

INSPECTION REPORT

MILL VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Upton-by-Chester

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111123

Headteacher: Mr R J MacRae

Reporting inspector: Ms A Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 8th – 12th May 2000

Inspection number: 189520

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wealstone Lane
Upton-by-Chester
Cheshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Dr G Hayle

Date of previous inspection: 17th September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ms A Grainger	Registered inspector	Art Music	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mr C Farris	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Ms A Dancer	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Design and technology Under-fives	
Mr M James	Team inspector	Science Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
Mr B Travis	Team inspector	English Geography History Equality of opportunity English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full-time pupils: 179 (smaller than many other primary schools)

Pupils with English as an additional language: 2.2% (higher than in most primary schools)

Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals: 8.9% (below average)

Pupils on the register of special educational needs: 15.6% (broadly average)

Average class size: 25.6

The school, which takes pupils aged four to eleven, is situated in Upton-by-Chester, just outside the main city of Chester. It is smaller than at the time of its last inspection in September 1996. Children begin school in the September of the school year in which their fifth birthday falls. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children under five in the reception class. Two pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups (5.3 per cent) is low. Considering the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the school is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Standards at the age of eleven are well above average in mathematics, above average in science, average in English, but well below average in information technology. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory except in information technology for pupils aged seven to eleven, where it is poor. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall, although there are areas in need of improvement. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in science, when pupils leave school at the age of eleven, based on the present Year 6.
- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of attitudes and behaviour.
- Relationships are very good. Pupils work and play well together and get on well with adults.
- There is a good level of care for pupils' personal well being.

What could be improved

- Standards are well below average in information technology when pupils leave school at the age of eleven.
- Pupils aged seven to eleven do not make enough progress in English to achieve standards as good as in mathematics and science. This is seen in the standards of the present Year 6.
- In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, there are no adequate assessment procedures to help teachers match work to pupils' needs.
- The headteacher does not check sufficiently the work of the teachers and other factors that affect pupils' learning.
- Other than in English and mathematics, co-ordinators are not leading and checking the quality of work in their subjects.
- There is too little involvement of governors in shaping the direction of the school.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress with improvement since its last inspection in September 1996. Many of the weaknesses identified at that time have been rectified, although there is still further work to be done. There has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching, especially in English, but also more widely for pupils aged five to seven, where there were many weaknesses. Standards have improved in English, although there is a dip this year at the age of eleven. Further action

is needed in improving pupils' progress in English between the ages of seven and eleven. Planning documents are now in place for all subjects, although information technology remains a serious concern. Satisfactory assessment procedures have been introduced for English, mathematics and science, but there are still no adequate arrangements for other subjects. Provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development is now satisfactory. Checking of teaching and the curriculum is taking place in English and mathematics, but this is still not good enough in other subjects. The senior management team is better organised than at the last inspection, although further action is needed. Parents are better informed, and their views of the school are more positive.

Although not key issues at the last inspection, standards in mathematics and science have improved at the age of eleven. Standards are also better in design and technology and geography between the ages of five and seven. Pupils' attendance is much better.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	C	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	B	A	A	
science	A	A	B	C	

The table above shows, for example, that pupils' results in 1999 were well above the national average in English and above average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Although the school's results dipped in 1998, the overall trend shows a better rate of improvement than that found nationally. This year, on the basis of pupils' school work, standards are still well above average in mathematics and above average in science, but in English they are average. The school is setting targets for improvement in English and mathematics standards at the age of eleven. Good progress is being made towards the mathematics targets, and satisfactory progress towards those in English. At the age of seven, based on pupils' school work, standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Standards in information technology are well below those expected nationally at the age of eleven, although they are as expected at the age of seven. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus at the ages of seven and eleven. In all other subjects, work is of the expected standard, with good art work in Years 2 and 4.

At the age of five, pupils' achievements are above average in all the recommended areas of learning for children of this age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are well motivated, concentrate well and respond positively to opportunities to show initiative in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and when at

classrooms	play. They are courteous and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with adults. They are pleased to take responsibility.
Attendance	Good. Attendance in the 1998 to 1999 school year was well above the national average, and unauthorised absence was below the national average. So far this year, attendance is above average in comparison with last year's national average.

Pupils' good attitudes, good behaviour, very good relationships and positive response to opportunities for their personal development, all contribute to the effectiveness of their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Fifty-two lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these, 90 per cent were satisfactory or better, including 42 per cent that were good and six per cent that were very good. Ten per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. All the very good teaching is located in the combined Year 5 and 6 class in English and religious education. The unsatisfactory teaching is scattered through most of the school. The overall teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory throughout the school, including the basic skills, with some good teaching of mathematics in Years 5 and 6. The school meets the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs satisfactorily, although higher attaining children are not always well enough challenged in the reception class. The needs of the few pupils who do not speak English as their first language, and who are at an early stage of English language acquisition, are met well. Pupils' learning is satisfactory, in all subjects except information technology, between the ages of seven and eleven. The teaching of information technology to these pupils is poor.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. This is because National Curriculum requirements for information technology are not met for pupils aged seven to eleven. Work in geography and history is limited for these pupils. For children under five, and those between the ages of five and seven, provision is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There are clear procedures for the identification and assessment of these pupils. Pupils are provided with suitable work that takes account of their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Work is well matched to these pupils' needs, especially when they are taught intensively in small groups by a visiting teacher. Good account is also taken of their needs in other lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and	Satisfactory. There is good provision for pupils' social development and satisfactory provision is made for their spiritual, moral and cultural development. The emphasis on pupils' social development contributes to

cultural development	their caring attitudes towards others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. There is good care for pupils' personal well being, but there are no adequate procedures for assessing the standard of their work or checking their progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

The school's partnership with parents is good and parents are kept informed of their children's progress and how to help them at home. Parents have positive views of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership for the work of the school, although the pace of change is too slow. The subject co-ordinators, other than in English and mathematics, have no brief for initiating and bringing about change in their subjects. A role with significant responsibilities for the deputy is only just beginning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. A few governors are well involved and are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are not involved sufficiently in shaping the direction of the school, or in ensuring that statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses on a broad level. Other than in English and mathematics, there is insufficient checking of teaching and the wider provision.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial planning is careful, and specific grants are used properly for their intended purposes.

The school has sufficient teachers, support staff and resources to meet the demands of the curriculum. Accommodation is very good. The school's application of the principles of best value to its work is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good. Their children make good progress. Their children are expected to work hard. Their children are helped to become mature. The school is approachable. Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of activities provided outside lessons. The information they receive on their children's progress. How well the school works in partnership with parents and carers. The amount of work their children are given to do at home.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views, although teaching is satisfactory overall, as is pupils' progress, rather than good. The school works well with parents, and provides good information on children's progress. A satisfactory amount of homework is set. The range of activities provided outside lessons is satisfactory, although these are mainly for pupils aged seven to eleven only.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, in the National Curriculum tests, were well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above the national average in science. When compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, they were well above average in mathematics, above average in English, and average in science. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most eleven-year-olds was well above the national average in mathematics, and above the national average in English and science. In all three subjects, the percentage reaching a higher level was well above the national average. The standards achieved in 1999 were much higher than those shown by the most recent tests at the time of the school's last inspection in 1996. Although results dipped in 1998, the overall trend of improvement in the school's results in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds has been above the national trend. Over time, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, although boys have done better than girls in mathematics for the last two years.
2. The school has set targets for improvement in English and mathematics results at the end of Key Stage 2. In 1999, these targets were exceeded in mathematics, and the school came very close to achieving them in English. The targets for 2000 are lower than for 1999. Viewed in the light of the 1999 results and pupils' present performance, the mathematics targets are unambitious. Those for English are more realistic. Taking account of factors such as the high number of pupils who have left or joined the present Year 6 group, and weaknesses identified in the provision for these pupils in English earlier in the key stage, the school's progress towards its English targets is satisfactory. Good progress is being made towards the mathematics targets.
3. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were above average in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics based on the average of the points scored. When compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance was average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most seven-year-olds was well above the national average in reading and writing, and close to the national average in mathematics. The percentage reaching a higher level was broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing, but it was well below the national average in mathematics. The most recent test results at the time of the last inspection were better in reading, and very slightly better in mathematics. They were similar in writing. Standards fell in 1997 in reading and writing, but there has been improvement since then. Mathematics standards rose after the last inspection, but fell in 1999. Girls' performance is better than that of boys in writing, but there is no significant difference in reading and mathematics.
4. Pupils' results in the teacher assessments in science in 1999 were above the national average for the percentage reaching at least the standard expected of most seven-year-olds. They were well above average for the percentage reaching a higher level.
5. This year, on the evidence of school work, the standards of pupils in Year 6 are also well above average in mathematics and above average in science. English standards

are lower and are average. This is because this year group of pupils has made unsatisfactory progress in English through the key stage, with the school having identified weaknesses in the teaching they experienced in Year 3 and during a period of temporary staffing in Year 5. There are also shortcomings in the breadth of the school's provision for writing now. Nevertheless, these pupils have made satisfactory progress in English since entering Year 6, with very good progress in some lessons. The progress of pupils now in Year 6 between the ages of seven and eleven has been good in mathematics, and satisfactory in science. The standards achieved reflect this.

6. Present Year 2 pupils are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This shows an improvement in mathematics standards, and a return to the better picture of attainment shown by the 1997 and 1998 test results. The standards achieved show that these pupils have made satisfactory progress between the ages of five and seven in English, mathematics and science.
7. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class, at the age of four, is above average. It is also above average at the age of five. The standards achieved at the age of five show that most children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. There is some underachievement by the highest attaining children because work is not sufficiently challenging for them.
8. By the age of five, children listen carefully and with interest, and speak confidently using a good vocabulary for their age. They know most of the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound, are interested in books, and a few higher attaining children read stories fluently and with understanding. They write their names without help, and are confident in writing on their own, without needing to copy directly from the teacher's writing. Children count to twenty and understand and use mathematical language such as 'tall', 'more than' and 'less than', and higher attaining children write sums using numbers up to ten. Most children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes, and many know three-dimensional shapes such as cones and spheres. Children recognise coins and those who are higher attaining give change accurately with toy money.
9. By the age of seven, pupils speak confidently and fluently and listen carefully during discussions. Their reading is accurate, fluent and expressive. They use phonic skills effectively, have a good level of understanding of the plots and characters in the stories they read, and are confident in the use of indexes. They write for the expected range of purposes, using punctuation and grammar well. Higher attaining pupils are starting to organise their writing into paragraphs and are using language imaginatively. Handwriting is clear and evenly formed, although most pupils do not join their writing. Working with numbers is the strongest aspect of pupils' work in mathematics. Most pupils count to a hundred, identify odd and even numbers and round numbers to the nearest ten. They have effective mental arithmetic skills and explain how they arrive at answers. Pupils have the expected competence in shape, space and measure and in problem solving. There is less evidence of understanding of right angles and reflective symmetry. In science, pupils have a good body of knowledge of life processes and living things, forces, electricity, sound, and materials and their properties. They make sensible suggestions, and show independence, when carrying out investigations.
10. By the age of eleven, pupils use a wide vocabulary, adapt their speech to suit the audience and show consideration when listening to others. Pupils are confident, independent readers with the expected accuracy, fluency and expression, and satisfactory skills in using books for research. Pupils' awareness of the reader when writing, and their use of grammar and punctuation, are average. They do not, however, have the expected skills in drafting and redrafting their writing, or in developing plot and

character in narrative writing. Most pupils' writing is joined, neat and legible. All pupils have strong mental mathematics skills. Most pupils calculate to a million, combine different methods to speed their mental calculations, use decimal fractions and percentages accurately, and solve simple equations. They are very secure in their understanding of shape, space and measure, and have a good knowledge of probability, which they use well in solving problems. Skills in data handling are the weakest area of pupils' work in mathematics and are no better than average. Pupils continue to have good knowledge and understanding across the National Curriculum areas of study in science, and have a secure understanding of what makes a test fair. They make clear predictions and careful observations, as well as systematically recording their findings during experiments.

11. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are satisfactory. They use books to find information and apply their writing skills in subjects such as geography and history, although opportunities for this are more limited at Key Stage 2. Numeracy skills are used at the expected level, for example, in science and physical education.
12. Standards in information technology are as expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1, but they are well below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This shows improvement since the last inspection at the end of Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2 it represents a decline. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils control the mouse, word process text, save and print their work. They have the expected competence in using an art program on the computer, operating machines such as tape players, and using a programmable toy. Although pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 can edit text on the computer screen and improve its presentation, they cannot handle data, produce graphs or design a spreadsheet. They do not know how computers are used for controlling or checking external devices which are linked to them. Pupils' progress in information technology is poor between the ages of seven and eleven because the school has not rectified the weakness identified at its last inspection. Pupils' achievements at Key Stage 1 show that they make satisfactory progress between the ages of five and seven.
13. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in religious education are in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are familiar with Christianity and Hinduism, and understand the importance of 'special things' and friendship. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also know about the Buddhist, Jewish and Sikh faiths, and recognise some of the similarities and differences in world faiths. They understand issues such as the need to avoid temptation and the importance of tolerance. The standards pupils achieve at the end of each key stage show that their progress is satisfactory as they move up through the school.
14. In design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, pupils' work is of the standard normally expected for their age. In art, standards are as usually found, except in Years 2 and 4 where pupils are working at a higher standard as a result of good teaching throughout this school year. In design and technology at both key stages, and geography at Key Stage 2, standards have improved since the last inspection.
15. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them. In mathematics and design and technology, progress is good because work is well matched to these pupils' individual needs. In design and technology another adult, who is helping the teacher, gives carefully targeted support. In Years 2

and 4, they make good progress in art, as do other pupils in the same classes. In information technology, they gain satisfactory competence in using programs to develop their word skills at Key Stage 2. In other areas of information technology, their progress is poor, in line with that of other pupils in the same year groups.

16. At the time of the inspection, there were very few pupils in the school not speaking English as their first language, and even fewer who were identified as needing specific support. These pupils, in Key Stage 1 only, make good progress because good account is taken of their needs and they are well supported. In literacy and numeracy, they are achieving at the same standard as many other pupils of the same age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. Children in the reception class settle quickly into school routines, and form good relationships with all the adults who help them in the classroom and with each other. They behave well and are interested to learn, concentrate well and make good efforts to complete the tasks they are set. Children work well on their own while the teacher is busy with another group, and organise themselves when playing a game such as word bingo where they need to take turns. They have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
18. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have good attitudes to their learning and are well motivated. Even in lessons where teaching is not so successful, pupils' attitudes remain positive. Pupils try hard, enjoy new challenges and are keen to show what they can do. They concentrate and work well when carrying out a task individually or collaboratively in groups. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found that many pupils needed a great deal of support when working together on an activity. Pupils respond well to opportunities to show initiative in their work, such as when researching a topic of their own choice for a presentation to their class.
19. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils move very sensibly to the hall for assembly or physical education, and enter the building after play and lunch time in a very orderly manner. Pupils know the school rules and fully understand the standards expected of them. Most pupils work very well without supervision, for example older pupils work on computers in the corridor. Pupils behave responsibly, taking care of their own possessions and the school's property with equal care. Behaviour when pupils are at play is good and no oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. During the last academic year, there were three permanent exclusions of pupils, but there has been none this school year. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the rate of exclusions for misbehaviour was rising.
20. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. The warm and friendly atmosphere that exists contributes strongly to the productive learning environment. Pupils enjoy helping their less able colleagues as, for example, in the 'buddy' reading scheme in Year 5, with both helper and helped benefiting from this. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults, and remember to say 'please' and 'thank you'.
21. Pupils often show maturity ahead of their years, and they respond well to opportunities to take responsibility. Older pupils help arrange the hall for assemblies and operate the CD player and overhead projector. They carry out library duties, hold doors open as classes move to and from assembly, and help support younger pupils at lunchtime and on the playground. Such duties are undertaken willingly and enthusiastically and help in

the smooth running of the school. Pupils show initiative in making presentations to their class, in fund-raising for Blue Peter and in running a stall at the summer fair. They show their sense of social responsibility by actively seeking to promote environmental issues such as whale conservation and the improvement of the school's wildlife area.

22. Attendance for the last reporting year was 96.6 per cent, which was well above the national average and was very good. Attendance for the current year is slightly below this, on account of the winter flu epidemic in the spring term, but it is still higher than the national average for last year. It is well above the level at the time of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time.
23. Pupils are happy at school. Their good attitudes and behaviour, very good relationships, and positive response to the opportunities for their personal development, as well as their good attendance, all contribute to the effectiveness of their learning and the standards they achieve.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement at Key Stage 1 where a very high percentage of lessons was less than satisfactory at the last inspection. Teaching throughout the school is at least satisfactory in 90 per cent of lessons. It is good in 42 per cent of lessons and very good in a further six per cent. There is also unsatisfactory teaching in ten per cent of lessons. All the very good teaching is located in the combined Year 5 and 6 class in English and religious education. Teaching in this class is good overall, resulting in pupils making good progress in their learning across a wide range of subjects. The unsatisfactory teaching is scattered throughout the school, and is found in individual lessons in English in Year 4, in mathematics and art in Year 1, in design and technology in Year 3 and in physical development in the reception class. There are instances of good teaching throughout the school except in Year 3. The teaching of reading for children in the reception class is good, as is the teaching of experimental and investigative science in Years 2, 5 and 6.
25. Teaching and learning is satisfactory in all subjects except information technology at Key Stage 2, where it is poor. There has been a great improvement in the teaching of English since the last inspection. The teaching of basic literacy skills is satisfactory throughout the school, although insufficient attention is given to the development of writing at length in English and other subjects at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory teaching overall, and are well supported to make good progress in mathematics and design and technology. The teaching of pupils whose first language is not English is good, particularly when they receive intensive support from a visiting teacher.
26. The very good teaching in the combined Year 5 and 6 class is characterised by lessons which are thoroughly planned and focused, and conducted at a brisk pace so that full use is made of the time available to move pupils on in their learning quickly. Questioning is used well to challenge pupils' thinking and develop their understanding, for example of a poem during the literacy hour. All pupils' answers are valued, giving them the confidence to 'have a go', and any incorrect answers are used well as the basis for teaching points and further learning. Imaginative teaching methods are used in religious education to assist pupils in considering complex issues, such as an exploration of temptation through role play. These factors, together with the teacher's catching enthusiasm, involve pupils at a deep level of thinking. As a result, they make

very good progress in the lessons concerned.

27. Mental arithmetic is well taught throughout the school, with some very good practice in Years 5 and 6 where it is an exciting daily event. Teachers have high expectations, and get the pupils to think very quickly to develop their skills of mental problem solving as they work against the clock to provide the correct answer. The overall teaching of basic numeracy skills is good throughout the school. In the good teaching of reading in the reception class, the teacher works well with parents to support children's learning of 'key words' as they move through the reading scheme books. In good art teaching in Years 2 and 4, activities are challenging, developing pupils' understanding of techniques and introducing them to the styles of famous artists, while allowing them plenty of scope to develop their own creativity. In good, practical science lessons, the teacher gives clear instruction and helpful demonstration supporting Year 2 pupils, for example, in developing a good knowledge of different kinds of food.
28. In other satisfactory teaching, lessons are well prepared and organised, although teachers are not always sufficiently specific about what is to be learned during the lesson and how this relates to what is being taught over a greater amount of time. This is evident in much of the art and music lesson planning, and in lessons focusing on the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world in the reception class. Planning overall has improved since the last inspection when it was a main weakness. Good use is made of resources, such as items of historical interest on loan from the museum, or a lawn mower to demonstrate in a Year 5 design and technology lesson. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and this enables them to pitch work at the right level and to support pupils when they need help during independent work. Praise is used effectively to motivate pupils, and in all classes teachers' relationships with pupils are good. The management of pupils is good throughout the school and this contributes to pupils' good attitudes to learning.
29. While the overall teaching of children under five is satisfactory, with some instances of good teaching, there are shortcomings in the provision made for their learning. Lessons are very directed by the teacher who makes almost all decisions about what children will do and when. There is little room for children to learn through discovery or to take initiative, and this restricts their personal and social development. Activities in the role play area, for example, are largely determined by the teacher, with little opportunity for children to engage in their own make believe play. There are few opportunities for children to talk to each other in play situations or to make decisions together. The timetable of lessons and the structure of literacy and numeracy lessons is more suited to a Year 1 class than children of this age, and the wider provision of writing activities is limited. Insufficient account is taken of the need for young children to learn through play and discovery. Higher attaining children in particular have their learning limited by the lack of more 'open ended' activities which encourage them to think and form opinions for themselves.
30. Teaching and learning in information technology is poor at Key Stage 2 and results in standards which are far too low. There is too little teaching of information technology either as a subject with its own specific knowledge, understanding and skills, or as a tool for learning in other subjects. The lack of the use of computers for data handling in mathematics means that this is the weakest area in Key Stage 2 mathematics standards when pupils leave the school. The areas planned for lessons during this school year are totally inappropriate in relation to pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills. The work planned for Years 5 and 6 is well beyond their capabilities, and that intended for Years 3 and 4 requires the use of programs the school does not have. Pupils make very few gains in their learning in information

technology between the ages of seven and eleven. The school has not taken the action necessary to eradicate a weakness identified at the last inspection.

