

INSPECTION REPORT

WELLFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Sale

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106304

Headteacher: Mr G V Geoghegan

Reporting inspector: Peter Hill
6642

Dates of inspection: 11th - 14th June 2001

Inspection number: 190713

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 7 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dumber Lane
Sale
Cheshire

Postcode: M33 5QX

Telephone number: 0161 912 3685

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Croft

Date of previous inspection: December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6642	Peter Hill	Registered inspector	Science Information Technology Geography Art and design	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9882	Alice Rea	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?
30362	Jacqueline Henshaw	Team inspector	English Religious education Design and technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
26519	Margaret Hatfield	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Music	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wellfield Junior School is a two-form entry school with 261 pupils on roll. Only a very small percentage of pupils come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language and the number of pupils entitled to free school meals is in line with the average nationally. The area surrounding the school consists of mainly owner occupied homes with the school continuing to take a significant number of pupils from further afield, including a local authority housing estate. Overall, the socio-economic circumstances of pupils' families is just below the average nationally. There are 52 pupils on the school's special needs register, with 1 pupil having a statement of special educational need. When they start school, pupils' attainment is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school providing very good value for money. The school is very well led and managed and this is having a very positive effect on the school ethos and on standards. The school has made considerable progress recently. Pupils are well taught in all areas of the school and during the inspection there was a very high percentage of good and very good teaching. Very good teamwork between teachers and support staff considerably benefits all pupils. By the time they leave the school most pupils attain standards which, overall, are above the national average and above those of similar schools. Last year's results fell short of the school's targets in English but remain in line with the national average and with those in similar schools. The standard in English was, however, against the trend of recent years. The standard of pupils' work in books and in lessons is above average.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed by a dedicated headteacher who is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff.
- Teaching is good overall with a significant amount of excellent and very good teaching.
- Teachers' planning is excellent and is a major factor in the good quality of teaching.
- Assessment of pupils' levels of attainment is very good. The way in which teachers use assessment information in their planning is excellent.
- Pupils' attainment is above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The standard of presentation of pupils' work is very good in all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They enjoy school and are very well behaved.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

What could be improved

- The school's coverage of the information technology National Curriculum and pupils' standards in ICT.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996. Since that time it has made very good progress in meeting not only the requirements of the key issues identified in the report, but also in a considerable number of other areas. There has been: sustained improvement in standards; considerable improvements in the accommodation and resourcing, including the new information and communication technology (ICT) suite; pupils' independent learning has improved; subject co-ordinators are very effective in managing their subjects; assessment procedures are very good; and there has been a good response to promoting pupils'

awareness of multi-cultural issues. Parents, governors, and all concerned with the school are full of praise for the way in which the school continued to provide a good quality of education through the very difficult period when the buildings were being remodelled. The school has recently gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, further recognising the high quality of its work.

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	B	B	C	C
mathematics	A	C	B	B
science	A	B	B	B

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

The results of the 2000 tests for 11-year-olds show that standards in mathematics and science are above the national average and standards in English are average. When comparing the school's results with those of similar schools, the picture is the same. There was a fall in performance in English in 2000, compared to a rise in both mathematics and science. A proportion of English papers was re-marked and, in all cases, claims for a higher level were upheld. Standards of work seen in English during the inspection were above average. Pupils who are identified as having special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment, as do those who are potentially higher attainers. Overall there are no significant differences in the standards attained by boys and girls although the school monitors this closely. Literacy across the curriculum is a strength of the school with writing being particularly well developed. The school has been very successful in developing pupils' numeracy skills. The development of ICT has been very impressive, but the provision has not yet had time to ensure that pupils have access to all the strands of the IT National Curriculum and, as a result, pupils' standards in ICT are currently below average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and want to attend. Pupils show high levels of interest in both their work and in extra activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. On occasions, in lessons, pupils' behaviour was exemplary. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school and respond quickly to their teachers and other adults in the school, wanting to please. The overwhelming majority know right from wrong and reflect this in their actions.

Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with adults in school. They show very good respect and are very able to take initiative and responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.

Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and the way they relate to each other and to adults are very good and strengths of the school. They respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others and clearly understand the impact of their actions on others. In over half of the lessons observed pupils' behaviour was very good with some being excellent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching is good overall with a very significant amount of very good and excellent teaching. During the inspection, in 8% of lessons teaching was excellent, in 28% it was very good, in 47% it was good and it was satisfactory in 15%. There was only a very small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. Excellent and very significant areas of strength are the effectiveness of teachers' planning and the way in which, throughout the school, teachers use up-to-date assessment information to ensure that their lessons meet the needs of all their pupils. The quality of teaching in English is good overall and very good in mathematics. The skills of both numeracy and literacy are very well taught. In the very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching pupils misunderstood their tasks and, as a result were unsuccessful. Pupils work hard and show very good levels of interest, concentration and independence, putting high levels of physical and creative effort into their work. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for and, as a result, they achieve very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The range and quality of the curriculum is good, although it does not yet completely fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum for ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good and effective. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are very well catered for. The school places a high priority on this aspect of its work and has very good structures in place.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good overall with clear improvements in pupils' multi-cultural awareness, an issue at the time of the last inspection. There is very good provision for pupil's moral, social and cultural development and good provision for spiritual development. Collective acts of worship make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. There are excellent procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment. The school's strategies for child protection are very well developed.
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Links with parents are good and parents have a good and positive view of the school. The quality of the information provided for parents is very good. The school provides a good range of additional activities, considerably enhancing the curriculum. Although progress in the development of ICT provision is very good and the opportunities for pupils to use and learn about ICT have improved considerably, the school does not currently meet the statutory requirements in this area. The school is especially good at providing and caring for its pupils and this aspect is very good. Pupils' needs and strengths are well known and the school has excellent procedures in place to monitor individual progress and ensure that this information is used in lesson planning. This is an area of considerable strength.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed by a dedicated headteacher who is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a clear and very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are very supportive of all aspects of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There are very strong and effective systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial management is very good with resources being clearly, imaginatively and very effectively, matched to the school's targets.

Very good leadership and management ensures that the school is very successful in meeting its stated aims. Staffing levels are good and all staff are well deployed. Resources are good in almost all areas of work. The ICT suite is a very good resource and is used effectively. The recent improvements in the building have brought about a spectacular change in the environment. The school has very skilfully made the most of the opportunities provided by the remodelling of the building to enhance the provision: for example, the development of the new ICT suite, the library, a special needs base etc. The principles of best value are well applied and form an essential part of all the school's detailed monitoring, analysis and planning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p><i>Well over 90% of parents who returned questionnaires strongly agree, or agree, that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children make good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school is helping children become 	<p><i>Around 20% of parents who returned the questionnaire</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to be better informed about how their children are getting on. • Would like to school to work closely with parents. • Would like a more interesting range of

<p>mature.</p> <p><i>Over 86% of parents strongly agree, or agree, that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour is good. • Parents feel comfortable approaching school about problems and suggestions. • The school is well led and managed. 	<p>activities outside lessons.</p>
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Over 53 % of parents' questionnaires were returned. Parents are very positive in their support for the school, both in the questionnaire and the Parents' Meeting. They have recognised considerable improvement in many areas of the school's work since the last inspection and especially recently. Inspectors agree with all the positive responses made by parents. Inspectors judge that, overall, the school makes good provision in the areas which some parents identified as needing improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The national test results for 11-year-olds in the last few years have been above average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were above the national average in mathematics and science and in line in English. In comparison with similar schools' standards, results were the same. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was also above average in mathematics and science and just below in English. The English results for 2000 were not in line with the results for previous years, which were above average. As is pointed out in the English paragraph of the report, there was a discrepancy in marking National Curriculum test papers and this could have had implications for the overall results in this subject. Most of the current Year 6 are attaining above the level expected for their age in all three subjects. Overall there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. When taking into account the level of pupils' attainment when they start school, the majority are making good progress, and pupils of all abilities are achieving well. The main reason for these high standards is the high quality teaching that pupils receive.

