

INSPECTION REPORT

ELWORTH HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sandbach, Cheshire

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111163

Headteacher: Mrs M Blease-Bourne

Reporting inspector: B Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th May 2001

Inspection number: 192225

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lawton Way Elworth Sandbach Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jean Done
Date of previous inspection:	24 th February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1993 8	B Matusiak- Varley	Registered inspector	Under fives Equal opportunities Science Art	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1966 4	John Bayliss	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2205 9	Neil Wales	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology Physical education	
2357 4	Lona Thomas	Team inspector	English History Geography Music	
2095 1	Philip Littlejohn	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Elworth Hall Primary School is an average sized primary school situated to the north-west of Sandbach in the village of Elworth. The school caters for pupils aged 4-11. There are 208 pupils on roll, 108 boys and 100 girls. Pupils who are in the Foundation Stage of learning are taught in the reception class. The pupils are predominantly of white United Kingdom heritage. Five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, average for a school of this size. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Pupils are taught in single aged classes by nine full time teachers. Attainment on entry is broadly average. Pupil mobility is static in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 many pupils join the school in Years 4, 5 and 6. This is a contributory factor to depressed test results at the end of Key Stage 2.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good quality of education. After a period of instability due to many staff changes, it is well poised to improve pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 which, over three years, has been very variable but is not as high as it could be. Standards are satisfactory overall but they are higher in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. Pupils are developing good learning habits. The present newly-appointed team of teachers is hard working, dedicated and determined to raise standards. Teaching is good, with examples of very good and excellent practice. The school is well led and managed by a caring headteacher, an experienced senior management team and a supportive governing body who have successfully built a secure and caring learning environment where all pupils are valued. The school provides satisfactory value for money and is well poised to make further improvement soon.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and in experimental and investigative science at the end of Key Stage 1, and at the end of Key Stage 2 pupils attain high standards in speaking and listening, reading, art and music.
- Pupils have good learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage and they are well prepared for more formal work in Key Stage 1. In both key stages provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching and support staff work well together to ensure that pupils have full access to the curriculum and, in both key stages, teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, relationships between pupils themselves and staff are very good and pupils are well looked after. Pupils like coming to school and attendance rates are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this ensures good gains in learning.
- Partnership with parents is good. Parents support the school and are actively involved in their children's learning.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, senior management team and governors is good. The school has clear educational direction and is well poised to improve standards.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics, science and writing at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Assessment data is not rigorously used to inform planning, consequently above average attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

- The role of subject co-ordinators needs to be further developed so that they have a clearer overview of standards and identify opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in their subjects.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent throughout the school, above average attainers are not sufficiently challenged and further opportunities need providing for pupils to become independent learners.
- The expertise of support staff is not used sufficiently to ensure that they are fully involved in planning learning opportunities for pupils in their care.

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 February 1997. Since then there has been a very high turnover of staff. A new headteacher has been appointed and only two of the existing staff remain. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall. The school has made good improvement in provision in the Foundation Stage of learning, and in improving long term planning. The provision for early years is now good and the school has a very comprehensive improvement plan. Further improvement needs to be made in using data to inform curriculum provision and in developing the role of the co-ordinators. Whilst improvement in these two areas is satisfactory, it could be better, although, since the previous inspection, many staff are new to the school. The best improvement has been in the quality of teaching, which is now judged as good overall. The school has improved standards further in mathematics in Key Stage 1, which are now above the national average. However, at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are not as high as identified in the previous report in English because the present cohort of pupils has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and behaviour problems. Standards in art and music remain high. The satisfactory improvement has been brought about by the good leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body in identifying the main priorities for improvement in a clear and concise manner, as evidenced in the school development plan.

STANDARDS

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

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

Standards as judged by 2000 test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show that, in comparison with all schools in English and science, standards are in line with the national average, but are below average in mathematics. Standards are well below average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is very low, but this is not necessarily a true reflection of social conditions because many parents are not claiming their entitlement. The school has recognised that standards need to be

higher and every effort has been made to raise them. Over time, the school's trend in average National Curriculum points for all core subjects was broadly in line with the national trend. There is some under-challenge of higher attaining pupils, but pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. The school exceeded its targets for literacy and numeracy in the 2000 test results.

By the end of Key Stage 1 test results show that, in comparison with all schools, standards in reading are well above national average, in writing they are below and in mathematics they are in line. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading are above average, in writing they are well above average and in mathematics they are below. Trends over time show that standards in Key Stage 1 over three years have been very high.

