

INSPECTION REPORT

**St Mark's Church of England Voluntary Aided
Primary School**

Newtown

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106452

Headteacher: Mr Glen Robinson

Reporting inspector: Mrs S. M. Barnes
16249

Dates of inspection: 29/01/01-1/02/01

Inspection number: 191309

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	Alexandra Street Newtown Wigan
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev D. Rouch
Date of previous inspection:	20 th – 23 rd January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16249	S.M. Barnes	Registered inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, equality of opportunity, English as an additional language	Characteristics, standards of attainment, how well are pupils taught, leadership and management,
13706	G. Marsland	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils, how well the school works in partnership with parents,
29688	M. Brammer	Team inspector	English, music, physical education, special educational needs	How good the curricular and other opportunities are
20086	D. Speakman	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, information and communication technology	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
30935	K. McArther	Team inspector	Art and design, education of children under five	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average primary school, with 201 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and eleven. The school is situated in Newtown, about a mile from the centre of Wigan. The previous inspection in 1997 described the area in which the school is situated as mixed, but predominantly local authority housing. Fewer adults in the area have higher education qualifications than nationally. The number of pupils having free meals is above average. Virtually all pupils are of white ethnic origin and English is their first language. Attainment on entry is below average overall. This situation remains unchanged. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average and so is the number of pupils with statements of their need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Due to the effective leadership and management, standards in teaching have been raised. As a result standards have improved in English and mathematics. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school are good. The good levels of monitoring and evaluation by senior staff, including taking effective action have led to improvements throughout the school.
- Teachers manage pupils well. As a result, behaviour in classes and around the school is good. Relationships are good.
- Pupils at both key stages are currently making good progress in mathematics.
- The school has developed good links with parents. Parents' views of the school are positive and their involvement has a positive impact on standards and pupils learning.
- The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.
- The care and welfare of pupils is good throughout the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English at Key Stage 2 and speaking and listening skills throughout the school are too low.
- Standards in science at both key stages.
- Standards in history and geography.

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 1997. Since that time there has been a good level of improvement. Standards in mathematics have been improved at both key stages. Standards have improved in English at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. At the time of the previous inspection thirty per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The head and deputy have put an effective programme in place to monitor and develop teaching. During the current inspection virtually all of the teaching was at least satisfactory and much of it was good. On occasion teaching was observed which was excellent. Improvements have been made in planning, assessment and pupils' records of achievement. The imbalance of the curriculum at Key Stage 1 has been resolved. Reports to parents are clear and a parent teacher association has been developed. Schemes of work have been put in place for English and mathematics. The role of the co-ordinator is now being effectively developed and an effective plan for further whole school development and improvement is being drawn up.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	E	E	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	D	D	E	C	
science	D	E	E	E	

Pupils throughout the school are currently making good progress from a low base. There has been significant improvement in standards in recent years particularly in English and mathematics. As can be seen from the table above, results in the end of key stage tests in English for pupils in Year 6 have been well below average in the last two years. This is well below average when compared with similar schools. Results in mathematics have been below average in 1999 and well below average in 2000. However this is average when compared with results in similar schools. The results in science were well below average and well below average for similar schools. Currently standards in English are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in mathematics are average at the end of both key stages. Standards in science are below average at the end of both key stages. Standards in geography and history are below those expected of pupils of seven and eleven at the end of both key stages. Standards in all other subjects are broadly similar to those expected at the end of each key stage. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as do gifted and talented pupils and those with English as an additional language.

Appropriate targets are set for improvement in standards and pupils' achievements are appropriate in reception and Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 achievements are good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have appropriate attitudes to school and their education. They co-operate effectively with their teachers and with each other.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good both in and out of classrooms. This is directly linked to the teachers' good overall management, as many pupils have difficulty in maintaining concentration for any length of time.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Relationships within school are good. Pupils have good levels of understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. They show appropriate levels of initiative in their work.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

From the scrutiny of work and observation of lessons the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and during the week of inspection much good teaching was observed. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. At that time 70 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better, but 30 per cent was judged to be unsatisfactory. In the current inspection 97 per cent of the teaching was at least satisfactory. Fifty four per cent was at least good and on occasion excellent teaching was observed. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, three per cent, was much less than at the time of the previous inspection.

Teaching of children in the reception class is satisfactory overall and leads to them making at least satisfactory and often good gains in their learning. During the week of inspection it was never less than satisfactory and in just over 80 per cent of lessons it was good. The children responded readily to the tasks they were set and showed a willingness to concentrate. At Key Stage 1, all of the teaching and learning observed was at least satisfactory and more than half was at least good. At Key Stage 2, virtually all of the teaching and learning was satisfactory or better. Of this nearly half was good. The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength and on occasion excellent teaching of this subject was observed. As a result pupils at both key stages make good progress in the acquisition of mathematical skills. Pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in developing skills in reading, writing and use of computer technology. Teachers at both key stages have appropriately high expectations of behaviour and attainment. As a result pupils adjust well to the demands of working in different contexts. Teachers are generally good in their management of pupils at both key stages. However in the one unsatisfactory lesson observed, unsatisfactory management of the behaviour of a significant proportion of the pupils was the main reason for the class making insufficient progress in their learning. Good use is made of time, resources and on-going assessment. Suitable opportunities are provided which allow pupils to develop skills of observation. However scrutiny of work indicates that teachers do not always plan lessons to meet the needs of pupils of different prior attainment. Too often tasks are set for the whole class, sometimes with the answers given to copy from the board. Subjects where this happens too frequently are science, geography and history and this is a major factor in the unsatisfactory progress pupils make developing enquiry skills in these subjects. Suitable use is made of homework to support teaching and learning and pupils have appropriate knowledge of their learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Gifted and talented pupils are suitably supported. Pupils with English as an additional language receive appropriate support and make steady gains in their acquisition of language.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a curriculum that is satisfactory in delivering the early learning goals for children under five and all the subjects of the National Curriculum at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when the school did not always sufficiently differentiate planning in terms of the desirable learning outcomes for children under five and there was an imbalance in the curriculum at Key Stage 1. These have now been resolved.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The curriculum effectively provides for pupils with special educational needs. It is inclusive and ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The curriculum effectively provides for pupils who have English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual,	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a good ethos in which all pupils are seen as

moral, social and cultural development	individuals and are valued. This reflects the Christian nature of the school. A strong sense of morality underpins the school and, as a result, pupils have an appropriate sense of right and wrong. All members of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff, provide good role models for pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well and this confirms the views of the parents. The staff all know their pupils well. The high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school has developed a range of assessments to help to track pupil progress and to set targets.

The school maintains good links with parents. The head teacher is accessible to parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents have expressed good support for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The judgement of the previous inspection was that the educational direction of the school was insufficiently focussed. Since that time a new head teacher has been appointed from within the school, and also a new deputy head teacher. The leadership of the head teacher is now good and he and the deputy head have worked hard, suitably supported by staff and governors, to drive up standards. Leadership now ensures clear educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body are appropriately involved in the daily life of the school. Governors have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play an appropriate part in shaping the direction of the school. They are effective in meeting nearly all their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching and learning are effectively monitored. This has had a positive effect on standards since the previous inspection. There are suitable systems in place for appraisal. Performance management systems have been put in place. The school identifies pupils who need support early in their school life.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are well supported by the school's careful financial planning. The principles of best value are effectively applied. Suitable use is made of new technology and specific grants are used effectively to support designated purposes. There is an appropriate match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation and learning resources are appropriate and are efficiently used. The school provides good value for money and this is a significant improvement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good. The school expects pupils to work hard. The school is well led and managed. The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra curricular provision. Some parents feel the school does not provide the right amount of work for their children to do at home.