2 There has been a very good improvement in English since the previous inspection. The National Literacy Strategy is well used and teachers are secure in their subject knowledge. Basic skills have been emphasised and the development of the use of classroom assistants for pupils with special educational need has been very successful. Most pupils read very fluently with expression and discuss favourite authors or poets and they are all able to use information texts for research and reference. In most classes pupils will read aloud with confidence. Writing skills have been a major focus for improvement. Although it remains a focus, it is also a curriculum strength with pupils producing some very high quality work, and finished stories are of a high standard and are very well presented.

3 Pupils use their literacy skills in an effective way in other subjects. In mathematics lessons the pupils have opportunities to develop these skills when reading questions and then discussing and explaining their strategies for finding solutions. Pupils label diagrams in science and also use their independent research skills to write good quality accounts of their findings about earth and space.

4 In mathematics, across all classes and all years, pupils' standards are above average. By the age of eleven, pupils successfully acquire skills of mental manipulation of number and use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10 and 100, many by 1,000. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of the inter-relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in science, physical education and in ICT when using spreadsheets and control technology.

5 In science, all pupils achieve well because of the strong emphasis that teachers place on developing their knowledge and understanding by being involved in practical, investigational activities. There is good development of pupils' ability to devise and carry out a fair test and their skills of recording their findings in a variety of ways.

6 In ICT, although standards are below average, pupils are now achieving well. The whole-class teaching in the computer suite is having a marked affect on pupils' knowledge and understanding and on the development of their basic skills in the subject. In a number

of aspects of the ICT National Curriculum, a significant number of pupils have attained standards which are now above average.

7 In religious education, the attainment of the majority of pupils, by the time they are eleven, exceeds the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the traditions and beliefs of Christianity and have effectively developed their awareness of other major world faiths.

8 In art, history and geography, pupils achieve good standards by the time that they are eleven. In these subjects the pupils are given a wide range of stimulating and challenging activities that effectively develop their skills. Good use is made of visits and visitors that enrich a number of these subjects by providing further significant learning experiences. In design and technology, music and physical education most pupils achieve in a suitable way and have reached average standards by the age of 11.

9 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve well as a result of the well-structured support that they receive. The needs of the more able and gifted pupils are met effectively and they also make good progress in their learning and achieve well. The high quality of teachers' planning, which effectively matches activities to pupils' abilities, is a significant factor in this good achievement. There are no significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10 Pupils are enthusiastic about school, where they enjoy both work and play. They are well known by all the staff and are valued as individuals. The headteacher shows respect for all members of the school community and this is reflected throughout the school. Parents are rightly pleased with the attitudes and the values promoted within the school.

11 Behaviour is generally very good, promoted by the behaviour management in lessons and the very high expectations of the teachers. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school and pupils respond quickly to their teachers and other adults in the school, wanting to please. On a few occasions behaviour was exemplary, such as in a Year 3 English lesson, where pupils were highly motivated to apply and develop their English skills for writing letters. The teacher had excellent relationships with and high expectations of the pupils and fired their enthusiasm for the lesson. Where, on a few occasions, teachers did not pick up quickly on behaviour that was not to the usual high standard, a few pupils were less attentive to listening or getting on with their work.

12 Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils are confident and considerate. Younger pupils speak with confidence and older pupils respect them. For example, a Year 3 pupil spoke about his Muslim faith to a class of older pupils as part of their religious education lesson. Older pupils go over to the infant school to help work with the pupils there. The headteacher of the infant school values their contribution to the infant pupils' education. Pupils work well together in pairs and small groups. They listen to each other and co-operate well.

13 The School Council enables pupils throughout the school to develop their understanding of citizenship through the election process for class representatives, the system for suggestions being put forward to the School Council and the procedures for representatives to report back to their class.

14 Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence is below, or better than, the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15 Overall, the quality of teaching is good with a significant amount of very good and excellent lessons. In 15 per cent of lessons teaching is satisfactory, in 47 per cent of lessons teaching is good, in 28 per cent it is very good and in 8 per cent it is excellent. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred in just 2 per cent of lessons. As a direct result of the good quality of the teaching, the quality of pupils' learning is good.

16 Teaching is good in English, science, ICT, geography, physical education and music and very good in mathematics, religious education and history. Teaching of design and technology is satisfactory. An insufficient number of lessons were observed to enable secure judgements to be made about the teaching of art. Of the four excellent lessons observed, two were in mathematics, one in English, and one in history.

17 The most successful lessons are characterised by highly enthusiastic teaching, planning of the highest quality, which allied to very good subject knowledge inspires pupils to work very hard, with high levels of interest and concentration, resulting in very good learning. In these lessons, the excellent use of ongoing assessment to guide the planning of lessons is evident. For example, a Year 3 teacher very effectively evaluated the previous day's work in mathematics, adapting the lesson plans for the next day to suit the specific needs of the pupils. This ensured that tasks were appropriately challenging to enable pupils to make very good progress. In a small number of lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, strategies to motivate the pupils were lacking. Levels of challenge in tasks did not match pupils' attainment levels so that the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding did not build on the pupils' previous learning. This resulted in a lack of success, leaving them insecure in their knowledge and unsure of how well they have done and how they could improve.

18 Planning and preparation of lessons are of a very high standard. Year group teachers plan very effectively together, so that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. This also ensures that the content of lessons is consistent between classes covering the same age range. Teachers set clear learning targets and regularly discuss these with pupils so that pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning and understand what they are expected to do. Most teachers' day-to-day assessment of their pupils' learning is very good and they use assessment very effectively to guide the planning of future learning. This means that they are able to present work at levels that are closely matched to pupils' prior attainment, enabling them to build on what they already can do, know and understand. The quality of marking is good and is generally helpful in showing pupils how they can improve their work.

19 In most lessons, pupils' behaviour is managed very effectively. Teachers' expectations are high and relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. These factors have a significant impact on the very good efforts that pupils make and on their brisk pace of working. For example, in a Year 5 music lesson, the high quality of the teacher's questioning and demonstrations, allied with very good class control, motivated the pupils very well and enabled many of them to make very good progress in the lesson.

20 Teachers work well together and they also work very closely with support staff who contribute significantly to pupils' learning and are an integral part of lessons. Pupils are very well motivated in most lessons and respond very co-operatively as a result of the high

levels of mutual respect between adults and pupils. Resources are very well prepared and are used very effectively. Pupils access equipment and materials sensibly and easily, encouraging independence and a sense of responsibility.

Teachers' subject knowledge is very secure, especially in English, mathematics and science, impacting well on the gains made by pupils in their skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers take care to make clear to pupils the intended learning outcomes of the lesson. They revisit these objectives during the summary session at the end of the lesson to reinforce the key learning points made earlier. This approach is especially prevalent in English and mathematics lessons and reflects the very successful manner in which the school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In most classes the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well, enabling pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics. Teachers also ensure that relevant opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. The organisation of pupils into ability groups in mathematics is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers use a good range of methods. Class and group teaching are very effective and very good interaction with pupils provides good opportunities for individual teaching.

21 Teaching is very good for pupils with special educational needs who make very good progress. They have full access to the curriculum and are secure and confident. All teachers and support staff are very aware of pupils' needs and respond sensitively and appropriately to the needs of all pupils, especially to those who have a statement of special educational need.

22 Almost all the parents are pleased with the teaching. A few parents responding to the parents' survey held before the inspection began, were concerned about the amount of homework set by the school. However, inspection findings are that homework is well addressed, for example, in literacy, mathematics and history, and supports and extends work done in school.

23 In the last inspection report a key issue was to create opportunities for the development of pupils' independent learning skills. This key issue has been successfully addressed and the school has made good progress in this area. Another key issue was to promote multi-cultural awareness. Teachers now plan very well for cross-curricular links, and multi-cultural education now has high priority and this concern has been well addressed. There has been a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection when there was a relatively high amount of unsatisfactory teaching, i.e. 7.4 per cent of lessons. There is now only 2 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of very good and excellent teaching has increased from 10 per cent to 36 per cent. This improvement is attributable to the combined effect of the monitoring of teaching throughout the school, much improved planning, more challenging tasks being presented for pupils, and excellent teamwork amongst the staff. Six out of nine teachers have joined the school since the last inspection. Good use is made of the ICT suite. Teachers now need to make far greater use of computers in order that pupils may apply their ICT skills across other subjects.