Inspection findings show that children in the Foundation Stage attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning by age five and make good gains in learning. In English, standards at the end of both key stages are above average in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in writing are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and are below the national average in Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and reading, but in writing progress is only satisfactory. In mathematics and science standards are average at the end of both key stages. In religious education, at the end of both key stages, pupils attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In information and communication technology pupils attain average standards at the end of both key stages. In design and technology, geography, history and music, attainment is average at the end of both key stages, with the exception of music, where it is above average at the end of Key Stage 2. In physical education attainment is higher at the end of Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. In art standards are above average at the end of both key stages and all groups of pupils make good gains in learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are motivated and interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. There are some examples of unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons in Key Stage 2 but teachers deal with these isolated incidents very well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils have good relationships, both with others and with staff; they execute their duties well.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils like coming to school, lessons start punctually and this contributes to good learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. Four per cent of teaching seen is excellent, in design and technology in Year 1 and music in Year 5. Twenty three per cent of teaching is very good, 51 per cent is good, 12 per cent is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, but teachers' knowledge of the higher levels of mathematics and science is not always secure. The good quality of teaching contributes to the good gains that pupils make in their learning. The management of pupils is very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in both key stages is good but there are instances when above average attaining pupils could be challenged further in the core subjects. Teachers' marking is inconsistent and pupils' mistakes are not always used as teaching points. Teaching is good in science, music, art and religious education and it is satisfactory in information and communication technology. In geography, history and design and technology, insufficient teaching was seen to make an overall judgement. The teaching of pupils in the Foundation Stage is never less than satisfactory and this contributes to the good gains that pupils make in their learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and every opportunity is taken to ensure that these pupils have full access to the curriculum. The recent introduction of personal target setting is having a positive effect on standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage of learning is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. However, more use could be made of support staff in the planning of tasks for pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon spiritual experiences and the impact of their actions on others. A good range of learning opportunities is provided for them to develop their moral understanding and social skills, and many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good and enhances the quality of education provided.

Partnership with parents is good. The school generally has good relationships with parents and they support it. A minority of parents feels that their views are not fully considered. The headteacher and governing body have recognised this as an area for developing communication.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is a caring leader who has the interests of all pupils, staff and parents at heart. She is ably supported by her senior management team, but the role of the co-ordinators could be developed further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and are committed to raising standards.
The school's	Good. The school evaluates its performance well but, as yet,

evaluation of its performance	the use of this data, in informing curriculum planning, is in the early stages of development.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school ensures that all grants are used effectively, but there are times when support staff could be more strategically deployed.

The school has an appropriate number of well-qualified teachers for the National Curriculum. Learning resources are good but there is a lack of pitched instruments in music. Accommodation is satisfactory but the open plan nature of the school prevents opportunities for quiet study. At times this has a detrimental effect on pupils' concentration skills.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • The school has high expectations and expects their children to work hard. • The school helps their children develop into mature and responsible individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standard of behaviour. • The amount of homework, although some want more others less. • Better information about the progress made by their children. • Closer working with parents. • The quality of leadership and management. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Thirty seven per cent of parents responded to the parents' questionnaire and only 20 parents attended the parents' meeting, so the above may not be fully representative of the views of all parents. Overall, parents support the school's educational provision for their children, which they think is good. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents, except that expectations could be higher. No evidence was found to support the negative views expressed by a small minority of parents. Behaviour is good compared with that expected in a primary school. The school's homework policy is appropriate, there is good information provision and ready access to the headteacher and teaching staff. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good and there is a satisfactory range of activities provided outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The 2000 national test results at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards in reading in comparison with all schools were well above national average. In writing they were below average. In mathematics they were in line with the national average and teacher assessments indicate that science standards were above average for pupils attaining Level 2 but well below the national average for pupils attaining the higher levels.
2. In comparison with similar schools, standards were above average in reading, in writing they were well below and in mathematics they were below average. In science, teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 showed that pupils' attainment in experimental and investigative science was in line with the national average. In life and living processes and materials and properties, attainment was very high and in physical processes attainment was above average for seven-year-olds.
3. By the end of Key Stage 2, based upon national test results in 2000, standards were in line with the national average in English and science, and they were below average in mathematics in comparison with similar schools. Over time, pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are better at the end of Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2, with no gender differences in attainment. In Key Stage 2, over three years, girls achieved better than boys, although this was not reflected in inspection findings. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects at Key Stage 2 was broadly in line with the national trend. In English and science standards fell in 1999 due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort who took the test. Several factors need to be taken into consideration when judging standards by the end of Key Stage 2, both in relation to pupils' prior attainment and based upon the uptake of free school meals, as standards appear to be too low for these pupils and there has been under-achievement.
4. Since the previous inspection the school has experienced difficulty in maintaining a stable staff, due to illness and retirement. To ensure that appropriate educational direction was given to staff, the headteacher took on responsibility for co-ordinating both literacy and numeracy in an attempt to raise standards. She very quickly identified the reasons for pupils' underachievement in Key Stage 2 and, together with her senior management team, has produced a detailed and comprehensive school improvement plan, which is focused on the main areas for development. She now has a full complement of staff who are implementing her directives effectively and the leadership of the recently appointed literacy co-ordinator is already having a positive effect on raising standards. The science co-ordinator has produced a very comprehensive action plan and, together with the local education authority adviser, systems have been put in place to develop pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. This is having a positive effect on standards.

