

INSPECTION REPORT

**WILMSLOW GRANGE COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Handforth, Wilmslow, Cheshire

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111014

Headteacher: Mr G.J.H. Mendham

Reporting inspector: Mrs P.J. Allison
21420

Dates of inspection: 29th January – 1st February 2001

Inspection number: 190462

Full 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 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ullswater Road
Handforth
Cheshire

Postcode: SK9 3NG

Telephone number: 01625 526566

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M. Carlisle

Date of previous inspection: 25th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21420	P. J. Allison	Registered inspector	Mathematics History Religious education Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11439	J. Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22058	C. Richardson	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Special educational needs	
21073	R. Fry	Team inspector	Science Information technology Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wilmslow Grange is a primary school of a similar size to other primary schools, with 204 boys and girls aged four to eleven on roll. It is a popular school and usually full. Almost all of the pupils are of white ethnic origin. There are a few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Twenty per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. The school mostly serves the local area, although some pupils come from further afield. There is a broad range of attainment on entry, but overall it is about what is expected for children of this age. Since the last inspection, there have been many changes in staffing.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Wilmslow Grange is a very effective school, which achieves high standards and provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The good quality of teaching ensures that pupils usually achieve above what is expected for their age across a broad range of the curriculum. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The school is well led and managed; the headteacher provides excellent leadership. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements are good; standards are usually high.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good; teachers have high expectations of their pupils.
- The curriculum is broad and provides a range of experiences and opportunities for pupils.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Pupils are very well cared for in school.
- The school is well led and managed; the headteacher provides excellent leadership.
- Governors are involved with the life of the school and support it well.
- Parents have positive views of the school and the school works well with them.

What could be improved

- Older pupils do not achieve as well as they could in some aspects of information and communication technology.

This one area for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Despite a fall in the standards achieved by the older pupils last year, the school has generally maintained the high standards highlighted in the last inspection in November 1996. All issues were addressed and this has led to an improvement in such areas as encouraging pupils to use an investigational approach in their work. The role of the co-ordinator has been developed very well and the school now makes more use of assessment data to set targets for improvement. There have been improvements in the quality of teaching and in the breadth of the curriculum. The school has seen many changes in staffing recently, but this has been managed positively. There is now a strong team of teachers and support staff, working together effectively to ensure the school moves forward confidently.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	D	E
mathematics	A	A	C	E
science	A	B	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The standards achieved by eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science are usually above average and often higher than this. These high standards have been maintained for a number of years. Last year, results from end of Key Stage tests were disappointing, but many factors were involved in this drop in standards, for example, changes in staffing and a large number of pupils with special educational needs. Currently, many of the oldest pupils are working at levels that are higher than is expected for their age, and evidence indicates that standards will rise again. Targets set by the school are very challenging, but the school is determined that the targets will be reached.

The standards achieved by seven year olds in reading, writing and mathematics have been rising over the years and are currently above average. Standards in writing are not as good as those in reading and mathematics, but the school is focusing on this in order to improve these standards further.

Pupils achieve well. There are high expectations in the school and the quality of teaching ensures that pupils make good progress from the time they enter the school to when they leave. This achievement applies throughout the curriculum. In music, art and design, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education, pupils achieve high standards. Only in information and communication technology is there a weakness in the standards achieved by the oldest pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are keen to learn, involve themselves in activities and maintain concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils are courteous and respect others. They behave responsibly in classes and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They work independently and willingly take on responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

The quality of teaching is consistently good, and it is often very good. During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching in the school, and virtually all of the teaching in the school was at least good (96 per cent). Almost half of the teaching was very good or better (46 per cent). Two per cent of the lessons were excellent. This quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and on the progress they make.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set them challenging work to do. Pupils respond well to this and they make a lot of effort. Teachers plan work carefully to meet the needs of all the pupils in their classes. The enthusiasm of teachers is very marked, so that pupils are interested and want to learn. Teachers use a range of methods and resources to motivate pupils. In particular, they involve their pupils in using their skills in problem-solving and investigational work. This is an improvement from the last inspection and has a positive effect on developing pupils' thinking skills.

Literacy and numeracy are well taught, and pupils gain skills and develop them through the school. All other subjects are also taught well by teachers with a high level of expertise and interest. Teaching in the reception class is of good quality. There is an effective emphasis here on children's personal and social development, as well as on their gaining basic literacy and numeracy skills. Throughout the school, support staff and volunteer helpers make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. High priority is given to developing skills in literacy and numeracy, but the school also ensures that pupils have access to a full curriculum. Experiences offered are stimulating and all pupils benefit from them.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils receive specific help as they need it and their progress is carefully monitored.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' personal development is given a high profile in the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to respect others and to take responsibility for their own actions. The positive relationships in the school provide pupils with a very good example on which to model their own social behaviour.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils. Parents recognise the part played by the headteacher in promoting care for the individual. All staff provide very good support for pupils throughout their school life.

The school works very effectively with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He effectively promotes the ethos of the school and has gained the confidence of everyone. With the positive support of the senior management team, there is clear direction for the work of the school. Subject co-ordinators work enthusiastically and are committed to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are loyal and supportive. They involve themselves in the work of the school and use a range of expertise and interests to further its aims and ensure that their responsibilities are fulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school evaluates its performance and sets targets using a range of information and different ways of monitoring what is going on.
The strategic use of resources	The school has long term plans for the use of resources and educational priorities are supported by careful financial planning. The school applies the principles of best value well. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.

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. The school is well led and managed. Children make good progress. The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. The school helps children to become mature and responsible. Behaviour in the school is good. Parents can approach the school and feel welcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents feel the range of activities outside lessons is not sufficient. Some parents are concerned about the amount of homework given. A few parents feel they do not get enough information about how their children are getting on.

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views of parents.

Comments about issues raised by parents

- The range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in music and sport, is good when compared to other schools, although as with most schools it is mainly available to older children.
- The amount of homework given is in line with what is recommended. Homework is well used by teachers to support work in lessons and involve parents in their children's learning.
- Parents' meetings are held regularly, reports are informative and parents can talk to their teacher if they need more information.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Standards in the school are usually above average and are often higher than this. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with what is expected for children of this age, pupils make good progress as they move through the school and attain above average levels as they leave the school. Pupils attain these high standards in almost all subjects. The quality of teaching, the breadth of the curriculum and the high expectations in the school, are major factors in this good achievement.
- 2 The standards achieved by eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science are usually above average and are often higher than this. These high standards are better than they were at the last inspection and have been maintained for a number of years. Last year, results from end of Key Stage tests were disappointing. However, there were several factors involved in this drop in standards, for example, changes in staffing, a high level of pupils in Year 6 with special educational needs and some problems with attitudes amongst a few of the oldest pupils. Standards in mathematics were in line with the national average, but standards in English and science were below average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below those achieved in other schools. However, when prior attainment is taken into account, standards were in line with similar schools, indicating that at least satisfactory and often good progress was made from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.
- 3 Currently, many of the oldest pupils are working at levels that are higher than is expected for their age, and this and other evidence indicates that standards will rise again. Targets set by the school are very challenging, but there is a determination in the school that the targets will be reached.
- 4 The standards achieved by seven year olds in reading, writing and mathematics have been rising over the years. Last year's results showed standards in reading were well above average and in writing and mathematics were broadly average. Attainment in writing is not as good as that in reading and mathematics, but the school is focusing on this in order to improve these standards further. Currently seven year olds are working at levels that are higher than expected and the school is likely to reach its challenging targets.
- 5 Standards in mathematics have been maintained at a high level for a number of years and are now improving, because of the emphasis that is being placed on pupils using their skills and developing their understanding of mathematical ideas. Year 2 pupils work confidently with numbers to 100 and have a good understanding of place value as they order numbers in a series. They are beginning to use their knowledge of the processes of addition and subtraction to solve problems. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of larger numbers and of decimals and fractions. They use a range of mental strategies to make calculations, as well as using written methods of computation.
- 6 Standards in speaking and listening have also been maintained at a high level. Year 2 pupils listen well to the teachers' instructions and are involved regularly in reading out their work. Listening skills develop well in group work. Pupils enjoy learning new words and retain much of the technical vocabulary they are taught in other lessons. When

performing to an audience they speak out clearly and expressively. Year 6 pupils listen to each other and take part in conversations and discussions. Regular experience of role-play and drama in history, religious education, assemblies and productions has a positive impact on pupils' ability to speak confidently in front of an audience

- 7 Attainment in reading is above average throughout the school. Skilled teaching of letter sounds and patterns enables pupils to read simple texts by themselves so that they make good progress with their reading skills. Year 2 pupils read a rhyming story enthusiastically and accurately before writing their own version of the story. By the age of eleven, the number of pupils reading at a higher level is rising because of the very good teaching of basic reading skills. Pupils read fluently, accurately and expressively. They select books written by a wide range of authors. Many read regularly at home and enjoy discussing and comparing what they have read. Pupils know how to find information from books in the library, and from the Internet.
- 8 Standards in writing across the school are improving because of the additional time given to all aspects of written work and teachers' imaginative planning. Pupils learn a joined script from entry into school so that, by the time they are seven, they have a good, legible style of handwriting. They write a range of stories, letters, poems and instructions and use these skills well in other subjects for example, writing up evaluations in design technology. Year 6 pupils learn how to structure a story to give it suspense, using their editing checklists and targets very effectively to improve their work.
- 9 Teachers make a particular effort to make sure that pupils have the opportunity to use their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, they use writing in history and religious education when re-telling stories or describing events. They use mathematics in science and geography to measure their findings. This ensures that pupils apply their skills and develop them further in relevant contexts.
- 10 The school has maintained pupils' good standards of work in science since the last inspection. There are particular strengths in pupils' investigative skills, brought about by the school's very good emphasis on the use of experimental work to teach science. Year 2 pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. They know about some physical processes, such as what electricity is used for. They have a good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. Year 6 pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding. They investigate the separation of sand, pebbles and water using sieves, filters and the process of evaporation. They have experimented with sound and what it can travel through. Pupils know how to test fairly and can explain in detail what they have done.
- 11 What is impressive about the school is the fact that high standards are achieved throughout the curriculum. In music, art and design, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education, pupils achieve high standards. The quality of teaching and the range of the curriculum ensure that pupils gain knowledge and develop their understanding of many different subjects. Only in some aspects of information and communication technology is there a weakness in the standards achieved by the oldest pupils.
- 12 Pupils achieve well. There are high expectations in the school and the quality of teaching ensures that pupils make good progress from the time they enter the school to when they leave. There is a broad range of attainment on entry. Some children have well-developed skills and some are more limited in what they can do. A few children have special educational needs that are identified almost as soon as they enter the

school. Overall, however, attainment on entry is in line with what is expected for children of this age. This is reflected in the results of assessments that are made during the first few weeks in school.