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

24 Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities, offered to pupils, are good.

25 Provision for literacy and numeracy through the National Strategies, special educational needs and history is very good. There is also very good provision for personal, moral, cultural and social development and for health education.

26 The school offers a broad curriculum that is strengthened by the extra-curricular opportunities available. However the curriculum is not balanced, as it does not currently meet the statutory requirements to teach information technology.

27 The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes and guidance have been adopted for foundation subjects with some adaptation to match the school's own policies and schemes. This has led to a good set of policies and schemes that offer structure to the curriculum and guidance for staff. The school is following the new locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

28 There is a very good health policy that is related to mind, body and spirit and seeks to develop pupils in a proactive rather than reactive way. Pupils are encouraged to develop personally, socially and healthily through a number of very good initiatives. These initiatives include the School Council, the playtime 'Fitbods' scheme, after-school sports and dance clubs and the option and encouragement of healthy snacks.

29 Sex education and drugs awareness is taught within the context of relationships and within the school's philosophy of a caring environment and a moral framework. They are encompassed within personal, social and health education and other relevant subjects.

30 The School Council is particularly successful in developing personal skills of negotiation, responsibility and independence. Pupils from all age groups draw up their own agendas and take class or individual suggestions to the Council meetings. Staff, in attendance at the meetings, allow pupils to run the meetings and show great respect to them and the suggestions made. Pupils sometimes research their beliefs or arguments before bringing them to the attention of the group.

31 The curriculum is available to all pupils, who have equal rights of access. The special educational needs Code of Practice is fully implemented and pupils have individual education plans or behaviour plans as necessary. The school caters very well for all pupils with special educational need. A specific sound system is in operation in the hall to assist hearing impaired pupils. This also enhances the sound quality for all pupils. The deployment of classroom assistants ensures the success of pupils with special educational need.

32 The curriculum is enriched by visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities offered at various times of the year. For example: pupils visit Chester, Bramall Hall and the Manchester Museum and invite drama productions as part of history topics; live musicians play in school; visits to Sedburgh in the Lake District are part of their geography field work and Shakespeare Stories productions visit to link with literacy. The school offers sports, music, dance, drama and mathematics clubs. There is a major Christmas production and special assemblies at Harvest and at the end of Year 6. The school ensures that all pupils participate at some time during their school career if they wish to.

33 The school enjoys very good links with its infant and secondary schools. The feeder infant school invites pupils from the junior school to assist with lunchtime activities and they are used to take messages across the field, further developing interpersonal skills. There is close liaison when setting targets, sharing information or records and checking progression.

There are close links between staff who are invited to bring children to special assemblies or concerts.

34 The school's policies of Equal Opportunity and Education for ethnic diversity are both very good and they strive to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity and that opportunities are created for pupils to learn about and from other cultures.

35 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. There is a clear moral framework that permeates all lessons and activities. Pupils are shown respect and as a result they give respect to staff and to each other. They value contributions and are valued. Teachers emphasise the importance of taking turns, sharing and making the right choices in behaviour. They know that if classroom rules are broken there will be consequences. The work of all pupils is valued and contributions are accepted and celebrated. This results in high self-esteem. In one Year 6 class, pupils thanked their teacher for her positive feedback. Collective worship strongly contributes to moral development as when pupils were given a target of 'saying something pleasant during the day'. Pupils are encouraged to raise funds for specific causes and often raise money in a smaller way for their own favourite charities or causes.

36 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Team activities and working together in physical education lessons develop social skills as do visits and trips outside school. Classroom settings, of groups or pairs, encourage co-operation and collaborative work. Projects and lessons are often planned to incorporate different social settings such as in drama productions or in history lessons. Personal, health and social education lessons and circle time are often the vehicle for learning social skills. In a Year 4 lesson pupils were developing a good understanding of the qualities found in a good friend.

37 Provision for cultural and multi-cultural development is very good. Pupils are given the opportunity to read and evaluate texts from a variety of cultures through the National Literacy Strategy. They read texts written by a variety of significant children's authors and are introduced to classical texts, poets and Shakespeare. There are sets of multi-cultural group reading books ascribed to each year group. This allows discussion of issues and ideas within group reading times. One assembly included a story from the Jewish tradition. Music is introduced by a variety of composers and from a variety of traditions; for example, Polish music was played during a Year 4 music lesson. Pupils visit places of interest such as Chester and learn about others' lives in the past. Artwork displayed is of a good quality and reflects pupils' interest in the variety of artists studied. These include both male and female and of different eras. African patterns were observed and drawn when Year 3 pupils developed their patterns for curtains.

38 Provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on thoughts, feelings and ideas both in assemblies and in class lessons. They are asked to reflect on the different moods and tone music can create. In religious education lessons pupils relate ideas and concepts within religions to their own lives. They show respect for other faiths and write their own prayers or thoughts for creating a better world or for giving thanks. Prayers are said in lessons and sometimes in classes. Year 3 pupils wrote their own prayers.

39 There is a daily act of corporate worship that complies with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40 The school takes very good care of its pupils. The combination of highly effective monitoring systems and staff, who know their pupils well, and have very good relationships with them, ensures that this is so. Child protection procedures are extremely effective, enhanced by staff training, including training for the lunchtime supervisors.

41 There are good procedures for monitoring attendance. The headteacher monitors registers and parents are contacted about absences or late attendance causing concern. There are clear systems for involving the Educational Welfare Officer, who responds promptly to contacts from the school.

42 Parents rightly feel that any instances of bullying or harassment are promptly dealt with by the headteacher. The school's behaviour policy gives staff clear guidance on managing behaviour, ensuring that pupils clearly understand that there are consequences if they choose to behave in particular ways. The policy is effectively and consistently applied by staff, who have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The headteacher monitors behaviour and the effectiveness of the behaviour policy, ensuring that pupils are supported when they have difficulty behaving in an appropriate way and that parents are involved where there are concerns about a pupil's behaviour.

43 The school is taking part in the 'Healthy Schools' Award Scheme. The school has undertaken the physical activity and healthy eating modules of the scheme and is now tackling the citizenship module. The introduction of the School Council has been particularly successful in supporting pupils' personal development. This award scheme linked in to an effective personal health and social education programme both provides for and monitors the personal development of the pupils.

44 Since the last inspection the school has addressed assessment of pupils' progress in a highly effective way. Extremely good assessment procedures are now in place and the results are well used to monitor pupils' progress. Indeed monitoring is very well used throughout the school to show not only academic progress of pupils but also to show progress in pupils' personal development and to bring about change in the school. There is ongoing evaluation of 'what is working well' for the pupils and a willingness to change to be more effective, that is a strength of the school. Although some work has been done to support gifted and talented pupils, the school recognises that this is an area for further development.

45 Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by the school and every effort is made to give these pupils the fullest access to the curriculum, such as the sound system in the hall for pupils with hearing impairment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46 The school has a good partnership with parents, who value the school, which they feel is well led and managed, and the work of the teachers. They especially value the teaching, the expectations for children to achieve their best and the attitudes and values promoted by the school, feeling their children are enabled to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Parents feel very comfortable about approaching the school with any queries or concerns. However, a small but significant number of parents do not feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress or that the school works closely with parents.

47 Written information for parents is of a very high quality. The prospectus and governors' annual report for parents comply with legal requirements and are clear and

informative. Regular, well-written, newsletters keep parents well informed about all aspects of school life. Written reports inform parents of their child's progress, including their personal development, and give targets for the future.

48 Parents are welcome in school. They are invited to attend assemblies, school productions and meetings about the curriculum. They are formally invited to meet their child's teacher each term. The very good monitoring systems operating within the school ensure parents are contacted both when there are any concerns and when there is 'good news' about the child.