31. Marking is undertaken regularly and praise is often given. It is unsatisfactory, however, that marking is not used as a means of helping pupils to know how to improve their work. In English, incorrect work is sometimes marked as correct, resulting in pupils repeating their mistakes.
32. Where teaching was unsatisfactory in individual lessons during the inspection, pupils' learning was adversely affected. The teacher was unaware of pupils' difficulties in understanding the introductions to the lessons in mathematics and art in Year 1. In art, the level at which the knowledge, understanding and skills were to be taught was unclear, meaning that teaching was not well enough focused and insufficient account was taken of pupils' prior learning. Similarly in English in Year 4, too little account was taken of the range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability class, and not enough attention was given to checking groups working independently. This resulted in some pupils losing interest because they were unsure of what was required of them. In a design and technology lesson in Year 3 planning was not detailed enough, and this resulted in the teacher misjudging the time needed for the activities. In a reception class gymnastics lesson, children spent far too long waiting for their turn to use the apparatus. In all these lessons, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

33. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory for children under five, and for pupils at Key Stage 1. They are unsatisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 2 because statutory requirements are not met for information technology at Key Stage 2.
34. The curriculum for children under five is broad, with the exception of outdoor play, for which there is no regular provision. Children do not have the opportunities for the development of their knowledge and understanding of the world, creativity and physical development that are afforded by the use of large outdoor equipment, including wheeled toys. Although the curriculum is satisfactory, the planning of learning for children under five is too prescriptive, with insufficient allowance for independent and group learning through discovery and play. Too many unrelated lessons do not allow children to consolidate and develop their learning. Activities during the literacy and numeracy lessons are not well enough related to other work.
35. At Key Stage 1, the curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, with all subjects taught for adequate amounts of time. At Key Stage 2, although the curriculum is broad, it is not balanced. Far too little time is given to information technology. The requirements of the National Curriculum for information technology at Key Stage 2 are not met. The very low priority given to this area of the curriculum, both as a subject and as a tool for learning in other subjects, results in poor standards when pupils leave the school at the age of eleven. There is also too little time given to geography and history at Key Stage 2. This limits the range of opportunities for the development of pupils' writing. The weakness in information technology was identified at the last inspection, and it has not been rectified. This is now a serious concern. Similarly, the low time given to geography was reported then.
36. At the time of the last inspection, policies were in place for all curriculum subjects. New policies have been produced for English, mathematics and science, but most of those for other subjects are in need of updating. At the last inspection, there were no

schemes of work. The school has successfully addressed this issue by using national guidance or local education authority schemes for all subjects, as well as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school does not, however, have its own clear guidelines on how to implement these schemes in lessons. As a result, medium-term plans often lack clear and detailed information to ensure that the correct work is provided for a particular age group, and that work in one year builds effectively on that in another. Unsatisfactory lessons seen in art in Year 1 and design and technology in Year 3 can be directly tracked back to this weakness in curriculum planning. The lack of adaptation of national schemes to meet the needs of the school is most keenly apparent in information technology. Here, planning for Key Stage 2 pupils does not take account of pupils' low attainment and the resources the school has available.

37. The school's strategy for numeracy is good and is raising standards. The overall effectiveness of the literacy strategy is satisfactory, but there are some shortcomings, and it is not having the same effect on standards as the numeracy strategy. In particular, there is too little provision for Key Stage 2 pupils to write at length, and insufficient attention is given to the development of writing in subjects other than English. This is a contributory factor in the lower standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 this year.
38. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Clear procedures are in place, and they closely follow the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. Individual education plans are provided for pupils who are at Stage 2 and beyond on the school's special needs register. These plans are of good quality, are reviewed termly, and help to ensure that work is matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive the support to which they are entitled.
39. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' personal and health education. It is the school's policy not to teach sex education, although pupils in Year 6 are provided with instruction about puberty. The school does not have a policy for the teaching of drugs awareness, and although visiting police officers introduce the subject to older pupils, statutory requirements are not met.
40. Satisfactory provision is made for extra-curricular activities, with a range of musical and sporting activities being provided, mainly for pupils at Key Stage 2. The school welcomes a number of visitors, such as police, scientists and music and theatre groups, to enrich the curriculum. A variety of educational visits is arranged for pupils, such as to the Manchester Science Museum. All pupils at Key Stage 2 undertake residential visits to Tattenhall and Fairbourne. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, as well as to their learning in a range of subjects.
41. The school has some good links with the local community. Year 6 pupils last year worked with local planners on a project concerned with the development of the old railway line. Links with a supermarket have enabled pupils in Year 5 to look behind the scenes at the bakery department. Participation in the National Pupils' Parliament involved pupils in debating environmental issues and essay writing. There are links with local sports groups and residential homes. Improved links with local business have resulted in the acquisition of a number of computers, as well as equipment to support work in science. Satisfactory links have also been forged with local primary and secondary schools. In particular, the curricular contacts with the local comprehensive school have supported pupils' work in science. The school has established particularly

close ties with a nearby school for pupils with special educational needs, which benefit pupils in both schools.

42. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is satisfactory, and for their social development it is good. In addition to the extra-curricular activities and residential visits, social development is supported through the emphasis on pupils caring for others. Pupils participate in charitable collections and distribution of harvest gifts to the elderly. Some pupils visit a nearby nursing home to entertain the residents. Older pupils are encouraged to consider their own actions. This is successfully promoted in geography, where pupils in Year 6 consider their involvement in the increased traffic outside the school. Pupils are clearly taught the difference between right and wrong, and all adults in school provide good role models for pupils' moral development in behaviour towards others. They encourage pupils to recognise what is fair and just. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss and debate issues of social significance, which contribute to their moral awareness. Year 6 pupils, for example, debate the causes and outcomes of temptation, and pupils in Year 2 consider the threat to whales, writing letters to Greenpeace to express their concern.
43. Religious education lessons contribute to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are taught about the values and beliefs of major world faiths, such as Sikhism and Judaism. In history, they learn something of the faiths of older civilisations, such as the Ancient Egyptians and Greeks. Through their work in science many pupils experience moments of awe and wonder, for example, when experimenting to discover which materials conduct electricity, or when working in groups with a visiting scientist. In art, in Year 4, pupils study objects from the natural world, for example looking at the beauty of crystals. The school does not meet the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship. In hymn practices there are missed opportunities for spiritual development through prayer and reflection. There are also some weaknesses in the provision for pupils' cultural development, as there is little opportunity for pupils to explore the rich and exciting heritage of Chester. Beyond religious education lessons, little is done to promote an appreciation of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Britain to help prepare pupils for citizenship in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. Overall, the school cares for pupils well and there are effective procedures in place to ensure their safety and well being. The weakness in the school's care is in its assessment procedures, which do not extend beyond English, mathematics and science at Key Stages 1 and 2. At a practical level, the school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and secure and able to learn without fear. The pastoral support provided by all staff is very good and relationships between adults and pupils are relaxed. As a result, pupils feel comfortable talking to staff about any worries or problems they may have. Child protection procedures, which were a concern at the time of the last inspection, are now fully in place. The school has a good policy, which is new and which links with the local area child protection procedures. The policy includes provision for training and the headteacher keeps staff fully briefed on any concerns.
45. The school has a comprehensive policy for health and safety and the management of this on a day-to-day basis is good. The school environment is well maintained and any safety concerns are quickly and effectively dealt with. A governors' sub-committee carries out safety inspections and regular risk assessment takes place. Fire drills are held each term and the fire alarm is tested weekly. Fire appliances are tested annually and testing is in date. Testing of portable electrical appliances is properly carried out

and appliances are marked accordingly. Testing of electrical appliances is slightly overdue, and this needs to be done as soon as possible. First aid procedures are satisfactory. All accidents are properly logged. When a more serious accident or bump to the head occurs, parents are notified by the headteacher and this is confirmed by a note.

46. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. Registers are checked each week by the headteacher and any unexplained absences are followed up. The importance of regular attendance is emphasised to parents, but pupils enjoy school and are keen to attend. The school's management of behaviour is good and this results in good standards of behaviour. There are few formal rules, but those that there are, coupled with the excellent example set by all staff, who have high expectations of pupils, lead to a productive learning environment. Midday supervisory staff maintain good order and provide good support on the playground. This has a positive effect on behaviour and safety.
47. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection, but they are still unsatisfactory overall. There are good procedures for children under five in all the areas of learning. Detailed information is collected about each child on entry to the school and it is added to each year. There are no specific records, however, for children who are working within the National Curriculum that could be continued by the next teacher.
48. Annual tests are used to record attainment in English and mathematics throughout the school, and science at Key Stage 2, with additional tests for Years 2 and 6. Target setting that is shared with parents and pupils, and recorded and discussed each term, is a good system followed systematically by all teachers. Five of the six teachers keep records in English, mathematics and science that are detailed and informative. In all other subjects, there are no adequate or consistently used systems for recording pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, assessment information is not available in a form that can help teachers to plan work, and ensure that all pupils needs are met fully. Neither is there a system to enable teachers to pass records on to the next teacher when a class moves on. There are no records for pupils' personal development, other than those included for some pupils when targets are set for improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school has a good relationship with parents and works closely with them on the education of their children. Parents are supportive of the school, and have significantly more positive views than at the time of the last inspection. Parents see the school as providing a good education and having a positive work ethic. They see their children liking school and being well looked after. They find the school very welcoming and see the teaching as good. The inspection findings largely support these positive views. On a less positive note, nearly a third of responses to the questionnaire expressed concern at the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Some parents also consider that they do not receive enough information on their children's progress, and are unhappy about the amount of homework their children have. The inspection finds that the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory overall, being good for older pupils but more restricted for the younger ones, particularly those at Key Stage 1.
50. The school provides parents with a good level of information about their children's progress and general school matters. There is a weekly newsletter and termly digest summarising the activities of the previous term. The prospectus and governors' annual report are informative, but both omit a number of items statutorily required. Pupils'

annual reports give generally good information about attainment and progress. Although they meet statutory requirements, they are unusual in that they do not include space for comments by the headteacher. There is a consultation meeting each term and parents are involved in discussions on targets for their children. Parents wanting additional information on their children's progress can meet the teacher informally at the end of the school day.

51. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning and to the life of the school. A significant number of parents help in the classroom and on outside visits and provide valuable and effective help that the school itself could not afford. Parents provide good help to pupils at home with their reading and other homework, and reading diaries are used well as an effective two-way communication. The school's homework policy provides a structured programme that extends the pupils' abilities and helps them develop good learning habits. The school provides helpful information to new parents and holds workshops to explain changes to the curriculum. The parent teacher association is very active and well supported and raises significant funds that are put to good use purchasing resources for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and meets its aims. Children's attainment on entry to the school is above average, and the standards of pupils now in Year 6 are well above average in mathematics and above average in science. In English and other subjects, however, they are no better than average, and in information technology they are well below average. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Progress with improvement since the school's last inspection in September 1996 has been satisfactory. Standards overall are now higher, and teaching is considerably better. There are, nevertheless, weaknesses in the overall leadership and management of the school, which prevent the pace of improvement from being better.
53. The school has satisfactorily identified priorities for development, including the raising of standards in writing and information technology. Areas for improvement are well detailed in a one-year development plan, with further outline planning for the next two years. The school is behind schedule in implementation of the plan and there is a lack of the necessary sense of urgency in addressing writing and information technology standards at Key Stage 2. The school now has the equipment necessary to deliver the information technology curriculum at the right level for Key Stage 2 pupils, but the action necessary to do so has not been taken. There has not, for example, been training of staff or a review of the planned curriculum. There is no doubt that the governing body, headteacher and staff share a commitment to further improvement, and have the capacity to succeed. Work towards improvement is not well enough focused, however, and the school is not sufficiently critical of its progress in this respect.
54. The headteacher's leadership and management are satisfactory, and the direction given for the work of the school is sufficiently clear. He has been strongly involved in monitoring mathematics, but his wider checking of the school's work is not sufficient. It is unsatisfactory, for example, that no one is currently checking whether teachers follow agreed procedures in recording pupils' attainment across the curriculum. The deputy has had a suitable job description since February 2000, and with it the beginning of the levels of responsibility normally associated with this senior position. She has had organisational tasks to support the smooth running of the school for two years, such as production of the weekly newsletter for parents. It is only in the last three months that

she has had a brief for monitoring teaching by observing in classrooms and checking teachers' planning. This is unsatisfactory and means that the role of deputy is still not well enough established to be able to contribute significantly to school improvement.

