interesting for the pupils. Good examples were in two Key Stage 1 sessions when pupils wrote their own "ten commandments" and drew their own secrets to put in the "Secrets Box". Personal and social education for the under-fives is very good but other than in the reception class, the school is not monitoring the delivery of personal and social education or recording pupils' progress.

59. Pupils with special educational needs receive sound levels of educational support and provision. Teachers' concerns about individuals are followed up sensitively and parents are consulted. Individual education plans include targets for development and pupils are offered support in the classroom and in withdrawal groups with another teacher.

60. Children under the age of five are well supported by the school. Parents praised the good induction programme which both introduces the children to school and also allows the staff to gain valuable information about the children and their experience. The good links between the school and a local playgroup ensure that the children settle quickly with the minimum of anxiety.

61. Teaching and non-teaching staff manage and promote good behaviour well. The headteacher takes a visible lead in setting high expectations of how pupils will behave. She knows each pupil very well and actively promotes firm, fair discipline whilst showing respect for, and interest in, each pupil as an individual. All adults working in the school provide good role models for pupils. All are consistent in their use of praise and encouragement for work well done and weekly awards are given for effort and attainment. School and class rules are well known to pupils and staff encourage pupils' self-discipline and sense of responsibility. Parents are involved at an early stage when problems arise and the Home/School agreement gives parents clear guidelines on the school's expectations. The pupils say there is little bullying and it is quickly dealt with by staff. Pupils know that it is not acceptable.

62. Although attendance is not a priority, the headteacher is not complacent and keeps track of attendance rates particularly in tracking the effect of absence on pupils' attainment and progress in the short- and long-term.

63. There are clear policies in place for health and safety both in the school as a whole and in the classroom. The health and safety officer works closely with the chair of the Governing Body to ensure that health and safety inspections take place regularly. The site supervisor is conscientious in his duties and responds quickly to any identified hazards such as a board which came away from the school fence. The Local Education Authority has arranged to conduct a risk assessment on behalf of the school. Appropriate arrangements are made for the provision, administration and recording of first aid. The level of knowledge and ability to respond to first aid situations is good. Three members of staff are fully qualified in first aid and one other has received emergency first aid training. Lunchtime supervisors are well briefed and with the support of teachers, uphold the high standards of behaviour expected by the school. Lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions conducted in an orderly atmosphere.

64. Procedures for child protection are efficient and all staff understand their role in the early identification of concerns. The designated teacher is due to participate in further training. Parents are informed of the procedures in the prospectus.

65. Good liaison takes place with the local high school to ensure the smooth transition of Year 6 pupils into Year 7. Good initiatives are the project begun in Year 6 and completed at the high school, joint residential visits and visits for concerts and other events in the high school. Further liaison work is undertaken for those pupils who have a special educational need. The school has access to a range of support services who work with them on behalf of the children.

66. The school has maintained the high standard of provision highlighted in the previous inspection. Staff are to be praised for the time, effort and commitment given by all to ensure that pupils feel happy, confident and secure.

### **73. Partnership with parents and the community**

67. In the last inspection, links with parents, agencies and other institutions were seen as "generally effective". The school has been successful in strengthening the partnership with parents and this aspect of the school's work is very good. The very good links with parents and the community add considerably to pupils' school experience and enhance their attainment, progress and personal development.

68. The school has very good working relationships with parents. This is reflected in the questionnaire responses, especially in how they feel encouraged to play an active part in school life and in finding it easy to approach the school with questions or concerns. Many parents pointed out that they had never had cause to complain and those parents who attended the meeting before the inspection were very positive about the work of the school and the commitment of staff. Parents feel they are made very welcome and that the staff value the support given by parents.

69. Some parents and grandparents help in school giving support in classrooms, with administration work, on visits out of school and with practical activities. The high level of interest from pupils' families, some of whom have had a long association with the school, is shown in the high attendance at events. Parents find the headteacher and staff extremely approachable and appreciate the fact that the school consults parents on issues such as homework. The regular open days to see their children at work in the classrooms, coffee mornings reflecting the school theme, "parent clinics" and parental involvement in the baseline assessment of the reception year children class are all initiatives welcomed by families. Parents are invited to the reviews of their children who have a special educational need. The active Parent Teachers' Association organises many fund-raising and social events which provide valuable support for school projects and equipment.

70. The quality and range of information provided for parents is excellent. The management team and the Governing Body have successfully revamped the prospectus to give a fresh, "this is us" view of the school. It is a professional document which highlights well the school's strengths. Parents were very complimentary about it and parents of children new to the school commented on how "it tells us everything we want to know". This was reflected in their visits to the school when Year 6 pupils acted as guides and answered all questions honestly and freely. They also appreciated the pack of useful, helpful information for children starting school in the reception class.

71. Nine out of ten parents who returned the questionnaire feel the school keeps them well informed about what is taught. All parents have received a copy of the Home/School agreement which has sensible guidelines for them. There are user-friendly booklets on how parents can help their children to read and information on special needs provision. Pupils take menus home so that parents can help them choose their meals for the coming week. Parents' evenings give an opportunity to discuss work in hand and in the summer term, for parents to comment on the annual reports on their children's progress. Parents welcomed the detail about progress made in subjects and the targets for future development. They particularly liked the children's own review of their school year included in last year's report.

72. There are very good links with the local and wider community and the school uses these to good effect to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils visit places of interest to enliven and support curriculum topics. Visits to Wales and Delamere Forest allow the pupils to look at mining and forest life. The school has maintained links with schools in Ireland following last year's literary work as part of "The Irish project", an initiative to strengthen relationships after the bombing of Warrington. The school accommodates a Link Club before and after school and parents appreciate the facility. The reception class teacher maintains close links with the local playgroup and the school has good links with Great Sankey High School. Through the Internet, the school has established links with an Australian school. Pupils support local and national charities including St. Joseph's Family Centre to which pupils donated Christmas toy hampers. Whilst there are some links with local industry and commerce, these have still to be explored fully.

## The management and efficiency of the school

### 79. Leadership and management

73. The quality of leadership and management is very good. As highlighted in the 1996 inspection, the headteacher provides strong leadership and is the driving force behind the changes and improvements made. The parents acknowledged this in comments on questionnaires and at the parents' meeting. They also rightly commented on the professional and dedicated approach of all staff. The positive stance taken by all, but particularly by the Governing Body, has ensured very good improvement since the last inspection and also places the school in a good position to continue to improve.

74. A management strength is the active, critical role played by the governors of the school. They are interested, committed and highly aware of their responsibilities. They have a clear view of the school's position and how they wish it to be. Governors bring specialist expertise and business acumen which is being used profitably in structuring the work of the Governing Body and also in realising initiatives. The work done to revamp the school prospectus and to market the school is a good example of this as is the "sponsored management" where individual governors are twinned with subject and school co-ordinators. This has successfully addressed not only the criticism that the headteacher carried "*too much of the burden of the school's management*" but also the key issue of the need for governors and co-ordinators to have training that would enable them "*to play a more significant role in the further development of the school*". As then, several of the governors are new to their post, but the Vice Chair of the Governing Body has compiled a comprehensive training schedule to support governors in their management position. The committee structure is highly effective and all legal responsibilities are met.

75. The quality of strategic planning and management is very good. The headteacher and governors share a common vision for the school. The three-year School Development Plan addresses all aspects of the school's work and provides a good framework for action. However, key long- and short-term points for development are not clearly prioritised nor are they linked to aims or to targets for academic attainment. How the school is working to achieve aspirations, such as spreading good practice in teaching, is not evident from current plans.