49 Parents are very well involved in their children's education. They are well supported by the effective guidance on homework, covering aspects such as the time to be spent on homework and how to help children learn spellings. Parents are very supportive of their children's education, especially when pupils are asked to research a topic or bring items in to school. They hear their children read and help them learn their tables on a regular basis. A few parents regularly help in school, for example listening to reading and helping in ICT lessons. The school values this help. Parents also give good support to the school through the fund-raising activities of the 'Friends of Wellfield' association. This fundraising has, for example, provided the furnishing of the ICT suite.

50 Parents of pupils with special educational needs rightly feel that they are very well informed about and involved in their children's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51 Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff is very good. The school is very well led and managed by a dedicated headteacher who is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff. The quality of the leadership and management, and the way in which the headteacher sets, and expects, high standards, are major factors in the success of the school. The leadership ensures clear direction for all the work of the school, not only in raising standards of attainment but in the care, welfare and well-being of the pupils. As a result the school is a very caring one in which all aspects of the pupils' education is considered and developed. Relationships are very good, considerably enhancing pupils' education and there is an explicit and integral commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils.

52 Governors discharge their responsibilities very well and they are effective in fulfilling their statutory duties with the exception of meeting the requirements for the National Curriculum for ICT. The governors and the school are aware of this issue and there are clear and successful plans to address it as a part of the flourishing development of ICT across the school. Governors have a clear, and very good, understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and play a significant and important role in shaping the future direction and development. They are very supportive of all aspects of the school.

53 The school's evaluation of its performance is very good. There are very strong and effective systems in place for checking and evaluating the school's performance, with the headteacher playing a central role in the monitoring of standards of pupils' work and the evaluation and development of teaching. The school's strategies for performance management are very good and effective. The systems are well developed to the extent that, after each lesson, teachers review their lessons and lesson objectives and ensure that the evaluation from one lesson feeds into the targets for the next. This is a common feature of all lessons and has been carefully developed as a result of very good management.

54 The strategic use of resources is very good with educational priorities being supported through very good and careful financial management. The recent improvements in the building have brought about a spectacular change in the environment. The school has very skilfully made the most of the opportunities provided by the remodelling of the building to enhance the provision for example, the development of the new ICT suite, the library, a special needs base etc. Specific grants, provided for the development and improvement of targeted areas, have been very well incorporated in the overall planning. The ICT suite is an excellent example of this and is now a very good resource and is used well. Financial management is very good with resources being clearly, imaginatively and very effectively, matched to the school's targets. The school makes good use of new technology, including ICT, in its management and day-to-day running. The principles of best value are well applied and form an essential part of all the school's detailed monitoring, analysis and planning.

55 The number and qualification of staff supports and matches the demands of the curriculum and all staff are well deployed. The provision to support pupils with special educational needs is very good with the management ensuring, through very good financial planning and foresight, that the special needs coordinator has time to review and meet individual pupils needs as well as support those who are lower attainers, especially in mathematics. This is combined with providing quality release time for the deputy headteacher to play a full and effective part in the running and management of the school. Support staff play a valued and integral part in many aspects of school life and their high quality contribution considerably enhances pupils' education, especially those pupils with special educational needs.

56 The accommodation, having been recently very imaginatively remodelled, has changed the school considerably. The buildings provide a welcoming and high quality environment with very good facilities, for example, the new ICT suite and the provision of a base and teaching area for special educational needs. Some of the areas, for example the library, are small, but imaginative planning is overcoming these difficulties. The school is clean, very well cared for and maintained and the environment is enhanced through good quality displays of pupils' work.

57 Learning resources are good overall and are very good for English. ICT resources are of very good quality and are still being developed.

58 Given the very good improvement since the last inspection, the good teaching provided, and the improving standards attained by pupils, the school is providing very good value for money and clearly and effectively applies the principles of best value.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- The school's coverage of the ICT National Curriculum and pupils' standards in ICT. (paragraphs 6, 113, 118)

The development of ICT has been a priority for the school for some time. The opportunities provided by the remodelling of the school have been capitalised on and, through careful planning, including the very good strategic use of resources, the school now has a modern and well-equipped ICT suite. This is already having a considerable effect on standards and coverage of the National Curriculum for ICT.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	28	47	15	2	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	Y3 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	261
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	29	35	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	24
	Girls	29	28	33
	Total	48	50	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (86)	78 (75)	89 (87)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	25
	Girls	30	31	32
	Total	51	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (76)	84 (73)	89 (83)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (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	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	260
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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: Y3 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.1
Average class size	32.6

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	449183
Total expenditure	445917
Expenditure per pupil	1729
Balance brought forward from previous year	4069
Balance carried forward to next year	3266

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	261
Number of questionnaires returned	139

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	45	5	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	47	45	7	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	44	7	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	57	14	5	4
The teaching is good.	50	42	4	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	50	17	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	29	9	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	36	4	3	1
The school works closely with parents.	29	50	17	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	50	37	4	6	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	43	6	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	49	14	6	3

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

ENGLISH

59 Attainment on entry to the school at Year 3 is generally in line with the national average. Pupils in this Year 3 cohort achieved standards above the national average.

60 Standards of attainment at the 2000 National Curriculum Tests, at eleven years of age, were in line with the national average and in comparison to similar schools. Across the three years of 1998-2000 the average points' figures show that pupils' performance in English was above the national average. There was a fall in performance in English in 2000, compared to a rise in both mathematics and science. This can, in part, be explained by possible marking errors. A proportion of English papers was re-marked and, in all cases, claims for a higher level were upheld. This has implications for the remaining papers that were not remarked.

61 Standards of attainment in the present Year 6 are generally above national expectations. However, in one Year 6 lesson, standards were below expectations in the task set. This was due to a lack of awareness of pupils' needs or understanding and inappropriate structure to the lesson. Across the school, standards of literacy are above national expectations and in Year 3 there are a number of pupils who achieve standards well above expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational need achieve very well.

62 Literacy across the curriculum is a strength of the school and writing is particularly well developed.

63 There has been a very good improvement in English since the previous inspection. The school uses the National Literacy Strategy well and teachers are generally secure in their subject knowledge. Basic skills have been emphasised and the development of the use of classroom assistants for pupils with special educational needs has been very successful. The assistants are well trained and knowledgeable. Pupils respect and trust them and standards are improving. Targets have now been set for each class and year group, allowing staff to focus planning. Resources have been further developed.

64 Almost all pupils read very fluently with expression and discuss favourite authors or poets. They read a range of genre and are usually familiar with features, style and layout of the different genre. Texts used link to work in history, geography and science. High expectations of reading abilities leads to the planning of challenging work. The strategy of guided reading is well used; teachers and classroom assistants work with groups. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their enjoyment and purposes of texts. They are all able to use information texts for research and reference. In most classes pupils will read aloud with confidence.

65 Writing skills have been a main focus for improvement. Although it remains a focus, it is also a curriculum strength. A project to develop writing skills within each year group has led to very high quality work. Pupils draft their stories and work with a writing partner across a period of time. The finished stories are of a high standard and are very well presented. Parents help and support pupils' research for the writing projects. Pupils are justifiably proud of their achievements. The standard of achievement in Year 3 is particularly high. Writing is strongly emphasised within other subject areas and is planned within subjects

such as history and religious education. Writing skills are well taught and linked to the pupils' experiences of texts through their reading. Pupils in Year 3 wrote letters of complaint, using ICT, to Red Riding Hood and presented these in a variety of fonts. They are aware of the formal style of this particular letter. Year 6 collaboratively wrote a sequence of poems linked to a theme of animals.

66 There is a high focus on basic skills. The school has gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. Spelling strategies, such as spelling logs and grammar in contexts are in constant use and pupils remember well. Handwriting is good and pupils develop a fluent, joined style. Speaking and listening skills are improving and pupils are encouraged to contribute in a variety of ways within a number of subject areas. Pupils with special educational need are always made to feel part of the class and are encouraged to take the lead in such activities as evaluation. Presentations in assemblies and drama productions or choral speaking have increased confidence. There are, however, times when some pupils in Year 6 show insufficient confidence or ability to explain processes or to express ideas precisely.