55. The head of infants satisfactorily co-ordinates all Key Stage 1 planning, and ensures that staff in the key stage are aware of what is taking place in other classes. She has organisational tasks concerned with the day-to-day running of the school and deals with matters such as the arrangements for children starting school. She has given support when weaknesses in teaching within the key stage have been identified. She does not have a role for monitoring the effectiveness of the provision through the key stage, and this limits the impact of this leadership and management role.
56. The headteacher, as numeracy co-ordinator, provides effective leadership for the school's work in mathematics. This crucial area of the curriculum has improved over the three years he has been in post. He monitors teaching and the curriculum in mathematics thoroughly, and knows the strengths and weaknesses of each teacher. The English co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and has helped to bring about improvements in the quality of English teaching since the last inspection. She has ensured that the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily, and this has included the monitoring of teaching and the provision of feedback to teachers to help them to improve. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had responsibility for special educational needs in the absence of the permanent co-ordinator, and was supported in the administrative aspect of this by the deputy. This area of the school's provision is satisfactorily managed, with extensive records kept, ensuring that pupils receive the support they need and are enabled to make satisfactory progress.
57. The involvement of subject co-ordinators, other than those for literacy and numeracy, in the leadership and development of their subjects is unsatisfactory. They have an overview of resources for their subjects and occasionally help colleagues, for example in finding materials. They do not have any brief to monitor teaching and learning and do not analyse the effectiveness of the curriculum to identify where improvements are needed. There has been reluctance on the part of the headteacher to give teachers full co-ordinating roles, in part due to some problems with staffing in the past. The effects can be seen in the poor provision for information technology, as no one has taken a lead in ensuring that standards are improved. The effectiveness of co-ordinators was a concern at the last inspection, and the weaknesses have not been eradicated. The situation is exacerbated by the appraisal of teaching staff not being in place, and there being no other arrangement for staff to have professional development interviews. The headteacher has not been appraised since taking up his post three years ago.
58. The governing body has a few members who are well involved, and overall there is satisfactory awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Some new governors are keen to become more involved. There is one governor who has responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. This particular governor is in school frequently. She observes the teaching of literacy and numeracy and is effective in monitoring the progress of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. Governors were very active in working for improvement after the last inspection, with the chair and vice chair serving as members of the senior management team. There has been recent involvement in initiatives such as the development of behaviour and homework policies, but there is insufficient involvement of the governing body in determining the direction of the school, and in ensuring that improvement continues to take place at a quick enough rate. Governors receive much more information from the headteacher than was the case at the last inspection, but

there has become too great a reliance on the headteacher to provide this. A number of statutory requirements are not met in respect of the National Curriculum for information technology at Key Stage 2, a policy for drugs education, the appraisal of teachers, collective worship, the contents of the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.

59. The school's finances are satisfactorily managed and educational developments are supported through careful planning. The amount received per pupil in the last financial year was broadly average, but the school managed its funds sufficiently well to enable staffing levels to be maintained through the present school year, even though pupil numbers dropped by eight per cent. The linking of financial and school development planning has improved since the last inspection. Phasing of expenditure is shown on the school development plan, and the sources of income for the different areas are now clearly identified. The headteacher plays the major role in the management of the school's finances, but governors are provided with relevant cost figures to ensure they are fully informed.
60. Day-to-day administration and financial management are satisfactory. The school secretary maintains the accounts effectively and these are regularly reconciled with figures provided by the local education authority. Purchase procedures ensure that value for money is achieved and there is a proper hierarchy of signatories for order, receipt and invoice. The school was audited very recently and received a positive report on its financial procedures. The auditor made a number of minor recommendations and most of these have already been dealt with. Grants received under the standards fund are administered and monitored by the headteacher, and are properly used for the purposes intended.
61. The use of new technology by the school is unsatisfactory. Insufficient emphasis is put on the development of pupils' computing skills. Resources available in the school, such as e-mail, are not sufficiently used for pupils' learning. The use of computers for administrative purposes is satisfactory. The use of new technology in monitoring pupils' attainment and progress is at a very early stage of development.
62. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers in the school. Newly qualified teachers receive support from a colleague acting as a 'mentor' and teachers and other staff new to the school are properly briefed and supported. Classroom assistants are well informed by the teachers and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. The administrative and premises staff provide good support and ensure the smooth running of daily routines and procedures. The accommodation provided is very good. The classrooms are of a good size and are very well appointed. There is excellent additional accommodation in the room established to be a computer suite, the music room and the library. The building is in good condition, is well maintained and is enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work. The school's external facilities are also very good.
63. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall in range, quality and quantity and are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Overall, this is an improvement on the situation reported at the time of the previous inspection. The lack of equipment such as large wheeled toys for children under five to play outside is a weakness.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to sustain the positive developments that have taken place since the last inspection, rectify the weaknesses and improve the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

a) Raise standards in information technology at Key Stage 2 by:

- adapting the national guidance already available to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils so that there is a clear programme for pupils' learning, and ensure that this is implemented and regularly reviewed and updated;
- bringing into use the resources currently available, and adding to these where necessary, to ensure that pupils experience the full Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum; and
- providing staff with the training necessary to teach the National Curriculum in this area.

(Paragraphs: 12, 25, 30, 35, 53, 61, 119, 121, 123, 124)

b) Improve pupils' progress in English at Key Stage 2 by:

- developing pupils' skills in writing at length for a variety of purposes, both in English lessons and through other subjects such as geography and history; and
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop skills in reading across the subjects of the curriculum.

(Paragraphs: 5, 10, 25, 35, 37, 79, 87, 114)

c) Develop and fully implement assessment procedures for all subjects to monitor pupils' progress and gain information to help in planning work to meet pupils' needs.

(Paragraphs: 44, 47, 84, 105, 110, 114, 118, 134, 138)

d) Improve the leadership and management of the school by:

- developing a thorough and systematic programme for monitoring the teaching and impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning, and also to check wider areas of provision, such as the recording of assessment information;
- clearly identifying the responsibilities of all teachers with leadership and management roles and ensuring that they are enabled to be effective; and
- increasing the involvement of the governing body in shaping the direction of the school, including development planning and review.

(Paragraphs: 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 101, 105, 110, 114, 118, 129, 134, 138)

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

- There are too few opportunities for children under five to show initiative and make choices, and there is not sufficient challenge for higher attaining children.
(Paragraphs: 7, 29, 34, 65, 69, 71, 73, 77)
- There is no regular provision for outdoor play for children under five, and they do not have access to large equipment for this purpose such as wheeled toys.
(Paragraphs: 34, 63, 75)
- Schemes of work are not adapted to meet the needs of the school, and there is no school guidance for teachers on their implementation in specific projects or lessons.
(Paragraphs: 36, 105, 118, 124, 129)
- The school does not meet statutory requirements for the appraisal of teachers, a drugs awareness policy, collective worship, and the contents of the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.
(Paragraphs: 39, 43, 50, 57, 58)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	42	42	10	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	179
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	28

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.4	School data	0.0
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	14	12	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	11	12	11
	Total	24	25	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	96 (93)	92 (93)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	92 (93)	96 (97)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	18	17	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	17	15
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	29	33	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (67)	94 (75)	89 (94)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	15
	Girls	15	16	15
	Total	29	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (66)	91 (75)	86 (92)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	2
White	145
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.38
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	322,026
Total expenditure	317,245
Expenditure per pupil	1,586
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,279
Balance carried forward to next year	10,060

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	179
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	42	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	52	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	43	7	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	55	14	3	2
The teaching is good.	51	41	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	58	14	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	41	2	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	38	0	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	29	52	11	7	2
The school is well led and managed.	38	46	10	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	57	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	48	23	8	3

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

64. Children enter the reception class at the start of the Autumn term following their fourth birthday. They attend part-time for four weeks before starting school full-time. Almost all children have previously attended one of several nursery schools in the locality. At the time of the inspection, nine of the twenty-six children were under five years old. The only identified special educational needs were physical.
65. On entry to the reception class, children's attainment is above average for their age in all areas of learning. During their under-fives education, most children make satisfactory progress. By the age of five, most children meet, and many exceed, the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning. Some higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should because some of the work is not sufficiently challenging for them. The overall standards achieved are similar to those found at the last inspection, as is the quality of teaching and learning.

Personal and social development

66. By the age of five, many children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They have very good relationships with each other and with adults. Children care for each other well, helping to do up aprons without being asked, and showing concern if a classmate is sick. They look after toys and resources very well. When using dressing up clothes, they put them on carefully, and make sure that pencil crayons are returned to the central pot so that they do not fall on the floor and break. Children take turns well, for example, when playing a game of letter bingo. They include all children when playing in the fairy tale castle. They behave well even if work is not challenging enough, such as when waiting a long time to take their turn on the apparatus in a gymnastics lesson. They are independent in going to the toilet, washing their hands and when changing for gymnastics or dance lessons. When given work to do while the teacher is busy with another group of children, they get on with it without fuss, and are keen to finish their task. They understand the consequences of their actions, and are proud of their signatures next to the school rules, which they understand well.
67. The quality of teaching and learning of personal and social development is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in learning how to behave, and in social skills. Their development of initiative and greater independence is limited, however, as almost all decisions about what children will do, and what order they will do it in, are made by the teacher. There are too few opportunities for children to choose activities, to invent and play games together or to make decisions about their work and play. Respect for different cultures is promoted satisfactorily, for example, when children learn about the Hindu festival of Holi. All adults use praise well to encourage confidence, and this is most effective during whole class discussion. A good strategy used at this time is the passing round of a pebble, with children knowing that they must listen carefully to the one who holds it.

Language and literacy

68. Most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in language and literacy by the age of five. Children listen carefully to stories and explanations by adults, and are interested in what other children have to say. They speak confidently and answer questions with a mature vocabulary. They enjoy nursery rhymes and stories involving

rhyme, and recognise rhyming words such as 'bad' and 'had'. Children know most of the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. They are interested in books and use a mixture of picture and letter clues to tell a story. A few higher attaining children are fluent readers, with a good understanding of the characters and plot. All children write their names independently, using upper and lower case letters correctly. They are confident to write on their own and use a mixture of known words, initial sounds and simple dictionaries. Higher attaining children leave spaces between words, and use middle and final sounds when attempting to write unfamiliar words.

69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and it is good in reading. There is a good partnership with parents and carers in promoting children's learning in this area, for example in the learning of 'key words' for the next series of reading books. Reading of the 'big book' together in the literacy hour is presented as an enjoyable activity to which children respond with pleasure. The daily group work that gives practice in combining letters to form words, or parts of words, gives children confidence to be independent in both reading and writing. A weakness is that some of the activities do not make the best use of children's time in developing literacy skills. Average attaining children sequence four pictures to tell a well known story, but most of the time is spent cutting them out and sticking them into a book. Higher attaining children copy out lists of words, but there is no clear learning objective for this activity. There is no time for children to write more than a few sentences during the literacy hour. There are very few opportunities for children to develop their ideas through writing in other areas of the curriculum. This restricts the progress of higher attaining children in particular. Speaking and listening skills are developed well when the teacher is speaking directly to the children, particularly in the final session of each lesson when children explain what they have learned. There are very few opportunities, however, for children to talk to each other in play situations, to explain their thinking or to make joint decisions, and this restricts their learning.