76. The involvement of all subject co-ordinators in school development planning and the compilation of their own action plans has ensured a shared approach to school improvement and also consensus, given the tight financial position, over spending priorities. The headteacher takes the lead in devising and structuring programmes and, as less experienced staff become more confident in their co-ordinator roles, has appropriately shifted the emphasis from support to monitoring. Her recent work in upgrading and devising additional procedures to monitor and analyse pupils' attainment and progress provides a good springboard for continued improvement especially in identifying how to raise standards and the quality of provision. Although there has been some monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher and literacy co-ordinator, other co-ordinators have yet to undertake this role. This is appropriately identified as a school development priority for the year.

77. All the six key issues from the last inspection have been addressed. The governors have agreed a policy on sex education, teacher appraisal procedures are in place and the curriculum has been broadened with information technology given a higher amount of emphasis. Only two teachers and the headteacher were at the school in 1996. Astute appointments have brought a “freshness” (Governing Body comment), have strengthened the quality of teaching at both key stages, but especially for Year 2 pupils, and given a boost to curriculum development particularly in literacy and the use of information technology. Standards in 1999 were considerably higher than in 1995 but the school is very aware of the need to exercise caution as their monitoring highlights differences in cohorts and indicates that the 1999 results are high compared with predicted outcomes for 2000.

78. The headteacher takes a highly visible role in the day-to-day management of the school. Her appreciative, warm and open manner is much praised by parents who also value her consistent stance in promoting and maintaining pupils’ good manners, self-discipline and awareness of the school code of conduct. This contributes in large part to the positive ethos of the school. Pupils know they come to school to learn but that they are also part of the Park Road family where care and concern for others are also important. This is a strength of the school and rightly valued by parents and pupils alike.

79. The management of the provision for children under five is good. The reception class teacher is working to improve the quality of the curriculum and conscientiously monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of her work. General points for improvement are included in the school development plan but these are not specifically linked to raising standards.

80. The management and administration of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The special needs co-ordinator is thorough and meticulous in keeping records updated and in monitoring the progress of pupils in meeting the targets in their individual education plans. Similar plans and targets are now being proposed for higher attaining pupils. This is a worthwhile initiative arising from the senior management staff’s monitoring and evaluation of the school’s effectiveness in raising academic standards.

81. The school is working to implement its mission statement. *“Children’s enthusiasm, motivation and sense of discovery”* are more evident as *“key routes to learning”* in the reception class and at Key Stage 1. However, the school’s 15 aims are being met in large part. The school is very successful in providing equal opportunities for all pupils and in fostering their personal development and aspects of spiritual development. Many pupils do *“love learning in all its forms”*. Governors, staff and parents accept that there is still some way to go to achieve *“the highest standards possible”* but see this as a developing trend.

## **88. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

82. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers for the number of pupils on roll and to meet the demands of the National Curriculum, religious education and pupils with special educational needs. There have been several changes since the last inspection and there is a good blend of experienced and more recently qualified staff. The teacher of the children under five has no specific qualification in early years education but has attended courses and has expertise in teaching this age group. At Key Stage 2, the information technology, religious education, music and physical education co-ordinators teach their specialist subject to all classes. Key Stage 1 staff teach the whole curriculum with some music support from a visiting pianist.

83. Newly qualified teachers and those new to the school receive good induction and support from other staff. Subject co-ordinators work well with colleagues in planning the curriculum.

84. A fully qualified nursery nurse works with the children under five and another supports pupils with statements of special educational need as well as pupils who are receiving additional literacy support.

85. The number of hours worked by the administrative staff is low for a school of its size but the permanent and temporary staff contribute much to the smooth running of the school and all support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed, receive appropriate training and bring a high level of personal commitment to their work. They work with the pupils, conscientiously record their observations and are very well involved in the direct support of pupils. The good quality of this support makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Parent helpers are used in a variety of roles including support in classrooms and organising the school library.

86. Professional development opportunities for staff are good. The headteacher holds regular staff development interviews to ensure that arrangements meet the needs of individuals and the school. Arrangements for the appraisal of teachers are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has linked professional development to the School Development Plan and recent emphasis has appropriately been on training staff to implement the literacy and numeracy strategies.

87. The accommodation provides sufficient space for the pupils on roll and is adequate for the delivery of the full range of the National Curriculum. The school building and grounds are attractive, clean and very well maintained. The site manager takes pride in his work and his presence and high profile around the site adds to the school's homely atmosphere.

88. The school has addressed a number of issues raised about the indoor and outdoor accommodation in the previous inspection report. Children under five have access to a small enclosed, secure courtyard which is suitable for many outdoor group activities including sand and water play in dry weather. The central covered courtyard area now houses the Link club as well as providing some storage and a vast "display window" which allows staff to create theme displays on a grand scale which are appreciated by parents and pupils alike. Outside, the school has pleasant grassed areas as well as hard play surfaces and a bark playground area. New recreational pathways lined with trees have been constructed and pupils use the landscaped areas and safe balancing equipment during lunchtime breaks. There is appropriate access for disabled pupils although steps have to be negotiated at the main entrance.

89. The range and quality of learning resources for each subject is satisfactory and is increased and updated in line with school development priorities and also as funds allow. Resources are well maintained, clearly labelled and easily accessible. Recent book purchases have provided a good range of books by well known children's authors and these are tastefully presented in "book baskets" in classrooms. The library has a limited stock. There is a good sufficiency of reading books to support group reading sessions in the literacy hour and staff have made many support materials for this and the numeracy hour. School resources are supplemented by loans from the Local Education Authority. Good use is also made of visits to places of interest to extend curriculum coverage.

90. The number and quality of computers are good. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the number of computers. Each class now has at least two computers although these are of different types and are not all compatible. The seating and arrangements of keyboards and monitors is unsatisfactory. Whilst younger pupils are too low, older pupils have little room for their legs and are often looking sideways at the computer screen.

#### **97. The efficiency of the school**

As at the time of the 1996 inspection, the overall efficiency is good and the resources available are managed well.

91. Financial management of the budget is good. Financial planning and control are good and governors use their professional expertise well to evaluate cost effectiveness. The headteacher and members of the governors' finance committee have a good strategic view of the financial implications of educational decisions. They have considered options and managed effectively and prudently the problems caused by recent budget reductions. To maintain staffing last year, the school drew heavily on its small reserve funds. Governors have reluctantly cut staffing this year and are carefully monitoring spending trends. They are highly conscious of the low contingency fund available but are looking at ways to ensure this increases over the next few years. The budget is appropriately linked to the School Development Plan and governors receive regular reports from curriculum and school co-ordinators to update them on progress.

92. The day-to-day financial administration of the school is well managed by the headteacher. All recommendations made in the last audit report from the local authority have been addressed.

93. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is being used appropriately to meet their needs in class and in small withdrawal groups where the work is well focussed on the targets in their individual education plans. Funds raised by parents and the rent received from organisations which use the buildings out of school hours are used well to support the purchase of resources and overall costs.

94. The secretary has streamlined systems and procedures and during her absence, temporary staff were ably maintaining these and the day-to-day running of the school was smooth and efficient.

95. The Governing Body's appointment of a governor to co-ordinate training needs, as recommended in the previous inspection report, has greatly increased the governors' understanding of their role and their effectiveness in carrying it out.