67 Pupils behave very well in classes and listen. Generally their attitude is good and they are well motivated. Good relationships throughout, mean that pupils are usually confident enough to ask and answer questions about the texts and make informed guesses about the meaning of unknown words. Pupils organise their own independent reading tasks, check in dictionaries and record ideas. The collaboration of groups and partnerships is working well and leads to high standards. Pupils are usually confident in their use of evaluation skills.

68 Teaching overall is good with some very good and excellent teaching. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Excellent teaching is shown in excellent planning which includes key words and the language to be taught; excellent relationships lead to high motivation and a response to the brisk pace and high expectations. Pupils in this Year 3 class are confident and sure about their objectives. They model their teacher's excellent use of language using appropriate vocabulary and structures. There is enough support to increase confidence and allow independence. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred when tasks were misunderstood and presentation was unclear. Pupils were unsuccessful in their task and a plenary assessment highlighted their failure.

69 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The annual audit covers all aspects of the subject from planning, work scrutiny, assessment, professional development and resources. The focus on writing has resulted in the purchase of new schemes. The teaching and learning in classes is monitored by the senior management team and observed by the literacy governor. Results from the Key Stage 1 National tests are analysed and targets are set for different year groups. The co-ordinator has identified areas for development that includes a club for gifted and talented pupils, a school magazine and training librarians.

70 The school library has been accommodated within the re-structured building and houses a good range of texts. These include a variety of story genres including texts from around the world and non-fiction for all subject areas including a range for world faiths. Large texts for class reading are housed in the corridor and cover a variety of styles, subjects and genres. Library books have now been classified onto the computer and borrowing should be efficient. However, the situation of the library means that pupils have no access during lesson times unless they go outside the building. The library is open during lunchtime and every class is time-tabled for library time to ensure that every child has use of the library. The school needs to develop the library further by making it more

child-friendly to include book displays of authors or genres, bright chairs or cushions and vivid labelling. The position of the library and its limited size does not ensure its best use, particularly for research or for browsing. The school borrows topic boxes for reference and topic work within the classrooms and all classes have access to reference books, class texts or small class libraries.

MATHEMATICS

71 The school's 2000 test results for 11-year-olds are above average when compared to all schools nationally and also when compared to similar schools. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 5) is above average when compared nationally, and well above average in comparison with similar schools. The trend in pupils' attainment is rising, with a clear improvement since 1997, when results were below average. Evidence from the work of the present Year 6 pupils paints a similar picture of above average standards.

72 Mathematics provision is very good and is a strength of the school. Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection, particularly with regard to the quality of teaching. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good, varying from satisfactory to excellent. 20 per cent is satisfactory, 20 per cent is good and 60 per cent is very good or better, with 20 per cent being excellent. Where teaching is less successful, but nevertheless satisfactory, it is due to a lack of strategies for motivating the pupils, or the mental starter part of the lesson being too slow or an inappropriate task being presented. On these occasions the level of challenge is too great for most pupils.

73 Teaching was seen at its best in a Year 3 lesson on multiplication and in a Year 5 'Shapes' lesson on measuring angles. In these lessons, teachers' outstanding subject knowledge enables them to ask probing questions, deepening pupils' understanding and skilfully including all pupils, and assessment is very well used to guide the planning of new work. For example, the Year 3 teacher evaluated the previous day's lesson, identified pupils' difficulties and very effectively adapted her planning for the next day to meet pupils' specific needs. In the Year 5 lesson for average attainers, high quality questions and demonstrations allied with excellent class control and use of resources, motivated pupils very well, enabling many to attain above average standards.

74 Teachers work very hard. In all lessons throughout the school, teachers' planning is detailed and thorough and pupils are informed about what they are intended to learn so that they know exactly what is expected of them. Teachers manage pupils well and levels of challenge are mainly appropriately high, regarding the quality and quantity of work, enabling very good progress to be made. Teachers deal constructively and sensitively with pupils' misconceptions or errors and turn these to advantage, using them very effectively as teaching points. Usually the pace of lessons is very brisk, with time allowed for pupils to think through their answers and explain their calculations clearly. Homework given, for example, on function machines in Year 6, well supports learning. Adults value pupils' contributions and very good relationships between pupils and adults impact very well on pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy mathematics, co-operate fully with adults, respond confidently, behave very well and show interest and concentration in their work.

75 Most pupils make very good progress during lessons. Over time, progress is good, with a significant number making very good progress in all aspects of mathematics. The quality of learning is very good as a direct impact of the very good teaching.

76 Scrutiny of pupils' works shows above average standards, overall, across all classes and all years. By the end of the key stage, pupils acquire successful skills of mental manipulation of number and use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10 and 100, many by 1,000. High attainers have a good understanding of the inter-relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. For example, most can match 0.666 with two-thirds, and rapidly calculate 20% of 160. Almost all pupils apply their skills with the four rules of number. They understand negative numbers, use their skills to work with money problems, and explain such terms as 'overdrawn' with confidence. High attainers perform long division and multiplication, involving decimals. In shape and space work, most pupils calculate the area and perimeter of simple shapes and identify all the symmetries of two-dimensional shapes. They measure and draw angles accurately, to the nearest degree, and use correct mathematical terms, such as 'zero line', 'centre point', 'inner scale'. In data handling, pupils construct and interpret a range of graphs, for instance, linear graphs, involving conversion of sterling to francs. They use frequency tables to record data about, for example, lengths of words.

77 Throughout the school, pupils with special needs and those who are high attainers are very well provided for. This is mainly due to the accurate assessments made by teachers that provide them with the requisite information upon which future work is planned according to need. Additionally, those pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by the very good additional help of classroom assistants.

78 The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) has been successful, especially in the way teachers carefully structure lessons. Lessons begin with a good, brisk mental warm-up but in a small minority of lessons greater pace and relevance is needed. During the main part of lessons, pupils are usually successfully introduced to new knowledge and skills and teachers make very good use of the plenary part of lessons to reiterate learning. The NNS is raising pupils' competence to recall and manipulate number and to use correct mathematical vocabulary, for example, when answering questions or explaining strategies. Written computations are accurately completed and mainly neatly presented.

79 Pupils use and apply numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in science when using Venn diagrams to record data about living things, in physical education through playing directional games using odd and even numbers, and in ICT when using spreadsheets and control technology. Some good use of ICT to support mathematics is seen when pupils record data by creating a variety of graphs and charts. However, the use of ICT in mathematics is at a developmental stage. Links with literacy are good. Teachers promote pupils' clear understanding of text by often reading it with them first. By giving oral explanations, pupils' speaking and listening skills are enhanced. In many lessons, collaborative working contributes significantly to the very good provision made for pupils' social development as well as reinforcing mathematical learning. Very good opportunities are given for pupils to evaluate their own learning independently and most can decide for themselves how they can improve their work.

80 Planning is excellent at every level. It is very detailed and thoroughly addresses the differing abilities of pupils. Teachers plan jointly in year groups to ensure continuity, progression and equal opportunity for all. Assessment and recording systems are of the highest quality, enabling the clear tracking of individual pupils' progress and attainment, using the key learning objectives identified for each year. Staff and pupils regularly review these so that pupils gain a good understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve. All pupils are regularly assessed, using both non-statutory tests and teacher

assessments. Teachers' own evaluation of their lessons and the use of assessments to guide the planning of future work is outstanding. The organisation of pupils into ability groups in Years 5 and 6 in mathematics is impacting very positively on pupils' learning.

81 The very good improvement since the last inspection is attributable to the combined effect of the monitoring of teaching throughout the school, the very successful implementation of the NNS, very good subject leadership and the enthusiasm and commitment of most teachers in addressing this initiative. The enthusiasm, expertise and commitment of the co-ordinator have enabled her to fulfil her role, including monitoring colleagues' plans and scrutinising pupils' work. Analysis of the results of national tests is undertaken to improve pupils' performance.

SCIENCE

82 The school's year 2000 national test results for 11-year-olds are above average when compared with all schools nationally and when compared with schools of a similar nature. Pupils' standards in science have been consistently above average for a number of years indicating that this subject is one of the strong areas of the school's work.