The inspection team broadly agrees with parents' views. The school is well led and managed and the quality of teaching is sound. The school does expect pupils to work hard and makes a significant impact on their developing mature and responsible attitudes. Extra curricular provision is too little. However, the amount of homework pupils are set is appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

1. The previous inspection judged attainment on entry to reception to be below average. This continues to be the case. Children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Within the class, there is a very wide spread of ability and the great majority of the children attain below the average for their age. During their time in the reception class they make satisfactory, and sometimes good progress. By the end of the year they meet the nationally expected standards for their age in personal, social and emotional development, although attainment is still just below that expected for their age in the other five areas of learning.
2. The previous inspection judged that standards achieved by pupils were requiring substantial improvement overall. Since that time the school has worked hard to achieve this.
3. In English, in the Year 2000 national tests for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level for their age, or better, in reading was above the national average. The percentage achieving the higher level was below the national average. The percentage achieving the expected level for their age, or better, in writing was below the national average. The percentage achieving the higher level was below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the national test results were well above average in reading and close to the average in writing. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils at the age of seven are attaining at a level in line with national standards. In the Year 2000 national tests for eleven year olds, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level for their age, or better, was well below the national average. The percentage achieving the higher level was very low in comparison with the national average. When compared with similar schools, the national test results were well below average at the expected level and were very low at the higher level. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. The previous inspection report judged attainment to be below average at both key stages. Given that attainment on entry is below average, and the end of key stage tests for pupils in Year 2 in 1997 were well below average, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress during their time in school.
4. Attainment in mathematics was below average at both key stages at the time of the previous inspection. Much work has been done since that time to improve the situation. In the end of key stage tests at seven in 2000, the results were above the national average, and were well above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are currently attaining standards which are in line with those expected of pupils at that age. Results in the end of key stage tests for eleven year old pupils in 2000, were well below average. They were in line with those attained by pupils in similar schools however, based on eligibility for free school meals. Inspection evidence indicates that currently standards are broadly average and pupils make good progress in their learning from the low base noted at the previous inspection.
5. By the end of both key stages, standards of attainment in science reached by the majority of pupils are below the national average. The results of the National Curriculum assessment tests have been mostly well below average since 1997. Pupils come into school at levels that are below average and, although standards remain depressed, the progress that pupils make is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. This represents some improvement since the last inspection, when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards found during the inspection are also below expectations at both key stages. This is similar to the situation at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were also below average.

6. Attainment in geography in the previous inspection was judged to be below average at both key stages. This continues to be the case. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress and attain standards below those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Attainment in history was below average at Key Stage 1, but in line at Key Stage 2. Currently pupils make unsatisfactory progress at both key stages and standards are below those expected at seven and eleven. Attainment in all other subjects was similar to that found in most schools at both key stages at the time of the previous inspection. This continues to be the case and progress is satisfactory overall. Parents are generally pleased with the standards their children attain.
7. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Information from the pupils' individual education plans shows that pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. The register of pupils with special educational needs indicates that pupils move appropriately throughout the stages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes towards the school are satisfactory. This represents a generally similar picture to the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, show a reasonably positive approach to school. In lessons, they usually settle down to their work properly and make sufficient effort to complete their tasks. Some try hard and concentrate well, even over extended periods. They approach their work with suitable willingness and show satisfaction when they meet with success, such as in information and communication technology. However, a significant proportion of pupils are noticeably less well engaged in their learning. They sometimes show signs of lack of co-operation, which requires teachers' to emphasise a positive approach and their clear high expectations of behaviour. Pupils generally respond positively to this and show a marked improvement in their approach and attitudes towards work.
9. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally good. Classes are orderly and teaching usually takes place unhindered. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are mostly effectively managed, and respond to teachers' strategies to improve their behaviour. For example, there has been a significant improvement in the behaviour of Year 4 pupils, which in the past has created some difficulty. They now are settled and work takes place in the class unhindered by inappropriate behaviour. This observation agrees with the parents' views that the majority of pupils behave well, that there are disruptive pupils in school, but that there are systems to deal with this. Some pupils have difficulties maintaining concentration for any length of time, but this is generally effectively managed by teachers. Behaviour in the playground is sometimes boisterous but bullying is not observed to be a problem. Inside and around the school building, pupils are suitably behaved and some make good efforts to be polite and helpful. The behaviour in the dining room and in assemblies, when large groups of pupils are gathered together is good. There were four exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.
10. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good. The majority of pupils mix and co-operate satisfactorily both in and out of classes. Teachers know pupils well and the use of "circle time" and personal, social and health education lessons help pupils to consider others and to think about the impact of their relationships. Teachers clearly respect pupils and this is returned.
11. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Older pupils benefit from a few opportunities to serve the whole school community. For example, older pupils have Year 3 reading partners who they listen to and help to improve their reading skills. They reliably help in the office at lunchtime, when needed, ensuring the security of the school during the lunch break. Some pupils are voted as house and school captains. These pupils have responsibility as school and house ambassadors, which they fulfil with confidence and reliability. Pupils feel responsible and are pleased that they are given the opportunity to help the school. However, there is no opportunity, such as a school council, by which pupils can express their views of the school or be responsible for effecting development from their viewpoint. Lessons also lack sufficient opportunity for pupils to investigate in science, history and geography and therefore satisfactorily develop independent

learning skills. Pupils with special educational needs show a good level of interest and respond well to planned activities that match their needs.

12. Attendance is improving and it is currently satisfactory. During 1999 to 2000 attendance was below the level expected for primary schools. The school has effective procedures in place to raise levels of attendance, and although actively discouraged, some families still take holidays in term time. Some pupils are persistently late for school. Registration is effectively undertaken, allowing lessons to start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. From the scrutiny of work and observation of lessons the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and during the week of inspection much good teaching was observed. As a result pupils made good progress in those lessons and developed their skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. At that time 70 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better, but 30 per cent was judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching of children under five was never less than satisfactory, but unsatisfactory teaching was observed at both key stages. Lesson planning was identified as a weakness at that time. In the current inspection 97 per cent of the teaching was at least satisfactory. Fifty four per cent was at least good and on occasion excellent teaching was observed. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, three per cent, was much less than at the time of the previous inspection.
14. Since the previous inspection there have been some changes to teaching staff, in addition to which the leadership and management of the school have placed an appropriately high emphasis on the monitoring and development of teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics and literacy. Lesson planning is effective and co-ordinators monitor planning in their subjects. Parents are generally supportive of teaching. They say they feel teachers are working well to raise standards. They feel the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection.
15. Teaching of children under five in reception is satisfactory overall and leads to them making at least satisfactory and often good gains in their learning. During the week of inspection it was never less than satisfactory and in just over 80 per cent of lessons it was good. The children responded readily to the tasks they were set. They showed a willingness to concentrate and to help one another. They made good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding. At Key Stage 1, all of the teaching and learning observed was at least satisfactory and more than half was at least good. At Key Stage 2, virtually all of the teaching and learning was satisfactory or better. Of this nearly half was good. The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength and on occasion excellent teaching of this subject was observed. As a result pupils at both key stages make good progress in the acquisition of mathematical skills. They look for patterns within number and develop their understanding of shape and problem solving effectively. Positive features, which were observed in many lessons at Key Stage 1, were in the teaching of basic skills. Pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in developing skills in reading, writing and use of computer technology. Teachers at both key stages have appropriately high expectations of behaviour and attainment. As a result pupils adjust well to the demands of working in different contexts. They sustain concentration with a sense of commitment and enjoyment. They are sufficiently confident to raise questions or to persevere when solutions are not easily come by. Suitable opportunities are provided which allow pupils to develop skills of observation. Teachers are generally good in their management of pupils at both key stages. The management of pupils was noted to be a strength in the great majority of lessons. However, in the one unsatisfactory lesson observed, unsatisfactory management of the behaviour of a significant proportion of the pupils was the main reason for the class making insufficient progress in their learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' attainment is appropriately high and teachers make generally good use of time, resources and on-going assessment. However, scrutiny of work indicates that teachers do not always plan lessons to meet the needs of pupils of different prior

attainment. Too often tasks are set for the whole class, sometimes with the answers given to copy from the board. This is particularly the case in some lessons at Key Stage 2. Subjects where this happens too frequently are science, geography and history and this is a major factor in the unsatisfactory progress pupils make in these subjects. Suitable use is made of homework to support teaching and learning and pupils have appropriate knowledge of their learning. Parents have suitable opportunities to support their children's learning at home.