Mathematics

70. Most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in mathematics by the age of five, particularly in number. Children count confidently to twenty, and those who are higher attaining fill in missing numbers in the spaces on a line of numbers from one to twenty. All children understand the meaning of 'more than' or 'less than', and most children apply this accurately for numbers up to ten. Higher attaining children write simple sums using numerals up to ten. Most children recognise circles, triangles and rectangles, and many are familiar with the solid shapes of sphere, cone and cube. All children identify and continue a simple repeating pattern of shape, size or colour. They recognise coins, and those who are higher attaining give change accurately in pretend shopping. Children have a good mathematical vocabulary, for example understanding and using 'tall, taller, tallest', and 'holds more'.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Most children make satisfactory gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills during the school year, although some higher attaining children are underachieving. The daily numeracy lesson is well established, but termly plans make no reference to the needs of higher attaining children. There is insufficient planned provision for learning by discovery and play, and few challenges that help children to solve simple problems. In the numeracy lesson seen during the inspection, teaching was good. Mental arithmetic work provided a brisk and interesting start to the lesson to which children responded well, being keen to take part and trying hard to give the correct answers. The teacher gave clear explanations, used a good range of resources effectively, and held the interest of the children well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. By the age of five, most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They talk confidently about their homes and families, and know the main landmarks on their journey to school. They describe how to find different parts of the school such as the hall, secretary's office or music room. Children are aware that time can be considered in terms of past, present and future. They understand that some teddy bears in their class collection are worn because they have been cuddled frequently, and not because they are old, and that others, that are actually old, appear new because they have never been played with. Children understand that objects such as telephones, irons and cooking pans have changed over time. They know that some modern materials used in making these, such as plastics, are lighter in weight than 'older' materials, such as iron. Children are aware that water is found in a variety of forms such as in a fountain, ocean, river or sea. They know features such as 'hill', 'village pond' and 'bridge' and include these in drawings of Goldilocks' route to the house of the three bears. They have satisfactory cutting and sticking skills, but there are few examples of joining skills, other than models made from commercial building kits. They use the computer mouse with confidence to 'drag and drop' pictures of characters in a fairy tale story to make a composite picture.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teacher uses a well-chosen range of resources to broaden children's experience and extend their vocabulary. Adults are used effectively to help with follow-up activities after whole class introductions to lessons, and are well briefed to support learning well. In the three lessons seen, the same organisation was used, with a long initial discussion session and a set task, often with a limited time allocation, to reinforce learning. Activities are tightly structured and do not take account of children's previous knowledge and understanding, or provide sufficient challenge for those who are higher attaining. There are very few free choice activities where children have the opportunity to discover and form opinions for themselves, to record their ideas and observations in writing, or to practise skills of cutting, joining and fixing. Planning shows a sequence of unrelated experiences that are suitable for the age and experience of the children, but the programme is too full to allow opportunities for follow-up lessons where children can develop their ideas. Technology, such as an audio tape player for stories, is used effectively to enhance listening skills. Programs chosen for children's use on the computer are suitable for their age, but the computer is not used sufficiently.

Physical development

74. By the age of five, most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. During gymnastics lessons, they move quickly without bumping into each other, and walk along a bench and climb with confidence. They form good stretched and curled up shapes, demonstrating well the difference between a narrow 'pencil' and a wide 'star' stretch. Children have a good awareness of safety, lifting apparatus carefully, and allowing each other plenty of working space on the high, fixed climbing frame. They follow instructions well, selecting and maintaining shapes as they move along the bench, climb on to the box, jump on to the mat and move back to their place. In dance, children move confidently and imaginatively in response to words and music relating to the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'.
75. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Effective account is taken of any physical disabilities, and sensitive support is given to ensure that all children can participate in activities such as balancing and jumping. Lessons are well prepared and the teacher gives clear explanations. There is good attention to safety, although no

coaching was given for pupils jumping from the box to encourage bent knees and soft landings during the gymnastics lesson seen. Children are used well to demonstrate good work to help the class improve. Praise and encouragement help children to try hard and set themselves high standards. In dance, the teacher made good use of the time available, but in gymnastics, children had to wait too long for a turn on the apparatus, which restricted their learning. Planning shows that occasional use is made of the outdoor playground for playing hop-scotch, skipping, throwing and catching. However the lack of a secure outdoor area, and suitable resources for outdoor play, restricts opportunities for children to balance, climb, throw, catch and control wheeled vehicles. The result is an unbalanced programme for children's physical development. This weakness was identified at the last inspection and it has not been rectified.

Creative development

76. By the age of five, most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They know how to hold and play musical instruments such as the triangle, tambourine and drum. They follow a child conductor and play when alerted by a coloured disc related to their family of instruments. They know the properties of wet and dry sand for building, and have experience of a range of malleable materials. Their paintings are lively, with good use of colour. Skills and techniques for painting, printing, collage and many other aspects of picture making are good, and high standards are achieved. Children explore rough and smooth and hard and soft materials and sort them into different categories before making collage pictures. They decide roles with maturity when re-enacting fairy tales and enjoy the opportunity to dress up and act in character. They respond enthusiastically to opportunities for discovery, as when feeling the difference between ice and water.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Skills of picture making are well taught, resulting in knowledgeable children with a good range of skills. Activities are tightly structured, however, and there are insufficient opportunities for children to experiment, learn through discovery, or to practise their skills. In the role-play area, set up as a fairy tale castle, children are expected to select a story from a limited range, and use characters listed on a card. They have no opportunity to develop their own ideas in the castle environment. The lack of outdoor play also restricts children's opportunities to use their imagination individually or as a group, to adapt their environment to reflect their ideas, for example when playing with large building blocks.

ENGLISH

78. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were well above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving at least the level expected of most eleven-year-olds was above the national average. The percentage reaching a higher level was well above the national average. In the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999, pupils' results were above average in reading and writing. In both areas, the percentage reaching at least the level expected of most seven-year-olds was well above the national average. The percentages reaching a higher level were close to the national average. At Key Stage 2, results have fluctuated in recent years, although the overall trend is of a better rate of improvement than that found nationally. The 1999 results were much higher than the most recent test results at the time of the last inspection. Reading and writing results at the end of Key Stage 1 fell after the last inspection, in 1997, but there has been steady improvement since then. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at Key Stage 2. Girls do better than boys in writing at Key Stage 1. In comparison with the results

achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, in 1999, pupils' performance was above average at Key Stage 2. It was below average in reading, and was broadly average in writing, at Key Stage 1.

79. This year, the evidence of pupils' school work shows the present Year 6 to be average and working at a similar level to that found in 1998, which was significantly lower than the 1999 test results. The school has identified that the teaching of English for these pupils was unsatisfactory when they were in Years 3 and during a period of temporary staffing in Year 5. This means that their progress, as they moved up through Key Stage 2, has been unsatisfactory, and they are now achieving at a lower level than expected in relation to their attainment on entry to the key stage. There is also, at present, unsatisfactory provision for extended writing and practise of literacy skills across the curriculum which is adversely affecting their achievements. The work of Year 2 pupils continues to be above average, with improved performance at the higher level in reading. The following judgements on standards relate to the work of pupils presently at the end of each key stage.
80. By the end of both key stages, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above average. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils speak with a high degree of confidence and fluency. They articulate clearly, employ an extensive vocabulary and have a good grasp of Standard English. Pupils listen carefully to one another, willingly taking turns to speak in discussions, such as when talking about the seaside in geography. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils successfully adapt speech to suit the occasion. They modulate their voices and engage the interest of the listener, for example, when discussing books they have read. They are confident in debate, where they develop arguments, ideas and opinions logically and politely. Pupils listen with care and consideration, respecting others' right to be heard.
81. By the end of Key Stage 1, reading standards are above the national average. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are fluent, confident, expressive and accurate readers, with greater independence than is usually found. They make good use of strategies, such as phonic clues, when encountering unfamiliar words. They discuss character and plot with good understanding. Pupils are familiar with alphabetical order and indexes, putting this knowledge to good use when using dictionaries and reference books. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are confident and independent readers. They read with the expected accuracy, fluency and expression. In discussing favourite authors and books, they satisfactorily explain their choices through reference to character, plot and genre. Higher attaining pupils give good reasons when explaining preference. Most pupils have secure reference skills and make satisfactory use of these.
82. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is above the national average. They write for a satisfactory range of purposes, including instructions, stories, book reviews, poetry and letters. They successfully use their knowledge of grammar and punctuation in constructing sentences. Spelling is good, with higher attaining pupils accurately spelling words such as 'beautiful'. Most pupils have a good knowledge of simple story structure. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use paragraphs well and to use language imaginatively to create a picture, for example 'then she disappeared in a cloud of ink'. Although most pupils are not yet joining letters, handwriting is satisfactorily formed and legible. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in writing is average. Pupils write for a wider range of purposes including reports, reviews and newspaper articles. Most pupils employ a rich vocabulary to enliven their writing and higher attaining pupils show a personal style, which helps to hold the reader's attention. Pupils' spelling is usually accurate, and satisfactory use is made of punctuation. Skills

in planning, drafting and redrafting writing are less effective, as are those in plot and character development. Most pupils are beginning to develop their own handwriting styles, most of which are joined, neat and legible.

83. The overall quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is satisfactory, with some very good teaching in Year 6. During the inspection, an example of unsatisfactory teaching of the literacy hour was seen in Year 4. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when there was much teaching that was less than satisfactory, especially at Key Stage 1. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported to make good gains in their literacy skills, and especially in speaking and listening, as was the case at the last inspection.
84. Where teaching is very good, very effective use is made of every moment, and questioning is used well to extend, challenge and consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding. Answers, whether correct or not, are valued, and incorrect answers are skilfully used as the basis for teaching points. The teacher has a real enthusiasm for the subject which pupils quickly 'catch', responding with enjoyment and conscientiously applying themselves to their work. Teaching in these lessons results in a rapid pace of learning. Where an example of good teaching was seen in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher challenged pupils' thinking about a story through the use of searching questions. Good use of language, such as 'author', developed pupils' understanding well.
85. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers have secure subject knowledge, which helps them to plan work suited to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Questioning is used well to extend and consolidate pupils' learning and to assess their knowledge and understanding. Good use is made of a variety of simple strategies to ensure that all pupils respond. An example of this was the requirement in a Year 2 lesson for pupils to raise the requisite number of fingers to indicate the number of phonemes in a given word. All these aspects of teaching move pupils' learning forward at a satisfactory rate. Throughout Key Stage 1, however, there are some weaknesses in time management, and parts of some lessons lack pace. In addition, during the literacy hour in Year 3 as well as in Key Stage 1, the teacher is not always aware of the needs of groups working independently when concentrating on one specific group. These elements of teaching inhibit the pace of pupils' learning.
86. In unsatisfactory teaching, planning does not take into account the needs of all pupils. As the activities of groups working independently are not checked carefully enough, too many pupils are unsure of what is expected of them. As a result, they lose interest and do not work hard enough, which limits their learning. Throughout the school, the overall quality of marking is unsatisfactory. Credit is sometimes given for incorrect work. This restricts pupils' learning and leads to the repetition of mistakes. Most teachers give praise and add some constructive comments to help move pupils' learning forward but, with the exception of Year 5, this practice is inconsistently used.
87. The co-ordination of English has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator, in consultation with colleagues, has introduced a good policy, which leaves no doubt about the school's approach to the teaching of English. In addition, the co-ordinator has begun a satisfactory programme of monitoring the quality of teaching, giving feedback to help teachers to improve. Good use is made of the results of regular testing to set individual targets for pupils. The national framework for teaching literacy has been adapted to meet pupils' needs and forms the basis of medium-term planning. This, together with the introduction of a wider range of good quality resources, has made a positive contribution to the improvement in reading at Key Stage 1. The adapted framework also includes provision for writing at length and the use of literacy across

the curriculum. Despite a programme of monitoring of medium- and short-term planning, these aspects of the curriculum are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. This prevents the practice and extension of many literacy skills and inhibits the progress of pupils throughout the key stage. Progress is also limited by too little use of work in subjects such as geography and history to develop pupils' literacy skills, and especially to give opportunities for writing.