5. Up until now the school has not had rigorous procedures for tracking pupils' progress from Key Stage 1 to be able to build upon their achievements in Key Stage 2. This has resulted in pupils marking time and not achieving their full potential as tasks set have not been appropriately matched to their needs. Assessment has now been developed but there is a need for all staff to consistently use assessment outcomes in order to challenge pupils further.
6. A particular group of pupils in Year 6 has a high percentage of pupils who are on the special educational needs register and many of the average attaining pupils have not fully developed effective learning skills, due to the interruptions in their education through lack of consistency in teaching due to high staff turnover. Over half of this class did not start their education in Key Stage 1 and they experience difficulty in spelling and in writing. This consequently affects their overall attainment and should be considered when evaluating why standards are higher in core subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 than they are at Key Stage 2.
7. Inspection findings show that the school now has a complement of good teachers who work well together under the effective leadership of the headteacher, and standards are poised to rise even further once the effects of good teaching filter through the school.
8. By the time that children enter Year 1 they attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning. Children who are higher attainers exceed the learning goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development because of the good provision that the school makes, both in learning experiences and through the good quality of teaching.
9. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in speaking and listening and reading are above the national average and standards in writing are in line with the national average, with several higher attaining pupils attaining standards which exceed national expectations. There has been an improvement in pupils' standards in writing on last years test results because the school targeted writing as an area for improvement in its attempt to raise standards. This has been achieved by further emphasis being placed on the teaching of correct letter formation, spelling and writing for a different range of purposes. Pupils' achievements in speaking and listening and reading are good. In writing they are satisfactory and could be better if teachers limited the number of worksheets given to pupils, which prevent them from developing their skills of extended writing.
10. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in speaking and listening and reading are above the national average with sound rates of progress being maintained. Standards in writing are below the national average. This is because the present Year 6 has an academic profile which is skewed towards a high percentage who are of average and below attainment, many of whom also entered the school in Key Stage 2 and not Key Stage 1. Pupils' rates of progress in writing could be better, because the school has only just started to use data from assessments to target pupils' learning opportunities. Individual targets have been set for pupils in English and mathematics and this is having a positive effect on raising

standards in writing, with pupils becoming more independent in correcting their own work and aware of what they need to do to improve. Inspection findings confirm the results of the 2000 tests, but evidence from the inspection finds that the higher attaining pupils, whilst making sound progress in their learning, could be challenged even further. The school has recognised this as an area for improvement.

11. In mathematics, by the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards which are in line with the national average and make good gains in their learning because of the good quality of teaching seen. It is evident that by the end of Key Stage 2 standards have risen from being below the national average to being in line. This is because the National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented in both key stages.
12. Pupils generally make good gains in learning in both key stages in number work and can use the four rules of number effectively, but in Key Stage 1 the use of calculators could be further developed. As with English, pupils who are above average attainers could be further challenged by more demanding work, especially in the mental mathematics session. There is also a need for pupils to pay further attention to problem solving, mathematical investigations and data handling, and the use of information and communication technology in both key stages needs to be further developed. Over time, pupils' achievements are satisfactory, but they could be better if teachers systematically used data from assessments in their planning and limited the number of worksheets they use, concentrating more on giving pupils further opportunities for problem solving.
13. By the end of both key stages standards in science are in line with the national average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Pupils in both key stages make good gains in learning in experimental and investigative science because the school has placed high emphasis on developing this area. However, above average attainers, whilst making sound progress overall, are, on occasions, under-challenged because insufficient opportunities are provided for them to record their findings in a variety of ways and further develop their skills of literacy and numeracy.
14. Rates of progress in science across Key Stage 2 have been inconsistent because there has been insufficient coverage of subject-specific skills and knowledge in Year 5. In Year 3 and Year 4, information and communication technology has not been used sufficiently well to support pupils in their recording of results. Furthermore, scrutiny of work reveals that there has been inconsistent coverage of physical processes in Key Stage 2. Since September there has been good improvement in the school's provision for science. The science co-ordinator, with her very good leadership of the subject, has identified the areas of improvement needed and her recommendations are now being undertaken by staff and standards are improving. The good quality of teaching is having a positive effect on raising standards.
15. Pupils with special educational needs, in both key stages, make good progress in their learning because they are appropriately supported by support staff who are

both knowledgeable and very sympathetic to their learning needs, ensuring that these pupils develop effective learning strategies to enable them to access the curriculum.

16. Above average attaining pupils make satisfactory progress overall but their rates of progress are inconsistent. The best progress is evident when assessment data is used in planning, resulting in challenging tasks being set.
17. In religious education by the end of both key stages, pupils achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and make sound gains in their learning. In information and communication technology pupils attain average standards and achievement is satisfactory. Examples of good short-term learning were seen in the week of inspection, especially in Key Stage 1, when parents came in to help the teachers. However, the number of computers is low, staff do not always use them in developing learning across all subjects and this limits pupils' rates of progress. In design and technology, geography and history, pupils attain average standards at the end of both key stages and achievement is satisfactory. In physical education pupils attain standards which are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1; by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are in line with the national average. Achievement is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. This is because there has been a high turnover of staff in Key Stage 2 and there has been a lack of continuity in teaching pupils subject-specific skills.
18. In art standards are above average at the end of both key stages and all groups of pupils make good gains in learning. This is because of the very good leadership of the co-ordinator, the good provision of activities, as evidenced in art club, and the good teaching of subject-specific skills.
19. In music standards at the end of Key Stage 1 meet the national expectations of seven-year-olds and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above national expectations for eleven-year-olds and pupils make good gains in learning. This is because they are taught by a subject specialist who has very high expectations, very secure subject knowledge and who uses the short time that he has in school very well to ensure that they have good opportunities in learning.
20. The school has worked very hard to provide pupils with sound learning experiences supported by good quality teaching. The headteacher and the governing body's decision to raise standards in literacy and numeracy is having a positive effect throughout the school. Since the previous inspection pupils' rates of progress have improved in the Foundation Stage, and in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 there is evidence to suggest that rates of progress and pupils' achievements are now poised to rise further due to the good quality of teaching seen during the inspection.
21. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress. Those with statements of special educational needs benefit from the help they receive from support staff both in class and in withdrawal groups, such as Springboard