96. Teaching staff are well deployed with strength in the reception class, Year 2 and Year 6. The decision to operate a "carousel system" at Key Stage 2 on two afternoons allows subject co-ordinators to draw on their subject expertise in teaching across the key stage. This is largely effective and is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. The administration of special educational needs is effective and support staff are well deployed to support pupils with particular needs. Their presence and support often benefits other pupils too.

97. The well maintained accommodation is generally used effectively to enhance pupils' education. The central hall is particularly well used for class drama and discussion as well as physical education, games, assemblies and lunch. However, this often precludes pupils using the library in the hall for independent research and browsing. The enclosed outdoor courtyard is used very effectively by the reception class for activities such as water play, climbing frame use and number games. Shared areas and corridors are used well for displays, book areas and the storage of resources but these are not always used to the full as part of planned work areas.

98. The school provides good value for money given its average funding and achievements. Pupils enter school with attainment close to the average. Although the number of free school meals is low compared with the national average, pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds. They leave school with levels of attainment which meet national expectations in most subjects. Last year, standards in English and mathematics were higher for Year 6 pupils than in most other schools. Satisfactory progress is made by most pupils. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally very good. Teaching is usually satisfactory and sometimes good. The provision for moral and social development is very good and the school enjoys a very good relationship with parents and the local community.



## 106. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

### Areas of learning for children under five

99. At the time of the inspection 27 of the 30 children in the reception class were under the age of five. The class were in their third full week after an initial programme of part-time attendance. Most have had some experience of pre-school education and on starting school, the children's attainment is average for their age. A small number are above average with a good level of general knowledge and a good command of language. Inspection evidence including a scrutiny of the previous year's work indicates that the majority of children make at least satisfactory progress in all six areas of learning. By the age of five, and certainly by the end of the reception year, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes especially in language and literacy and mathematics. A small number of children get off to a really good start in reading, writing and number and at five, they are already working towards, or are at, Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Very little was included in the 1996 inspection report on the work of the under-fives making it difficult to assess improvement, but good standards in personal and social development have been sustained.

#### Personal and social development.

100. By the age of five, many have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes and show a mature attitude to school. Even though the children had been in school only a short time they were very happily settled and had made good progress in getting used to the class routines. They enjoy their days and look forward to what is coming next. They are very pleased to "earn the owl" (taking care of a toy bird for the rest of the session) for sitting still or for concentrating hard. All have made good progress in developing confidence to speak out before the class or to choose and record their own activities from the range available. They play happily alongside or with others and tolerate well occasional temper outbursts from one or two children. Three girls created their own "follow-the-leader" sequence on the climbing frame and had much fun as they did so. Most of the children are independent and take care of their own personal needs. They tidy away without fuss and help each other put away boxes in trolleys. Relationships are very good and the children are open and friendly to each other, their teachers and visitors.

101. The quality of the teaching and provision is good. The teacher and nursery nurse have high expectations of the children's behaviour and ability to cope. Their calm, warm approach as well as use of praise, encouragement and firm insistence on compliance with class rules, has ensured a welcoming, smooth start to school for all the children. Children who find it hard to play and be in a group are given clear criteria for their behaviour and the use of "time-out" is proving very effective in helping one child to settle and to behave appropriately.

109.

#### Language and literacy

102. The children are making good progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Most are on target to attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five and certainly by the end of the reception year. The children listen attentively and appreciatively to stories on tape or told by an adult and often offer their own opinions and experiences. They know several rhymes and songs and join in when phrases are repeated such as "*but they couldn't pull it up*". Many are articulate, confident speakers with a good knowledge of words. When inspecting the teeth of an inspector, one "Park Road dentist" gave a lengthy, lucid explanation of how to brush teeth. Children who have English as an additional language make good progress in acquiring and using new words

103.All the children make at least satisfactory progress in naming the characters in the school reading scheme and many are recognising words on sight. They handle books appropriately and use the pictures to tell the story, occasionally pointing to a word they know. Several have made rapid progress in learning to copy or write their name and simple words independently and also to name correctly letters and their sounds.

104.The quality of teaching and provision is good and has a positive impact on the children's interest and progress in reading and writing. The literacy hour has been introduced and good use is made of jigsaws, games and other practical activities, such as forming letters in dough, to develop and consolidate the children's awareness of letters and words. The nursery nurse's questioning and use of a story bag with replica characters and items helped a group of children to retell "The enormous watermelon" with increasing accuracy. Although information gained from the baseline assessment is being used to plan work there is no on-going system to record children's progress in language and literacy.

112.  
**development**

**Mathematical**

105.By the age of five most children have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes and many are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum especially in number. Many children already count to ten accurately and count much higher than this with adult support. They know that zero comes before one and that six is one more than five. They confidently recognise numbers to five and many are working happily with numbers to ten. When doing a number jigsaw, two girls constantly checked their number against a number frieze and counted and recounted to make sure. The children know their colours, recognise and name correctly basic shapes and sort, match and order items to their own or imposed criteria. A scrutiny of work from last year shows that the children compiled a graph to show the number of different shoe fastenings in the class and compared their length when born with their current height. By the end of the reception year, many are recording simple sums using addition, subtraction and equivalence signs.

106.The quality of teaching and provision is good. The teacher is following the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy and takes every opportunity to use number as part of on-going class life and topics. Good use is made of practical, interesting activities such as throwing the requisite number of bean bags into a hoop to reinforce the children's awareness of numbers and their value. Opportunities are missed to record observations of children's progress and attainment at such times.

**Knowledge and understanding of the world.**

107.This is an area of strength. A scrutiny of last year's work shows the children experience a good range of topics which promote at least satisfactory progress towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes. By the end of the reception year, the children have had a good introduction to aspects of science and design and technology and most have attained all of the Desirable Learning Outcomes.

108.The children develop a sense of time passing through looking at the journal compiled by children who take home Rosie, the toy rabbit, for the weekend and looking at photographs to see how they have changed since they were a baby. They observe the turn of the seasons and use a magnifying glass to look at leaf veins and patterns. In making vehicles to transport a teddy the children incorporated axles, pulling strings and, after testing, seat belts. Appropriate skills in cutting, folding and joining are fostered and children learn to use a variety of tools safely. They operate the tape recorder to listen to stories and use the computer mouse confidently to click on icons to turn the pages in an animated story or press arrows to move through a maze.

109. The quality of teaching is good. A strength is the increasing focus on posing questions and problems to be solved. Last year, the children had to find a hole in a bottle and then decide how to mend it. Such experiences are highly effective in fostering investigation and observation skills as well as a growing awareness of the characteristics of materials. Although the indoor and outdoor areas are used quite well, such as the bulb planted border, to arouse the children's curiosity, insufficient is done to ensure fresh challenges are introduced to displays and theme areas such as the dentist's surgery.

117.

**117. Physical development**

110. At five, the children have achieved the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Most are well coordinated in their movements and show a good awareness of space. When moving round the classroom they are careful not to stand on items on the floor and to carry items sensibly. When playing outside they run, skip and jump confidently and many can kick and throw a ball towards a partner. They follow the rules when playing games. Many climb higher than their height on the climbing frame without showing concern. They make good progress in competently handling tools such as pencils and scissors, and in manipulating small items dexterously. A group of six children had little difficulty in shaping dough to make the letters in their name or in placing small figures on a model roundabout.

111. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory. Good use is made of the courtyard to set up climbing and scrambling equipment. Appropriate consideration is being given to the development of outdoor play using wheeled toys and other resources. A structured programme of physical education lessons supports the children's development in moving to music and using gymnastics apparatus.

119.

**development**

**Creative**

112. The children make satisfactory progress and by the end of the reception year, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Work from last year shows that the children enjoyed a range of experiences in art, music and imaginative play. They were taught different techniques such as colour mixing used when painting their teddy's portrait and also looked at the work of Matisse. Their own work shows a developing awareness of features, detail and proportion. They can clap a steady beat when led by an adult and know the names of several percussion instruments and different ways to play them. In their play, they create involved scenarios using different voices and characters. In some situations, they incorporate characters from stories heard.

113. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory. The teacher and nursery nurse work together to provide a range of creative experiences. However, the art and craft work area lacks stimulus and a well planned focus for the children's daily attention. Opportunities are missed to record children's progress in using materials and in expressing their own ideas creatively.

## 121. English, mathematics and science

### 121. English

114. In the 1999 national tests, the percentage of pupils who reached Level 2, as expected for their age, in reading and writing was in line with the national average. One in four pupils reached the higher Level 3 in reading and one in eight in writing. This was better than the national average. Just over half of pupils however, are in the early stages of writing. Their Level 1 and low Level 2 attainment brings the overall results to below average when compared with similar schools. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection. The work of the current Year 2 pupils indicates that pupils are on line to achieve similar standards.

115. In the 1998 Key Stage 2 national test in English, only one in two pupils reached the level expected for their age. This was well below the national average. Standards rose in 1999 when four out of five pupils reached Level 4 as expected for their age and one in four reached the higher Level 5. The school achieved its target for Level 4 attainment and overall results were well above the national average. Inspection evidence shows however, that standards are not as high this year. Pupils' reading is better than their writing.

116. At the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, standards in speaking and listening are good and pupils make satisfactory progress. This would appear to be an improvement since the last inspection when pupils were judged to be under-achieving. In all subjects, at work and at play, most are confident, fluent conversationalists and well able to explain, describe and justify their point of view. They listen carefully to stories, explanations and instructions and even Year 1 pupils evaluate the effectiveness of others' talks and comments. This has a positive effect on their learning across the curriculum. Year 3 pupils talked enthusiastically about their work on Egyptians and Year 6 pupils gave clear explanations of how they had tackled a problem in design and technology. Pupils are encouraged to give their opinions and this has a positive impact on the quality of discussion in group reading times. Parents commented favourably on the quality of the talks given by Year 6 pupils in their final assembly in the summer term.

117. Standards in reading are good. At the age of five, most pupils are showing interest in books and reading a few words on sight. By seven, pupils read fluently, accurately and often with good expression. They tackle new texts confidently and use letter knowledge and the sense of the passage to work out unfamiliar words. Many have a good awareness of word patterns and use this well in their spelling. Pupils are also familiar with non-fiction books and know how to use the index and contents pages to find a particular subject. Year 2 pupils found key facts about Florence Nightingale in the collection of books on display. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils cope equally well with fiction and non-fiction texts. This enhances their work across the curriculum. They read aloud with accuracy, good phrasing and characterisation; they appreciate humour and inference and summarise succinctly story-lines and plots.

118. Pupils make good progress in reading at both key stages. This is enhanced by the willingness of parents to hear their children read regularly and by the pupils' enthusiasm for books. At Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in recognising words on sight and in using their knowledge of words and stories to predict meanings and events in stories. Year 1 pupils already talk about the blurb on the back cover of a book and show satisfactory progress in realising story structure, rhymes and the effect of punctuation, such as ellipsis, when reading aloud. A particular strength is the development of pupils' understanding and appreciation of the story content. When choosing their own books, Year 2 pupils tackle quite difficult texts including biographies, poems and stories.

119. Year 3 pupils' progress is enhanced by the high literary focus of their teacher. They make good progress in reading a range of fiction and non-fiction and in recognising author style and use of language. Year 4 pupils showed well refined skills in discussing books and their merits. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory but slower progress. They too develop a good awareness of story content.

120. Standards in writing are satisfactory overall but spelling is good. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach the level expected for their age. Pupils write independently, often at length. The higher attaining pupils draw well on their reading and their stories show imaginative ideas and fluency of expression. However, the accuracy and use of punctuation is not as secure. Pupils also know the format of invitations, letters and reports and draft some of their work. A few pupils are beginning to join their writing and to use techniques such as capital letters to show emphasis. Pupils know how to use simple word processing and can edit, save and print their work.

121. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' writing is well organised, often with a good turn of phrase. The book "Redfire", written by groups of Year 6 and 5 pupils last year, was of a good standard. The chapters flowed well and echoed the style of Alan Garner. However, the work of the current Year 6 pupils does not have the same literary quality and liveliness. Their newspaper reports show a good understanding of layout and structure. Pupils draft, review and edit their work. They are familiar with desktop publishing functions and know how to create borders, insert pictures and alter font style to suit their purpose. Pupils have a good knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling rules and many apply them well in their writing. They write legibly but handwriting styles vary considerably and the quality of presentation is inconsistent.

122. Progress in writing is satisfactory at both key stages. Pupils develop a good knowledge of different forms of writing such as Year 1 pupils' instructions on how to make a fruit salad and Year 4 pupils' biographies of Tutankhamun. However, higher attaining pupils' progress is slowed by the lack of directed teaching in how to improve their work through the use of punctuation and the development of ideas. This is more marked at Key Stage 1. Most pupils make good progress in spelling, They have a go at spelling unfamiliar words and use well the knowledge gained from literacy hours to identify spelling patterns. Year 2 pupils sorted out verbs which take "ed" in the past tense and Year 3 pupils suggested spelling rules to explain why some take "ied". Pupils make good progress in appreciating the links between reading and writing. They refer to what they have read as they write and use appropriate terminology to talk about language structures. Year 5 pupils correctly referred to adverbial commas and their use. Higher attaining Year 5 pupils have made good progress and their work is already of a good standard.

123. Pupils like English. They very much enjoy reading on their own or with others, and younger pupils join in group reading with enthusiasm. Year 1 pupils relished making the sounds to accompany "Polar bear, polar bear, what do you hear?". Pupils willingly chat about their books and share humorous passages. They recommend favourites and are quite critical of their own reading skills. Occasionally pupils' concentration and behaviour slip when class sessions are over-long or when they are not clear as to what they must do. They usually try hard to finish their work. A group of older pupils with special educational needs were keen to improve their handwriting and concentrated really hard over a period of 30 minutes to keep the letters uniform and joined correctly.

124. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but is often good or very good in Year 2. Here, the teacher's enthusiasm, challenging questions and activities ensure that pupils' interest is fired and they make good progress in many lessons. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are many good lessons. Even so, teaching lacks the vitality and buzz of many of the Key Stage 1 literacy hours. Teachers' knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy is generally secure and they plan well for the daily literacy hour. Enlarged texts are used well to highlight aspects of grammar, punctuation and style. A good range of literature is used including Shakespeare, classic poems such as Blake's "The silk rose", myths and legends. The 1998/9 project on Celtic folk tales allowed class, group and individual work over a period of time and allowed the co-ordinator to work with pupils to develop their ideas and re-draft and edit their chapters. The teachers make effective use of computers to support reading, spelling and writing.