83 Pupils in a Year 6 lesson clearly demonstrated the strengths of science and the depth of their knowledge and understanding. Engaged in investigating micro-organisms, a lesson which involved making yoghurt, they showed that they were well organised, and being very used to conducting investigations, they recorded their results carefully, were able to confidently draw conclusions and then present a hypothesis based on their findings.

84 In a Year 4 lesson investigating habitats and the grouping of plants and animals, pupils have a clear understanding the principles of the need for accurate recording of their observations. Pupils are actively involved in the investigations and have sound organisational skills and knowledge and understanding of the topic. Pupils know what is meant by prediction and are able to write a clear sentence explaining the relationships between plants and animals. They are able to group plants and animals.

85 Pupils' attitude to their work is good. They are well behaved and enjoy their work, listening well to their teacher and to each other. Pupils in all classes are confident when asked to explain why they think something is about to happen, or has happened and they make good use of appropriate scientific vocabulary. As pupils get older it becomes more obvious from their response to the teachers and the lesson content, that learning is good. They are able to apply their previous scientific knowledge and understanding to new contexts and they make good and effective links between topics and different areas of science. In all classes pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills with clear writing and good use of mathematics, for example when using graphs and tables.

86 All pupils have equal access to the science curriculum. Those pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and as a result make good progress. They are able to take a full and active part in lessons and are provided with additional resources, where these are required to meet their needs.

87 The teaching of science is good throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and ensure that the content challenges and excites pupils. Teachers have a good scientific knowledge of their topics. For example, in a well taught Year 6 lesson, the high level of the teacher's planning and her clear expertise in the topic allowed her to present the lesson content in a very clear and unambiguous way. As a result pupils had a very good understanding of the topic and were very involved in the lesson. Questioning is well

used in most classes to develop pupils' understanding, to involve them in the lesson and to check out what they know and can do. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are very good and this considerably enhances pupils' learning, allowing them to be confident when asking questions and putting forward ideas.

88 Science is very well co-ordinated by a well-qualified and experienced teacher. She has ensured that the scheme of work provides clear direction for colleagues, has reviewed what is taught in all classes and has carried out an evaluation of all aspects of the subject and especially standards. The majority of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and coverage is through the review of teachers' planning and through collecting in samples of pupils' work. Through these strategies the co-ordinator has gained a very accurate view of standards, of what works well and of what needs to be improved.

89 Resources are good for science, and especially for investigations. The use of computers in science is limited, partly because the school is currently developing the ICT provision. However, there is a shortage of good quality software to support science. The school is aware of this situation and has plans to improve it.

90 There has been a good improvement in science since the last inspection. Much of the work has centred on developing a relevant scheme of work and ensuring the resources are available to match the scheme. The monitoring of standards and coverage of the science curriculum is having a significant and positive effect on the development of the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

91 During the inspection week there was only very limited time to observe art lessons and so make secure judgements on teaching and learning and on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. However, from the range of good quality pupils' work on display and from discussions with the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, it is clear that the subject is a secure and important part of the work of the school and that pupils' levels of attainment are above average.

92 Art is taught as discrete lessons and also as an integral part of other lessons where there are clear and relevant links. Example of this are to be found in design and technology lessons, history lessons where pupils sketch artefacts, e.g. from Victorian times and religious education where they examine pattern and form of a number of religions and cultures. The coverage of the art curriculum includes all aspects of the programmes of study and a wide range of artists including Matisse, Van Gogh, O'Keefe, Miro etc.

93 The co-ordination role is thoroughly and well carried out. The co-ordinator ensures that there is a good range of materials to meet the requirements of the scheme of work and the topics which teachers have planned for. The organisation includes a clear year plan of which area is to be covered by each class for every half term. This enables the co-ordinator to check on the delivery and coverage of the programme of study. The co-ordinator also ensures that the gallery of best work is up to date and displays pupils' high quality work. This is an important strategy in showing not only the range and coverage of artwork, but also the standards pupils attain. Overall the range and quality of resources are at least adequate and meet the needs of the topics covered. There is a good range of materials, especially for two-dimensional work and a more limited but adequate range for three-dimensional work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94 Standards of attainment throughout the school, at the end of the key stage and within all groups, are at least in line with national expectations and there is evidence of standards that are above expectations. Pupils develop ideas for design, considering their purpose and use. They explore materials and aspects of safety, aesthetic quality and suitability. Across the school pupils are given the opportunities to work with a range of materials such as clay, textiles, paper, card, food and sheet materials. They learn how to use tools appropriately, to assemble accurately and to use electrical circuits, including those with switches. There are clear links to mathematics or art as pupils learn to measure accurately or consider aspects such as repeating patterns or rotations.

95 There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Assessment procedures are in place and are utilised. Standards of attainment in design and technology are improving.

96 Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They show interest in their lessons and relationships are good. This clearly leads to good quality of presentation in design and in the finished products, reflecting the pupils' care and pride in their work.

97 Teaching overall is satisfactory with evidence of some good teaching. A limited number of lessons were observed but satisfactory and good teaching was reflected in the completed products, marking within books and the work set. Year 3 extensively research ideas for sandwiches including evaluation of breads and spreads, whilst Year 4 design and make torches that include shatterproof casings and electrical circuits with switches. Year 6 use designers' specifications for shoe designs. Most teachers are using effective questioning techniques and marking is constructive.

98 Clearly planned and differentiated work ensures that activities are usually well matched to pupils' abilities. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils linked their research to mathematics as they completed a class tally chart for the kinds of home they lived in.

99 Year 6 pupils research the different soft toys available for young children and discuss materials, safety and other aspects of their construction. There is, however, a marked difference between the Year 6 classes in the emphasis placed on the language aspects of the subject. The development of pupils' abilities to explain clearly, suggest alternatives and to communicate design ideas is more developed in one Year 6 class. This is as a result of lower expectations of pupils' abilities and less appropriate modelling of language structures or technical vocabulary.

100 The QCA guidelines are used to strengthen the school's own design and technology scheme of work and to increase confidence in teaching. The school has recognised the need to further develop the scheme to achieve a greater balance of experiences for the pupils in the upper years of the school. There are plans to develop cookery that will expand opportunities for food technology. Mechanisms are studied through paper or card mechanisms in greeting cards but other materials and mechanisms, including an ICT control program, have not been developed. There was little evidence of the use of ICT in design.

101 Overall, co-ordination of the subject is good. Areas for development have been recognised and an audit of the subject includes all aspects. There is a clear assessment process that includes statements for lower and upper Key Stage 2 pupils. A lack of storage for resources and tools means that sometimes pupils do not have a wide selection. Resources are purchased ahead of the topic to be taught and, although a good range is

usually provided, the lack of alternatives such as wood and wood-working tools, limits more creative pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

102 By the time they are 11, most of the pupils attain standards which are above average, having made very good progress in their learning as they pass through the school. This is a direct result of the very good quality teaching that they receive. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are able to organise and manage their classes very effectively. There is good use of time and resources and very good use of questioning to find out what pupils know and understand. Teaching is well matched with the needs of all pupils so that all abilities are well challenged. There is good explanation of the ideas to be taught and all teachers place strong emphasis on pupils using correct geographical vocabulary. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils exploring rivers and the local environment have a clear understanding of the physical features and the properties of rivers and are able to use geographical vocabulary correctly and in context. In a Year 4 lesson where pupils were comparing the features of their own locality with a contrasting one, they demonstrate good observational skills and are able to describe in detail what are the main contrasting and similar features of each area. In Year 6 pupils' work in books there is clear evidence of independent research. While studying weather in the Alps, pupils have plotted temperature and altitude and drawn accurate conclusions about the melting of snow.

103 Pupils are considerate and co-operative in lessons and their attitudes and behaviour are very good. This is especially evident when they are working on shared tasks. In these situations they listen very well to each other and put forward sensible and informed suggestions.

104 Curricular provision is very good, so that all pupils are able to enjoy to a broad range of relevant experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they have full access to all activities and are able to achieve very well.