- 13 Children make good progress in the reception class. Most children enter Year 1 having achieved the levels expected of this age of children across all areas of learning. However, they make particularly good progress in developing personal and social skills and this makes a very good foundation for their future attitudes and behaviour, and the confidence with which they cope with what is expected of them in school.
- 14 All pupils benefit from the curriculum provided by the school. All groups of pupils achieve well and there are no significant differences in attainment between groups of pupils of the same capability. The school takes effective action to help all pupils. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged and they achieve high levels across a broad range of the curriculum.
- 15 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans, and in the development of self-esteem and confidence. This is because of the good teaching they receive and the suitability of their targets. The school makes very good use of assessment data for target setting on individual education plans and for the formation of groups. This ensures that pupils who need additional support are identified as soon as possible. Some pupils with special educational needs attain well for their abilities in national tests.
- 16 The school has a few pupils for whom English is an additional language, although they usually speak English fluently. These pupils are well integrated in the classes. They work alongside their peers, take part in class discussions and make similar and appropriate progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 17 The high standards in pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour throughout the school have continued since the last inspection. Pupils now have many opportunities to take responsibility for themselves, and this means that their personal development is now also very good. For example, they participate fully in the school council, put out chairs before music lessons in the hall, and return registers to the office. Within 'circle time'¹ in classes pupils take advantage of the opportunities given, to develop an understanding of citizenship and social democracy.
- 18 Attitudes are very good. Pupils are eager to work and involve themselves in activities. They concentrate well, which enables them to finish tasks and develop their ideas fully. They learn effectively because of their positive attitudes to work. It means that they want to finish tasks and enjoy the subjects offered. This enjoyment of learning is spread throughout the school, with pupils working hard and enthusiastically.
- 19 Behaviour is also very good. Classrooms are calm, and children are courteous throughout the school, listening to others and developing good relationships with each other, staff and other adults. Pupils in classes often take the registers. They read out

¹ **'circle time'** – during 'circle time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and that only one person at a time will speak. In this context pupils feel secure that they can talk about issues that concern them.

each name, look at the pupil and say 'Good morning' to each other as the teacher marks the register. This polite and courteous start sets the tone for the school day. 'Circle time' is used to underpin the good behaviour policy in the school, and pupils get the chance to make important decisions within their class. Individual pupils are not afraid to dissent from the majority view and their reasons are listened to carefully and discussed. This develops pupils' understanding of democracy and the need for compromise and rules. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and the need for good behaviour throughout the school. The moral guidance given to pupils assists their personal development, and their ability to make hard decisions.

- 20 Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now good. It is above the national average and there were no exclusions. There are very good procedures for monitoring good and prompt attendance and the school works well with other agencies whenever necessary. The high expectations that the school has ensure that lateness is not an issue. Registers are marked correctly, closed promptly and monitored very well.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 21 The quality of teaching in the school is consistently good, and often very good. During the inspection all the teaching was at least satisfactory, and virtually all of it was good or better (96 per cent). Almost half of teaching was very good or better (46 per cent). Two per cent of lessons were excellent. The quality of teaching has improved from the good standards reported in the last inspection; there is now a higher percentage of good and very good teaching and more consistency through the school. There have been many changes in staffing since the last inspection, but there is now a team of committed, hard working teachers who are providing a good quality of teaching throughout the school. The quality of teaching has a positive impact on the quality of learning and the standards achieved.
- 22 Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set them challenging work to do. They expect the most of them and as a result pupils make a lot of effort and achieve well. In oral sessions questioning is skilled and makes pupils think. In a Year 1 science lesson the teacher used questioning at the beginning to test pupils' knowledge and encourage them to think hard about how the light sources they were looking at worked. The level of their answers and suggestions demonstrated a high level of involvement with the ideas.
- 23 Often the high expectations are due to a good level of expertise and enthusiasm on the part of teachers. The enthusiasm of teachers is very marked and occurs in every class. As a result, pupils are interested and motivated. In a Year 3 art lesson the teacher questioned pupils and challenged them to evaluate their work and think about how colour was used. Because of her knowledge and understanding of the subject, she was able to skilfully encourage pupils to develop their ideas. In a similar way, the Year 2 teacher in a design and technology lesson encouraged pupils to explore ideas and solve problems. In a Year 4 games lesson it was the expertise and enthusiasm of the teacher that enabled pupils to learn some ball skills and use them in a game. They remained involved and interested for a long time – despite the cold!
- 24 Teachers teach basic skills competently, but they also encourage pupils to use these skills. Careful planning and a structured approach in literacy and numeracy lessons mean that pupils successfully acquire new knowledge and skills. In a Year 4 literacy lesson the teacher gave clear explanations and made sure that all tasks were

appropriate for the attainment levels of the pupils in the class. Clear learning objectives and the imaginative use of work sheets encouraged pupils to settle to tasks and they all made good progress. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson the teacher was able to work in a focused way with a higher attaining group and made sure they were challenged in their thinking. In a Year 5 science lesson pupils were taught the skills of structuring a test to make sure it was fair. They then used these skills in a practical activity involving fizzy drinks.

- 25 Having acquired basic skills across the curriculum, pupils are given the opportunity to apply them in problem solving and in investigations. This is an improvement from the last inspection and is having a significant impact on pupils' thinking skills and their understanding. For example, in mathematics pupils are being taught to think mathematically. In Year 2 pupils learnt to choose an appropriate operation to solve a problem and in Year 6 pupils explored different ways of solving problems. In both cases pupils were challenged mathematically and visibly developed their understanding during the lesson.
- 26 Teachers use different methods of teaching to keep pupils interested. Particularly effective is the way in which visits and visitors are used to extend pupils' experiences and make learning relevant. In Year 5 the teacher skilfully used a local issue to encourage pupils to think about the environment. The development of the airport proved to be a topic of interest to everyone and had been enlivened by a visit to the airport. The level of discussion during the lesson was an indication of the depth of understanding pupils were gaining.
- 27 Relationships in classes are positive. Teachers want their pupils to do well and are sensitive to individual needs. They support the less confident and challenge the higher attainers. Pupils feel secure in their classes and not afraid to 'have a go' and learn from their mistakes. For example, the teacher in Year 6 has been working hard and sensitively to try to establish positive relationships in the class. Now pupils are able to discuss issues that concern them in an open and confident way.
- 28 The management of pupils is usually very good. Teachers have established their expectations in the classes and approach the encouragement of good behaviour and positive attitudes in a consistent manner. In the best lessons, expectations are very clear and rules are strictly adhered to. Pupils respond well to this; they attend well, work hard and concentrate throughout the lesson. Occasionally, the approach is not so consistent and a few pupils do not respond so well. In these lessons the quality of the teaching and learning suffers from the lack of attention of a few pupils.
- 29 Teachers are sensitive to the needs of individuals and ensure that all pupils receive an equal opportunity to participate in all lessons and activities. During the inspection all pupils were fully included in all the class activities. No individuals or groups of pupils were disadvantaged in any way. There was no bias found in the resources that teachers used in lessons that favoured either boys or girls. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are well integrated and play a positive part in lessons.
- 30 Teaching in the reception class for the youngest children is well focused. There is an emphasis here on children's personal and social development that has a positive impact on children's learning in this area. The teacher plans carefully and uses a range of resources to interest children. The classroom assistant works very effectively alongside the teacher in supporting children's learning.
- 31 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and

support staff take good account of the targets for such pupils in their planning. Older pupils have timetables to indicate when they have additional support, which gives them a sense of ownership of their support. The targets in the individual education plans are clear, achievable and reviewed regularly. Pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment and particular needs in numeracy and literacy lessons, but teachers manage this very sensitively. They plan their work so that more able pupils work with lower attaining ones in some lessons. Tasks, however, are matched well to pupils' abilities. Staff have very good records of pupils' attainment and progress and there is regular, relevant and high quality liaison between all support and teaching staff.

- 32 Pupils who have specific needs have skilled support from experienced and committed teachers and support staff, either on an individual or small group basis. Throughout the school, support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. They work effectively with small groups, but also support pupils within the class. This is done very sensitively and has a positive impact on the learning of individuals. For example, in oral lessons a member of the support staff may be helping less confident pupils to take part on the lesson alongside their peers.

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

- 33 The whole curriculum reflects the school's aims very well and makes a valuable contribution to the learning of all its pupils. The school continues to provide a very good curriculum. Since the last inspection the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been fully implemented and developed. The National Curriculum is taught in a very interesting and stimulating way and pupils' attainment in virtually all areas of the curriculum is good. The school reviews the curriculum in the light of pupils' attainment and adapts lessons to meet pupils' needs. Proper emphasis has been placed on improving the school's results again after a decline last year.
- 34 Sufficient time is allocated for teaching all subjects and very good links are made between subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils develop the 'rainforest' theme in geography and dance very effectively. New national guidance about the National Curriculum and the curriculum for young children has been incorporated into the school's plans and the school meets all statutory requirements with one exception. The curriculum for information and communication technology is incomplete for older pupils. They do not have enough opportunities to use computers to record information (monitoring) or to control events, for example, on screen using a simple programming language.
- 35 The curriculum for children in the reception class is very good. It is planned to ensure that all pupils have access to all areas of learning and there is particular emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills. There is a wide range of learning opportunities and activities are well focused and challenging.
- 36 Pupils of all ages and capabilities benefit from a curriculum that meets their personal and social needs very well. The behaviour policy provides very good strategies for teachers to use in class to motivate pupils. In lessons and whole school assemblies, teachers and pupils celebrate success and achievement. Consequently the school has a very positive atmosphere and pupils experience a safe and happy environment in which to learn. The 'good health' topics are taught mainly in science. They include a sensitive approach to sex education and drugs awareness with the oldest pupils. Teachers deal with any additional issues as they arise and at a level of understanding

suitable for the pupils.