125. A strength of teachers' marking is the good quality of their comments and targets for improvement. Some of the best support was seen in the responses by the English co-ordinator to pupils' journal entries. All staff value pupils' work and class books are presented attractively. Many teachers take time and care to organise their room and support pupils' learning. The Key Stage 1 classrooms are a rich literate environment and the Year 2 central book display gives reading a high profile. In all year groups, homework is used effectively to extend work in reading, spelling and comprehension.

126. The school meets the statutory requirements of the English curriculum. The co-ordinator has monitored the impact of the literacy hour and has a good understanding of relevant areas for improvement such as developing pupils' writing skills. Systems to track attainment are now in place although there is no portfolio of writing from across the curriculum to assist teachers in attributing an attainment level. Past work on widening the range of literature and identifying clear targets for progress has been successful in raising standards.

## **Mathematics**

127. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in improving standards of attainment in mathematics. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of number, shape, algebra and data handling. Good use is made of assessment information to set targets for improvement.

128. The 1999 national test results are close to the national average for Key Stage 1 and well above the national average at Key Stage 2. Nine out of ten pupils reached Level 4 as expected for their age and three out of ten reached the higher Level 5. The school far exceeded its target for attainment. The results represent a significant improvement from the average and below average levels of attainment identified by the previous inspection. They also show a marked improvement on the 1998 test results when standards were well below that found both nationally and in similar schools. A scrutiny of the work of the 1999 cohort indicates that a key factor in the improvement is the good quality, highly focused teaching by the Year 6 teacher during the school year.

129. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average at Key Stage 1. The rigorous focus on mental arithmetic is having a significant effect on raising pupils' attainment, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1. Many pupils are secure in understanding place value to one hundred and add and subtract numbers correctly to twenty. Most pupils make paired numbers to ten and add three numbers to make twenty. Investigative tasks are an integral part of the curriculum and challenge pupils' mathematical thinking. Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of shape, space and measures. They recognise a good range of shapes including prisms, cuboids and cones. Most pupils are on course to attain Level 2 by

the end of the key stage.

130. Most pupils' attainment meets the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2. By Year 6, pupils are confident with decimal numbers; they understand and use mean, mode and median when handling data and have a satisfactory facility with multiplication and division. The investigational approaches apparent in pupils' work from last year is very effective. Pupils undertake varied, imaginative tasks, and devise their own recording methods.

131. Progress through the key stage is satisfactory and in some lessons it is good, with teaching well focused on specific needs and work well matched to extend or support different groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make sound progress. The school is taking positive steps to boost pupils' numerical skills after identifying this as an area for improvement. The increasing use of 'quick-fire' questions to assist the recall of number facts, and the use of more whole-class teaching and consolidation through group and individual work is having a positive impact. Year 3 pupils are making satisfactory progress in investigating odd and even numbers and higher attaining pupils see pattern and relationships. Year 5 pupils show sound skills of calculation when devising equivalent calculations for given procedures.

132. Pupils' attitudes are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. In one very good Year 2 lesson, pupils worked very well together on collaborative tasks and showed great respect for their classmates when they explained their findings. In one lesson at lower Key Stage 2, pupils became restless when the teacher's introduction was overlong and they remained unsure of their tasks. Sometimes as pupils move to their tables from class sessions on the carpet they can be noisy. Behaviour is good overall. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils remained on task, shared a genuine curiosity and adopted a problem-solving approach as they used Carroll diagrams to handle their own data. Pupils take good care of resources and co-operate well together when working in pairs.

133. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching at both key stages. Teachers show good subject knowledge in their lesson planning and in their careful expositions and probing questions. Clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils. The teachers manage the pupils well and relationships are warm. Most lessons are brisk. In one very demanding Year 2 session, the teacher kept up the pace for the full numeracy hour. Teachers often prepare their own resources. Classroom support staff are well briefed and effectively deployed. Day-to-day observations and assessments enable teachers to identify pupils' next steps in learning. Marking is thorough with many positive comments but not all teachers offer suggestions as to how pupils can improve their work. Homework often supports and extends the work done in class. This has a positive effect on promoting standards in numeracy and is well supported by parents.

134. The curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy. Appropriate emphasis and time are given to all aspects of mathematics but opportunities are missed to promote pupils' application of their knowledge and skills in other subjects. The co-ordinator, with the support of the headteacher, is providing purposeful leadership and direction but has insufficient time and opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on standards. Appropriate documentation is in place and assessment opportunities are made clear in planning. Assessment is good and pupils' progress is carefully tracked and recorded.

135. Computers are used consistently to support work in mathematics.

## Science

Teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils' attainment in 1999 were above the national average. Nearly all pupils reached Level 2, as expected for their age, and one in three attained the higher Level 3. This was also above the national average. These results largely sustain the standard of the previous year. Pupils do well in all aspects of science.

136. Pupils' results overall in the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests were in line with the national average but well below the average for similar schools. This is due to the relatively low percentage of pupils who achieve a higher standard than expected for their age. Eight out of ten pupils reached Level 4 as expected for their age. Just under two out of ten reached the higher Level 5, whereas in similar schools the average was one in three. Standards have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be below the national expectation and pupils were underachieving.

137. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are on target to achieve the national expectation at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, the attainment of many of the present Year 2 pupils is already higher than expected for their age and indicates a possible increase in Level 3 attainment.

138. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have well developed scientific knowledge and skills. They accurately identify the main parts of a plant such as the stem, petals and leaves. They name the major organs of the body and know where they are located. Year 2 pupils have conducted simple investigations such as finding out which member of a group can jump up and down the most often. They understand that to make the test fair, they had to give each person exactly the same time to complete the experiment. Similarly, when pupils dropped ink and paint into a tank of water, they carefully measured the amount of liquid to make sure it was the same. Pupils predict, record and evaluate their findings.

139. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have deepened their knowledge of physical and life processes and have refined their investigative skills. They identify the constituent parts of a flower including the stigma and anther, and look at the characteristics of different habitats such as a pond or river and describe and categorise the animals that live in them. In devising their own investigations, Year 6 pupils sensibly predicted how beams of light would react when shone onto a mirror. Higher attaining pupils suggested hypotheses and ways in which they could set up an experiment which would prove or disprove their ideas. All pupils were aware of the need to consider variables such as the distance from a torch. Pupils know that some micro-organisms are needed to produce some foods, such as yeast in bread making but that other organisms make food go mouldy and food must be refrigerated to prevent this from happening.

140. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall in extending their knowledge about scientific processes and how to carry out investigations. This is enhanced, particularly at Key Stage 1 by the consistent use of guiding questions including "What do we know?" and "How are we going to find out?". Pupils make good progress in many Key Stage 1 lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress at both key stages, and often good progress in practical sessions when they talk about their findings. Progress is also supported by the revisiting of topics and the links with themes. Key Stage 1 pupils investigated materials as part of work related to the tale of "The three little pigs".



141. Year 1 pupils are already working towards Level 2. They recognise that when they move in different ways they will use different parts of their body and they identify and classify animals which walk on four or two legs. Year 3 pupils are building on the knowledge gained last year on how to keep healthy. They know that sugar can have a detrimental effect on our teeth but when looking at labels on food products, they began to recognise that sugar may be called by other names such as glucose or sucrose. In Years 4 and 5, pupils consolidate and extend their understanding of aspects including electrical circuits, friction and the effect of exercise on the body. They carry out investigations and develop a clearer awareness of the need to control the variables, such as measuring the pulse rate before and after exercise, to ensure it is a fair test.