MATHEMATICS

88. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were well above the national average. They were also well above average when compared with results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the standard expected of most eleven-year-olds was well above the national average, as was the percentage of pupils reaching a higher level. Standards have improved considerably since the last inspection. The trend over the last four years is of improvement at a faster rate than that found nationally. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' results were below the national average, based on the average of all the points scored. They were well below average when compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the standard expected of most seven-year-olds was close to the national average, but the percentage reaching the higher level was well below the national average. The results showed a sharp drop from the two previous years, where performance was above the national average. The inspection evidence is that higher attaining pupils, who took the tests in 1999, were underachieving because of fluctuations in the quality of teaching since starting school, and previous work that did not offer sufficient challenge. Boys are doing better than girls at Key Stage 2, but there is no significant difference at Key Stage 1.
89. This year, the evidence of pupils' school work shows the present Year 6 as well above average, continuing the high standards of the 1999 tests. The work of Year 2 is of an above average standard, as it was in both 1997 and 1998. These improved standards are a result of the introduction of key learning objectives for teaching and close checking of teaching and learning over the last three years, together with the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy during the current school year.
90. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils count reliably to 100, and have a secure understanding of place value to 100. They identify odd and even numbers to 100, and round numbers accurately to the nearest 10. Higher attaining pupils are confident with place value to 1,000. All pupils have very strong mental arithmetic skills, give reasons for their thinking, choose the best method for each calculation, and solve number problems with mature confidence. There are very few pupils working at a lower level than that expected for their age in this aspect of mathematics. This is a direct result of good teaching in the daily mental arithmetic practice, introduced this year as part of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils estimate with reasonable accuracy in work on length, capacity and weight, where they use both standard and non-standard units according to the problem they are solving. Most pupils recognise many regular shapes in two and three dimensions, distinguishing between faces and edges. They understand halves and quarters and tell the time to quarter-hours. There is less evidence of knowledge of right angles and of reflective symmetry.
91. By the end of Key Stage 2, almost all pupils calculate confidently in numbers to a million and multiply and divide large numbers by hundreds. They have mature mental mathematics skills, explaining their thinking clearly using a very wide mathematical

vocabulary, and testing and combining different methods to speed calculations. Almost all pupils calculate decimal fractions and percentages accurately. They work with prime factors and solve simple equations. They know the properties of a triangle, measure angles accurately in degrees and prove that the three angles add up to 180 degrees. Pupils understand reflective symmetry and work confidently with co-ordinates in all four quadrants. They use their good knowledge of probability to solve problems accurately. The weakest area is in the collection and processing of information, where no use is made of computers to produce a range of graphs or to solve problems. Attainment in this area is a long way behind that in arithmetical skills.

92. The overall quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching at Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make consistently good progress, and achieve very well by the end of Year 6 because they have been taught to think for themselves. As a result, they have confidence to put forward their own ideas and to ask for help when they need it. There is good teaching and learning of mental and practical arithmetic throughout the school, and this is the best feature of Key Stage 2 teaching. Mental arithmetic sessions in Years 5 and 6 are exciting daily events. Teachers are very skilled at including pupils of all capabilities. They ask difficult questions to challenge higher attaining pupils and easier ones to give confidence to those who are lower attaining.
93. In other satisfactory teaching, resources are used well to support pupils individually, and to focus the attention of the class and illustrate new learning. Teachers carefully prepare work so that all pupils are challenged and achieve success if they work hard. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking when calculating and solving problems, and the teacher moves them on in their learning through discussion. Calculators are used very effectively at Key Stage 1 to give an accurate check where numbers have been rounded up or down for quick addition. The computer is also used well to support learning in mathematics at Key Stage 1, for example enabling pupils to see number patterns emerging on a number grid. In Key Stage 2, computers are not used to develop skills in processing information to produce graphs and spreadsheets and this restricts pupils' learning in this area of mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are supported to make good progress. The effective and sensitive help provided for pupils with English as an additional language ensures that they make good progress. This was demonstrated well in a Year 1 lesson on turning and moving, where one pupil was used to demonstrate, following instructions such as 'move forward', or 'turn left'.
94. In an unsatisfactory lesson seen in Year 1, the teacher did not appreciate that pupils had not fully understood the work covered during the introduction. As a result she could not complete successfully the planned follow-up work. This meant that pupils' learning was adversely affected. Marking is the weakest area of teaching, with very few constructive comments to help pupils to improve, or explain why answers have been marked wrong.
95. There has been good improvement in the management of mathematics since the last inspection. As a result, standards have risen well. For the last three years, clear objectives have been set, attainment recorded, and annual tests introduced so that year on year progress can be monitored. Results of tests are analysed in detail so that weak areas can be addressed, and challenging, but realistic targets are set for individual pupils. Most teachers keep detailed and accurate records, but each teacher has devised their own format. This means that there is no consistent recording system that can be continued as pupils move to a new class and to be used to track progress

in detail over time. The confidence of teachers is justifiably high. They have been very well supported by the headteacher as co-ordinator. He has worked with teachers and pupils in each classroom, and knows their strengths and weaknesses in detail. Where weaknesses have been identified, teachers have been given good, practical support. Resources have been built up during the last three years, and are now good, which is an improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

96. Pupils' performance in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests was above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the standard expected of most eleven-year-olds was above the national average. The percentage reaching a higher level was well above the national average. When compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's results were broadly average. The test results in 1999 were very much better than the most recent test results at the time of the last inspection. The trend of improvement is better than that found nationally. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils reaching the standard expected of most seven-year-olds was above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching a higher level was well above the national average.
97. This year, the evidence of pupils' school work is that the present Years 2 and 6 are above average. They are working at levels well above average in experimental and investigative science. The school has made particular efforts to improve its standards in practical science, with pupils being provided with many opportunities to develop their skills and gain confidence in this area. This has contributed significantly to the achievement of the current good standards. At the time of the last inspection, there were limited opportunities for experimental and investigative science, especially at Key Stage 1. This weakness has been rectified.
98. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils name the main external features of the human body, and a flowering plant, and identify the items needed to sustain life. Pupils know which foods are needed to provide a healthy diet. Pupils recognise and name a range of common materials, such as metal, plastic and wood, and know that some are man-made and others are natural. They understand that pushes and pulls are examples of forces, and explain that crushing, bending and stretching are forces that can change the shape of objects. Pupils understand the role of batteries, wires and bulbs in making an electric circuit, and they know that a circuit will not work if it has a break in it. Pupils know that there are many sources of sound, and that sounds travel away from sources, getting quieter as they do so. In carrying out practical activities, pupils put forward their own ideas, record information and explain what they have found out from their work.
99. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils recognise that there is a wide variety of living things, and understand that organisms vary according to their habitats. Pupils confidently name the major organs of a flowering plant and explain their functions. Pupils know what constitutes a food chain. They describe the properties of a variety of materials, and recognise the differences between solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that materials can be made into mixtures, and that they can be separated through processes such as sieving and evaporation. They understand that a switch can control an electric circuit, and that some materials are conductors of electricity, and some are insulators. Pupils know that light travels in straight lines, that objects can be seen when they reflect light and that shadows are caused by objects blocking light. Pupils

confidently undertake a wide range of experiments, and have a clear understanding of the concept of a fair test. In carrying out their experiments, pupils make clear predictions, careful observations and record their findings systematically.

100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching of experimental and investigative science observed in Years 2, 5 and 6. Lessons are well planned, with teachers making especially good use of practical activities. This means that pupils make good gains in their learning in experimental and investigative science. They respond well to these activities and are motivated to find answers to problems. Teachers are also particularly careful to use, and emphasise, the correct scientific terminology, which has a beneficial effect on pupils' overall learning in science. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and provide clear instructions and helpful demonstrations of the work that is to be undertaken. They have high expectations of their pupils' work, especially in relation to investigative activities. Occasionally, the teacher does not ensure that all pupils are fully involved during the question and answer sessions at the start of lessons, with the result that a very small number of pupils are unsure of what is expected of them. Teachers provide much help and well directed support, with gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding identified, and appropriate advice provided. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported, enabling them to make a similar rate of progress to other pupils in the same classes. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but helpful comments and advice are rarely added.
101. At the time of the previous inspection, the school had a suitable science policy, and this has recently been updated. At that time, however, there was no scheme of work for science, and a scheme is now in place in the form of new national guidance. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, and provides her colleagues with advice when requested. She has no opportunity to check on the work being undertaken in classes, however, and this shortcoming, also listed at the time of the last inspection, still remains. Assessment was also a weakness at the time of the last inspection, but clear procedures are now in place. Although teachers record results in their own ways, useful information is now produced. This information is used successfully to help plan work for pupils of differing prior attainment, especially higher attaining pupils, where a shortcoming in provision was reported at the time of the previous inspection. The written work undertaken by pupils, especially that relating to reporting on practical activities, provides support for the school's initiative in literacy. Counting and measuring activities support the school's work in numeracy. At present, little use is made of computer technology to enhance the work in science.