- 37 The personal development of pupils is considered very important. Pupils have opportunities to discuss and consider many difficult issues that will face them in the future. Discussions in classes help pupils deal with their fears, develop self-discipline and help them to resolve disagreements. Pupils' personal development is enhanced greatly by, for example, the work of the school council. During the council meeting observed, pupils showed great respect for the opinions and contributions of others. Overall, this excellent initiative gives pupils an important chance to improve their school further through democratic means.
- 38 The content and organisation of the curriculum ensures that pupils have equal opportunities for learning. Although classes vary in size, no pupils are disadvantaged. Pupils have equal opportunities to experience all that the school offers. Pupils with special educational needs, those from ethnic minority groups, boys and girls, younger and older pupils all mix well, for example, in the playground and in the dining room.
- 39 An effective cycle of planning for subjects is in place. Courses of lessons clearly outline what will be taught in each year group. Teachers responsible for subjects keep these under review and continual development is the norm. Teachers have time to observe their colleagues and make suggestions for improvement. This process helps to ensure that the curriculum continues to meet the needs of pupils and any changes in national requirements. The curriculum is taught mainly as separate subjects, although purposeful cross-subject links are made in the planning. For example, pupils' knowledge of counting and recording information in graphs is developed in science investigations. Visits and visitors provide exceptionally rich experiences that are exploited fully to enhance pupils' learning in most subjects. For example, a friend of the school talked to younger pupils about her childhood 50 years ago.
- 40 The school has implemented the literacy curriculum very well. Close attention is given to writing from an early age. Pupils are required to think, draft ideas, find alternative words and phrases, and learn ways to remember spellings and to present their work tidily. In numeracy lessons, teachers emphasise that there are different ways of finding answers and investigations of ideas are used regularly. In religious education, the curriculum promotes understanding and respect for other faiths.
- 41 The school recognises the great importance of a wide curriculum and provides many extra activities. Pupils have opportunities for additional study in music, art and sport, and a wide variety of instrumental tuition is available. There is a strong musical tradition in the school that continues. Interested pupils can join, for example, the band, orchestra and recorder groups. The pupils' musical talent is well recognised locally and the school participates in many community events.
- 42 Regular subject related visits are made to museums, art galleries and places of interest, and in addition, pupils have the opportunity of two residential visits of several days' length from Year 3. Links with the community are very good. For example, the teacher in Year 5 has invited a pilot to talk about the current improvements at Manchester airport. She also will invite a park ranger to give his view of the impact of the changes to the environment around the airport. Poets, musicians, football clubs and visits to the nearby leisure centre all add to the richness of the curriculum.
- 43 There is good communication with the comprehensive school and valuable opportunities to ease the transition of pupils at eleven are arranged. Year 6 pupils meet staff towards the end of the year and spend some time at the school before they leave

Year 6.

- 44 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good because of its relevance for all pupils with additional needs and the level of inclusion in lessons and the life of the school. Pupils receive specific help in literacy and numeracy, and carefully planned programmes support pupils with additional needs very well. Teachers and support staff are involved in the preparation and review of individual education plans.
- 45 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The provision for spiritual development is very good and it is developed through assemblies, religious education and in many other lessons. The sensitive approach to religious education ensures that pupils gain an understanding of how religious belief affects people's lives. Assemblies are special times. Pupils listen to music as they come into the hall and there is time for quiet reflection and for prayers. Pupils are encouraged to empathise with the feelings of others. Pupils during one assembly gave much thought to why money cannot buy friends.
- 46 The contribution made to pupils' spiritual development by the strong emphasis on local and regional issues is considerable. During a science lesson, pupils were amazed when they realised how many extra people might be employed as a result of the second runway boosting air traffic at the nearby airport. The school council is an excellent initiative. Each class is represented from Year 1 onwards and pupils bring concerns to the attention of the council. Teachers deal very sensitively with pupils' ideas and seek to clarify them so that action can be taken. Pupils' current interest concerns lunchtime seating arrangements. A number of good proposals were made during the meeting observed.
- 47 The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and there is a very good moral framework in which pupils can grow. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, as their reactions show when they see their classmates rewarded for doing good things. The school's rules and use of rewards recognise all of the positive things that pupils do. Pupils learn to respect others and take responsibility for their own actions. They learn about moral issues on a wider scale. In geography lessons, older pupils compare Manchester and Kenya and attention is given to comparisons between First and Third Worlds. Pupils in the choir have raised funds for clean water wells in Africa.
- 48 The provision for social development is very good. Relationships in the school are positive and this provides pupils with a very good example on which to model their own social behaviour. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility in classrooms. Throughout the school pupils work co-operatively, sharing ideas and supporting each other as needed. In an art lesson, Year 2 pupils worked on making three dimensional fish and discussed co-operatively whether they had achieved a three dimensional shape.
- 49 Pupils learn to take part in team sports and to play fairly. School assemblies recognise pupils' achievements very well. 'Snowflake' awards are given for thinking, good work and any positive contribution to school life. The school makes very full use of outside visits and visitors, including residential visits that provide pupils with valuable social experiences.
- 50 The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Both stories and music from other cultures are used throughout the school. During assemblies pupils listen to

various types of music each week. Pupils develop good knowledge and understanding of local history, and of other places in geography. In English, Shakespeare and other famous writers are studied. In art lessons, pupils appreciate the works of Picasso, Van Gogh and Rousseau, and study Asian art and Islamic patterns. The multi-cultural nature of the country is valued in religious education; for example, Judaism is studied in Year 3.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 51 The school continues to take very good care of its pupils. Parents recognise the part played by the headteacher in promoting care for the individual and pupils receive good support from all members of staff throughout their school life.
- 52 The procedures for child protection are good, but need to be more formally recorded. Provision for health and safety is very good. The statutory checks, maintenance and procedures are in place and effective, with the caretaker working with the headteacher and designated governor to ensure that the school and grounds are kept safe and secure. There are no fire exit signs with the running man symbol above the external door in the classrooms, but the fire drill procedure is clearly displayed, and the procedures are well known. There are fire drills every term. The risk assessments are working documents that inform maintenance and ensure that health and safety has a high profile in the school.
- 53 The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good. Attendance has improved and is now above the national average. The school works well with other agencies to support good attendance and pupil welfare. The rules for taking holidays in term time are shared with parents on several different occasions during the year, and explanations as to the effect of absence on learning. Sensitivity is shown to parents who do not share the Christian faith and arrangements are made to stop the children from feeling excluded.
- 54 The behaviour policy is very good and includes a section on the management of oppressive behaviour. No such behaviour was seen and parents are happy that it is not an issue. There is a high expectation of good behaviour, which is based on assertive discipline. There is a rewards and sanctions element, with children receiving class points, individual awards and with certificates presented in celebration assemblies. Where the policy is fully used, it underpins the very good behaviour seen around the school. The children obviously appreciate the reward system and the whole class was delighted when one boy got a 'snowflake' for 'thinking' and getting the correct vowel in a word. 'Snowflakes' are rare with only two a fortnight being awarded in each class, so pupils appreciate the effort entailed in getting this accolade. Any children seen being challenged about their behaviour were always treated with courtesy, and good reasons were always given as to why good behaviour was essential to help the school to run smoothly and to keep everyone safe and well.
- 55 There is very good support for the personal development of the children throughout the school. They are inducted well into school and given numerous opportunities to grow in understanding and maturity both mentally and physically. Children take it in turns to use the two climbing areas in the playground, appreciating the chance to explore and be adventurous. They mix well outside and many older pupils were seen helping the younger ones.
- 56 There is good use made of 'circle time' to develop pupils' debating skills and thought

processes. Teachers are very skilful at steering the pupils towards corporate decisions and a greater understanding of relationships and citizenship. All pupils are valued, included and supported well. Pupils are helped to see learning in a positive light. The extra help given to some pupils is promoted in a positive way and appreciated by everyone. No one is made to feel negative about themselves and even very young children understand quite complex rules for reaching mutual decisions.

- 57 Teachers and support staff know pupils very well. Assessments of pupils with special educational needs are carried out thoughtfully and all staff are aware of pupils' targets and programmes. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good so that learning takes place in a purposeful, motivating and inclusive atmosphere. Staff work very effectively together to assess pupils' work and share information gained very well. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice and works effectively with external agencies.
- 58 Assessment procedures have been improved since the previous inspection and the school now has systems and procedures for the assessment and tracking of pupil's work, which are good overall, and very good in English and mathematics. These are used consistently throughout the school. The school is continuing to develop its systems and procedures in science to bring them up to the same high standard.
- 59 The school makes very good use of the information from assessments to identify needs and to adjust teaching programmes to meet pupils' needs. For example, the school identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to write for a wider range of purposes and altered its planning for English accordingly. Target setting is well established and targets match well with the overall purpose of the lessons, enhancing the quality of the assessment procedures used by teachers. The setting of individual and group targets provides pupils with valuable opportunities to develop insights into their own learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 60 Parents have a very positive view of the school. The school has very good relationships with parents. This is still one of the strengths of the school and has a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- 61 A few parents were concerned about some issues, but inspection evidence did not support these concerns. Parents are well informed about the progress their children are making and parents are very welcome to come into school to discuss any concerns with the teachers. The homework policy is clear and gives parents a very good idea what to expect in the way of homework throughout the school. This information is in the prospectus as well and the home/school agreement explains the parents' role clearly. The amount of homework given is in line with what is recommended and it is used well to support work in class and to involve parents in their children's learning. There is a good range of after school activities, as well as lunchtime music groups.
- 62 The school recognises and acknowledges the role of parents in children's learning, in the policies which underpin its work. It keeps them fully informed, and elicits their help whenever possible. There is a real partnership between parents, pupils and the school,

which is of mutual benefit. This relationship between parents and the school starts in the reception class, where there is a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Parents come into class to settle pupils and the system works really well with lots of exchanges of information and support.

- 63 Parents are valued highly and give practical help in every class as well as with trips, visits and residential courses. There is never a shortage of volunteers for the latter, which is a great credit to the school and shows that the partnership is working well. Parents are well trained for their work in school and help confidently to support the children's learning. Their contribution both in and out of school has a positive effect on learning in a practical way, but also because children can see that parents value education so highly.
- 64 Parents are kept well informed about what is going on in school, how they can help with learning at home and about the curriculum. The school prospectus is very informative and helps parents to understand where they fit in the home/school partnership. There are regular newsletters on a wide range of subjects, which clearly display the school's regard for parents and their part in children's learning. The annual governors' report to parents is informative, although it has a few statutory items missing, mainly with regard to the access of disabled pupils' to the school.
- 65 The headteacher encourages, and responds well to suggestions from parents and a very good relationship exists between them. Parents are very confident in the headteacher and feel they can approach him with any concerns they may have. The Parent Teacher Association holds many and varied events, which help the school socially and financially. Last year there was an event nearly every month ranging from a crazy hair day, children's talent show, quiz night, car treasure hunt, family picnic, bingo night and a leavers disco.
- 66 The school has good arrangements to keep parents fully informed and to give them opportunities to discuss their child's targets with the school. Parents get an annual report that covers all the areas of the curriculum and is informative and helpful. They get opportunities through the year to meet with teachers to discuss their children's progress in detail. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved at all stages of the process of provision for their children, and not just at the statutory ones. There are regular parents' meetings, when parents get a chance to discuss progress and any areas of concern.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 67 The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He effectively promotes the ethos of the school, particularly in fostering positive relationships and ensuring that there is care for the individual. He has gained the confidence of staff, governors, parents, pupils and the community. He leads by example in the school and sensitively supports and encourages other members of staff.
- 68 The deputy head and key stage co-ordinators support the headteacher well and use their own skills to ensure the school moves forward in a positive direction. They are all good teachers in their own right and lead by example, setting very high standards for teaching and learning in the school. The senior management team works together effectively to provide clear direction for the work of the school.
- 69 Subject co-ordinators show a high level of expertise and interest in their subjects. The

role has been well developed and they have the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. They have a strong impact on the standards being achieved across the curriculum.