Mathematics and Additional Literacy Support. Support staff are conscientious and well qualified and have a beneficial effect on the progress of pupils. Often they are able to work with other pupils with special educational needs and, on those occasions, these pupils also benefit from their expertise. All pupils participate fully in a full range of class activities in which they are appropriately monitored and guided. In classes the generally good quality of teaching, together with the support of teacher assistants, often enables the pupils to progress well. There are occasions when the time of the support staff could be better managed and teachers should be aware of this when they are planning lessons. There are occasions when assistants spend periods of time sitting listening to the class teacher. On these occasions they are not actively engaged with the pupils and so the use of their time is inefficient and ineffective. There are a few occasions, particularly in Key Stage 2, when the behaviour of a minority of pupils causes problems in the class. On these occasions teachers need to ensure that pupils are fully aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected. Although the standards that pupils with special educational needs attain are sometimes below those expected, they often make good progress and some attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally for all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

22. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. The positive situation found at the time of the 1997 inspection has been maintained.
23. Children in the Foundation Stage develop good attitudes to learning because the provision for their personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children in the Foundation Stage settle to their work very well, due to the caring nature of the staff and the stimulating learning environment. They co-operate well with one another, share their toys and learn to take turns.
24. Throughout the school the overwhelming majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic about school activities, trying hard and endeavouring to do their best. When teaching is good, as it frequently is, pupils are swept along with the flow of the lessons, responding positively and well. In lessons, pupils listen politely and attentively to the teacher and to each other. They are polite, friendly and well behaved. Pupils respond appropriately to instructions from teachers and settle quickly to work. They work well together and individually and show an interest in their work. Most are keen to participate in question and answer sessions and do so in a sensible and mature way. They readily take turns and show a willingness to apply themselves to whatever task is presented to them. They are keen to collect rewards for good behaviour, attendance and good work. The positive attitudes displayed by pupils contribute positively to the learning that takes place during lessons.
25. As reported in 1997, this inspection finds that pupils behave well both in lessons and around school. Although a small number of parents feel otherwise, behaviour is good. The school actively reinforces its positive behaviour strategy in assemblies and in circle time with the result that the pupils understand the need to behave well. Very little inappropriate behaviour was observed during the inspection. When it does occur, teachers are secure in their classroom management strategies, showing sensitivity to the needs of pupils as individuals. Outside the classroom, in the playground, when moving to the hall for assembly and when eating their lunch, behaviour during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, and was usually good or better. Some pupils are recognised as having behavioural problems. These pupils are generally appropriately supported by teaching and other staff. There was one necessary instance to exclude a pupil for a brief fixed term during the 1999-2000 school year to allow time for reflection and to allow other pupils to learn without disruption, but no similar instances have been necessary

during the present school year. Overall there is an ethos of good behaviour within the school that promotes learning.

26. Relationships throughout the school and personal development are good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. Constructive relationships allow all pupils to be fully involved in school activities and to take advantage of the opportunities that are provided to them to show initiative and assume responsibility. These opportunities steadily increase through their school life. Class representatives have been involved in school consultations about playground developments. Elsewhere pupils undertake their classroom and school responsibilities, such as being responsible for litter picking, helping in assemblies and as register monitors, conscientiously and with enthusiasm. Year 6 pupils readily involve themselves in the school's buddy system, providing support to the youngest members of the school community or those starting school part way through the school year. Pupils thoroughly enjoy being involved in fund raising activities, showing an interest in helping those who are less fortunate than themselves. They respect the values and beliefs of others, apparent in the way they relate to each other both in lessons and elsewhere. Pupils who have behaviour problems are treated with understanding by their peers and pupils recognise the need for both tolerance and acceptance, whilst at the same time being made aware that there is a code of conduct that cannot be transgressed. Pupils, whatever their ages or backgrounds, play happily together at playtimes and lunchtimes. During lunchtimes the pupils readily take responsibility for those less capable than themselves or those needing help and support. The school is inclusive in all of its practices and there have been no incidents of racism or bullying.
27. Attendance levels are very good, being consistently higher than the average for primary schools nationally. Despite a number of parents opting to take annual holidays during term time, contrary to the school's advice, the very high level of attendance found at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Levels of unauthorised absence are broadly in line with the national average and there is no evidence of truancy. Punctuality in the morning is generally good. When instances of lateness occur, they are of a minor nature and, because of the school's timetabling arrangements, are not disruptive to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

28. The quality of teaching is good. Four per cent of teaching seen was excellent, 23 per cent was very good, 51 per cent was good and 12 per cent of teaching was satisfactory. This is a good improvement on previous inspection findings where the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall but with nearly 18 per cent of teaching found to be unsatisfactory. The fact that there was no unsatisfactory teaching seen is attributable to the hard work of the teachers who, under the guidance of the headteacher, have worked at improving the quality of teaching. This is the first year since the headteacher's appointment that the school has had a strong team of teachers and, with this good quality of teaching, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are poised to rise.