ART

102. The overall standard of pupils' art work is similar to that normally found for their age, although in Years 2 and 4 pupils are working at a higher level as a direct result of good teaching. Pupils in Year 1 show the expected level of skill in using oil pastels to draw landscapes, in response to a painting by Turner. Higher attaining pupils show a good awareness of colour in creating atmosphere and achieve effects such as the reflection of buildings in water. Those in Year 2 have a good level of skill in a range of techniques including batik, marbling and stencilling. They confidently use a variety of materials such as charcoal, paint and pencil. The pupils in this year group have a very keen awareness of the overall visual effect of their work. Year 3 pupils make satisfactory attempts at recording what they see as they draw plant pots in pencil and chalk. The work of pupils in Year 4 is mature. They very competently apply their understanding of the styles of famous artists, such as Matisse, to their own work. These pupils are very aware of the impact of colour and pattern in their work. Year 5 pupils produce some visually attractive designs for Greek pottery and show the expected level of skill in a range of printing techniques. Those in Year 6 demonstrate good skill development in their Greek designs using marbling and press printing.
103. The overall quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is satisfactory, with good teaching and learning in Years 2 and 4. During the inspection, an unsatisfactory lesson was seen in Year 1. What distinguishes teaching in Years 2 and 4 is the strength of the teachers' subject knowledge. This enables them to provide activities that really challenge all pupils, to ensure that skills are developed well, and to allow pupils to be creative in expressing their own ideas. These teachers are also clear about what it is that they want pupils to learn in a project taking several weeks and in individual lessons. In other satisfactory teaching, a suitable range of activities is provided to give pupils a breadth of experience of two-dimensional art work and to develop skills in using a variety of materials and techniques, such as in printing in Year 5. All these aspects of teaching support pupils' learning.
104. Where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in a lesson in Year 1, the teacher was not clear enough about what the pupils should achieve, the introduction was too long, and there was very little opportunity for pupils to be imaginative in the use of their own ideas. As a result, pupils' learning was adversely affected and many pupils produced work that was not good enough. Although there are still instances of unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 1, the overall quality of teaching and learning is better than at the last inspection. Satisfactory account is taken of the needs of pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, and they are given the support necessary to make satisfactory progress.
105. Since the last inspection the school has introduced a local education authority scheme of work, and this has gone some way towards rectifying a weakness found at that time. The school has not, however, fully eradicated the weakness, as it has not developed guidance for teachers on the implementation of the scheme to assist in planning lessons with clear objectives at the right level. As the curriculum is strongly focused on two-dimensional art, pupils have too few opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in three-dimensional work. There is no adequate or consistent approach to the assessment of art, and assessment information is not used to guide teaching. The co-ordinator has no responsibility for monitoring teaching or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. Neither is this role carried out at a more senior level. The lack of monitoring, and the weaknesses in the planning, restrict the school wide effectiveness of art teaching and limit pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. The standard of work in design and technology, across the school, is similar to that normally found for pupils of the same age. Standards are higher than those found at the time of the last inspection. Standards were previously lower because the school had no scheme of work until eighteen months ago, and the choice of topics was not checked to ensure that pupils were taught skills and knowledge that built on previous experience.
107. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use their good scientific knowledge to support their work in design and technology; for example, nutrition in a bread survey, and belts and cogs in preparatory work for a fairground topic. They have gaps in their knowledge and skills, and are underachieving in some areas because of a chaotic curriculum earlier in the key stage. Few pupils have had the opportunity to work with wood, and they have a limited knowledge and experience of creating rigid structures from materials such as paper and card. Recent work on the design and making of slippers shows innovative designs meeting detailed criteria. The finished products are of good quality, using a wide range of materials, including plastic, and a well chosen use of joining and fixing techniques. Year 2 pupils make glove puppets from felt. Choosing from a range of designs, they ensure a good fit to the hand, and provide a wide range of individual finishing touches to personalise their puppets. Good features of the project are in the quality of the sewing to join the felt pieces, the clearly drawn and labelled initial sketches showing the materials and techniques to be used, and the honest evaluations that conclude the project. No pupils have used computers to support work in collecting and processing information, although very suitable projects, biscuit making in Years 5 and 6 and sandwich testing in Years 3 and 4, are ideal for this purpose.
108. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages, and better than at the time of the last inspection. The main reason for the improvement is the adoption of consistent planning for the whole school through a series of topics. These develop skills and understanding systematically, and give pupils a balanced experience of a wide range of materials and techniques. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Year 3, however, where the organisation of the lesson was ineffective, and time was not well used. There was a lack of urgency because the teacher had not planned the topic in detail, and had underestimated how much was needed to be done in each lesson to complete the work in the time allocated.
109. Teachers use resources well to gain pupils' interest and to give them direct experience, while emphasising safety and hygiene rules suitably. Pupils in Year 5 were fascinated to see the cogs and drive belt of a lawn mower, and this experience helped their understanding. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support to include them in all activities. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils with English as an additional language were helped by the teacher to ensure that they understood the names of the fruit and vegetables used in the lesson. As a result, they made good progress. Teachers have good questioning skills that encourage pupils to think for themselves, and to explain their thinking. At Key Stage 2, teachers do not use the collection and processing of information sufficiently, or use computers at all to support this aspect. For example, where older pupils made biscuits or tasted bread, they recorded individual preferences, but they did not investigate the favourites of the class as a whole, or survey reasons for choices. Marking is minimal, and does not help pupils to improve. The presentation of work in Year 3 is unsatisfactory.
110. At the time of the inspection there was a temporary teacher 'looking after' design and technology. The permanent co-ordinator has no responsibility to check standards of teaching and learning. The school is preparing to introduce new national guidelines for design and technology. There is no record of pupils' present standards and the skills

developed to help ensure that planning based on the new guidance will be matched to their needs. Nothing is being done to identify and fill the gaps in skills and knowledge of pupils in Years 5 and 6. The absence of assessment procedures was identified as a weakness at the last inspection, and it has not been rectified. There are no tools suitable for working with materials other than paper and card, for example, no saws, drills, hammers, screwdrivers and clamps for woodworking. The omissions in recording pupils' attainment and the work covered, and the lack of checking of teaching and learning, all restrict the effectiveness of the school's provision and how well pupils are able to learn.

GEOGRAPHY

111. The standard of pupils' work is similar to that found in most schools for pupils of this age. This represents an improvement since the last inspection at Key Stage 2. Year 1 pupils have an early understanding of maps and identify human features such as their homes on a map of the locality. Year 2 pupils recognise a wider range of human and physical features. They recognise a map of the United Kingdom, name the constituent countries and indicate the location of Upton. They have satisfactory knowledge of how weather affects a location, and are beginning to understand how man can affect the environment. Year 3 pupils satisfactorily use photographs to compare and contrast physical features at different locations in the United Kingdom. They use colour keys to record climatic differences in worldwide locations. Pupils in Year 4 identify changes in land use and their impact on the community. Those in Year 5 understand how the pollution of rivers affects wildlife. They have a satisfactory understanding of the precipitation cycle and know that the availability of water is limited and that it is unevenly distributed throughout the world. In Year 6, pupils recognise how behaviour patterns affect a locality and its residents, and focus on this in a study of traffic in the area of the school. Throughout Key Stage 2, however, pupils have little understanding of the broader context in which localities are set or how they are linked with other places. Key Stage 1 pupils have limited understanding of man's impact on their immediate environment.
112. The overall quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Where teaching is good, resources such as maps are well chosen to support pupils' learning. Planning includes clear objectives, which are shared with pupils, reflecting teachers' good subject knowledge. This ensures that pupils know what is expected of them and they work hard to complete tasks. Good use is made of questioning, helping to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and to consolidate their learning. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, pupils are well managed and they enjoy their work. All this makes a good contribution to the pace of pupils' learning.
113. Where teaching is satisfactory, planning is clear, teachers have secure subject knowledge, and resources and questioning are used well. All these features support pupils' learning. Planning does not, however, include different levels of work to suit the range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability classes. The pace of parts of lessons is slow, inhibiting the rate of pupils' learning. Throughout the school, pupils' work is regularly marked, although the use of constructive comment to help move pupils' learning forward is inconsistently applied.
114. The school has no clearly defined management role for the co-ordinator, who has held the post only since January 2000. As a result, there is no formal monitoring of the quality of teaching or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. Medium-term planning is based upon a national programme of work, which has had some adaptation

to suit the school's needs. Limited time is allocated to the subject. This reduces the range of work covered. The depth of work in those aspects included in planning is satisfactory and, in Years 5 and 6, it is sometimes good. There are no adequate assessment procedures. Consequently, information from assessment is not used to support the planning of work. Largely due to the limited time allocated to the subject, pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, have little opportunity to practise and develop their literacy skills.

HISTORY

115. No history lessons were taught during the inspection. This was due to the school's programme of alternating the teaching of history and geography. Evidence was drawn from pupils' workbooks, the school's planning documents, and talking with staff and pupils.
116. At both key stages, standards are similar to those found in most schools for pupils of this age. This reflects the findings reported at the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils have some awareness of changes that have taken place over time. They have the expected knowledge of some famous people and significant events from the past, such as Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War, and Samuel Pepys and the Fire of London. They are beginning to appreciate the usefulness of primary sources and to develop an understanding of cause and effect. Year 3 and 4 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the culture and religion of Ancient Egypt, such as the symbolism of the gods. Although they recognise that artefacts are useful in understanding the past, their knowledge and understanding of the importance of archaeology is limited. Pupils in Year 4 have a satisfactory understanding of change over time in relation to land use. Those in Year 5 have a good understanding of the legacy of Ancient Greece, and have a satisfactory knowledge of Greek city states and of the conflict between Athens and Sparta. While pupils explain some of the consequences of events, such as the Battle of Marathon, their understanding of the cause is insecure. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory knowledge of conditions in Victorian England and the effect of famous people such as Dr Barnardo. There is limited evidence that pupils know how to obtain information from a variety of sources or how to evaluate evidence.
117. From the available evidence, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, planned work covers a sufficient range. This is dealt with in satisfactory detail, and in some instances, such as Year 2's work about Florence Nightingale, in great detail. At Key Stage 2 the overall content of planned work is satisfactory. The limited time allocation for the subject often results in insufficient depth of coverage. For example, although there is some planned use of the local area to investigate times past, there is insufficient depth of coverage to give pupils an adequate appreciation of the richness of Chester's heritage. Nevertheless, teachers make satisfactory use of visits to a Tudor house in the vicinity. This enriches pupils' experience and reinforces their understanding of the period. All work is regularly marked. Correction of spellings and grammar support the development of pupils' literacy skills, but there is inconsistent use of constructive comment to help pupils improve their approach to history and move their learning forward.
118. The co-ordinator has been in post since September 1999. The school has no planned role for her management of the subject. This is unsatisfactory, resulting in no formal monitoring, either of teaching quality or of pupils' work. The co-ordinator would welcome the opportunity to be more actively engaged in monitoring. She carries out some informal monitoring of pupils' work and is aware of some of its shortcomings. A national programme of work forms a satisfactory basis for planning, but little has been

done to adapt this to suit the needs of the school. Pupils' work is not formally assessed against agreed criteria. Consequently, although teachers exchange informal details of pupils' attainment, there is no secure information to guide their planning to meet pupils' differing needs. Resources to support the teaching of history are unsatisfactory. For example, the school has no artefacts or facsimile original documents to help pupils develop an understanding of history through a variety of sources, although artefacts are occasionally borrowed from a local museum.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but they are well below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills have improved at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, they are lower than were reported at the last inspection. Statutory requirements are not met at Key Stage 2 because some important areas of the National Curriculum are not taught, for example, using the computer to control external devices or to analyse information. There is no systematic planning to develop computer skills, very little direct teaching and not enough regular practise for each pupil. Staff expertise is low.
120. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a suitable range of skills that they use effectively in many areas of the curriculum. They enter text confidently and save and print their work. Pupils use an art program well to produce lively computer-generated pictures of flowers. They draw outlines on the screen and colour them in by selecting from a range of colours, showing good control of the computer 'mouse'. Pupils also control and operate other machines effectively. They use calculators competently to check work in mathematics and they operate the tape player independently when listening to story tapes. They give the correct instructions to a robot floor toy to enable it to move round obstacles to reach a given point.
121. By the end of Key Stage 2, the knowledge, skills and understanding of pupils in Year 6 are at a level expected for pupils in Year 3. Pupils in Year 6 enter text confidently, edit their work to correct mistakes and improve presentation, and add pre-drawn pictures stored in the computer. They use a limited number of CD ROMs for research, but do not save or print the information to use at a later date. They have been taught how to send an e-mail. All pupils wrote stories for the 'Tesco 2000' internet site, but pupils without a computer at home have very hazy memories of these experiences. Pupils in Year 6 have had no experience of using the computer to input information and produce graphs or to use and design a spreadsheet. They do not know how to use information technology for communicating and handling information, or for controlling and checking external devices linked to the computer. Within the last month, they have used a laser pen to draw coloured lines on a folder cover. Pupils with special educational needs are competent users of programs to develop their word skills. Teachers create a specific list of words for each child that is used to practise reading and spelling in a range of exciting programs.
122. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Planning for learning is at the right level for the needs of the pupils, and a suitable amount of time is spent in teaching how to use the computer and in introducing new programs. Skills and understanding are then practised during work planned for other subjects, and this is effective in consolidating learning. Pupils are well managed. As a result, they concentrate well and make the most of their turn to use the computer, working well in pairs and taking turns to use the

controls. They have good support from the teacher, as in mathematics, when discussing the emerging pattern of even numbers on a grid.