16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. It is good for pupils aged up to seven and satisfactory for older pupils. Pupils are well provided for when there is extra support within the classroom. The quality of support given by the classroom support assistants is good. Gifted and talented pupils are suitably supported. Pupils with English as an additional language receive appropriate support and make steady gains in their acquisition of language.

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

17. Overall, the school provides a curriculum that is satisfactory in delivering the early learning goals for children under five and all the subjects of the National Curriculum at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when the school did not always sufficiently differentiate planning in terms of the desirable learning outcomes for children under five. The previous inspection also judged that there was an imbalance in the curriculum at Key Stage 1, which has now been resolved. At that time there were no schemes of work to guide teachers' planning in all subjects. These are now in place. The National Strategies for developing literacy and numeracy are currently appropriately used. The curriculum effectively provides for pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. It meets statutory requirements, is inclusive and ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
18. Extra curricular provision is unsatisfactory. There are only three after school clubs. The staff and Friends of St Mark's Association run the craft and gardening clubs. The craft club meets once a month. The head teacher also runs a football club.
19. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school makes good use of the discussion period called 'circle time' every week. Pupils in every class are given suitable opportunities to discuss issues such as behaviour and relationships. Sex education and healthy eating are effectively taught in science lessons. The school dentist, police and school nurse also make a valuable contribution by supporting drugs awareness and health education. A recent drama workshop, hosted by the school, appropriately dealt with the issues of bullying, drugs awareness and personal safety.
20. Links with the community are good which has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. There are good links with St Mark's Church where the pupils attend Christian festivals. Visitors to the school have included the 'bird man' a folk singer and musicians. Educational visits, for example, to a bird sanctuary, the cinema and Chester, contribute to learning. The pupils participate in sporting events and festivals within the community, and the school has links with the local rugby club and sports centre.
21. There are good links with local nurseries and playgroups. The reception teacher visits the homes of the children before they start at the school. This enables the school to establish a relationship with the children and provide for their needs. Links with the secondary schools are also good, particularly the one to which most of the pupils transfer at the age of eleven. Links with the art, craft design and technology and physical education departments have been established. The secondary schools also provide a loan service for resources.

22. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school has a good ethos in which all pupils are seen as individuals and are valued. This reflects the Christian nature of the school. During acts of collective worship, pupils are given suitable time for reflection when prayers are said. In assemblies for older pupils, they are encouraged to listen to 'the voice within' and to act upon it. All this enhances pupils' spiritual development. Awe and wonder was observed in a Year 1 art lesson when a pupil was completely absorbed in a task in a state of silent concentration and intense enjoyment.
23. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. A strong sense of morality underpins the school with pupils having an appropriate sense of right and wrong. Whilst an effective sanctions system is in place, the emphasis is on rewarding good behaviour. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond to moral issues so that in Year 6 they write letters to the Junior Section of Amnesty International.
24. The provision for pupils' social development is good. All members of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff, provide good role models for pupils. The school takes part in a number of different sporting activities, which promote collective responsibility. There are opportunities for older pupils to undertake residential visits where adventurous activities are organised. The school has recently raised funds for a children's charity and a local hospice.
25. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. A number of musical groups have recently visited the school and pupils enjoyed a visit to the cinema to see 'The Borrowers' as part of a film festival. The music in Year 2 is linked to the Chinese New Year. Pupils take part in concerts both at Christmas and at Easter. They listen to music of different styles in school assemblies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

26. The school cares for its pupils well and this confirms the views of the parents. Parents have stated that the school helps the children to care for each other. All staff know pupils well. The head teacher is available to parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. Class teachers also collect the pupils from the playground in the morning and lead them into the classrooms. The high level of care noted at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained.
27. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school has developed a range of assessments to help to track pupil progress and to set targets. It plans to use the assessments at the end of the reception class and in Year 1 to make more accurate predictions of national test results at the end of Year 2. It is trialling a local scheme for monitoring progress in writing. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is satisfactory.
28. The school's procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs comply with the Code of Practice. Appropriate help is given to pupils whether they have physical, behavioural or learning difficulties. Liaison with outside agencies is satisfactory and is improving.
29. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare are good. The school adheres to the health and safety policy. Fire-fighting equipment and electrical appliances are checked annually. Whole-school risk assessments are carried out regularly. The pupils are well supervised by staff and ancillary assistants at breaks and lunchtimes. There are effective procedures in place for dealing with accidents but there is only one qualified first aider, who teaches on a part-time basis. The school is aware of the need to train more staff and arrangements are in place to do so. There is an appropriate child protection policy in place and named person responsible for child protection who is supported in this by the head teacher. All staff, including ancillary assistants, are aware of child protection procedures and receive regular training.

30. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good and are effectively raising attendance levels. The class teachers monitor attendance each day and the administration assistant and headteacher are informed if a pupil's attendance causes concern. Absence letters are rigorously monitored, and the school makes telephone calls if no reason for absence has been received. The pupils' attendance is discussed with parents at the "meet the teacher" evenings, and explained clearly in the school booklet. The educational welfare officer visits the school every two weeks to check the registers.
31. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Parents have acknowledged that the school has good systems in place for dealing with behaviour. There is an effective behaviour policy, which was reviewed last year. This has had a good effect on behaviour and there have been no exclusions since the review. The behaviour policy is clearly understood by the pupils and consistently used by the staff. Class rules have been written in co-operation with the pupils. Certificates, praise, stickers, stamps and the "Good Work Assemblies" are used to encourage achievement and good behaviour. A graduated scheme of appropriate sanctions is in place. The school has an anti-bullying policy and the head teacher deals with incidents immediately should they occur. All serious incidents of challenging behaviour or bullying are recorded and parents informed as necessary. No bullying was seen during the inspection and when challenging behaviour did occur it was dealt with swiftly and effectively.
32. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. The procedures are supported by the good relationships between the staff and pupils. The staff know their pupils well, which makes them feel valued and secure. Personal, social and health education makes a good contribution to the personal development of the pupils. A discussion period called 'circle time' is used every week, in each class, to discuss relevant issues such as behaviour or bullying. Moral issues are frequently discussed in assemblies and in the classrooms. The class teachers share targets for improvement and lesson objectives with the pupils who are also encouraged to compile their own Record of Achievement. The school maintains effective links with outside agencies such as health professionals and the police. This supports the academic and personal development of the pupils. The effort that the school makes in support and guidance has a good effect on behaviour and learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. Parents have expressed good support for the school. They did have some concern regarding the amount of homework given, topic information and the lack of after-school clubs. The inspection confirmed that the school now has a homework policy in place and pupils receive a sufficient amount of homework. Topic information is available, on request, to parents who are unable to attend the "meet the teacher" evenings. However, the inspection findings indicate that the parents' perception that there are not enough after-school clubs is correct.
34. The school maintains good links with parents. The head teacher is accessible to parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. A suitable home and school agreement has been given to parents and the majority have been signed and returned. School productions at Easter and Christmas are well attended. A recent school initiative has been to issue a parents' questionnaire to discover the views of parents on all aspects of the school.
35. Parental involvement has improved and has had a very good effect on the life of the school. Since the previous inspection in 1997, the Friends of St. Mark's Association has been established. They have arranged social and fund-raising events. In 1999 they raised £1200 to benefit the pupils by purchasing additional resources. The school has a small number of regular volunteers, which include parents, grandparents and school governors. They assist regularly in the classrooms and during educational visits and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