29. The teaching of children who are in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. The teacher and classroom assistant (practitioner) have good subject knowledge and understanding, and teach basic skills very well. They are very effectively supported by the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, who monitors planning and offers advice on both teaching and curriculum planning, and monitors the good provision for the Foundation Stage very well. Planning is good, covering all the early learning goals and identifies, effectively, opportunities for higher attaining pupils to participate in tasks that are at the early stages of the National Curriculum. Practitioners manage the children very well and their needs are well known to them, due to the effective and detailed lesson observations that are carried out. A good range of teaching methods is used. Children are encouraged to learn using their senses, as they explore the environment around them and the class teacher ensures that every opportunity is taken to develop their language and mathematical skills. For example, in outdoor play children use a range of counting rhymes to become familiar with numbers and mathematical language of position, size, weight and measure. The good quality of teaching contributes positively to children's good rates in learning. Children enjoy the learning opportunities presented to them and make good progress overall.
30. A strength of the teaching is the emphasis placed upon the teaching of basic skills. Children are taught correct letter and number formation, spelling patterns, and the teaching of early reading skills is good.
31. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the teaching of literacy and numeracy is generally good. Teachers teach basic skills effectively. Very good teaching of basic skills was seen in Key Stage 1 where teachers gave very good explanations of how to form letters correctly and, in Year 1 and Year 2, encouraged pupils to correct their own spelling mistakes. In text level work teachers modelled appropriately voice intonation when reading text and helped pupils identify the impact of punctuation on the listener. Teachers in both key stages generally have high expectations of their pupils but, as this is the first year that this group of teachers is working together, their use of assessment outcomes to challenge higher attaining pupils is inconsistent. This results in higher attaining pupils in the key stage making satisfactory rather than good progress. This is an area which has been rightly identified in the school development plan as needing addressing. Teachers' expectations are higher in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. For example, in an excellent design and technology lesson in Year 1, pupils were fully involved in becoming independent learners because the teacher gave them plenty of opportunities to speculate on how to join paper and then encouraged them to try out their own ideas. The teacher's excellent command of the subject enabled pupils to make very good gains in their learning because, while pupils were involved in choosing materials, she encouraged them to talk about why Velcro was a better fastener than Sellotape. The plenary was used very well and pupils were encouraged to talk about how they had learnt from their mistakes and how they identified the best fasteners for the job.
32. In an excellent music lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher set very high expectations for the pupils. When teaching them a song about the Rainforest, he used time very effectively and made learning fun by enabling pupils to learn the

song very quickly and effectively. The common characteristic of both excellent lessons was the teacher's very secure subject knowledge, use of technical vocabulary and very good use of time, which ensured that all groups of pupils made very good short term gains in learning.

33. Most teachers know and understand their subjects well, which gives confidence to learners. However, teachers' subject knowledge in Key Stage 2 in the higher levels of the programmes of study in mathematics and science is less secure. Behaviour is managed very well, although on occasions in Key Stage 2 some pupils do not give the teachers their undivided attention and talk whilst valuable explanations are given. Teachers are extremely considerate about pupils' emotional backgrounds, but a minority of pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 in Key Stage 2 have not managed to put aside their self interests for the benefit of the whole class and, at times, demonstrate selfish behaviour in spite of the fact that lessons are both interesting and challenging.
34. The recent introduction of target setting is having a positive effect on pupils' learning in both key stages. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. They are reminded of their targets when they undertake independent tasks and this enables them to make good gains in learning. Teachers know which pupils have learning difficulties. The school has, over the past three years, gathered considerable data on pupils to track their progress and teachers now need to ensure that higher attaining pupils are more effectively challenged in Years 3, 4 and 5. On occasions, tasks set do not cater sufficiently for the range of prior attainments of these pupils.
35. The teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, whilst satisfactory overall, could be better. Teachers in both key stages have not yet fully identified how skills of literacy and numeracy can best be incorporated in all subjects. For example, in science pupils use a limited range of strategies to record their results in a variety of ways, and in foundation subjects, such as history and geography, pupils do not use a full range of writing conventions.
36. Teachers generally have a good range of teaching methods at their disposal. For example, much thought has gone into teaching investigative and experimental science, but teachers are not sure of how to develop pupils' skills incrementally as they progress throughout the school. Next year this will cause rates of progress to be inconsistent because, at present, all teachers are using the same approach and are not sure what the expectations should be for each year group. The science co-ordinator has recognised this as an area to be addressed. Teachers successfully divide most of their lessons into three parts, beginning with an introduction followed by work in groups and a time towards the end when pupils are gathered together to review what they have done. This time towards the end of the lesson is often effective in consolidating learning. For example, in Year 6 in a very good geography lesson the teacher effectively encouraged pupils to deepen their understanding of different cultures and customs by making reference to what pupils had previously learnt in art, religious education and design and technology.