142. Pupils' response to science is good and they particularly enjoy practical work. At such times, their level of concentration is high and many get very animated and enthusiastic. In the lessons observed they listened carefully to the teacher and were eager to answer questions and to try things out for themselves. Older pupils comment that they find sessions tedious when "the teacher talks and then we just write". In lessons seen however, all pupils followed instructions carefully and shared resources well.

143. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The weak teaching at Key Stage 2 highlighted in the last inspection is no longer a concern. Teaching strength at Key Stage 1 lies in the practical activities which catch the pupils' interest well. The Year 2 teacher's demonstration of how to use a pipette, her organisation of groups with adult helpers and her clear revision of a prediction, resulted in good progress for all pupils. Although there is good structured teaching at Key Stage 2, occasionally insufficient guidance or examples are given to ensure that all pupils understand fully what they have to do and progress slows. Teaching is often staid with too little focus on pupils finding out for themselves.

144. The co-ordinator has an appropriate action plan to raise standards and improve the quality of provision. The scheme of work is carefully designed to give assistance to teachers as well as covering all areas required by the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has emphasised the importance of investigations but more could be done to ensure the use of information technology to investigate, record, analyse and present findings. Samples of pupils' work, which have been matched to National Curriculum standards, are available to help teachers assess pupils' level of attainment.

### **153. Other subjects or courses**

#### **153. Information technology**

At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. A substantial number of pupils have access to a computer at home and many are skilled in using the keyboard, roaming through programs and using the Internet. Attainment is much higher than reported in the last inspection and is largely due to the higher profile of information technology across the curriculum, the improvement in staff confidence in teaching it, and the way the subject is now organised and taught.

145. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use the tape recorder confidently to listen to music and stories. Most pupils produce creditable designs using a computer program which allows them to repeat their work. They design a pattern, save their work and choose how to change it when they re-load it. They word process stories and poems and use the mouse to click on icons to change the font and colour. They are confident in scrolling through CD-ROM programs to animate characters and also to explore the lives of people in different

146. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce interesting posters, logos and articles and combine pictures with text on the computer screen. They put text into a newspaper format and change the style of print to match headlines, sub-headings and text. They insert pictures and save files and folders. Having entered information into a data processing program they have produced different graphs. Last year, Year 5 and 6 pupils' book "Redfire" was produced using computer print and graphics. A weakness in pupils' attainment is their limited skills in using the computer and other equipment to control other things and to ask "What if ... ?" questions using simulation packages. The school has now acquired relevant programs and equipment such as programmable toys and teachers' planning indicates that Year 6 pupils will have experience of using them by the end of the key stage.

147. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in developing skills and knowledge of how to operate programs and equipment. Pupils with special educational needs often do as well as the others especially when assisted by their peers or when allowed to practise their skills. Year 3 pupils make good progress due to the particular expertise of their teacher. Year 1 pupils load disks onto computers independently. They use a weather recording program accurately and control the story of "The Jolly Postman" using the computer mouse to click on the page turning icon. Year 3 pupils explore the world of the Tudors as they work through a computer program which enables them plan a route round a town. By Year 5, pupils confidently move around a research program to help them discover that micro-organisms, like bacteria, can be helpful or harmful.

148. Key Stage 2 pupils are being introduced to the Internet and how to use e-mail. A contact with an Australian school has enabled pupils to send and receive messages.

149. Pupils enjoy working with the computers and other resources. They were pleased to have the opportunity to try various programs during a wet lunchtime. They work well together, help each other, share tasks sensibly and behave appropriately even when they are not directly supervised. They treat the equipment with care.

150. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The teaching is largely incidental as pupils work on the computers. Some effective teaching in Key Stage 2 is given by the subject co-ordinator when she works with different classes. Staff are fairly confident in using computers and in most lessons ensure that pupils are using the computers for related work. Records are kept of pupils' use of machines and familiarity with programs but there is no systematic analysis of pupils' progress in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge.

151. There is a good scheme of work for the subject and the school is using national guidance to review its curriculum. The co-ordinator provides valued support and advice to colleagues. There are a variety of computers in school, some networked but most free standing. Several are old and have limited programs. However, all the computers are used efficiently although the seating, height and placement of the equipment is often unsatisfactory.

161.

### 161. Religious education

Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Progress at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. However, progress has been unsatisfactory for the present Year 6 pupils whose attainment falls below expectations in their knowledge and understanding of religious stories and personalities, in particular about Christianity. No judgement on standards at Key Stage 2 was given in the last inspection but pupils'

knowledge and understanding were not highlighted as a concern.

152. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop an appreciation of different religions and of common aspects such as prayer, values and religious symbols. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils respond thoughtfully and honestly to questions such as "How can I be helpful?". Pupils know that the Bible is made up of the Old and the New Testaments, that Jesus performed miracles and that Moses is a special person in Judaism. They know that whilst Christians worship in a church, where ceremonies such as baptisms take place, Jews worship in a synagogue.

153. Key Stage 2 pupils build on this knowledge and develop a greater understanding of differing religions and the beliefs of religious followers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils argue a moral point well when discussing the meanings of some of Jesus' sayings from the Sermon on the Mount. They understand the symbolism associated with religions, such as the lotus flower in Buddhism. However, current Year 6 pupils do not have a clear understanding of the religions they have studied and are confused about many aspects. Pupils thought that the story of Jesus was probably in the Old Testament and that Jesus might have been American. Few of them were able to talk about Judaism or to say how it differs from Christianity.

154. Pupils show good attitudes in the way they listen to the opinions of others and consider why people have acted in a certain way. They work sensibly together. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from discussing ideas with others and make satisfactory progress.

155. The quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 was at least satisfactory in the lessons seen during inspection. The co-ordinator teaches the subject to all Key Stage 2 classes which ensures continuity of focus and content. However, past weaknesses in teaching at Key Stage 2 have limited older pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers use questions well to review pupils' appreciation and understanding. The Year 1 teacher's clear explanation of the laws given to Moses ensured that pupils grasped the meaning of "rules" and their importance in maintaining order in any society.

156. The school's planning and policy are based on the Cheshire Agreed Syllabus which provides clear content guidelines. A three-year rolling programme has been developed to ensure that pupils in a mixed-age class do not repeat work. At Key Stage 2, however, the under-emphasis on the teaching of the events, personalities and values of Christianity and Judaism has meant that not all areas of knowledge have been effectively covered by the Year 6 pupils. There is a satisfactory range of resources which are supplemented with library loans of artefacts and books.

## 167. **Art**

157. Only two art lessons were seen, both at Key Stage 1. There is ample evidence on display and in portfolios to show that pupils in both key stages, including those with special needs, are making at least satisfactory progress in investigating and making as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of art. Standards are as expected for pupils' ages and in some cases higher. The 1996 inspection criticism that Key Stage 2 pupils' achievements did not match their abilities is no longer appropriate. However, pupils have relatively few art sessions and little time to develop their own ideas or to apply techniques.

158. Pupils are involved in a wide range of investigations and make satisfactory progress in learning a variety of skills, including the use of computer graphics and drawing programs. New work reinforces and builds well on previous experiences. At both key stages, pupils are acquiring new techniques such as using bright pastels and chalks to reflect the vitality of Ancient Egyptian art or knowing how to create paint tones and tints. Pupils select and use a range of materials including paints, clay and textiles. Work from previous terms, such as

large sculptures of the human form and detailed studies of the branches of a monkey puzzle tree, is displayed and used as discussion points.