- 70 Governors are loyal and committed to the school. They have a range of expertise and use this in committees to help support the school and ensure that their statutory responsibilities are met. They are well informed about the school and involve themselves in its work. All governors are linked to a year group in the school and many are able to make regular visits to classes to ensure that they keep up to date with what is happening. Where this opportunity is used well, it has a significant impact on the individual governor's understanding of school issues.
- 71 The school has been subject to many changes in staffing in recent years, but this has been managed positively. There is now a strong staff team who work together well and have the potential to move the school forward confidently. There is a shared vision for the school and a commitment to improvement. Despite the unexpected drop in standards last year, the school has maintained high standards in all aspects of its work and has continued to make improvements in some significant areas. For example, there is now a more effective use made of performance data to track pupil progress and set targets.
- 72 The school's improvement cycle is well established and ensures that aspects of the school are subject to regular review. The self-evaluation process has been successful and has had a positive impact on pupils' achievements. For example, the changes in some of the teaching strategies for mathematics and writing have brought about more effective learning. The periods of investigation and research given to co-ordinators are very well used as a means of deciding how subjects need to develop. All teachers work in a professional manner, always keen to improve their practice, and this has a significant impact on the way in which the school copes with required changes.
- 73 Financial planning is sound. Governors are closely involved in monitoring the budget. Day to day administration is very efficient. The school is an organised environment and all its dealings with the outside world are courteous and positive. This is in keeping with the quality of relationships in school and the way in which pupils' attitudes are being fostered.
- 74 There is a strong commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all. Pupils' needs are met successfully in lessons and they achieve well. The school looks at test results and searches for patterns, so that if any particular group of pupils is not achieving as well as it might, then remedial action is taken. The number of pupils in the Year 4 class is particularly high. However, the very good management skills of the class teacher ensure that pupils make good progress and there is no negative effect.
- 75 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by the headteacher. Funding for special educational needs is spent well and the school uses money from the general budget to supplement the costs of the provision. Money has been spent well on the provision of a team of skilled support staff to work alongside the teachers. There is a special needs governor who is fully involved in the life of the school.
- 76 There are sufficient well-qualified teachers, providing expertise across a wide range of the curriculum. The governors' strategy of carefully recruiting staff according to the needs of the school, as well as the strength of the candidate, has resulted in the quality of the team of teachers now working in the school. New teachers have been well

supported. The school regularly takes students and supports them well. Support staff in school are of a high quality and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, for example in the reception class and when working with pupils with special educational needs.

- 77 Performance management is well established. There is a coherent strategy for holding reviews and setting targets for staff, which builds on the appraisal system already in place in the school. Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are well established. The school has a tradition of providing professional development opportunities for all teachers and this now supports the process.
- 78 Learning resources are good. The school regularly invests in quality resources and this has an impact on the motivation of pupils. Overall the accommodation is good and in a good state of cleanliness and repair. The walls throughout the school are covered with imaginative displays, which add to the overall atmosphere in the building. Occasionally there are large classes which puts a strain on space, but this is managed well by teachers. There is a rolling programme of refurbishment but this is dependent upon funds being available. Currently there are some deficiencies in the quality of furniture, which do not fit in with the overall ethos of the school. Some of the tables and chairs do not match and some are in poor condition.
- 79 The very good caretaker works closely with the headteacher to develop space imaginatively. For example the well-fitted computer areas which used to be cloakrooms enhance the curriculum considerably. There is a system in place for alerting the caretaker to minor repairs, which he tackles quickly and efficiently. The school's plan to amalgamate the library on to one site is a good one and will maximise its use. The grounds are large and the two activity-play areas for younger and older pupils are very good and offer scope for exploratory play and development. However, the youngest children do not have a safe, easily accessible outdoor area for exploratory play.
- 80 All available resources are used to the best advantage in promoting the learning of pupils. The school is very effective in providing opportunities for pupils to achieve highly and develop personal skills. Taking into account the cost of educating each pupil, the context of the school, the standards achieved and the quality of education provided, the school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In keeping with the school's good plans for improvement, staff and governors should:

Raise standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 2 by:

- improving the curriculum so that it includes all aspects of the subject, particularly monitoring and control;
- ensuring that all members of staff are confident in teaching all aspects of the subject;
- ensuring that pupils throughout the school have sufficient opportunity to

consolidate and develop their skills in information and communication technology.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	44	50	4	0	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)	0	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	41

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	10	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	8	10
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	27	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (94)	93 (88)	100 (94)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	9
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	27	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (94)	100 (97)	96 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	15	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	13
	Girls	11	9	13
	Total	21	19	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (97)	66 (87)	90 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	12	12	14
	Total	23	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (87)	83 (90)	93 (93)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	7
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	167
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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)	7.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	29.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/2000
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	£
Total income	355,315
Total expenditure	363,071
Expenditure per pupil	1705
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,934
Balance carried forward to next year	3,178

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	204
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	27	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	47	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	67	30	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	48	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	56	5	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	56	42	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	42	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	34	25	3	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 81 Children in the foundation stage are taught in the reception class. There is a broad range of attainment when children enter the class. Some children have well-developed skills and some are more limited in what they can do. A few children have special educational needs that are identified almost as soon as they enter the school. Overall, however, attainment on entry is in line with what is expected for children of this age. This is reflected in the results of assessments that are made during the first few weeks in school.
- 82 Children make good progress in the reception class. Most children enter Year 1 having achieved the levels expected of this age of children across all areas of learning. However, they make particularly good progress in developing personal and social skills and this makes a very good foundation for their future attitudes and behaviour, and the confidence with which they cope with what is expected of them in school.
- 83 The quality of teaching in the reception class is good, and often very good. The teacher plans carefully and provides a broad curriculum, giving children a wealth of experiences across all areas of learning. The warm, friendly approach enables children to feel confident in the class. But there are also high expectations and children respond well to these, learning to behave appropriately. The classroom assistants provide good quality support in the reception class. There is usually a balance between informal and more formal activities, although sometimes the amount of focused teaching can limit children's opportunities for free exploration and experimentation.
- 84 The partnership with parents is very good. Parents feel comfortable in the classroom and this helps children to settle quickly. There is a good system of induction as children start school, although this does not as yet include home visits. Assessments are made as children enter the class and information from these is used to identify children who may need support and to help with planning an appropriate curriculum for all children.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 85 Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a particular emphasis in the reception class and children make very good progress. The teacher has high expectations and children soon learn to behave appropriately, to listen and concentrate. Behaviour is very good in response to the teacher's high expectations. However, the friendly atmosphere in the classroom enables children to feel secure and confident. They enjoy learning and are excited by the wealth of new experiences provided. When a visitor came to talk to the children, there was a remarkably high level of concentration and interest.
- 86 Children form good relationships with the adults and with each other. They learn to share and take turns. Social learning goes on all the time and is sensitively promoted by all the adults working in the class. For example, when getting ready for a 'circle time' session, the teacher talked about including everyone in the circle and this alerted children to the need to make room for anyone who had not already got a place. When children were asked to talk about how they could help others, some found it hard to think at this level, but most managed to make some suggestions. The very good progress children make in the reception class enables them to enter Year 1 with a good

foundation for coping with what is expected of them as they get older.

Communication, language and literacy

- 87 Children are encouraged to talk and they become more confident as the days go by. The teacher values what children have to say and this develops their confidence. For example, in one opening session children were given the opportunity to tell the class about the things they had brought from home. Some children talk with confidence and explain their ideas, others are more reticent and find it hard to put their thoughts into words. They are sensitively encouraged and supported and they make good progress. All children enjoy listening to stories and most join in with rhymes and songs. When interested and involved, children concentrate and listen for a considerable length of time.
- 88 The teaching of literacy is well focused in the reception class and children soon gain basic skills. Reading skills are carefully taught and children begin to link sound to letters. They understand how books are organised and they enjoy talking about stories. Many children are learning to recognise familiar words. Reading is well supported by parents and this has an impact on the progress children make and the interest they have. Children are encouraged to write independently and most children will 'have a go', for example when writing an invitation. Some children attempt to spell their own words and can use their knowledge of sounds and letters when doing this. Children are taught a joined-up writing style from the beginning, which helps with their fluency.

Mathematical development

- 89 The teaching of numeracy is also well focused. Children make good progress and most can soon count to ten and are beginning to gain an understanding of how numbers work. Although most children can say the numbers to ten and recognise the numerals, they do not always count objects reliably. Teaching activities, such as counting cubes, are set up on a regular basis to give children plenty of opportunities to practise this skill. The teacher has high expectations of children and sets them challenging tasks. For example, the teacher set up a number line to twenty and some children were able to sequence the numbers and recognise quite rapidly where numerals had been swapped around.
- 90 There is a good emphasis on using mathematics in practical situations, for example sorting and matching crockery in the café. Children are encouraged to use mathematical language. In one session they worked with a set of scales and were learning to use the words 'heavy' and 'light' as they compared items by weight. Children talk about patterns and recognise shapes such as a square or circle.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 91 Children enter the reception class with a wide range of experiences. Some have a very good knowledge and understanding of the world about them and can talk about their experiences. Others have not gained such understanding and are more reticent in conversation. The teacher provides a wide range of experiences and ensures that children make good progress in this area. Children are interested and are keen to find things out. They respond well to what the teacher provides. They build with construction kits and confidently use a computer.
- 92 They learn about the past and can talk about how things were different from how they are today. A visit to a mill in the locality was followed up with some imaginative

activities such as writing with a quill pen or on slates. A visitor came to the class to talk about her life as a child fifty years ago. Children were keen to listen and look at photographs. Some children were very perceptive and responded well; for example by noticing differences in hairstyles and clothes.

Physical development

- 93 Children move with confidence and an awareness of the space about them. They play in the playground with older children and confidently run, jump and climb. In physical education lessons they respond in movement to music, learning to make shapes with their bodies and work with others to create movements. They use a range of small and large equipment and are taught to handle tools such as scissors safely and with increasing control.
- 94 Physical education lessons are very well taught and activities are appropriate for the age of children. There is also an area outside the classroom, where children can enjoy the freedom of exploring large-scale movements such as running, climbing and balancing. However, access to this depends on the weather and on whether there are extra adults available for supervision.