36. The quality of information for parents has improved and is good. The school has held a session for parents to help them to understand the aims of the National Numeracy Strategy. This was well attended by fifty-four parents. There are also “meet the teacher” evenings where the head teacher and staff are available to parents to explain issues such as homework and topic work. The governors’ report to parents and school prospectus are informative. However, the governors’ report does not contain all the required information. There is inadequate information regarding the school’s special educational needs policy, and finance, staff development and facilities for the disabled are omitted. Parents have the opportunity to consult staff formally each term to discuss their child’s progress. These meetings are not always well attended. The pupils’ progress reports are good. All the required information is included and how the pupils’ can improve their work is explained. There is additional space on the reports for parents to comment. Parents with children who have special educational needs are kept well informed of their progress.
37. The contribution of parents to children’s learning at school and at home is satisfactory. A family learning group, run by the local college, meets every week to discuss how to help children learn. The school has also held a literacy and numeracy course for parents. These sessions have the potential to have a good effect on the pupils’ learning. The Friends of St. Mark’s Association also provides good support for the craft and gardening clubs. Most parents with pupils in Key Stage 1 make good use of the school library to share a book with their children each weekend. Some parents support homework tasks and listen to their children read at home. The reading diaries are a valuable link between home and school and some parents use these books well.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The leadership and management of the school are good.
39. The judgement of the previous inspection was that the head teacher and governing body had worked hard to establish a caring ethos within the school, but the educational direction of the school was insufficiently focussed. The programme of development in the school development plan was not stated clearly enough. Ways of tracking pupil progress lacked rigour. Although school finances were effectively monitored and the day-to-day running was efficient, the school did not provide satisfactory value for money. Key issues were raised in the monitoring of teaching, the role of the curriculum co-ordinators and in securing whole school planning for English, mathematics and science.
40. Since that time a new head teacher has been appointed from within the school, and also a new deputy head teacher. The leadership of the head teacher is now good and he and the deputy head have worked hard, suitably supported by staff and governors, to drive up standards. Leadership now ensures clear educational direction. The caring ethos has been maintained and there has been a clear focus on improving standards, particularly in mathematics and English. The school’s Christian aims and values are appropriately reflected in the day-to-day work of the school. The school development plan is being evolved with appropriate contributions from staff and governors alike. Suitable priorities have been set for improvement, and effective action is being taken to meet these targets. There is appropriate delegation to staff with management responsibilities. Co-ordinators are developing their roles appropriately and they are starting to be suitably involved in the monitoring of planning, and of standards attained, in their subjects. There is a strong, shared commitment to improvement and the school’s capacity to succeed is now good.
41. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored. This has had a positive effect on standards since the previous inspection. There are suitable systems in place for appraisal. Performance management systems have been put in place. Effective systems are in place for the induction and mentoring of newly qualified teachers and teachers in training. The special educational needs co-ordinator has only recently been appointed but she has already taken steps to become aware of all the pupils’ needs. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has also only

recently been appointed but she has a very clear view of her role. The school identifies pupils who need support early in their school life. Classroom support assistants make a valuable contribution to their progress.

42. The governing body are appropriately involved in the daily life of the school and many help in classes in a voluntary capacity, which has a beneficial effect on standards and progress. Governors have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play an appropriate part in shaping the direction of the school. They are effective in meeting nearly all their statutory duties. However there are a number of omissions in the annual report to parents.
43. Financial management continues to be good. Educational priorities are effectively supported by the school's careful financial planning and the principles of best value are suitably applied. Appropriate use is made of new technology to support administration and teaching and learning. Specific grants are used effectively to support designated purposes including supporting pupils with special educational needs. There is an appropriate match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation and learning resources are appropriate and are efficiently used. The school provides good value for money and this is a significant improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards the head teacher and governors should:-

- (1) Raise standards in English at Key Stage 2, and speaking and listening skills throughout the school. (Paragraph No. 3, 55-60)
- (2) Raise standards in science at both key stages. (Paragraph No. 5, 70-72)
- (3) Raise standards in history and geography. (Paragraph No. 6, 88-89)

The governors may also wish to address the following minor issues:-

There is very little provision for extra curricular activities. (Paragraph No. 18, 33)

Only one person is trained in first aid and they only work part of the school week. (Paragraph No. 29)

Governors annual report to parents lacks some essential details. (Paragraph No. 36, 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

37

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	0	51	43	3	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

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	201
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	33

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	12	6	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	10
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	16	16	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (76)	89 (86)	83 (72)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	16	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (79)	83 (79)	89 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	9	10
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	14	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (60)	69 (60)	69 (68)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	8	6
	Girls	6	9	7
	Total	7	17	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	27 (68)	65 (64)	50 (60)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	172
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	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.1
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	329526
Total expenditure	324111
Expenditure per pupil	1697
Balance brought forward from previous year	31000
Balance carried forward to next year	36415

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

201

Number of questionnaires returned

89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	36	7	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46	42	4	4	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	53	8	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	54	10	8	2
The teaching is good.	56	42	2	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	52	8	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	29	7	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	40	9	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	55	38	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	44	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	35	25	9	7

Please note figures may not always add up to 100 due to rounding up or down of percentages.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Within the class, there is a very wide spread of ability and the great majority of the children start school with below average skills for their age. Effective teaching enables the children to achieve well and make satisfactory, and sometimes good progress. By the end of their year in the reception class, they meet the nationally expected standards for their age in personal, social and emotional development. Although attainment is still just below that expected for their age in the other five areas of learning, most children are well on the way to reaching the nationally agreed early learning goals.
45. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Teaching observed was always at least satisfactory and was good in just over eighty per cent of lessons, particularly in the area of personal, social and emotional development. During the inspection, good teaching was also seen in the areas of language and mathematics. The previous inspection found that teacher's plans did not relate closely enough to the national curriculum designed specifically for the youngest children. Since then, the early learning goals have been introduced nationally, and the plans are now closely linked to them. More opportunities for the children to develop their speaking and listening skills are provided, through the language project. The teacher and the nursery nurse work very closely together to provide an appropriate curriculum to meet the children's learning needs. Parents are welcomed into school and give good support to a range of suitable activities. Pre school visits add to the information about children's starting points and effective systems are in place to monitor progress regularly throughout the reception year. Staff all work hard to ensure the children are provided with a secure, welcoming environment, and receive a firm basis on which to develop all areas of their learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

46. The children make good progress in this area of learning, due to good teaching and to the positive role models provided by the staff. To help them to develop socially, the children are taught to take turns, to share equipment and to follow the good routines established in the classroom. They learn to put their litter into the 'Frog' bin, and to tidy up properly. They are encouraged to try to change into their P.E. kit for physical education lessons by themselves. They learn to play co-operatively and are learning to take turns with equipment in the 'Hospital', and outside when using their play area.
47. The children learn respect for other children when they listen or speak in a group or whole class setting. Notice boards showing 'Good behaviour', 'Good work' and rewards encourage personal and emotional development, and there are simple class rules that the children learn to follow. They are strongly encouraged to be independent when they choose activities. A board is provided for the children to display their work done at home and they enjoy using this. To encourage them to take responsibility and to care for others, the children help to look after a gerbil and a goldfish. Children write their own labels for pictures and writing displayed around the room, giving them a great sense of pride in their work. By the end of their year in Reception, the majority of the children are meeting the early learning goals in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

48. The development of children's language and communication skills is given suitable priority in the reception class. The children enjoy books and stories, and there is a good range of books available to them in the attractive class library. The teacher has successfully introduced the 'big book' element of the National Literacy Strategy and the class enjoyed reading 'The Tiger who came to tea'. All children were encouraged to join in and read aloud, and about a quarter could do so, and many recognised words that they see frequently, such as 'and' or 'but'. A different letter is the focus each week, and children were bringing different objects from home that begin with 't'.

They are taught to try to read new words by looking at the first letter, or by looking at the text. When the class meet a new word, there is not always sufficient emphasis on repeating the word to ensure it is remembered. Every day, the children take a book home and sets of individual words to learn and practice. Parents can record how well they read in their home and school diary.