159. Pupils develop an understanding of the styles and techniques of well known artists and craftspeople, for example Van Gogh and Goldsworthy. Year 2 pupils used a viewfinder to focus on the detail in Seurat's paintings before using paint and cotton buds to produce a similar "dotted" effect. Other pupils competently used the "Dazzle" computer program to create their own versions of pointillism.

160. Pupils take a lively interest in art and are very enthusiastic. Key Stage 1 pupils were eager to begin and most concentrated hard throughout. They persevered with the task even when the computer crashed several times and took pride in their work. Pupils relate well to one another and co-operate willingly. They listen with great care, pay attention and follow instructions carefully. Higher attaining pupils consider and review their work as they proceed.

161. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. The co-ordinator provides a good model of teaching as she draws on her knowledge and expertise in art to provide challenging experiences for her Year 2 class. Teachers' planning clearly identifies which skills are to be taught and what pupils will achieve by the end of the lesson. Clear explanations and demonstrations ensure that pupils work with little supervision or adult support.

162. Subject co-ordination is good and the co-ordinator provides much valued informal support and guidance for colleagues. Documentation is good and there is excellent written guidance on the development of specific artistic techniques. Although curriculum provision and standards are monitored, there is no system to monitor the quality of teaching. Portfolios of work are being compiled to provide a useful resource bank of ideas and also to indicate appropriate standards of work for each age group.

### 173. **Design and technology**

163. In addition to lessons observed, evidence was also gained from a scrutiny of the teachers' planning, pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils. Standards are as expected for pupils' ages and all, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This echoes the findings of the previous inspection.

164. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with a good understanding of how to make their own designs. They have already been introduced to problem-solving and improving their designs after trying them out. As pupils move through Key Stage 1, they build on these skills and knowledge and by the end of Year 2 are generating many good ideas. They explain, draw and then use various modelling and construction materials to put their ideas into practice. Sometimes they make spontaneous improvements to their designs and at other times the teachers instigate improvements by questioning about the design's effectiveness. Pupils evaluate their work carefully. In discussing their fruit salad recipes, Year 1 pupils decided that they had used too much banana as it "took away all the taste of the other fruit" and Year 2 pupils felt they needed more oranges to counteract the greenness of their products.

165. Satisfactory progress is continued throughout Key Stage 2 and by Year 6 pupils evaluate their work thoroughly. They consider the intentions of their designs, and illustrate alternatives using sketches imaginatively. When designing, they make step-by-step plans and show increasing accuracy with attention to the quality of finish and function. Pupils acquire suitable skills in working with a range of materials and tools including drills, saws and glue guns. Year 4 pupils scored lines on card to allow them to fold it into a box and Year 5 pupils cut, joined and strengthened straws to make model "shadufs". Their work showed a developing understanding of how to make strong corners and how to make wheels run freely

166. Pupils enjoy design and technology and solving problems. They behave very well, work together collaboratively and respect and consider the views of others. They respond very well to opportunities to make suggestions and choices.

167. At both key stages, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and often good in lessons. Teachers plan their work well, have clear learning objectives and are well supported by the scheme of work. The co-ordinator has provided supportive strategies for developing the quality of provision and she is frequently called upon for further advice and guidance. Teachers make good use of group work and the support of classroom assistants and parents. In a Year 1 lesson adult help was very well used to guide discussion and to elicit very good evaluations. Resources are well organised and there is a ready supply of consumable materials.

### 178. **Geography**

168. As the topic focus this term is history, no geography lessons were taught during inspection. Judgements on pupils' progress are made from a scrutiny of work from this and the previous school year, interviews with pupils of differing ages and teachers' planning documents.

169. At both key stages, pupils make satisfactory, systematic progress in acquiring geographical facts about places and peoples, and the skills of using maps, plans, pictures and visits. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress especially when the work is practical or discussion based.

170. Year 1 pupils use photographic evidence to indicate that a school in Africa is made out of wood and straw rather than the bricks and roof tiles used in their own school. They have drawn a plan of their bedroom furniture and use a map of the mouth of a river to make sensible suggestions about where a lighthouse should be placed. Year 2 pupils' visit to Chester Zoo allowed them to link what they see with topics studied. They looked at the animals in the zoo which come from the rainforests and extended their mapping skills by plotting their route around the zoo from the entrance gate. They compared the lives of the people of the rain forests with their own and looked at the differences in their homes and clothes. Another visit, to Delamere Forest, gave pupils good experience in identifying different kinds of plants such as ferns and moss.

171. Year 4 pupils have studied the Indian village of Kanjikolly. They have made maps of the area and compared the locations of India and the United Kingdom on a world map. Pupils in Year 6 visited Alderley Edge and having used local maps to identify natural and man-made features have drawn good quality diagrams identifying these features. They compared this area with Dinorwic in North Wales which they have also visited. Pupils are well able to explain the changes and the beneficial effect on the landscape of the change in land use from slate mine to hydro-electric power station.

172. Pupils' attitudes are generally good throughout the school. They are interested in their activities and some follow up work at home.

173. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching but teachers' planning is satisfactory and shows a good range of resources are used. The way visits are organised and linked to curricular plans is a strength of the teaching. The topic plan shows that geography is a summer term focus but work in pupils' books indicates that coverage is lighter than in history.

## 184. **History**

174. Pupils' attainment is as expected for their age and satisfactory progress is made during Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress due to the high use of artefacts, discussion and work in other subjects related to the theme. Work on Ancient Egypt at Key Stage 2 currently spills over into English, art, music and geography and is reinforcing pupils' knowledge of the life-styles and culture.

175. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring historical facts and an awareness of how people know about history. Pupils develop an understanding of chronology, especially in relation to their own lives and are introduced to a range of sources of information. For instance, pupils consider what they did as babies and what they do now and Year 1 pupils have examined how things have changed through looking at clothes, letters and photographs. Year 2 pupils know about people from the past and their influence on the present. They know that Florence Nightingale's work had an impact on nursing and hygiene.

176. Key Stage 2 pupils learn about earlier civilisations in Greece and Egypt and also develop an understanding of what life was like in Tudor times. By Year 4 they know many facts about life in the time of the Ancient Egyptians and especially about the boy king Tutankhamun. They make satisfactory gains in knowledge and increase their research skills by using a range of videos, books and photographs. Many pupils have a clear understanding of the different events and characteristics of this period.

177. Key Stage 2 pupils produce topic books of a good standard. They are proud of their work. The response in lessons is satisfactory and most pupils sustain concentration during individual work and class sessions. Key Stage 1 pupils were enthralled when their teachers dressed up and acted in role.

178. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Resources are used well to develop pupils' skills in finding out about the past, and pupils are encouraged to draw their own conclusions about the changes they think have taken place. In one Year 4/5 lesson, the teacher's visits to each group offering encouragement and constructive advice ensured that pupils were able to use available evidence to draw their own conclusions. Key Stage 1 staff acted in role as Florence Nightingale and as a modern nurse to illustrate, discuss and explain the changes in nursing during the last 140 years. This was highly effective in helping the pupils to ask very sensible questions. Pupils' work is regularly marked but comments more often refer to spelling and punctuation rather than the historical content of the work.