Creative development

- 95 The teacher provides a wide range of experiences for children's creative development. They work with paint, crayons and materials of many different kinds. They enjoy working with different media and produce work of a good quality; for example, self-portraits and stained glass windows. However, sometimes these activities are too focused and children do not have the opportunities they need to explore and experiment freely with colour, texture, shape and form. Children take part imaginatively in role play, such as in the café. They enjoy making up stories with puppets. They respond creatively in movement to music.
- 96 The teacher provides particularly well for children's musical development. There are many opportunities for them to listen to music and sing songs. They explore sounds and learn to respond to musical patterns. In one lesson children clapped rhythms and had the opportunity to try out different instruments to find out what sound they could make.

ENGLISH

- 97 The findings of the inspection are that pupils' attainment in English is above that expected in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the age of seven and eleven. National Curriculum assessment results have risen since the previous inspection, but in 2000 results for seven year olds were well above the national average in reading and close to the average in writing. Results in English for eleven year olds were below the national average. However, there were several contributory factors towards these disappointing and exceptional results, including a larger than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6, and staff changes during the previous year. The school had already identified the need to improve the opportunities for writing for a wider range of purposes throughout the school and has benefited greatly from help from the advisory service and extensive in-service training for staff. This has enabled the school to set in place many different, and successful, strategies to improve pupils' standards in writing.

- 98 Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in speaking and listening. Standards are above those expected of pupils aged seven and listening skills are developing well because teachers ensure pupils' full concentration at the start of lessons, speak very clearly to pupils and listen to all that they say very carefully. Teachers work hard to encourage pupils to respond to questions appropriately and extend simple answers skilfully. They structure questions carefully and help those pupils who are not very confident speakers by asking them questions which they know they will be able to answer correctly. The very good relationships and supportive atmosphere within the classroom enable pupils to make good progress in lessons and develop their confidence.
- 99 Pupils listen well to the teachers' clear instructions and are involved regularly in writing on the board or reading out their work. In Year 1 they show that they have learned a new skill, talking with a partner on a set topic whilst the sand runs through the timer. Pupils know what the count down of 3,2,1,0 means and hands shoot up as soon as they hear 'zero'. Listening skills develop well in group work, especially reading groups, because staff use interesting books and activities are matched well to pupils' abilities. Pupils enjoy learning new words and retain much of the technical vocabulary they are taught in other lessons. When performing to an audience they speak out clearly and expressively.
- 100 Teachers of pupils aged seven to eleven build on the progress pupils have made in the development of language skills. Skilful questions produce some relevant and correct deductions about the texts they are reading. They use technical and subject specific language confidently. For example, pupils in Year 3 work out correctly the meaning of the word 'representational' in art and are pleased to add this word to their vocabulary. Teachers prompt pupils to contribute to discussions, especially in 'circle time' and during School Council meetings. They are aware that some pupils need support to think through their answers and to express them clearly. The good emphasis on extending pupils' language and their ability to explain ideas is evident in Year 6 when pupils use their previous learning on different types of words and phrases, and additional interesting words, to construct a chapter in their science fiction story. They describe the effects of what the monster does in their story, some with great relish. Regular experience of role- play and drama in history, religious education, assemblies and productions has a positive impact on pupils' ability to speak confidently in front of an audience.
- 101 Attainment in reading is above average throughout the school. Skilled teaching of letter sounds and patterns enables pupils to read simple texts by themselves, so that they make good progress with their reading skills. Pupils in Year 1 have learned to 'stretch' words such as 'sing' so that they build up the sounds precisely. As they sit at the table you can see pupils using their hands to 'stretch' words before they read or write them. Pupils join in the teacher's expressive reading and are well aware of the purpose of punctuation. Year 2 pupils read a rhyming story enthusiastically and accurately, before writing their own version of the story. Higher and average attaining pupils use alphabetical order accurately to find spellings and meanings in wordbooks and dictionaries. The careful labeling of displays and the use of written questions around the room give pupils additional opportunities to practise their reading and formulate answers to questions.
- 102 By the age of eleven, the number of pupils reading at a higher level is rising because of the very good teaching of basic reading skills. Pupils read fluently, accurately and expressively. They select books by a wide range of authors. Many read regularly at home and enjoy discussing and comparing what they have read. Pupils know how to

find information from books in the library, and from the Internet, and most pupils have a good attitude towards books and reading.

- 103 By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' standards in writing are above what is expected nationally. Standards across the school are improving because of the additional time given to all aspects of written work and teachers' very imaginative planning. Pupils learn a joined script from entry into school so that, by the time they are seven, they have a good, legible style of handwriting. They enjoy using speech, question and exclamation marks in their writing and appreciate any opportunity to use capital letters for emphasis. Pupils look for more interesting words and examples in their writing. They write a range of stories, letters, poems and instructions and use these skills well in other subjects for example, writing up evaluations in design technology or describing their walk around Handforth in geography. The use of group and individual targets, and consistent teaching of spelling and letter formation, are helping pupils to develop confidence in their own ability to spell correctly. Good planning makes sure that lessons build on previous learning, so that learning about vowels and consonants is consolidated.
- 104 Pupils' standards in writing are above what is expected nationally by the age of eleven. The consolidation of reading skills helps pupils broaden their vocabulary and learn structures that authors use in their writing. They have regular opportunities to draft work and learn grammar rules and additional vocabulary, through consistent and thoughtful teaching. Year 6 pupils learn how to structure a story to give it suspense, using their editing checklists and targets very effectively to improve their work. Pupils with special needs are fully involved in the writing because the teacher ensures that they have tasks they can achieve and build on their own strengths. Year 5 pupils respond well to the imaginative teaching of how to write newspaper reports about the sinking of the 'Titanic'. The teacher weaves learning about main and subordinate clauses into this activity so smoothly that pupils learn an additional skill whilst they concentrate on their main activity. Similarly, Year 3 and 4 learn about adjectives and words that mean the same as others, but sound quite different, in interesting and enjoyable activities that reinforce many writing and reading skills. The marking of pupils' work is prompt and reinforces teachers' expectations of pupils, and their knowledge of how well they are doing against their targets, very effectively.
- 105 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development in English are very good. Pupils take care over the presentation of their work and concentrate on their individual reading and writing tasks well because they know what is expected of them. They move quietly and sensibly from the carpet to their groups and settle to work very quickly. Pupils progress from simple reading tasks to reading selectively and with good understanding of what they have read. They work hard in their groups and are interested in what others have done. As they grow older they begin to make an honest appraisal of their efforts and how they may improve.
- 106 The quality of teaching is never less than good and is most frequently very good. The very good relationships between all adults and pupils create a warm, inclusive atmosphere for pupils to grow in confidence and develop their skills and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the skilled and focused support of teaching and support staff. Much care has gone into the groupings of pupils and the purposeful deployment of staff in English lessons. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the literacy strategy and this ensures that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn in lessons.

- 107 The school has implemented the literacy strategy and the new arrangements for developing pupils' writing skills very effectively. Care is taken to ensure that literacy is extended into other subjects and information and communication technology is included in the planning for most lessons. Co-ordination of the subject is very good and information gained from assessments is used very well. Pupils use the library regularly and confidently, but will be able to use this for independent research more effectively and frequently when the library is contained within one inviting area.

MATHEMATICS

- 108 Standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1 have been improving year on year, and in Key Stage 2 have been maintained at a high level for a number of years. Standards have improved from the last inspection and are usually above average and often well above. Last year there was a drop in standards, particularly in Key Stage 2, but this was due to a number of factors and the results of the school's own internal testing indicate that the situation, although disappointing, was not as bad as it might seem from the statistics. Challenging targets have been set for this year and inspection evidence suggests that these targets are likely to be reached and standards will be above average again.
- 109 Achievement in mathematics is good. Despite the lower standards last year, comparison with prior attainment shows that even then pupils made good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. All pupils achieve well. Although girls achieved particularly badly last year in Key Stage 2, this is not usually the case and boys and girls achieve equally well throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attainers achieve well. Teachers are sensitive to their needs, set them appropriate tasks and encourage them to work hard and gain confidence. They often receive focused support and this helps them gain skills and to take part in lessons alongside their peers. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged. Teachers have high expectations and they enable these pupils to achieve in line with their capabilities, often well above what is expected for their age.
- 110 Pupils in Year 2 have a good level of confidence with numbers. They accurately add and subtract numbers to twenty and beyond. They recognise multiples of 2, 5 and 10. They understand place value and use this to sequence numbers to a hundred. They find halves of shapes and numbers. They make graphs and work confidently with money. They find it more difficult to solve problems with numbers, but this has been recognised by the teacher, and with more focused teaching most pupils can now choose the right operation to solve a particular problem and can write a problem as a number statement.
- 111 Year 6 pupils use more complex operations, such as division and multiplication, using two and three digit numbers. They use their knowledge of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100. They work confidently with decimals and fractions and can work out percentages and averages. They are developing sound strategies for doing calculations and know when to use particular operations in order to solve quite complex problems. They check their results, for example by using divisibility rules. This level of application of mathematical skills to solving problems is an improvement from the last inspection and is giving pupils more confidence in their own mathematical ability.
- 112 Progress through the school is good. For example, in the reception class some children recognise missing numbers in a sequence to twenty. In Year 1 pupils can

order numbers to twenty and by Year 2 pupils are sequencing numbers to a hundred. The careful way in which the mathematics curriculum is structured and the meticulous planning by teachers enables pupils to build on their previous learning and develop their skills securely. This applies also to the wider mathematical curriculum. For example, in Year 3 pupils learn to use grid references to locate position. In Year 4 pupils find lines of symmetry and in Year 5 pupils calculate the area of shapes.

- 113 Pupils use their mathematical skills across the curriculum and are encouraged to do so by their teachers. For example, Year 5 pupils used their knowledge from a mathematics lesson of how to find a circumference to help them when measuring in science. They use graphs in geography and their skills with numbers in recording their work in science.
- 114 Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are very good. They listen to their teachers, respond confidently in oral sessions and get on independently with tasks. Pupils throughout the school enjoy mathematics and this has a positive impact on their learning. They work hard and try to complete the work they have been given to do. They work co-operatively, for example when solving problems and help each other appropriately. Pupils are not afraid to 'have a go' and they learn positively from their mistakes.
- 115 The teaching of mathematics is good and is often very good or excellent. Teachers have high expectations and set pupils challenging tasks. But they also provide a secure atmosphere in classrooms where pupils feel supported and are not afraid of making mistakes. Teachers encourage pupils to find different ways of solving problems and they value any contributions made by individuals. This gives pupils confidence and they feel they 'can do maths'.
- 116 The work is carefully planned and takes into account the different needs of pupils. There is now more emphasis on the application of skills and this is having an impact on pupils' ability to think mathematically. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were given problems to solve. They were taught to identify and obtain the necessary information and to decide what operations to use. The careful demonstration of how to set about the task gave every pupil the confidence to get started, and sensitive individual support enabled all pupils to stay with the task. By the end of the lesson everyone had solved some of the problems and the discussions and explanations at the end showed just how much learning had taken place.
- 117 The co-ordinator for mathematics has a high level of expertise in the subject and has made an impact in the short time he has been at the school. He is well supported by the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator and between them they show a strong commitment to improvement. Standards are evaluated regularly and the progress of individual pupils is tracked through the school. Targets are set and weaknesses recognised and focused upon. There has been the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school and evaluate what needs to be done to improve standards.
- 118 The national numeracy strategy has been implemented well. There is now a stronger emphasis on mental mathematics and the development of strategies. This is having a positive impact on pupils' confidence with numbers. The mathematics curriculum is well structured and provides continuity through the school. Cross-curricular links are very well integrated. For example, work on symmetrical patterns is linked with Greek architecture in history and with Rangoli patterns in religious education.