49. Two groups of children take part in a special language project each week, led by the nursery nurse. This carefully structured project was designed by speech therapists to improve the speaking and listening skills of the lower attaining children. The children learn new skills through fun activities and games; for example they learn positional vocabulary when they are asked to place one object on or under another object. They learn to give and to listen to instructions by playing 'follow my leader' games, saying 'In my kitchen is a ...' and naming an electrical object that has a plug. All activities aim to promote and extend the correct use of language, and are followed up well in all other areas of the children's learning.
50. The classroom is rich in print, and this teaches the children that print has meaning. They use the writing table, which is well equipped with materials. Most children can write their own name legibly. To help the children as they write, frequently occurring 'key' words and the 'alphabet tree' are displayed, and there are suitable dictionaries which some of the children are able to use confidently. Some good teaching was observed in this area of learning during the inspection. At the end of the reception year, most children will have made sound progress and be very close to meeting the early learning goals in this area.

Mathematical development

51. Teaching is sound and a wide range of activities is provided to help children acquire the skills necessary for mathematical development. Numbers are clearly displayed around the room, with suitable opportunities for counting, sorting, matching, adding and subtracting. There are number lines to follow, and jigsaws to complete. Mathematical language is developed appropriately and children learn to use comparisons, tall and short, large and small. In the numeracy area, children have made a graph to show which is the most common eye colour in the class, and some children have developed these into block graphs on the computer. In art, children made colourful block prints of numbers, and the teacher used these as a starter in a numeracy lesson. She builds well on the children's knowledge of a well-known song 'Ten in a bed' to begin work on subtraction. Nearly all children can recognise and count numbers up to ten and back to zero, and some can count to twenty and thirty. Higher attaining children quickly learn to subtract numbers from ten, and move to different number bonds. All children are taught to say number sentences clearly and accurately to reinforce their knowledge of mathematical process and vocabulary. At the end of the year most children will almost meet the early learning goals for mathematics.

Knowledge and Understanding

52. A wide variety of materials and resources are used appropriately to stimulate the children's interest in the world around them. They are taught how to use the computer, and learn to use the keyboard and use the mouse accurately to click on matching shapes. Children experiment to find out which objects will float and which will sink by testing them in the water tray, but find it difficult to explain why because they lack the necessary language. One boy explains that the margarine tub floats 'because it's shaped like a boat'. The nursery nurse works with a group of children who test materials to see which are magnetic. Both the teacher and the nursery nurse help the children to discover the answers for themselves by careful questioning, and in the plenary session at the end of the lesson, accurate answers show that the children have learned and understood. The class has a gerbil and a goldfish to care for and study. This helps them learn about the living world. In history, the children learn about wash day in the past when they handle old flat irons and a small mangle, and compare them with modern appliances. They enjoy learning about the history of their school when they study old photographs, and listen to the experiences of staff who attended as children. Although teaching is satisfactory in this area and the children enjoy learning,

lack of basic general knowledge and language hinders their progress and at the end of the year attainment is still below the early learning goals.

Physical development

53. When they come into the reception class, the children are often either very confident or very timid in physical activities. Effective teaching ensures they have many opportunities to improve their manipulative skills by cutting, sticking, threading beads or fitting pieces of jigsaws together, to develop their hand-eye co-ordination, which is necessary for them to be able to write. There is a secure outdoor play area, specifically for the reception children, and they use the fixed apparatus to learn climbing, sliding and balancing. The children change into their PE kit to go into the school hall for physical education lessons. In a good music and movement lesson, links are made with science when the teacher blows up a balloon, and the children learn about how the balloon changes as it inflates and deflates, and know that blowing air into the balloon makes it grow round. They particularly enjoy moving round the room, acting out the balloon's movements as it inflates then gradually deflates. Physical development remains just below the standard for their age.

Creative development

54. The children are taught to work with a variety of materials. They paint self-portraits, which welcome visitors to the class, and make collages of favourite traditional tales. They print with different objects and leaves on paper or fabric, and make designs by blowing bubbles with paint. In the practical area they have play-dough, paints, pens and crayons all readily available. There are large and small building materials to turn into imaginary structures, as well as sand and water trays. Children enjoy singing and listening to music, and recall songs previously learned when they make up extra verses and new actions to suit the rhythm. Musical skills are not always fully developed as staff lack confidence in this area. They use a chime bar in mathematics when they listen, count and repeat the numbers of notes played. The 'hospital' area is well equipped for the children to assume the role of doctor, nurse or patient. Many can name the equipment such as bandages or stethoscope and know that this is used to 'listen to your heart'. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Staff all interact well with the children to develop their language, but the majority of children remain just below the standard expected for their age.

ENGLISH

55. Standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. The previous inspection report judged attainment to be below average at both key stages. Given that attainment on entry is below average, and the end of key stage tests for pupils in Year 2 in 1997 were well below average, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, are currently making satisfactory progress.
56. Standards in speaking and listening are below average. By the age of eleven, most pupils are eager to contribute to classroom discussion but many in Year 6 do not listen attentively to what others have to say. In Year 5, the teacher has to work hard to get a satisfactory response in children's answers to questions. Pupils in Year 2 acted the story of 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf,' which gave them the opportunity to practise their speaking and listening skills. Inspection evidence suggests that the pupils' poor speaking and listening skills have an adverse effect on their attainment across the curriculum.
57. Standards in reading are below average at the age of eleven. When questioned by their teacher, higher attaining Year 6 pupils show their understanding of genre. They also explain how to locate information using an index or the contents page of a non-fiction book. When they read aloud, they read fluently, accurately and with confidence at a level appropriate for their age. Average and below average attaining pupils select the main points when discussing a book but do not have the confidence as well as the skills to read at an appropriate level. In Year 5, pupils focus on how

they know 'The Sword in the Stone' is a modern piece of writing. Year 4 pupils concentrate on the characteristics of a non-fiction text. The majority know that the title and sub-headings are usually printed in bold and that the text is normally written in the past tense.

58. Standards in reading are in line with expectations at the age of seven. Pupils in Year 2 read poems in which they can predict and then sound out the rhyme. Higher attaining pupils read with a sense of meaning, observe sentence punctuation and read independently. They demonstrate their knowledge of the alphabet. Average and below average attaining pupils can recount simply what a story is about and read accurately. All work is at least within the expected level for their age. In Year 1 the teacher models the reading of a traditional story and, with encouragement, pupils rearrange sentences so that the story is in the right order. During group work, higher attaining pupils show they are familiar with a first dictionary.
59. Standards in writing are below expectations at the age of eleven. In Year 6, a high attaining pupil writes with an adventurous vocabulary and with a developing style, but basic sentence structure is not secure. An average attaining pupil writes at great length but with almost no punctuation at all. A lower attaining pupil writes a very basic story. They are encouraged to write for different audiences as they send letters to the Junior Section of Amnesty International. In Year 5, pupils write imaginative stories, poems and a review of Roald Dahl's 'Revolting Rhymes'. An average attaining pupil, in diary work, starts a new line for each connective, but is more ambitious in the review: 'it goes through stages again and again'. Year 4 pupils have written a wide range of pieces, including one which tells of a history visit to Chester. In Year 4, a bear called 'Travelling Ted' has been introduced to help raise standards. Work in Year 3 is at its best when there has been additional stimulation, such as after the visit of a journalist.
60. Standards of writing for seven year olds are in line with expectations. Inspection evidence confirms the view of the school that a large majority will achieve the expected level in the 2001 national tests. In retelling the story of 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf' a higher attaining pupil makes good use of language – 'decided' and 'ignored' – and uses speech marks accurately. An average attaining pupil writes at length but with no punctuation, and some lower attaining pupil have made great progress this school year. In Year 1, higher attaining pupils spell common words accurately whilst a lower attaining pupils use pictures to help sequence a story. Throughout the school, standards of presentation are below average and poor letter formation is common.
61. Attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. In just under a half of lessons they are good. At these times pupils concentrate well on what the teacher has to say and on the comments that other pupils make. Where pupils' response is satisfactory, they do not always listen carefully.
62. From scrutiny of work and observations of lessons teaching is satisfactory overall. During the week of inspection it was good in just under a half of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Teachers implement the literacy hour successfully. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are well supported by classroom assistants and make satisfactory progress. Where teaching is good, the teachers are confident in their understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and have good subject knowledge. The pace is brisk, time limits are set and good questioning extends the pupils' learning. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher sets challenging tasks which stimulate thought and enquiry as pupils look for a rule which explains which prefix to use. Where teaching is less successful then work is not always appropriately matched to the ability of the pupils.
63. The co-ordinator is recently appointed but is keen to develop the subject and to raise standards. She has already improved the central library. The head teacher has monitored teaching and teachers have received formal feedback. There are too few links to information and communication technology evident in pupils' work. Resources are good.