179. The good policy and scheme of work support well teachers' medium-term planning. The newly appointed co-ordinator has personal interest and expertise in history and is beginning to provide sound leadership. The 1996 inspection highlighted the limited resources but the school now has a good range of artefacts and these are regularly supplemented from a variety of sources and visits to places of interest. The range of objects linked to the Ancient Egypt theme incorporated into class and corridor displays was particularly impressive and contributes significantly to pupils' interest in history.

## 190. **Music**

1. Pupils' attainment in music is as expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress at both key stages and pupils with special educational needs take full part and often do as well as the others. A strength, particularly at Key Stage 2, is pupils' group compositions such as those recorded last year of a musical rainforest journey and music to accompany the verses of a poem "War and peace". A weakness however, is the very low standard of



choral singing; school, key stage and class singing lacks vitality and is often off key.

2.The 1996 inspection raised concerns about the breadth and quality of pupils' musical experiences. Current provision is satisfactory and as much attention is given to developing pupils' skills in playing and composing music as to listening to and talking about music. Ten pupils are learning to play the recorder and two pupils have specialist instrumental music tuition in school time. This enhances their knowledge of musical notation.

3.At Key Stage 1, pupils learn a range of songs and hymns. They sing confidently unaccompanied or to the piano and add their own accompaniment using percussion instruments. Pupils make steady progress in listening to sounds and music and using instruments to reproduce what they hear. Year 1 pupils followed their teacher's conducting signals when telling a story with sound effects and suggested different ways to play the drum to give loud and soft sounds.

4.Key Stage 2 pupils build on these skills. They learn about musical notation and listen to different styles and forms of music from a range of cultures and periods. Pupils are developing an ear for musical patterns and use them in their own compositions. Year 5 and 6 pupils selected different tuned and untuned instruments to produce a piece based on the pentatonic scale characteristic of the music of the Ancient Egyptians. Several also included an ostinato and wrote a simple musical score.

5.Pupils listen to music in assemblies and in several classes, especially at Key Stage 1, music is played as pupils enter the class, are working or when they are changing clothes and warming up for physical education sessions. Opportunities are missed to ensure that pupils know about the music and its composition as well as to discuss its style and effect.

6.In lessons, pupils respond well. They particularly enjoy playing the instruments. Year 4 and 5 pupils organised themselves competently and worked out their own signals to tell each other when to play their bit. They seemed oblivious to the noise of others as they concentrated hard on refining their piece to play for the class to guess the pattern used.

7.The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. A visiting pianist supports Key Stage 1 teaching and the music co-ordinator teaches all the Key Stage 2 classes. Lessons are effective in ensuring progress but they often lack pace and spark; time is lost as pupils scuffle to get instruments from the ill-organised trolley. The co-ordinator has high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and gives a good model in evaluating the pupils' work and identifying the effective aspects using relevant musical terms.

8.The co-ordinator is writing a scheme to formalise the work done at Key Stage 2. The good links made between music and curriculum themes give a relevance and purpose to much of the music at Key Stage 2. Although pupils work is tape recorded, there is little use of other information technology to develop pupils' musical skills and knowledge.

196.

## **Physical education**

1.Standards are satisfactory in relation to pupils' ages. Key Stage 2 pupils have swimming lessons and by the end of Year 6, the majority swim at least twenty-five metres. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection.

2. At both key stages, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall in gymnastics, dance and games. Key Stage 2 pupils also develop a good awareness of the rules of the game and tactics in playing team games. Progress is good in many lessons due to pupils' willingness to improve their performance and also because of the skills coaching and challenges set. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils made noticeable progress in controlling the ball with the side of a foot. By Year 6, pupils have developed a good eye for the ball and use their dribbling skills well to dodge and pass opponents. Several showed good co-ordination and control in handling a hockey stick and ball. Pupils also make steady progress in developing stamina and performing a series of controlled movements on the floor or on gymnastics equipment at differing levels. Year 3 pupils included twists and turns and Year 4 pupils' sequences were often well executed.

3. Most pupils enjoy physical education lessons, especially in gymnastics. Year 6 boys braved the rain to practise football skills and pupils of all ages were keen to use the hoops, balls, ropes and other equipment available at lunchtimes. Many Key Stage 2 pupils opt to play additional netball and football and during the inspection, 28 pupils trained after school under teacher and parent supervision. Pupils work sensibly in groups and teams. Year 2 pairs concentrated hard as they echoed each other's movements and four Year 5 pupils diligently refined a synchronised sequence of jumps and turns on the bench and mat. Pupils are interested in others' performance and keen that teams should do well.

4. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and often good. The co-ordinator's work with all Key Stage 2 classes is bringing consistency of approach and raising expectations of what pupils can achieve. Good use is made of a national sports scheme and the Cheshire scheme of work to structure the work done over the year. A strength at both key stages is the teachers' use of demonstration, praise and encouragement. As the pupils gain confidence, new challenges are introduced such as dribbling with alternate feet.

5. The curriculum is broad and good use is made of indoor and outdoor facilities to set up adventurous activities for Year 6 pupils in the summer term. Pupils apply their physical skills as they work together in teams to solve practical problems. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and keeps his own records of pupils' progress.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **Summary of inspection evidence**

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector. During the four days in school, the team observed 59 lessons or parts of lessons accounting for 40 hours.

The inspectors heard 22 pupils read and talked to many pupils about their work this year and in previous years. A range of assemblies, registrations and classroom routines were observed as well as playtimes and lunchtime activities. Pupils were observed entering and leaving school. The current work of several pupils from each year group was examined along with work from 1998/9, photographic and tape recorded evidence of work in previous terms, work on display around the school both at the time of the inspection and in the previous summer term when the lead inspector visited the school, class books, school reports, assessment records and teachers' planning files. The inspectors interviewed all subject co-ordinators, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the Early Years co-ordinator. Meetings were also held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, full Governing Body, the chair and vice chair of the Governing Body, and two members of the Local Education Authority support services.

School documentation was scrutinised including the School Development Plan, the special needs register, individual education plans, attendance records, curriculum planning from this and previous terms, examination results, minutes from meetings of the Governing Body and school management teams as well as budgetary information.

Parents' views were received at a meeting prior to the inspection attended by 12 parents. The inspectors also considered the information from 47 questionnaires returned and the additional comments on eight of them.

## Data and indicators

### PUPIL DATA

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on schools' register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	185	2	26	4

### TEACHERS AND CLASSES

#### Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3

#### Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	63

Average class size:	30.8
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### FINANCIAL DATA

Financial year:	1998/9
	£
Total Income	303,482
Total Expenditure	297,051
Expenditure per pupil	1,659
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,232
Balance carried forward to next year	1,198

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

185

Number of questionnaires returned:

47

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	43%	55%	0%	2%	0%
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my	55%	43%	2%	0%	0%
The school handles complaints from parents well	26%	47%	26%*	2%	0%
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	30%	60%	6%	4%	0%
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32%	53%	13%	2%	0%
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	30%	62%	6%	2%	0%
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	28%	45%	21%	6%	0%
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26%	64%	6%	4%	0%
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	36%	55%	6%	2%	0%
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	32%	57%	9%	2%	0%
My child(ren) like(s) school	53%	45%	0%	2%	0%

[Because of rounding, not all rows add up to 100%]

\* This figure includes a significant number of parents who felt that they could not agree or disagree with the statement, because they had never had a complaint.