SCIENCE

- 119 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in science throughout the school and achieve well. Most of the oldest boys and girls currently in Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are above what is expected nationally. There are particular strengths in pupils' investigative skills, brought about by the school's very good emphasis on the use of experimental work to teach science. Overall, the school has maintained pupils' good standards of work since the last inspection.
- 120 Children at the age of five have a knowledge and understanding of the world that is typical of children nationally. Seven year olds perform above the expected standard for pupils of this age and achieve well. Their work shows a good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. They know about some physical processes, such as what electricity is used for. They have a good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. For example, they know about plants and how they grow; they know about their own bodies and what they need to eat to be healthy. For example, they check the contents of lunch boxes for healthy and unhealthy foods. Year 2 pupils make good observations. For example, they have carefully recorded what happened when components in an electrical circuit were changed. Lower attaining pupils achieve well and they learn from the same experiences as all pupils. When needed, they receive appropriate help with recording ideas. Higher attaining pupils' recording and number skills are particularly good and they show in the way they measure and count things and in their understanding of what has happened in experiments.
- 121 The standards achieved by eleven year olds have been above average and well above average from 1997 to 1999. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2000 showed standards to be below average nationally and well below average when compared with similar schools. There are several reasons for this decline in standards. Many pupils achieved the expected standard (Level 4) but relatively few achieved above expected standards (Level 5). A significant number of pupils missed the higher level by only a few marks. Some pupils joined the school during the year and others left, which had a negative effect on results. The school is preparing the present Year 6 even more thoroughly to take the tests this year so that it can match the good standards found during the last inspection and in 1999. The school predicts that Year 6 pupils will again attain above average standards next May in the National Tests and inspection findings tend to support this prediction.
- 122 Currently in Years 5 and 6, pupils' work shows that a significant proportion of pupils are working at a level above that expected. Eleven year olds have a good knowledge and understanding across all aspects of science. For example, they investigate the separation of sand, pebbles and water using sieves, filters and the process of evaporation. The highest attainers work out the order in which to achieve the separation themselves in the best logical order. Average and below average pupils need some help but are successful with the investigation. Over the year, pupils have experimented with sound and what it can travel through. Pupils know that objects weigh less in water than in air and have experimented with the expansion of elastic bands and have graphed the results very accurately. Pupils know how to test fairly and explain what they have done in detail. Higher and average attaining pupils record their experiments using tables and clear conclusions. Lower attaining pupils showed clear evidence that they have understood the content of lessons and, for example, can measure in grams and draw accurate circuit diagrams.
- 123 All pupils make good progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils benefit from the practical approach, in which they can

be involved and included alongside their peers. Higher attaining pupils are sufficiently well challenged by the work they are given. Teachers use a high level of questioning to stretch the thinking of these pupils and they are given sufficient opportunities to discuss their ideas with each other.

- 124 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and it has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers plan carefully and have clear targets which pupils can understand and fulfil. Teachers' plans are organised so that what pupils are taught builds on what they have already learned. Consequently, pupils gain new knowledge and skills and make good progress. Teachers successfully build on the work in the previous classes. For example, in Year 4 pupils learn to measure temperatures in degrees Celsius, and in Year 5 pupils graph the relationship between time and temperature during their investigations. Teachers routinely provide modified recording sheets to help lower attainers who find it difficult to record what they know.
- 125 An important strength of the teaching in science is the understanding teachers bring to the subject and the enthusiasm with which they approach the subject. This encourages pupils and affects their positive attitudes to their work. Pupils are keen to learn new ideas because the work is often based on investigations and experiments where pupils are discovering new ideas to them, just as scientists do.
- 126 In Year 3, pupils were re-introduced to the idea of making a fair test. The teacher used a computer program to show pupils some of the effects of magnets on each other. He then asked pupils to respond to three statements as they experimented with comparing the strength of three magnets. He wrote on the white-board 'This is how I will know,' 'This is what I saw,' and 'This is what I have found.' Through such clear explanations pupils learned to record their work with clarity. Pupils also learned to test things fairly by keeping all things that could be changed the same, except one. In another very good lesson, in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils clear guidance about how to test the strength of different torchlights. She explained that pupils needed to add successively more layers of paper of the same kind over the torches until no more light could be seen. In this way pupils learned quickly and simply how to measure the strength of the different torches.
- 127 The teacher who co-ordinates science has had a very positive effect; her enthusiasm affects other teachers and the whole subject. Teachers effectively use a wide range of good resources. Visits, visitors and science topics rooted in real-life situations are used particularly well. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are put to good use. They record investigations in words, learn new technical terms and count accurately. The co-ordinator for science has appropriately identified that the staff needs to spend more time agreeing what the standards of pupils' work are across the school and to further develop the records teachers keep of pupils' progress.

ART AND DESIGN

- 128 By the time they are seven and eleven, pupils produce work above the required standard, using a very wide variety of media and techniques. In the lessons observed, very good teaching of basic skills was lifting the performance of pupils with the potential for lower attainment to a similar standard to others in the class. Pupils' work, along with that of other artists, is displayed very effectively around the school and classes have particularly good displays of two- and three- dimensional work that enliven the learning environment. Art and design is included in other subjects and pupils learn new artistic techniques through, for example, making masks for the faces of the disciples at

'The Last Supper' and thinking of the emotions and feelings that would be displayed on their faces. This was linked well to the work on the 'Life of Christ' in Year 6.

- 129 Pupils enter Year 1 with creative development in line with the expectations for their age. By the time they are seven, pupils use paint, collage, pens and pencils to create an appropriate range of imaginative and illustrative work of high quality. For example, in Year 1 pupils look at paintings by Lowry and talk about how he made houses interesting, before drawing their own homes in a bold and similar style. They have discussed self-portraits by a range of artists, looked at themselves in mirrors and produced their own realistic portraits using paint, pastel and pencil. Pupils use their pencils and brushes effectively to give added interest to their work.
- 130 By the time they are seven, pupils work with a visiting artist and learn how to make felt, producing a tapestry of gaily coloured and skilfully designed and made pictures. After visiting the Whitworth Gallery, pupils are very enthusiastic about sculpture and three-dimensional art forms. They make willow frames for flying fish, fastening them together very carefully, before covering them with selected pieces of tissue, foil, gauze and other materials. Pupils are encouraged by adults to solve the problems of sticking some materials to the willow and to remember that a three dimensional object is seen from all angles. They discuss their approaches to their tasks, give constructive opinion and modify and improve their own work as a result.
- 131 By the time they are eleven, pupils observe carefully and have built on skills and techniques very well. In preparation for their work in the style of Rousseau, Year 6 pupils visit Stapely Water Gardens to sketch trees, foliage, animals and birds in their sketch books. They sketch with increasing accuracy, using their pencils appropriately to provide shading to give added form and depth to their line drawings. Pupils discuss sensibly in their groups how to transfer their images on to a large sheet of paper and follow the process Rousseau would have used. They have been taught how to mix colours effectively. "We learnt how to do this two years ago," says one pupil, confidently developing his skills to make different shades and tones, alter thickness of paint to create interesting light and shade effects. Pupils share ideas and equipment well and the teacher intervenes sensitively to suggest to pupils how they may develop their work.
- 132 Younger pupils in Year 3 find words to describe the mood of paintings by Delauney and Munch. One picture is 'happy, joyful, with spiraling shapes' and the man in the other is 'weary, cross and mysterious'. Some experiment with brushes and sponges to create happy pictures and other use their sketchbooks to draw more sombre pictures with pastels. All are absorbed in their task, improving their work as the teacher skilfully questions them, encouraging them to extend their answers further and to complete written evaluations of their work. After experimenting by making different marks in a picture, one girl writes, "My picture is about relationships. What I liked doing was using pastel and I think my picture is good because I did my best." Year 4 pupils produce vibrant paintings in the style of Van Gogh, with good colour extensions of his paintings. They use colour mixing and tearing techniques to produce a dynamic paper sculpture and Year 5 use the techniques they have learned to decorate their thoughtfully drawn heraldic coats of arms and their Islamic tile designs.
- 133 Teaching of art and design is very good throughout the school. Pupils are taught new skills and then enabled to practise and improve them. For example, teachers use the work of other artists sensitively and effectively to show pupils what they can do, once they have learnt a new skill. Whilst trying this out, teachers show pupils examples of what others are doing, pointing out and suggesting how their work may be improved.