37. Teachers in both key stages have skilful questioning and match their questions to pupils' different ability levels so that pupils can experience success in their learning. For example, in science in Year 3, the teacher asked pupils of different capability levels about their previous knowledge of volcanoes; when conducting experiments to show the effects of vinegar combined with bi-carbonate of soda, appropriate reference was made to pupils' prior learning. The teacher's skilful questioning helped to both deepen and broaden understanding.
38. Teachers have recently had training in using the system of "concept mapping" to help pupils organise their thoughts. This is still in the very early stages of implementation but is likely to have a positive effect on pupils' learning.
39. The quality of teaching in the majority of subjects is never less than satisfactory. Teaching is good in literacy, numeracy, science, music, art and religious education, and is satisfactory in information and communication technology and physical education. In geography, history and design and technology, insufficient teaching was seen to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching in both key stages, but evidence suggests that there are examples of very good teaching evident in the examples of pupils' work. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively in the majority of subjects and pupils make sound gains in their learning. The good quality of parental help in information and communication technology enables pupils in Key Stage 1 to make sound gains in drafting and redrafting, setting up of very simple data bases and importing pictures to text.
40. A weakness in teaching in both key stages is that teachers' marking is not consistently rigorous. Teachers do not use pupils' spelling errors as teaching points, often work is not dated and the quality of work is not commented upon. This results in pupils repeating mistakes that they have made and rates of learning slow down. Throughout both key stages teachers do give oral feedback to pupils and check their understanding but there is an over-use of worksheets and this has a negative effect on the development of pupils' writing skills. This is especially the case in religious education and science. The headteacher has recognised this as an area for improvement and already this is to become a focal point for monitoring teaching and learning.
41. In class the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is often good, especially when support staff are used efficiently and effectively. On these occasions pupils make good progress. Support staff have received appropriate training but, unfortunately, their expertise is not used as fully as it might be. For example, due to time constraints, they do not have the opportunity to plan future work with the class teacher and so do not have the chance to contribute to the planning system. This is unfortunate, as they are talented and skilful staff. The school might usefully consider this in the future. The pupils all have individual education or behaviour plans that contain suitable targets. The support staff, who have good knowledge of these pupils, are not involved in the production of these plans and so cannot make a significant contribution. As a result there are occasions, although they are infrequent, when the work set is not appropriately differentiated and pupils are not challenged at their level of ability. It should be

noted, however, that lesson planning does indicate that teachers are making good efforts to differentiate work. When this is done correctly it has a positive effect on the progress of pupils. Care should be taken that there is not an over use of worksheets, for this can limit the opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.

42. Homework is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The school has recognised the need for further consistency in the giving out of homework in Key Stage 2, an issue that was also raised by parents at the parents' meeting.

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

43. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that has breadth, balance and is relevant to the needs of its pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage are very good, are good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The governing body has decided that sex education will not form part of the school curriculum. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its satisfactory provision.
44. The curriculum offered to the youngest pupils in the Foundation Stage is exciting, relevant, very well planned and provides plenty of opportunity for the pupils to learn through using all of their senses, whilst at the same time teaching them the basic skills required to cope with a more formal curriculum at Key Stage 1. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection in ensuring that learning opportunities are relevant and that classroom support is used well. The very good partnership between the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, class teacher and class support assistant enables the pupils to benefit from the very well planned activities and consequently achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
45. Long, medium and short term planning is firmly in place. The school has sound policies and programmes for learning. These are based on government publications and are adapted to meet the specific needs of the pupils. The use of these programmes and policies aids continuity and progression from year group to year group. Emphasis has correctly been placed on the development of literacy and numeracy and the implementation of the Literacy Hour and the Numeracy Strategy. The successful implementation of these initiatives is helping to raise standards in the core subjects. The school is also working to raise standards by differentiating work and setting targets for pupils of varying capabilities. This has resulted in pupils with special educational needs making good progress throughout the school, but there is still a need to ensure that higher attainers receive more challenge. The school is fully inclusive in all of its practices and all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
46. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school keeps an up to date register of these pupils and makes curricular provision for

pupils who have statements and for those who have individual educational plans. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in the curriculum.