MATHEMATICS

64. There has been a good level of improvement in the subject and pupils currently make good progress. This is a major strength of the school. The previous inspection judged standards to be well below average at both key stages, although it acknowledged that there were some signs of improvement since the end of key stage tests in 1995. Progress was judged to be unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 and hindered by a lack of systematic teaching at Key Stage 2. Since that time effective leadership has ensured that there has been a significant improvement in the standards attained at both key stages. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment are currently making good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and standards are broadly average at the end of Year 2 when pupils are seven. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress from a low base and standards are also currently average overall. The very low numbers of pupils attaining Level 5 in the end of key stage tests tends to depress the average points scored in national tests at the end of Year 6.
65. At Key Stage 1, pupils of all levels of prior attainment make good progress in developing their skills and understanding of number. The school follows the principles of the numeracy strategy and much of the work is of an appropriate practical nature. They are improving their mental recall of the relationships between numbers and are confident in their number bonds to ten and are beginning to use them effectively when adding and subtracting numbers up to twenty. They learn to use appropriate strategies to help them with their computation, such as adding a smaller number on to a larger one. By the end of the key stage they effectively double simple numbers, and usually place the digits in a two-digit number in the correct order. They recognise the value in looking for simple patterns in number and can explain how they have come to their solutions.
66. At Key Stage 2, pupils are generally quick to devise strategies to manipulate number. They multiply two digit numbers together and divide three digit numbers competently. Most pupils mentally multiply and divide decimals by ten. They identify and effectively use operations to solve problems explained in words. Pupils work with co-ordinates and higher attaining pupils complete work including negative figures. They are aware of equivalent fractions and by the end of the key stage they convert decimals to fractions and visa versa. Higher attaining pupils successfully reduce fractions to their simplest forms and order mixed sets of numbers up to three decimal places.
67. At the time of the previous inspection teaching was variable. It was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 it ranged from satisfactory to unsatisfactory and was unsatisfactory overall. Since that time the school has placed a very strong emphasis on working to raise standards. There has been a focus on the teaching of numeracy throughout the school. The numeracy strategy has been effectively implemented and all staff have had relevant training. Teaching is now good at both key stages. Teachers are confident in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. They make good use of the careful analysis of assessment when planning whole class lessons or support work for individuals or groups. As a result lessons move with a brisk pace. Pupils are interested and find the lessons fun. They make good progress in the acquisition of numeracy skills and in their ability to handle numbers confidently as a result. A suitably wide range of work is set for pupils to practice their developing skills in the subject and tasks set are regularly marked. This information is then effectively used to set targets for improvement. Information and communication is appropriately used to support learning, as when pupils make graphs and tables using computer programs.
68. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on lessons being fun as well as informative. Work is effectively planned to match the prior attainment of different groups of pupils and so although, suitably challenging, it allows them to build their self-esteem as they come to the correct solutions to the problems they are set. Pupils settle quickly to work. They are attentive and well behaved, being generally interested in the work planned.

69. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has a clear view of how to develop the subject effectively, and is herself very skilled in teaching the subject. Mathematics has been the school's main focus for improvement in the last two years and effective support for its development has been provided by the local education authority. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place with good coverage of all of the aspects of mathematics and suitable attention paid to numeracy strategy techniques. Parents have had suitable opportunity to find out how numeracy is taught, including meeting with teachers. The school has a suitable range of good resources, such as number fans, to allow teachers to teach a whole class while monitoring the progress of individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the subject. The co-ordinator monitors planning carefully and offers advice to colleagues when required. Teaching is effectively monitored and good use has been made of the analysis of results of testing to set targets both for individual pupils and for the school overall. As a result targets are realistic, whilst also having suitable challenge.

SCIENCE

70. At the end of both key stages, standards of attainment reached by the majority of pupils overall are below the national average. Pupils come into school at levels that are below average and, although standards remain depressed, and there is too little emphasis on scientific enquiry in some lessons, the progress that pupils make is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. This represents some improvement since the last inspection, when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards found during the inspection are also below expectations at both key stages. This is similar to the situation at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were also below average.
71. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have some knowledge of materials and their properties. They are able to classify materials into man-made or natural, but the criteria for classification used in this exercise is limited and pupils do not have a wide enough range in their understanding of the properties of materials. This is also reflected in their work when they identify sources of light in a picture. Higher attaining pupils accurately identify the sun as source of light, but many pupils miss this and simply identify such sources as torches and electric lights. This signifies a lack of understanding of the differences between the natural and the man-made worlds. Their knowledge of electricity is limited to knowing that a circuit must be complete for a bulb to light. They are aware of the basic requirements for animal survival, including food, water, warmth and shelter. Again, the range of knowledge and the level of understanding are not as good as that expected for pupils at this age.
72. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge of science remains below that expected for this age and their understanding is weak. Their knowledge and understanding has not sufficiently progressed. At the end of the key stage, they again look at the requirements for animals to survive, work that Key Stage 1 pupils have completed. They have a generally sound knowledge of the human body. They are able to talk in appropriate detail about the function of some of the major organs. They know, for example, that the skeleton supports the body and that some bones have the function of protecting other vital organs, such as the brain and the heart. They are aware of how we hear sounds, but some find difficulty in explaining clearly their ideas. They know that sound, for example, travels as vibrations in the air and is created in the human "voice box". However, they do not have a clear understanding of how the mouth is used to vary sounds and what happens when the vibrations reach the ear. Younger pupils have insufficient knowledge of the different forms in which substances occur: solids, liquids and gases. They know that temperature will change the state of some substances and that water can occur as a liquid or in its solid ice form. They observe what happens to candle wax when heated, simply explaining that the heat melts wax and that it will become solid again when it cools. Pupils in Year 5 have knowledge of forces that is limited and below that expected for pupils at this age. They understand that

forces can move an object by pushing or pulling and the force of water will allow certain heavy objects to float while others will sink.