This leads pupils to reflect on their work and try to improve it. Teachers use sketchbooks effectively and this helps pupils to realize that they can rehearse their ideas and skills before trying a final piece of work. The subject is very effectively co-ordinated and there is enthusiasm and vision for improving standards and ensuring that pupils receive a continuous learning experience as they move through the school. Pupils benefit greatly from regular visits to galleries, museums. Artistic experiences, including workshops, provide valuable additional opportunities for learning new techniques and working together.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 134 Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection. However, evidence from teachers' plans, photographs and the pupils' work displayed indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. This enables them to develop the full range of skills and understanding of design and technology. Standards of attainment are above those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and reflects the development of the curriculum, planning guidance for teachers and the development of the role of the co-ordinator.
- 135 From the lesson observed it is clear that seven-year-old pupils have a clear understanding of the design and making process and that high standards are the result of very good teaching. In each year group the teaching promotes and encourages the pupils to plan and design. This was evident when five and six-year olds designed their moving face-pictures. Before the activity they told an adult what they would need to make their picture and drew their face. They were provided with only the items they had listed when they started to make their picture and realised that they had forgotten such things as glue and sellotape. They were, of course, given these items so that they could complete their task, but mentioned this in their evaluation and omitted fewer things in the next lesson.
- 136 Pupils' designing skills were demonstrated further by seven-year-olds who made plans showing all the equipment they needed to make puppets after deciding on the characters for a play they would perform to others in the infants. They learned how to over sew the edges of their puppets, followed their plan carefully and finally evaluated how much like their original design their puppet was and how well the task had been accomplished. In the one lesson seen, the pupils' task was to make a winding mechanism with construction materials. Pupils listened very attentively as the teacher pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of some structures made previously, showing pupils how much difference a clip made to the success of the turning of the wheel and how to check if they had a stable structure as a basis. This introduction motivated pupils well to produce a stable base, to check against the models what should be done next and to make greater use of clips. One pupil estimated how much string he would need very thoughtfully and, whenever pupils asked what to do next, the teacher's very skilful questioning led them very successfully to solving their own problems. At the end of the lesson pupils evaluate what they have done, one saying proudly, "It's turned out quite good." They explain what they have done, are aware of their mistakes and pleased to tell everyone how they have corrected them.
- 137 Evaluating products is a prominent part of pupils' work in the juniors and teaching continues to be of a high quality. Pupils in Year 3 investigated a simple pneumatic system, asking and answering many questions as they worked through this task. In Year 4 pupils, in an activity in which the teacher planned very good links with English

and history, pupils made a book in which they would write their own version of the story of 'Theseus and the Minotaur'. They investigated the various ways in which books are produced, were given a choice of how their book could be made and wrote the instructions for making their book. When asked why he had chosen to make a pop-up book, one boy said, "I thought that would be hard. It was, but I liked it when I tried the first one, so made a pop-up book." He had enjoyed the challenge offered by the teacher and produced a very good book.

- 138 There is a very strong awareness of the need to build on skills in Year 5 and 6. When making very attractive and effective models of Tudor galleons pupils evaluate the new skills they have learned, write about the need for stability and rigidity in the structure. They work well with wood and plastic, marking, cutting, joining and assembling with precision. In very honest evaluations, they say what was most difficult and what they enjoyed most about the activity. They are aware of how they could improve their galleon. Making 'march pane' (marzipan fruits) in food technology lessons, close attention was paid to the learning of skills and the presentation of the sweets in a gift box, which they also made.
- 139 Pupils enjoy the subject, work sensibly together and support one another very effectively when they work as part of a team. They also say to someone with a problem, "Can I help you? I've finished." This reflects the inclusive atmosphere of the lessons and the expectations of the teachers well. Pupils get the help they need to improve because teachers plan well and are well prepared for their lessons. There is always an emphasis on learning skills and understanding the process.
- 140 The co-ordinator works hard to encourage and support other teachers and has been influential in improving standards in the subject because of the opportunities offered to her for training and involvement with advisors and other professionals. Sharing the most effective practice widely has given everyone greater confidence in the teaching of design technology. The revision of the guidelines for teaching, and the very useful portfolio of pupils' work which assists in the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, all add to teachers' growing confidence and experience. This has had a significant impact on pupils' learning and interest in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

- 141 The standards pupils achieve in geography at the age of seven and eleven are above what is expected of pupils of these ages. As result of good teaching and a curriculum that offers a wide range of experiences and investigations, the quality of all pupils' learning and progress is good throughout the school. All pupils achieve well. The co-ordination of the subject has improved since the last inspection and the profile of geography is much higher. Improvement is the result of better planning, more emphasis on using local issues as a stimulus, the development of good resources and the wide use of visits and visitors.
- 142 Seven year olds study places and they make observations about features of different environments. For example, they know why they like certain places and why some places are suitable for holidays. They successfully compare Manchester with holiday destinations and respond effectively to questions such as, 'Where do fish fingers come from?' They compare places, such as the imaginary 'Isle of Struay' with their own locality. All pupils use a simple colour code to show how the land is used on the island on a base map.

- 143 Eleven year olds know about physical processes, such as the water cycle. They give directions so that their friends can find treasure on a map using co-ordinates. Pupils study the climates of the world, features of rainforests and compare the weather patterns of Archangel with Singapore. Good links are made to mathematics; pupils study rainfall graphs and make scale drawings to assist the recording of investigations. They competently use maps and globes to find out about places. All pupils successfully use reading and writing skills to find out new information and record their ideas.
- 144 The teaching is good. Teachers demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of geography and they plan thoroughly to develop pupils' learning in a logical sequence. Teachers make very good use of the local area, both near the school and further afield. These experiences have a positive impact on pupils' interest and motivation. Pupils enjoy geography and show an interest in investigating places. For example, older pupils in Year 5 studied the effects Manchester Airport will have on the local area and the region. The teacher used pupils' ideas by listing the advantages and disadvantages of the second runway at the airport, which is just about to be open. Pupils learned many things. They learned to take a balanced view about important issues. They learned that any changes in the quality of the environment near the airport have to be weighed against the increases in employment for people. Pupils responded very well and took a very keen interest in what their friends thought. In Year 4, the teacher provided many informative photographs of a village in India for pupils to use. Pupils learned much about tropical environments. They began to interpret the location of the photographs by putting the numbers of the photographs on a street plan of the village. The good resources and clear guidance from the teacher lead to good learning.
- 145 The enthusiastic teacher responsible for geography has a good level of expertise and a great interest in the subject. She has effectively developed the number and quality of resources for teachers to use. Information and communication technology is used effectively by pupils to graph the results of traffic surveys and to help interpret weather patterns. The school organises two major residential visits for older pupils to contrasting areas each year. These visits give a very good purpose and impetus to the curriculum. The curricular planning is based upon five highly appropriate and essential questions that geography in this school asks, for example, 'Why is this a place like it is?' The co-ordinator has had sufficient time to watch her colleagues teach and to improve the provision for the subject still further.

HISTORY

- 146 Because of the way in which the curriculum is structured, there was no history being taught at the time of the inspection. However, evidence from scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and from talking to pupils themselves indicates that standards in the subject are above what might be expected and that the curriculum is broad and relevant. These high standards have been maintained from the last inspection. The subject has kept its high profile and is being effectively led by a competent co-ordinator.
- 147 Year 2 pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of famous people and events in the past. They show a good level of understanding of why people did what they did and what happened as a result, for example when talking about Florence Nightingale or writing about the Fire of London. They have a good understanding of how life has changed, such as when comparing life at the time of canal transport with their own lives. They

use sources of information, such as books, photographs and people.

- 148 Year 6 pupils have a good level of factual knowledge, shown for example when they write about the experiences of evacuees during World War II. They understand about life in Victorian times and can make perceptive comparisons between what life was like then and what it is like now. They are developing a good idea of chronology, for example they can calculate sensibly where a certain period of history might lie on a time line. They use many sources of information for their own research, for example books, artefacts, documents and CD ROM's.
- 149 Pupils make good progress through the school, extending their knowledge and developing their understanding. In Year 1 pupils have looked at toys in the past and compared them with their own. In Year 4 pupils have carried out an in-depth study of Ancient Greece and have a detailed knowledge of different aspects, such as what makes Greek architecture distinctive. Year 5 pupils have carried out their own research on the Tudor dynasty.
- 150 In their work and their discussion, pupils show a level of interest and understanding above what might be expected for their age. Their work is carefully presented; their discussion indicates a keen interest in the subject. Teachers plan the work carefully and use a range of interesting approaches. Displays in the school indicate the high profile the subject has, the interest teachers have in it and the way in which they value pupils' work.
- 151 The curriculum is well planned and provides a broad range of experiences. Particularly impressive is the way in which visits are made regularly to places of interest. These are well chosen to inspire pupils and provide them with a depth of understanding. For example, Year 2 pupils visited a boat museum and this promoted an understanding of life at the time of canal transport.
- 152 The co-ordinator is relatively new to the school but has already had a significant impact on the way in which history is taught. She has very good levels of knowledge and understanding of the subject and is enthusiastic about it. She has had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning through the school and has made the most of this experience in planning for the future and deciding how the subject should develop.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 153 Standards of pupils' work meet the expectations of the National Curriculum at seven years old. At eleven, pupils' standards of work match national expectations in most aspects of the subject. Pupils' standard of work in recording and then using information ('monitoring'), such as about the weather over days or weeks using computers, is below the standard expected nationally. Also the oldest pupils' standard of work in simple programming ('control') skills to change, for example, what is happening on the computer screen are below the expected standard. The school does not provide enough lessons in these two areas of the subject. However, the school is about to train staff to develop pupils' skills further in all areas of information and communication technology, and shortfalls in the curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are a target for improvement.
- 154 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress by the age of seven in all areas of the subject. At eleven pupils make satisfactory

progress in most areas of information and communication technology, but not in 'monitoring' and 'control' activities. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, discussions with the teacher responsible for managing the subject, observation of groups of pupils working in the school and discussions with small groups of pupils.

- 155 There have been some good improvements since the last inspection. The school has more and better computers, programs and other equipment. The new computers are linked together so that teachers can use, for example, the same programme throughout the school. Pupils regularly use the Internet and information discs (CD-ROM's) to find information, and these sources help pupils learn new facts in several subjects, such as history. Pupils do not always achieve the high standards of work reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, nationally pupils are expected to know and be able to do far more now than they were in the past. The school is in a period of transition between an older and new computer system. The school has wisely adopted elements from the latest national guidance for information and communication technology as part its overall plan for the curriculum.
- 156 At seven years old pupils print their work successfully. Pupils know how to create pictures using a painting program. In other subjects, pupils use information they have collected from CD-ROM based encyclopaedia to help them with their work. Pupils also successfully use word processing skills, such as changing the size and type of letters and rearranging the order of their writing, to enhance their work in several subjects. In Year 2, pupils use a tape recorder to listen to stories and some pupils play a keyboard in extra music lessons. All pupils have created and printed bar and pie charts after a survey. In Year 1, pupils use an attractive program to help them improve the accuracy of their counting.
- 157 At the age of eleven, pupils further refine their information handling and word processing skills. Many pupils know how to use a range of features on the word processor's 'tool bar.' Pupils were observed successfully changing the tenses of verbs. Part of an information and communication technology lesson was observed in Year 6. Pupils were introduced to some of the features of the new computers, such as how to improve the presentation of writing. Pupils have successfully used the Internet to find information about animals in different parts of the world using the 'search' facility. Several pupils were observed adding pictures to their writing. Pupils have begun to work with spreadsheets that help them to answer problems by, for example, adding columns of numbers. Pupils do not know how, for example, to use a simple programming language to draw shapes and then move and change them on screen.
- 158 In Year 5, pupils successfully find information about the 'Titanic' and improve their knowledge when multiplying numbers in mathematics. In Year 4, pupils know how to use the 'tools' feature on the word-processor to find words with similar meanings. Pupils reported that they learned to control some of the range of movements of a floor robot in Year 3. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 were observed listening to music and drawing creatively about their feelings using a painting programme. One computer is dedicated to pupils with special educational needs and pupils practise a wide range of writing skills successfully, such as word searches.
- 159 The use of computers in other subjects for supporting work in information and communication technology is good and pupils' progress is enhanced. Pupils use information technology in English, such as to draft, edit work, and use some of the many features of word processing programs. They have access to a wide range of programs, such as simulation games that require pupils to make decisions and skill

practices for understanding number in mathematics.