47. Provision for activities is good. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn the recorder, an art therapy group, netball and football. Key Stage 2 pupils have the opportunity to learn brass and woodwind, keyboards and strings from three music tutors. Year 3 and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in residential visits to local education authority outdoor education centres. The school has effectively implemented personal, social and health education and this is having a positive effect on pupils' awareness of themselves in relation to others.
48. The school has also invited in performers, artists and specialists to broaden the pupils' experience. Pupils have performed in Chester Cathedral, sung at a concert to celebrate BBC Music Live in Crewe, and have hosted a BBC Music Live concert at school.
49. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The headteacher and staff have ensured that a whole school approach is taken to ensure that good opportunities are provided for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
50. The provision for pupils' spiritual education is good. Assemblies meet the requirements for what is expected in both spiritual and religious content. There are acts of worship using both prayer and praise. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and have opportunities to empathise with others. In subjects across the curriculum such as art, science and music, pupils experience moments of awe and wonder when they reflect on human achievements and contemplate the mystery of physical phenomena such as volcanoes erupting.
51. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are taught to care for the environment and they look after their school very well. The overall ethos and general approach to developing positive attitudes and behaviour provide a good framework for pupils to learn a sense of right and wrong
52. Pupils' social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively in a variety of group settings. Older pupils are encouraged to help the youngest pupils at lunchtime through a 'buddy' system, a scheme that was rewarded with second place in the regional final of a national competition. Each term pupils help support a chosen charity. All pupils are aware of what is required to make the school community a happy safe place for everyone. Pupils take pride in their school, the school environment being litter free as each child feels it their duty to keep it so.
53. Pupils' cultural opportunities are good. The school makes good provision throughout the curriculum for ensuring that pupils have access to learning about other faiths, cultures, worship and ways of life. Pupils in Year 6 described a pen pal scheme with pupils in a multi-cultural, multi-faith school, which they had

enjoyed, but which had now lapsed. Schemes such as this would help develop pupil awareness of other cultures and faiths.

54. Since the previous inspection the school has improved its provision for pupils' spiritual development.
55. The local community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. There are close links with local churches. Local clergy come to share in assemblies and religious festivals. Pupils visit local churches.
56. The school has constructive links with partner institutions. In the summer term teachers from the high schools visit Year 6 pupils to start the induction process. Pupils also visit the schools to take part in workshops and presentations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

57. The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is good. It enhances the quality of education that is provided and has a positive impact on attainment and progress. As found at the time of the previous inspection in 1997, Elworth Hall is a caring and supportive school in which pupils feel happy, secure and able to concentrate on their learning. There is good support for pupils joining the school part way through their school life, and children starting their school life benefit from the school's good induction arrangements that include home visits by members of staff and opportunities to visit the school for half-day sessions. Throughout the school there is total inclusion, with all pupils receiving care and support appropriate to their individual needs whatever their age, gender or background. There is very sensitive and consistent implementation of school policies throughout the school, and the youngest children are treated with great care and sensitivity to ensure that their first days at school are pleasant and memorable.
58. Led by the very caring headteacher, all members of the school community work together to provide surroundings in which the pupils feel well cared for and secure. All staff, including those relatively new to the school, have a good knowledge of the pupils as individuals and this enables them to respond sensitively to individual need. The pupils are happy at school and confidently turn to adults when they need help or advice.
59. First-aid and fire safety arrangements are satisfactory. Regular risk assessments and safety audits are undertaken to ensure that the school provides a safe and supportive environment in classrooms and public areas. The school's procedures for dealing with accidents are secure. No significant health and safety hazards were observed inside the school during the inspection and there is no recent recorded evidence of any particular problems. It is a similar picture outside.
60. The school's procedures for child protection are satisfactory. They meet statutory requirements. All members of staff understand their responsibilities and

are attentive and conscientious in their approach to the proper support of the pupils in their charge.

61. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Registration procedures are efficient, with lateness and unauthorised absence being rigorously recorded. The school's records of attendance are properly maintained, held centrally in a secure location and comply with statutory requirements. Effective liaison with parents is maintained.
62. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour within the school and elsewhere. Rewards and sanctions are fair and are well understood and accepted by pupils. The procedures allow pupils to take advantage of the opportunities for learning presented to them, secure in the knowledge that the incidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism will be minimal and that, should it occur, it will be dealt with immediately and effectively.
63. The school has sound assessment procedures in place but as yet outcomes are not uniformly used across the school to plan challenging tasks for above average attainers to support them in their learning. The school has recognised this as an area for development. The school monitors and supports pupils' personal development satisfactorily. There is no formal record of achievement system to celebrate non-academic success, but the procedures that are in place, including the summary contained in the pupils' annual reports, provide an adequate record of the pupils' non-academic progress as they move through their school life. Informal arrangements, which build on teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals, are good.
64. The school has a positive approach to furthering the development of pupils with special educational needs. It is proactive in identifying the pupils who need support and there are occasions when, as a result of the help they receive, they either come off the register or move down the continuum. The provision for care, welfare and health and safety is good. The school makes every effort to ensure that provision for special educational needs is embedded in all curriculum areas and that target setting is done for individual pupils. The special educational needs code of practice is well implemented throughout the school. Individual education and behaviour plans are reviewed each term and are of good quality. There is a need to ensure that there is further consistency throughout the school for teachers to use them when planning lessons, especially in non-foundation subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. The large majority of parents responding to the parents' questionnaire have positive views about most aspects of the school's provision for their children. They feel it is a good one. Strengths of the school are seen to be that their children like school, teaching is good, with high expectations, and the school helps their children to become mature and responsible individuals. Inspection evidence supports these views, although expectations could be higher. No parents submitted concerns to the annual meeting with governors, indicating

general approval of the school's provision for their children. However, a small number of parents, responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and views expressed by some of the twenty parents attending the pre-inspection meeting, were not so positive. They have reservations about behaviour within and around school, the amount of work expected to be done at home, the quality of information provided by the school, particularly about progress, its relationship with parents, the quality of leadership and management, the impact of staff changes over recent years and the range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence finds little to support these views except that staff changes, necessary to raise the standard of teaching from that existing at the time of the previous inspection, have resulted in a dislocated learning experience for some pupils. There is no reason for any parent to feel a lack of information or to feel distanced from the school if they take advantage of the opportunities provided by the school for contact. Homework arrangements and the provision of activities outside lessons are judged to be satisfactory.