105 Very good leadership is provided by the co-ordinator who has a clear view of how the subject is developing and areas for further improvement. The topics in history and geography are carefully co-ordinated to ensure that there is an equal amount of time spent on each and that where topics have common and linked areas of study they compliment each other. The school starts with local issues and gradually moves further afield as pupils move through the school. The school makes good and effective use of the immediate environment and visits to places such as the Trafford Centre, Manchester Airport and the Mersey Basin Trust. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the standards of pupils' work, the scheme of work, which now clearly provides continuity and the analysis and recording of pupils' work.

106 Resources have been improved recently with teachers' resource packs, new atlases and software being purchased. The use of ICT is developing with a number of CDs to support topics, for example the mountains topic, and the use of relevant internet sites, including the Trafford site which is used as a part of the topic on the local environment.

HISTORY

107 Standards of attainment in history are above national expectations across the age groups and at the end of the key stage. Pupils with special educational needs achieve above expectations for their abilities. Pupils in Year 5 are able to place the Victorian era within a time line of British history and in relation to other periods studied. They ask

questions to develop their understanding and use background knowledge of the era from visits taken when they were younger. Year 6 pupils from one class have very good background knowledge of the Second World War through their holiday preparation work. They had interviewed grandparents or others who had lived during the War and in one case had filmed the interview. They demonstrated skill in gathering evidence from a variety of sources and used well-developed communication skills.

108 There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are above national expectations. There is a good scheme of work and policy that are being adapted to link with geography. Resources and first-hand experiences have been enhanced and developed. There is now clear assessment of standards against key objectives for upper and lower Key Stage 2.

109 Pupils work very co-operatively and share resources well. They discuss their findings with one another and show respect for others' ideas and opinions. Good relationships within classes leads to confidence in speaking for a group, good behaviour and work rate. Almost all work is very well presented and links are made with art and literacy. For example Year 4 pupils look at examples of Greek architecture in well-known buildings and write their own Greek legends. They study Greek vessels observing their shapes, design and purposes. Very well researched and presented history topics were on display and include a range of literacy genre.

110 Teaching overall is very good. Very well planned lessons are interesting and motivating. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good. Homework seeks to raise interest and to develop skills of enquiry. Pupils use the Internet at home to research periods studied. Very well prepared, good quality resources are presented which develop enquiry and interpretation skills. Lessons are very well organised and pupils themselves are encouraged to organise and communicate their own findings.

111 History has a high profile within the school and a new permanent mural has been commissioned for the hall wall. This has created a great deal of interest as pupils recognise the periods they are learning about. High quality displays of history topics reflect the importance and interest shown by the pupils and the standard of teaching in the subject.

112 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. An audit is carried out which includes all areas of the subject. This includes the assessment of levels of attainment, progress, planning, assessment and professional development. The strong link to literacy has been highlighted in recent resources specifically purchased to develop this area. The school makes very good use of historical visits and visitors and often links this to drama. Pupils in Year 3 gained first-hand experiences from their trip to Chester and from their visit by a gladiator.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

113 The development of ICT has recently been considerable and is already having a marked effect on the level of pupils' attainment and on their knowledge and understanding. The improvement has been as a result of the considerable commitment to resources and to accommodation, with the re-modelling of the school being seized upon by the leadership and management as an opportunity to develop a high quality ICT suite. However, the current overall level of pupils' attainment across all aspects of the ICT National Curriculum is below average because they have only recently had access to a number of the areas of the program of study. Standards are improving rapidly.

114 In the lessons observed, mainly in the ICT suite, the majority of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills related to the topics they were learning about was average. However, a significant number of pupils have levels of attainment that are above average. A clear example of this was to be found in the Year 5 class learning about the differences between paint packages and object-oriented packages. Here pupils were confident with both software applications, could access the program, use the menus etc. create shapes and objects and were generally very competent with the computer. They clearly understood the strengths and weaknesses of both pieces of software and the differences in their application. In a Year 6 lesson where pupils were using spreadsheets, a new area of study for them, most pupils could confidently use the software, being able to enter data and correctly use simple spreadsheet formulae and functions. In a number of classes there was good use of the Internet to provide information within subjects; for example pupils studying Ancient Egypt had found out facts about the country and life on the Nile.

115 In the best lessons pupils' levels of concentration and application to the tasks are very good and they co-operate well. For example in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were learning about spreadsheets, they shared very well, taking it in turns to input information, helped each other, and were very sensible and mature in their approach. Although very well appointed, the computer suite is quite small and pupils currently share computers. Most of the time this is well done with pupils co-operating well and helping each other. On a small number of occasions a few pupils, who were not concentrating well, tended to be noisy and disrupt other pupils' learning.

116 Teaching is good. Despite the newness of the suite, teachers are confident with the provision and have good subject knowledge of the applications they are using with their classes. Lessons are very well prepared, ensuring that both classes in each year cover the same material and that the programme of study is covered. In the best lessons teachers make good use of demonstrations and highlight what pupils are to do on a flipchart. The school is exploring the possibility of a large display system, which will make teachers' demonstration to the whole class easier. The relationships between adults and pupils are very good and are a very positive factor in teaching, ensuring that pupils are confident and can ask for help when they need it. Teachers ensure that all pupils have equal access to the lesson content, where necessary providing additional help and support through additional prompt cards. Support staff play a very good and essential role in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are full involved in the lesson.

117 The co-ordination of ICT is very good. There have been considerable recent improvements in accommodation, hardware provision and teachers confidence in the use of ICT. The co-ordinator, being a very competent user herself, leads from the front, supporting staff as well as ensuring subject is very well organised. A policy and scheme of work are in place; the co-ordinator has a clear view of standards and of pupils' progress as well as the school's strengths and areas for further development.

118 The accommodation and resources for ICT are good and are developing. The new suite, only recently completed, is a credit to the school and to the foresight and planning by management. The school is clearly aware of the need to provide some form of display in the ICT suite, enabling teachers to be even more effective in their lesson introductions and in demonstrations. There is also a need to review the working practices and room management in the ICT suite: whole-class teaching in a relatively small area, with two and sometimes three pupils using a computer, needs very careful planning to ensure that all pupils make appropriate gains in learning. Not surprisingly, given recent emphasis on developing and using the suite, during the inspection there was limited use of ICT in classrooms and the cross-curricular use of ICT was restricted. The school is clearly aware

of the need to ensure that the use of ICT is an integral part of pupils' experience in all subject areas and plans are in place to further develop its use in curriculum areas.

MUSIC

119 There has been no permanent music co-ordinator since January. The headteacher is currently the acting music co-ordinator.

120 Pupils attain standards expected for their age which are, overall, not as high as those found at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were above average. This is mainly because of the lack of a music specialist.

121 Younger pupils develop appropriate listening and appraising skills. They listen to a song 'My friend's name is...' and sing the tune, unaccompanied, maintaining the beat. Through listening to the music 'Two Polish Jews', while the teacher tells the story of 'The Rich Man and the Beggar' they become aware of ways in which, for example, rhythm and dynamics can be combined and used to express the desired effect of a rich man or a poor man.

122 Older pupils sing in tune, with expression, maintaining their own part when singing alongside two other parts. They perform, playing percussion instruments rhythmically and with confidence, to the Tudor tune of 'Bergamasca', following simple notation with increasing skill. Teachers encourage individual talent. For example, in one very good Year 5 lesson, a boy was able to play 'Greensleeves', faultlessly, on the glockenspiels, to accompany the singing of this song, having practised it as part of his homework. This created an atmosphere, which contributed very positively to pupils' spiritual development. Listening to 'Greensleeves' played in the traditional way, and then to a jazz version of this tune, raises pupils' awareness of the differences in music of other times. In assemblies, pupils listen with enjoyment to music as they enter and leave, and to the headteacher who regularly plays his guitar to accompany singing in assembly. The quality of pupils' singing is satisfactory. Most sing accurately from memory, with improving control of diction and phrasing. Pupils' literacy skills are enhanced by extending their vocabulary, using terms such as 'ostinato' and 'rhythm'. Numeracy skills are used in counting beats in singing.