123. The quality of teaching and learning is poor at Key Stage 2. There is very little teaching of information technology, and the computers in each classroom are rarely used. In some classes, pupils do take turns to use the computer, but their low level of skills suggests that they have had too little supervision and support while working. In other classes, including Year 6, there is no organised turn-taking, and some pupils have had very few chances to use the computer during the last eight months. The areas planned for teaching during this school year are totally unrealistic. Two of the three topics for Years 3 and 4, for example, are about processing information, and there are no programs in school for this. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also have planning for processing information, for multimedia presentation and learning about spreadsheets, all of which are well beyond their present level of understanding. There are no records other than in Year 6 to show the level of skills that the pupils have, or the aspects of the subject that they have covered. As a result, understanding and skills are not developed in sequence and pupils make few gains in learning.
124. No documentation is available to show if any targets were set to raise attainment after the last inspection found it to be low, or to give an overview of teaching and learning. The raising of standards at Key Stage 1 has more to do with the individual teachers ensuring that sufficient time is spent on the subject, and that the plans happen to match the needs of the pupils, than by any whole school initiative to raise attainment. No effective training has taken place to raise staff expertise in how to organise teaching and learning. There is no policy to guide improvement, and no effective planning at Key Stage 2. The co-ordinator, who has been in post since the start of the school year, has recently made an inventory of the computers and programs in school, but is not involved in teaching and learning beyond her own class. Plans for development of the subject are based on increasing the number of computers in school, and creating a computer suite. This is seen as a panacea for improving standards in the future. Meanwhile there are urgent problems to address to ensure that sufficient time is allocated to the subject, that pupils have a balanced curriculum that matches their needs, and that teachers have the expertise and support necessary to ensure that teaching and learning are effective.

MUSIC

125. Only two music lessons were seen during the inspection, in the Year 2 class and in the combined Year 5 and 6 class. Further evidence was gained from looking at Key Stage 2 pupils' music folders, listening to singing in hymn practice and assemblies, a scrutiny of teachers' planning, and discussions with teachers and pupils.
126. The standard of pupils' work in music is similar to that normally expected for pupils of this age. Year 2 pupils recognise that symbols can be used to represent how an instrument should be played, such as getting louder or softer, and they clap a steady beat together as a class. They have satisfactory skills in listening to music and identify which toys they can hear when listening to 'The Toy Symphony'. Year 5 and 6 pupils sustain a rhythm for a good amount of time as they play a game of 'Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?'. They have a good musical vocabulary and are confident in using terms such as 'tempo' and 'dynamics'. They recognise formal notation, and understand the 'values' of the different notes. When listening to music, such as an extract from 'Westside Story', they describe it well, for example using language such as 'fast and furious'. Pupils throughout the school sing tunefully in hymn practice and assembly, showing enthusiasm and enjoyment when the songs are familiar. Many join

in with actions.

127. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages, with some good teaching in the combined Year 5 and 6 class. What distinguishes the good teaching is the very thorough preparation of the lesson, the well identified learning objectives that ensure new work builds on that already covered, the responsiveness of the teacher to the pupils' needs during the lesson, and her very obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment. Where teaching is good, questioning is well focused, challenging pupils' thinking and checking their understanding. Praise is used well to recognise good effort, and pupils learn at a good pace. All these aspects of teaching motivate pupils and gain a good level of involvement and enjoyment on their part. This results in them making good progress.
128. In satisfactory teaching, the planning identifies clear learning objectives and activities and pupils are managed effectively, but the lesson lacks the liveliness and pace apparent in the good teaching. As a result, pupils' learning is no better than satisfactory. The effectiveness of pupils' learning was limited further in the Year 2 lesson by the teacher having too few instruments available, which restricted the activities that could be undertaken. In both lessons seen, pupils with special educational needs were supported in participating fully and making satisfactory progress. Hymn practice is a well managed event during which pupils are introduced to new songs and practise those they already know, but there are missed opportunities for pupils' learning. Pupils are required to sing a new song without direct teaching of it. This restricts the standards of singing achieved.
129. A weakness identified at the time of the last inspection was that the commercial scheme of work available in school was used inconsistently, and that there were no guidelines to support teachers in its implementation. There is now a different commercial scheme, which is well used by some teachers, but there are still no guidelines to help teachers in its use. This results in some teachers not identifying adequately what it is that they want pupils to learn. As at the last inspection, there is a temporary co-ordinator for music. The co-ordinator has been 'looking after' music since March 2000 only, and has introduced the use of compact discs for singing in assemblies. There is no monitoring of teaching or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning by the co-ordinator or any more senior member of staff. This is unsatisfactory and means that weaknesses in planning have not been identified, and that no clear direction is given for the development of music in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Standards are similar to those found nationally for pupils of this age. Standards in athletics, at Key Stage 2, are higher than those expected. The standards reported, at the time of the school's previous inspection, have been maintained, except in athletics, where they have improved.
131. At Key Stage 1, pupils move confidently around the hall and yard, showing the expected awareness of space and other pupils. Pupils in Year 1 roll a ball to a partner and also receive it confidently. They satisfactorily move with a ball, as well as with other items such as beanbags and quoits. Pupils in Year 2 successfully perform the basic gymnastic actions of travelling on both hands and feet, and they introduce turning, climbing, jumping and rolling into their travelling movements. They confidently use the floor and a range of suitable equipment to develop their skills, and emphasise balances during their routines. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 have the expected skills of throwing, hitting and catching a ball, and they confidently undertake rounders activities,

to further develop their ability. Pupils in Years 4 and Year 5 are competent in their athletic skills of running, throwing and jumping, producing good levels of performance in all areas. Through carefully measuring and comparing their performances, pupils are able to improve their standards further. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 attend swimming lessons for part of the year. All become suitably confident in the water and, by the end of Key Stage 2, at least 75 per cent of pupils are able to swim 25 metres or more unaided. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 develop their outdoor adventure skills effectively during residential visits to Tattenhall and Fairbourne.

132. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages, and in lessons observed in Years 2, 4 and 5 it was good. Teachers usually provide satisfactory planning, clear instruction and enthusiasm. This allows all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in their learning of skills, with good gains being made in athletic skills. In one lesson observed, in Year 3, however, the teacher did not coach the required skills adequately, with the result that pupils made only limited progress. Members of staff change into suitable clothing for lessons and they join in and demonstrate for pupils. They have secure subject knowledge, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection, and make suitable demands of pupils' performance. In athletics, teachers are particularly confident, and have high expectations of their pupils, resulting in high standards being achieved.
133. Lessons are generally conducted at a brisk pace. Teachers usually show good control and management skills, especially where a wide range of activities is being undertaken. Teachers often take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but opportunities are sometimes missed to discuss the quality of the work seen, which would help pupils identify the areas where they might improve themselves. Teachers provide help and support to pupils, in all aspects of their work, and in particular they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show good, and often very good attitudes, behave well overall, work well alone and with a partner or group and carry equipment carefully and safely.
134. Until recently the school used a local education authority scheme of work, although it has now adopted new national guidance as its scheme. All aspects of work are suitably covered, with good provision being made for swimming and outdoor adventure activities at Key Stage 2. The co-ordinator has only held the post since September 1999 and, although she is keen to support her colleagues, she has no opportunity to undertake any monitoring of the work being carried out. This shortcoming in monitoring was also identified at the time of the last inspection. No formal assessment procedures are in place, and although some informal assessment takes place during lessons, nothing is recorded. Any information gained is inadequate to accurately identify pupils' current attainment, or to help provide suitable future work. Activities involving counting and measuring, especially in games activities, give support to the school's initiative in numeracy.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. Standards are in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus. The standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are familiar with two major world faiths, Christianity and Hinduism. They are able to relate some of the stories of famous figures from both, such as Jesus, and Rama and Sita. Pupils recognise that religions have a variety of ceremonies and special occasions, and they understand, for example, the importance of Holi and Diwali to Hindus and Easter to Christians. Pupils are aware of the importance of 'special things', and have identified items which are special to themselves, as well as those which are special to Hindus, such as the shrine and the

puja tray. Pupils recognise the importance of friendship. They describe confidently what makes a 'good friend', and understand that many of their friendships are found within their own families.

136. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are familiar with the Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Sikh faiths. Pupils successfully identify and discuss similarities and differences between religions, such as in clothing and life-styles. They know that different religions have their own special buildings, such as the church, synagogue and the gurdwara, and their own special books, such as the Bible, the Torah and Guru Granth Sahib. Pupils are confident in discussing a variety of issues, such as the importance of journeys in many religions, and the need to understand the difference between right and wrong and avoid temptation. Pupils are aware of the need for caring and tolerance in their dealings with other people, and they speak confidently about Florence Nightingale and Mother Theresa, as examples to follow. Pupils recognise the part that prayer plays in religion. As well as having written their own prayers, they can explain the importance of prayer beads and the prayer wheel to Buddhists.
137. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at both key stages. In a lesson seen in Year 6 it was very good. Lessons are well planned, for example with teachers reading stories sensitively such as the story of the Prodigal Son in Year 4. Interesting and thought-provoking experiences are provided for pupils, such as the role-play on temptation undertaken in Year 6, in a very good lesson. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, and usually provide clear explanations for pupils, enabling them all, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding. Occasionally, teachers do not ensure pupils' participation and a small number of pupils are inadequately involved during the early part of the lesson, and are then uncertain how to proceed. Pupils find the subject interesting when their full involvement is gained, and they concentrate well on the tasks in hand. Pupils in Year 6 responded particularly well to the opportunities provided by the drama undertaken. Teachers always mark pupils' books, but few comments or advice are added.
138. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, and has assisted her colleagues in implementing the locally agreed syllabus. She has also improved the school's stock of religious artefacts since the last inspection. She has no opportunities to monitor the work being undertaken in the subject. This weakness in management, which was also listed at the time of the last inspection, still remains. No clear assessment procedures are in place, and though informal assessment takes place during lessons, no information is recorded to assess pupils' attainment. Consequently, assessment information cannot help with the planning of work. Through the written activities undertaken by pupils, for example in Year 6 when writing about Mary Jones and her Bible, religious education successfully supports the school's initiative in literacy. The work undertaken also provides strong support for all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.