- 160 Pupils have good attitudes to work and enjoy their studies in small groups. Their attitudes to work allow them to make the most of what the school provides. Although little teaching was observed, teachers clearly have explained procedures well and have given pupils time to understand what they have heard. This approach leads to good learning. For example, pupils are confident when they use the Internet to find information.
- 161 The co-ordinator is very well informed about the provision the school makes. The school has good plans to ensure that the skills and knowledge pupils need each year are consistently taught and in a logical sequence and that all pupils have equal access to time on computers. Staff have the skills and enthusiasm to teach information and communication technology well. The school has made the development of information and communication technology a priority for spending since the last inspection. A considerable amount of money has been spent effectively on good modern computers and programmes to improve standards in the subject.

MUSIC

- 162 Pupils throughout the school attain above the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music-making activities. There are particular strengths in composing music and in the playing of instruments in recorder groups, and the orchestra, because of the very good teaching. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 163 Pupils sing a wide range of songs pleasingly. Their diction is clear and they listen very carefully to the music between verses. Pupils concentrate well, sing tunefully and learn melodies and words quickly. The older pupils make a good contribution to the singing in assemblies and this helps younger pupils in the school learn more quickly.
- 164 Pupils in the infants sing sweetly and match sounds and actions accurately because they enjoy singing and watch the teacher very carefully. Lessons are planned and prepared so that pupils build on skills and techniques learned previously. For example, pupils in Year 1 quickly pick up the rhythm when the teacher starts clapping and they all keep a steady beat through a song. Pupils know the names of the instruments they are to use and the rule that instruments are left on the floor until needed. Training in the safe and careful handling of instruments begins in reception and it is noticeable that teachers throughout the school consistently reinforce this in their lessons. By the time they are seven, pupils understand why certain instruments are grouped together and play their instruments quietly and loudly, using them in many different ways. Pupils learn to respond to the teacher's signals to start and stop and the majority play their instruments at the correct moment when their instrument is named in the song, keeping in time with the music very well.
- 165 In the juniors, Year 3 pupils create a picture of a journey and find instruments that will add appropriate sounds. They are very thoughtful about their choice of instruments and this is encouraged very effectively by the teacher's probing questions that extend their thinking. When they work in their groups to compose their own tune for the journey pupils produce interesting and relevant tunes, because they find the work enjoyable. They rise to the challenge of the activity. Year 4 pupils extend their learning about pitch very effectively. They sing songs with an echo, dividing this up into two parts, before identifying patterns that represent tunes. They hear about Gustav Holst

and listen, with eyes closed, to an extract from his 'Planets' Suite'. After this, they want to know more about the composer and about the planets.

- 166 Year 5 pupils show great enjoyment in the challenge of echoing rhythm patterns, using handclaps, body movements and untuned percussion. They listen thoughtfully to 'Coronation Scot' before experimenting in their groups to produce their own railway story with music. Most groups have one member who plays an instrument in the orchestra and this encourages them to think of a composition that will combine tuned and untuned percussion effectively. For example, in one group a girl plays the clarinet and provides a constant two-note rhythm for the others to join in until she plays a final higher note. The teacher makes good use of group demonstrations to ensure that all pupils are clear about the task and her positive interventions in the groups ensure that all want to play their work at the end of the lesson.
- 167 Pupils in Year 6 build well on previous learning and the teacher's correct use of musical terms. They are encouraged to work in groups to compose a section of music to follow on from the previous week's work. Pupils try hard to provide a contrast in volume, melody and rhythm in this section. For example, one group found a contrast by introducing a very popular monkey into their rain forest section. They used musical sounds very effectively to complement its very realistic cries.
- 168 The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. The standard of work in lessons is high and those pupils who learn recorder and other instruments receive very good teaching and encouragement to share their skills with the rest of the school. Teachers provide a wide range of interesting opportunities and musical experiences that enable pupils to learn how to listen to music and improve their skills in playing instruments and composing. The selection of music for assemblies is helpful in providing pupils with opportunities to listen and reflect upon the music they hear in school. Opportunities to participate in music-making at other centres, visiting musicians, special services and performances are much enjoyed and contribute positively to pupils' learning. The school is fortunate in having several musicians on the staff and the co-ordinator provides good support for other colleagues who have less experience in teaching music. The curriculum has been developed well so that all elements that should be taught are taught well over the year. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there were insufficient opportunities for composition and musical appreciation.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 169 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress across the school and achieve well. Seven and eleven year olds achieve standards that are above those typical of pupils nationally. Standards of pupils' work are similar to the previous inspection and the school has maintained the good standards reported then. Although physical education is not a priority for extra attention, the good features of the provision reported four years ago have been maintained. There has been an improvement in the opportunity pupils have to evaluate their work and that of their classmates during lessons. The arrangements for teaching Year 3 pupils to swim are satisfactory. At eleven years old, the school reports that most pupils swim 25 metres.
- 170 Year 2 pupils develop a good range of movements in dance lessons. Pupils composed a sequence of steps and movements as part of a dinosaur dance. Higher attaining pupils followed the tape-recorded instructions very well. They successfully followed the beat of the music, made big steps and slow steps, and rolled their heads slowly as

triceratops might have done. Average attaining pupils moved slowly as the great dinosaur might have done, but were not always in time with the music. Lower attainers are enthusiastic, but on occasions some boys did not take notice of the start and stop instructions.

- 171 Year 6 pupils continued the dance theme and successfully put a sequence of actions together about rainforests. Pupils successfully linked several short sequences of movement into one longer sequence. Pupils showed that they could move in pairs as animals do. Higher attainers made very large actions and worked closely together with great co-operation and their work was very well co-ordinated. Average attainers used the space in the hall well and kept in step together. For example, a trio of boys hunted an animal, lit an imaginary fire and cooked the 'kill.' Lower attainers' movements were less expressive and lacked ideas initially. By watching their classmates and gaining inspiration, pupils were soon working well. Pupils' ball skills are above average. All pupils observed could catch and throw accurately in a netball lesson and trap and pass the ball effectively in a football lesson.
- 172 The teaching is good across the school. The school provides a good curriculum and all the elements of the National Curriculum for physical education are present. Teachers' levels of expertise and expectations of what pupils should do are high and lessons are well planned. Teachers place good emphasis on the use of space and good use is made of pupils' self-evaluations of theirs and other's work. Pupils learn effectively and gain new ideas in this way. Teachers demonstrate the required movements well, using higher attaining pupils or themselves to inspire pupils. In Year 1, the teacher gave a good demonstration of a safe and tidy forward roll. She made good teaching points and pupils learned what to do. Good demonstrations have a positive impact on the quality of pupils' work. Teachers also make good use of praise to motivate pupils and use the school's class reward system well to motivate the very few less enthusiastic pupils.
- 173 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They enjoy lessons and derive much pleasure from taking part. Nearly all pupils of all ages are interested in what they do and they make good attempts to carry out the teachers' instructions. For example, in Year 4, pupils made very good progress on a very cold day with learning to stop and push a hockey ball. The teacher gave very good advice about, for example, how stopping the ball requires a cushioning action with the stick.
- 174 The teacher who co-ordinates the subject has a good knowledge of physical education. There is a good programme of opportunities for her to watch colleagues and pupils at work in lessons. The school's programme of extra-curricular activities is good. It includes netball, football, cross-country running, sporting visits to other schools and outdoor and adventurous activities, which all raise the standards of pupils' work. The school's accommodation is good. The hall and playground are large and pupils have sufficient room in which to work. The school uses these spaces to very good effect.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 175 Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a good knowledge of Christianity and other religions, but they also show a high level of understanding of what religious belief means to people in their daily lives. They are able to share their own feelings and discuss things that are important to them. The provision for religious education is very good. Teaching is sensitive and fits in well with the ethos of respect in the school

generally.

- 176 Year 2 pupils are aware of the importance of Jesus in Christianity. They show a good understanding of how important the Bible is and they know how it is organised. They have a good knowledge of stories from the Bible and are beginning to understand some of their meanings and implications. For example, in a drama about the story of David and Goliath pupils talked about the motives of the people involved and were able to explain how David could do what he did because of his faith in God. They talk about their own feelings and show respect for other people's feelings.
- 177 Year 6 pupils have developed their understanding of Bible stories and can recognise messages in parables and relate them to their own lives. They soon realised that the 'Feeding of the five thousand' was a parable about sharing what you have. They were able to relate this to their own talents and think about how they could use them. For example, they talked about 'sharing a talent so it grows'. They talk in an open and confident way about their lives and the things that concern them. They think about how their actions affect others and how problems might be solved.
- 178 Through the school pupils develop an understanding of other religions. Year 3 pupils learn about the artefacts that are important to the Jewish religion and they start to link them to the faith itself. For example they talk about 'living by the Torah'. Year 5 pupils respect the special nature of Islamic artefacts. They understand the significance of prayer and begin to realise the importance of ritual and how it affects peoples' lives.
- 179 Pupils have very good attitudes to religious education. They listen carefully in lessons and are keen to learn. They are interested and become closely involved with what they are learning. In a Year 3 lesson pupils showed a sense of wonder as they watched the inside of a synagogue revealed on a website and recognised the artefacts they knew about from a previous lesson. They show a developing respect for other peoples' beliefs and value systems. Year 5 pupils soon understood why they had to handle some religious artefacts carefully and they responded to this very well.
- 180 The teaching of religious education is good and often very good. Teachers are sensitive to the issues they deal with and they convey this sensitivity to their pupils. This level of respect for others and their beliefs was seen in every lesson. It was also observed in assemblies. For example, the headteacher made a very valuable point to pupils as he turned water into 'wine' and explained the difference between a magic trick done to impress and the understated way in which Jesus performed miracles. A good range of approaches is used. In Year 2 the teacher used drama very well to provide pupils with an understanding of a Bible story. In Year 3 the teacher used the Internet to provide information in a more direct way. 'Circle time' is used well in every class to provide pupils with the opportunity to talk about issues that concern them.
- 181 The curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and it is well planned. There is an emphasis on using first-hand experiences wherever possible, for example artefacts and visits. The headteacher has been effectively co-ordinating the subject, but is in the process of handing the responsibility over to a relatively new teacher. They both demonstrate a sensitivity to the subject and a commitment to keeping its high profile in the school. The subject is due to be reviewed soon and they both have ideas as to how it should be developed.