73. Years 4 and 5 are beginning to develop a knowledge of the solar system and have written out the planets names, but show little knowledge or understanding of how the movement of planets around the sun creates day and night and seasons. By the end of the key stage, pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of fair testing. When devising and testing a container that will insulate sound effectively, they know about making the test fair. They know that there are variables and constants and that these change with the purpose of the investigation. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are able to predict, carry out simple experiments and record their results appropriately.
74. Pupils clearly enjoy their science lessons and appear keen and eager to be involved. The majority of pupils' work well together, listen carefully to instructions and remain on task. They can discuss their activities confidently with visitors and demonstrate understanding of the process required.
75. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses that limit the progress that pupils make. In well-planned lessons most pupils appear absorbed when they are actively participating in experimental projects. Some teachers plan suitable lesson strategies involving prediction, investigation and recording where it is appropriate, from which pupils benefit. In most lessons a brisk pace is maintained and lessons conclude with an effective plenary session to assess the pupils' findings. However, in other lessons, although there are clear learning objectives, the activities are not sufficiently challenging and as the lessons progress, it becomes more difficult to sustain pupils' attention. Most teachers' expectations are insufficiently high and in planning lessons, some do not effectively address the needs of different groups of pupils in their classes. Too much work seen in books, at both key stages focuses on pupils copying from work sheets, books or the board and that of lower, average and higher attaining pupils is identical in content and style. There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning habits or to make progress at appropriate levels. Some tasks are also inappropriate, for example using a totally unrealistic scale in drawing a plan of the solar system. Although pupils' work is marked frequently it is not always supported by constructive comments. Suitable opportunities are given to pupils to use information and communication technology to help them learn about science, such as when they use internet data bases to learn about volcanoes.
76. The co-ordinator is new to this role and acknowledges that there are weaknesses. The co-ordination of the subject is currently under-developed and there is much work to be done in order to raise standards. Teachers' planning is scrutinised for content, however, planning is checked retrospectively, and it is difficult therefore to identify weaknesses and in the appropriateness and level of activities, until after the lessons have taken place. Following the introduction of the new programme of work teachers' planning now adequately covers all the appropriate aspects of the National Curriculum for science. This is an improvement on judgements made at the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is currently checking the scheme and the National Curriculum documents to further improve the quality of the curriculum. Formal assessment procedures take place, but currently analysis of assessment data is not sufficiently used to identify weaknesses and to ensure improvement. There has been little opportunity to develop teacher's knowledge and understanding of science, and some readily admit that they lack confidence in teaching science at the higher levels.

ART AND DESIGN

77. The attainment of pupils aged seven and eleven is similar to that expected nationally for their age. Their achievement in art and design is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress in their acquisition of skills and knowledge of art. This was also the position at the previous inspection. Two lessons were observed in both key stages. Further evidence was obtained from scrutiny of

work in class, around school, in the portfolio of work samples, from photographs and discussion with the co-ordinator for art.

78. In all lessons observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Teachers' planning is appropriate. Pupils are managed effectively. They enjoy art lessons, settle to their work quickly, show good attitudes and behave well in art lessons. The subject contributes to their cultural development when they study the work of great artists, look at art from China or from the Celtic tradition, and look at work of disabled artists.
79. In Year 1, pupils make observational drawings of flowering plants. They are taught to use different drawing media, to blend colours and chose from pastels or wax crayons, on various colours of paper. Most pupils look very carefully at the plants, and one girl became totally engrossed in the task and worked with silent concentration and intense enjoyment. Most pupils make good representation of the plant, but find blending and shading more difficult, preferring bolder, primary colours at this stage. Year 2 pupils develop their knowledge of colour when they make printing blocks, mix paint colours and use them to make patterns on different background colours, learning how this affects the results. Many pupils are unsure about what will happen if they mix, for example, yellow with blue, and need to be taught more about colour mixing. They make pleasing, bold repeating patterns, and several pupils make dramatic contrasts, such as yellow spirals on black paper. Key Stage 1 pupils evaluate their own and each other's work and are proud to show their work to the whole class at the end of lessons.
80. Year 3 pupils explore how to use colour to express weather conditions when they use oil pastels. They describe the winter scene in few words, 'cold' or 'white', showing how their limited language hinders their response in all curriculum areas. Although they find it hard to limit the range of colours, most pupils succeed in producing a 'wintery' picture. In Year 5, pupils are introduced to the work of the artist Andy Warhol in connection with work on portraits. They broaden their experience of using different media and colours when they learn the technique of wax resist. Each pupil in Key Stage 2 has a sketch book. By Year 6, some pupils have recorded examples of drawing and pattern making, Islamic art, and sketches of decorated furniture. Other pupils may record designs for Christmas cards, and make observational drawings. Year 5 pupils make well proportioned 'five minute portraits' using shading and tone. The use and value of these sketch books is varied, and standards of the work in them are only just satisfactory overall.
81. Art makes a significant contribution across the whole curriculum, and in displays. A science display investigating plants is enhanced by three-dimensional collage mixing bright paint and tissue. Work on Joseph and the coat of many colours is developed to design patterns for the fabric of the coat. Pupils illustrate traditional stories from other cultures that they read in literacy lessons, such as Baboushka, The Boy who cried Wolf, and The Ugly Duckling. The subject co-ordinator gives satisfactory leadership, attends courses, liaises with local schools and the local Arts Centre. The last inspection found that the school needed a scheme of work for art. Since then, learning objectives for each year group have been agreed and implemented, and the co-ordinator has started work on the scheme. Art is a priority for the next School Improvement Plan, to implement the scheme of work, and develop links with information and communication technology.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. By the age of seven and eleven pupils attain standards that meet the expectations for their age. This represents a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. It was possible to observe only a very limited sample of lessons and therefore judgements are mainly based on an analysis of a limited amount of work samples, teachers' planning and discussions with the curriculum co-ordinator and pupils.

83. Pupils plan their tasks properly and their work fully meets the requirements of the recommended design process. They make initial decisions on how their models will meet the stated requirements of the task and include sufficient detail in their initial drawings. They also decide which materials they are going to use for the different parts. Pupils label their designs appropriately and draw what the finished product will look like. An ongoing feature of the work is the evaluation and development of their models and products so that there is an improvement in the quality. Once completed, they often test models for their suitability. For example, Year 6 pupils constructed small-scale models of Anderson shelters connected with their work in history. Once completed, they tested the strength of these by “bombing” their models with tennis balls to see how their models stood up to the attack.
84. Pupils investigate and evaluate commercial products effectively, so that they can study for example, how a range of products for sale in shops and for use in the home are made. During the inspection Year 6 pupils investigated how slippers are made. They took these apart and looked at the different parts that are used to make a slipper that is comfortable, warm and will stand up to the wear and tear expected of this type of shoe. Having looked at the parts used and studied the construction, they recorded how the finished product was put together and began to plan how they are going to make a slipper for themselves.
85. Pupils learn to use an appropriate range of materials, including fabrics, wood, card, food and recycled materials. Whilst making a range of models and products, they not only usefully add interest to their work in other subjects such as history or science, but learn competence in the skills of designing and planning, making and evaluation and testing. Most of their models however, are of a static nature. There is currently little evidence that pupils make moving models, such as those involving pneumatics, other than simple buggies with wheels. Most pupils with special educational needs receive an effective level of support from staff. This helps them to make satisfactory progress in the development of their designing and making skills.
86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some good features. The teachers have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the designing, making and evaluating elements of the subject. In the lesson seen the teacher managed the lesson well and, although the pupils experienced some difficulty in taking apart slippers with safety scissors, full attention was paid to the safety of the pupils. The planned work provides a suitable level of challenge for all abilities and promotes a satisfactory response from pupils.
87. The policy and scheme of work give clear guidelines and effective support for teachers’ planning. The planned curriculum for design and technology covers all elements of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over this role, and she is well qualified to lead this subject. She is aware of the developments that are needed, and that she has a secure base from which to work. There are sufficient hard materials, such as wood, available for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the full range of making experiences, but the co-ordinator has embarked upon the task of checking resources and further developing provision to add further variety and interest. Currently little use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

88. At the time of the previous inspection progress in geography was unsatisfactory at both key stages. Progress in history was judged to be unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 but reasonable in most, but not all, classes at Key Stage 2. Since that time the school had a need to focus on raising attainment in English and mathematics, following national guidance. Improvement in the subjects was postponed and, as a result, standards in both subjects are still below those expected of pupils of seven and eleven and progress for pupils of all levels of prior attainment is unsatisfactory at both key stages.