123 The overall quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching seen in Year 5. In the most successful lessons, expectations are high, and very good practical activities and organisation encourage the pupils' creative efforts and impact well on their behaviour, involvement and progress. In lessons where attainment is above average, it is because of the high quality of the demonstrations by the teacher and very secure subject knowledge. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils promote a good pace of working and the development of very positive attitudes to learning. 124 Most pupils behave well and enjoy music lessons. A number benefit from guitar, violin, clarinet, percussion and keyboard instrumental tuition by peripatetic teachers, which enables the more able pupils to achieve well.

125 The curriculum is broad and balanced. Documentation provides helpful guidance for teachers in planning, progression and continuity. Assessment procedures are very good and assessment is well used to guide the planning of future learning, a significant improvement since the last inspection. Subject co-ordination is effective. Some monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place by the headteacher. The curriculum is enriched by effective extra-curricular activities, such as the choir and a recorder club and by visiting musicians and involvement in the Bowdon music festival, of the choir and orchestra, as well as a choral speaking group. Events, for example, the Christmas performance, the Spring

Concert and pupils' visits to local secondary school concerts enhance the curriculum. Resources are adequate and accessible to all. Since the previous inspection the variety of musical instruments has been improved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126 Standards in physical education are average, a similar picture to the last inspection. Almost all pupils reach the expected standard in swimming.

127 The quality of teaching is at least good, with some very good teaching seen in Year 3. Where teaching is most successful, teachers' subject knowledge is very good and expectations of pupils' involvement and behaviour are very high. Planning in all lessons is very effective and shows clear lesson structure and learning aims. These are shared with pupils so that they know exactly what is expected of them. Good questions and explanations help to develop pupils' understanding of both the effect of exercise on their bodies and also of the importance of warming up and cooling down sessions. Suitably challenging activities make an effective contribution to pupils' good progress in the development of athletics skills, which are consolidated and extended appropriately. In games lessons, pupils are effectively organised into small teams to play 'Kwik Cricket', encouraging very good collaboration and development of team spirit. Through positive interaction and demonstrations by teachers, pupils learn a variety of techniques to improve their accuracy, for example, in underarm and overarm throwing and bowling. They improve their ball skills of sending and receiving through practice and effective discussion of their own and others' skills and techniques.

128 Improvement in physical education since the last inspection has been very good. Very good relationships between pupils and adults engender respect for others, a sense of fair play, and very positive attitudes. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when pupils' attitudes were unsatisfactory. Pupils listen attentively, concentrate well, willingly follow teachers' instructions, understand and apply basic principles of safety and can work safely alone and with a partner, all of which are very good improvements since the last inspection. Most enjoy lessons, are enthusiastic and make good physical efforts. Good overall class management elicits a good response and promotes good behaviour. Where class management is varied, pace is lost, noise level becomes unacceptable and this impacts negatively on pupils' progress. Non-participating pupils are well provided for and are included in lessons by observing and writing lesson and performance evaluations, identifying strengths and weaknesses in activities, then reporting on these, effectively using literacy and oracy skills. Numeracy skills are enhanced in directional games, involving odd and even numbers.

129 Subject leadership is very good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' performance and organises extra-curricular sports for boys and girls throughout the year. She has worked hard in involving the school in the local education authority 'Healthy School Scheme', resulting in awards being presented to school for 'Healthy Eating' and 'Physical Activity'. Curricular documentation is good and provides useful guidelines for continuity, progression and planning. 130 Assessment procedures are very good, enabling pupils' attainment and progress to be tracked very effectively through records kept of the upper and lower Junior Key Targets, a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Assessment is used very well to guide the planning of new work. The curriculum is enhanced by the good provision of extra-curricular sporting activities, such as athletics, football, tennis, netball, cross-country running and tag rugby, involving both girls and boys. These are supported by a good number of pupils and organised by staff. The school takes part in competitive matches with local area schools.

Good use is made of visits, for example, to watch Sale Sharks play rugby. Strong links are maintained with local secondary schools through liaison with sports coaches. Accommodation is spacious and resources are good. Resources have been well improved since the previous inspection and are well organised and accessible to staff and pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131 Standards of attainment in religious education, at all year groups, are generally above the expectations of the new locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational need mostly achieve above expectations for abilities. Pupils learn about Christianity as the basis of the curriculum and supplement this with a balanced study of a range of major world religions. Their knowledge and understanding of the religions is developed through reflection on how beliefs may affect their own or others' lives. Year 6 pupils recalled stories from the Buddhist religion in great detail. This was studied before the recent holiday but had impacted on the pupils. They were very interested in the prayer wheel and could name other artefacts used similarly in other religions. They understood that the sentiments reflected in prayer had relevance for all people.

132 Pupils learn from the religions and relate aspects to moral codes and cultural or spiritual understanding. In Year 4, pupils learn about Hinduism and make comparisons between religions. They link their work to literacy as they write from others' points of view in their study of Sikhism or in their thought-provoking 'Letters to Luke'. Pupils understand the idea of a strong faith and artefacts associated with the concept. They are able to relate a sense of belonging to the groups in their own lives.

There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. The new agreed syllabus has strengthened planning and assessment. Pupils study different religions within blocks of lessons to ensure better understanding. They learn from, not just about, the faiths. Specialist teaching by the co-ordinator in some classes enables her to check the planning and assess understanding. The comprehensive audit of the subject ensures that work is relevant and challenging.

134 Pupils show interest in their work and a respect for all faiths. This was demonstrated when a Year 3 Muslim talked to pupils in Year 5 about his faith. Pupils listened and took interest in the artefacts he brought and asked well-developed and relevant questions. These were suitable for a younger child but gave him the opportunity to teach them about Islam. Presentation of work is usually good and reflects pupils' attitudes to the subject. The very good relationships in all classes allow pupils to explore feelings and attitudes and to discuss freely.

135 Teaching is very good and, although a limited number of lessons were observed, curriculum planning, assessment of learning and the resulting standard of work have reflected the very good teaching at all age groups and abilities. Subject knowledge is secure and resources are well used. This leads to understanding of the faiths and cultures and to identifying their relevance within the pupils' own lives. Pupils in Year 3 write their own prayers that are used regularly in class. Each child uses its own mode of address to God, including Allah by the Muslim pupil. They have written further prayers for their Torah.

136 Curriculum co-ordination is very good. The co-ordinator writes all the well-structured lesson plans in consultation with class teachers. She researches the areas to help increase confidence in teaching and teaches in both upper and lower Key Stage 2. This ensures a thorough knowledge of the pupils' understanding and the match of lesson content to abilities. The subject is audited and assessment includes challenging targets. Resource

provision is good, including, boxes of artefacts for each of the religions studied, new books in the library, suitable videos and a class set of Bibles.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

137 The school puts provision for pupils with special educational needs as a very high priority. The headteacher, supported by the governing body, has targeted funds at providing additional support for these pupils. The support is aimed at providing the very good special educational needs co-ordinator (Senco) with sufficient time to enable her to work with small groups of pupils and with individual pupils, reviewing their progress and ensuring that their individual needs are met. The Senco does not have a class but works with groups of pupils raising their levels of attainment. This time has been additionally supported by the provision of a small, but very well equipped, base. The initiative also supports release time for the deputy head, enabling her to play a full part in the management of the school. This very high quality and very successful management strategy is a typical example of the forward thinking, very caring management of the school which actively seeks opportunities to meet the school's targets.

138 As a result the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, ensuring that they have full and active access to all aspects of school life and that they attain to the highest appropriate level. The Senco has a high level of expertise and knowledge in providing for pupils with special educational need. All the requirements of the Code of Practice are very well met and organisation is at a very high level. Pupils' individual needs are carefully and expertly identified and individual and group programmes developed. The Senco teaches with other teachers, further informing herself about pupils' needs, and she attempts, where possible, to see all pupils on post Stage 2 of the Code of Practice every week. This maintains pupils' individual progress and ensures that individual education plans are modified to meet their changing needs.

139 Overall this is an excellent strategy which is very effectively providing for pupils with special educational needs.