89. During the week of inspection, it was not possible to observe teaching of either history or geography at Key Stage 1 due to timetabling restraints, and only two geography lessons were observed at Key Stage 2. However, from scrutiny of work in books and on walls and discussions with pupils sound judgements can be made. Much of the teaching up until recently has been in the form of imparting information and too little emphasis has been upon pupils undertaking research, investigating different sources of information and coming to their own hypothesis. On many occasions pupils of all levels of prior attainment complete the same tasks or fill in the same work sheets, sometimes copying the answers from work the teacher has put on the board. Work is often set without due regard to pupils' prior knowledge or attainment and so does not always challenge potentially higher attaining pupils sufficiently well. While the programme of study covers all of the required aspects of both subjects, some areas have been given very light coverage and teaching has not followed the school's own good, recently produced, policies. Some work-books contain very little work in either subject. This is unsatisfactory. Pupils have not been given suitable regular opportunities in all classes to develop their skills and understanding to an appropriate level in history and geography. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support older pupils' research, as in a study of volcanoes, but this has not yet happened in all classes. Pupils have appropriate attitudes to their lessons. They are well behaved and attentive. They take part in discussions politely, recalling information they have learnt in previous lessons. Work in books is generally presented with suitable care and attention.
90. The co-ordinator, who is also the deputy head teacher has recently taken on responsibility for developing the subjects. She has worked hard, with all staff to produce good, well-written policies and schemes of work. She is aware that some staff lack confidence in teaching the full new curriculum and that further investment may be necessary in computer programs to support teaching and learning. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards. However, as yet there has been little monitoring of teaching, or of the work in all pupils' books.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. Pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally for pupils at the ages of both seven and eleven. There has been significant investment in developing and improving the resources for information and communications technology since the last inspection to good effect overall. The school now has a suite of computers and computers in classrooms, which are of a comparable standard with those in the suite.
92. Younger pupils are able to edit text satisfactorily and are developing sound, basic word processing skills. They add appropriate punctuation, such as capital letters, full stops and question marks to text displayed on the screen. Pupils control the mouse accurately to locate the position of alterations and type these in appropriately. They use the keyboard competently and, although some are only seven years old, they are already beginning to use both hands to type and locate letters on the keyboard with good speed and accuracy. Some higher attaining pupils recognise that they are supposed to be using a specific typescript. One girl recognised that the pupil on the adjacent computer was using the infant version rather than the junior version of the font. She competently located the intended one and changed the style for him. Routine skills in accessing their own files within the system, opening programs and saving their work into their own files develops well as pupils get older. Older pupils are able to devise a set of instructions to light up traffic lights in the correct sequence, with appropriate time pauses. This skill is then transferred to writing a set of instructions to operate a room heater when pupils are in the room. Pupils generally learn how to control a good range of information and communication equipment such as videos, computers and other equipment that require control instructions. Older pupils use Internet databases effectively to research their work, for example, in geography. They competently work their way through information banks on the volcanoes, for example, to find out information on how erupting volcanoes affect the lives of people and to then answer questions set by the teacher. The

majority of pupils do this well and successfully extend their knowledge in science, but a small number of pupils have difficulty in using and locating “hot spots” to access specific information. By the time pupils are eleven they are working competently with spreadsheets. They add to and amend the information contained in a spreadsheet competently, and they see the effects of changing values in some cells and the impact that this might have throughout the spreadsheet. Throughout these activities, pupils learn effectively about the advantages of using information and communication technology in many aspects of their work and how the use of a computer simplifies procedures. Standards attained when pupils are working in the suite are satisfactory, but learning is not always sufficiently supported by work in the classroom. During the inspection, computers in classrooms were given some, but insufficient use to effectively consolidate learning.

93. The quality of teaching and pupils’ learning is satisfactory. There is good provision in direct teaching of the skills of information and communications technology. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn as a class and to practise their routine skills, such as word processing, computer-generated artwork, research and using spreadsheets. Pupils learn satisfactorily throughout the school. Although the co-ordinator is aware that teachers’ knowledge and understanding in some areas needs to be developed, no specific weakness in teachers’ knowledge was identified in the aspects seen during the inspection. Teachers plan their lessons effectively and they make good provision for the pupils to have sufficient practical experience each week. However, not all plan sufficient opportunity for pupils to develop their computer skills in the classroom. Their organisation of groups is sound and teachers manage pupils well, ensuring that pupils treat the equipment with care and concentrate throughout. The school administration officer helps in the classroom and makes a valuable contribution to the development of pupils’ keyboard skills because of her very good knowledge in this aspect of work.
94. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work in information and communication technology. They enjoy working at the computers and most show pride in their achievement. They sit patiently and listen to teachers’ instruction carefully and the great majority confidently put their knowledge and understanding into good practice when working independently.
95. Information and communications technology has been a major development area over recent years. Co-ordination of the subject is good, and development has been planned well within financial limitations. Considerable effort has gone into ensuring that sufficient funding is available to meet the needs of the school’s development of the subject. Computers are of a good specification and software loaded into all computers is up-to-date and also of a good specification. Funding is set aside to enable all staff to take training so that they are competent to teach computer skills using the new computers and programs.

MUSIC

96. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and standards of attainment are in line with those expected at seven and eleven.
97. By the time they are eleven, as part of a lesson on sound, pupils are aware that higher notes are made from more tightly strung strings. Higher attaining pupils are aware of musical notation and can follow this to clap from simple rhythms reasonably accurately. Using a computer, they succeed in composing a simple tune in four parts and use terms such as melody, percussion and staves correctly.
98. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn the words of songs, which they sing fairly tunefully. They nearly all tap a simple rhythm and then extend this skill by using un-pitched percussion instruments. Pupils know the names of a range of percussion instruments and name them as they return them to the teacher. Older pupils join in whole-school singing enthusiastically, but do not always sing tunefully.

Relevant music is played as pupils enter assembly. It is connected to the themes of the assembly and suitable opportunities are given for pupils to develop their listening skills.

99. Pupils' enjoy singing and their attitudes to music are satisfactory overall. For example, in a Year 2 lesson observed, pupils were focused and try hard. They concentrated well and remember not to play in the link between the verses of a song. In Year 3, attitudes are unsatisfactory on occasion, when a significant minority interrupt and distract from the lesson. This is the result of unsatisfactory management of pupils' behaviour and resulted in unsatisfactory progress.
100. The quality of teaching varies but is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is satisfactory, the lessons are well planned and the teacher is familiar with the material.
101. Recently there has not been a strong emphasis on the subject and there is still no designated co-ordinator. Music is occasionally used to enrich other curriculum areas like science. A number of instrumental groups have visited the school. One pupil is learning to play the saxophone. Pupils take part in concerts at Christmas and Easter and in a leavers' service. This has a beneficial impact on their performance skills and also on their social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

102. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and standards of attainment are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages.
103. From teachers' planning and schemes of work, all the programmes of study are covered although it was not possible to observe all of these during the inspection. Teaching and learning are good overall. A lesson for pupils in Year 1 proceeded at a brisk pace. The teacher continually increased the demands and the pupils responded effectively, so that good progress was made. Attitudes to physical education are very good overall. Younger pupils are enthusiastic, they work well in pairs and suggest further variations of their activity when asked. Older pupils co-operate well and move apparatus safely. The pupils work well individually, in pairs and in larger groups as they practise throwing and catching. Pupils know the importance of warming up before a lesson. As they warm up, one pupil in Year 1 explains that exercise increases the heart rate. In Year 3, the teacher is careful to see that pupils make their movements safely and makes clear points to ensure that this happens. The pupils recall working with a partner on a movement sequence and can say how to develop this further.
104. At present, pupils in Year 4 have a weekly swimming lesson. When practising the crawl, pupils in the advance group know to keep their head in the water and have a good style as they swim. They learn to dive in from the side of the pool. Pupils in the middle group swim across the pool on their backs kicking their legs before moving on to develop their arm action. Six have already moved to the group this term from the non-swimmers. Only two in the beginners group need a float, whilst the remainder can get across the pool only needing to put their foot down once or twice. Pupils in Year 4 are very aware of the progress they have made in learning to swim.
105. A strength of the subject is the sports festivals and tournaments which the school takes part in. These include football, cross-country and short tennis. Players from the local rugby football team come to teach ball skills and a large number of older pupils were taken to a game in the emerging nations rugby league tournament. These all have a positive impact on pupils' social and cultural development. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is keen to develop the subject further. Resources are satisfactory but good facilities are available to pupils because of the school's involvement in outside events.