66. The effectiveness of the school's links with the majority of parents is good as evidenced with so many helping out in lessons during the week of inspection. The school has maintained many of the strong features found at the time of the previous inspection and has developed others.
67. Home-school links, supported by the introduction of a home-school agreement that provides for commitment by all involved to the improvement of standards, are good. The school encourages parents and other helpers to participate in its work and many do so. Their input to school activities is very good; they help with information and communication technology, reading, art and physical education. The school welcomes the support provided by the School Association, a registered charity. It raises a considerable amount of money to support school activities, most recently developing the external environment. Parental support for school assemblies and attendance at parents' evenings to discuss attainment and progress are also good.
68. The school has a wide variety of ways for communicating with parents. The quality of the information provided is good. Informal discussions, formal parents' evenings, open days, annual reports, reading records, school brochures, pre-school visits and regular newsletters keep parents well informed about school activities. The school prospectus has improved since the time of the previous inspection and now meets statutory requirements. The prospectus, and the somewhat formal governors' annual report to parents, which also meets statutory requirements, are comprehensive documents that provide parents with all the information to which they are entitled, giving good information about school activities and achievements. The importance of regular attendance and punctuality is stressed. Parents are provided with regular opportunities to be informed of their child's progress and development. They are also welcome to talk to teachers informally before school, or at greater length by making an appointment to ensure availability given their teaching responsibilities. The pupils' annual reports are of good quality, with well focused target setting, although there is some variation from teacher to teacher and, on occasions, there is some use of inappropriate language, such as 'He must now further these skills

to improve his inferential understanding', which is difficult for parents to understand.

69. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are generally pleased with the partnership with the school, although a minority expressed concern that occasionally the help pupils need takes a long time to be sanctioned by the various agencies involved. Inspection findings show that the headteacher genuinely works for the benefit of the pupils and that pupils receive the help that they need.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has been operating without a deputy headteacher for a considerable length of time and has implemented all new government initiatives effectively. She has been well supported by two senior members of staff, who have provided an effective lead in special educational needs and the co-ordination of Key Stage 1. A new deputy headteacher will take up post in the next academic year. The headteacher, through monitoring of teaching, has ensured that all new staff are appropriately trained and, since September, when many new staff were appointed, they have developed into a strong and cohesive team, committed to raising standards and giving pupils the best start to their secondary education. The headteacher gives clear educational direction in a calm and purposeful manner. She has helped her team of very hardworking and dedicated teachers raise standards of teaching throughout the school and this is now having a positive effect on the rates of learning, especially in Key Stage 2. The headteacher has produced a very clear school improvement plan, which rightly identifies the need to raise standards. This has been appropriately linked to the school's finances, and success criteria are effectively identified.
71. The governors fulfil their statutory duties well and are well informed of the school's strengths and of improvement. National test results have been analysed, resources have been targeted to raise standards and success criteria have been identified. The school exceeded its targets in literacy and numeracy in the 2000 national tests. The headteacher and governors have monitored the school's performance and have taken appropriate action to ensure that the present literacy and numeracy co-ordinators execute their duties well, in an attempt to bring standards in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 2. The delegation and contribution of staff with management responsibilities is at present variable but never less than satisfactory. As the staff have only operated as a team since September, not all responsibilities, such as monitoring of teaching and learning in foundation subjects, have been implemented. Not all co-ordinators have the skills to monitor teaching and learning and at present there is no whole-school approach to planning opportunities for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to be incorporated into teaching. The management and co-ordination of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is very good and is an exemplar of effective practice. This results in standards improving in writing and mathematics and in experimental and investigative science.

72. The school has good procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it, which are somewhat higher than those for primary schools nationally, are used appropriately to support learning. Positively led by the conscientious and well-informed chair of governors in her capacity as chair of the school's finance committee, working closely with the headteacher who has a secure grasp of the school's financial situation, and supported by the local authority's finance officer, the school manages its budget effectively and has wisely kept money back to ensure that, should pupil numbers fall, the level of staffing could still be kept. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection when arrangements were generally satisfactory. Financial reserves, the amount of money that the school carries forward from one year to the next, are somewhat higher than is typical for primary schools but they are consistent with the school's prudent contingency planning to ensure that it will be able to respond to changing circumstances with minimal disruption to its planned strategies for the further raising of standards. The specific funds element of the school's finances is appropriately targeted. Additional funding has been used well to provide booster classes for Year 5 and 6 pupils in need of additional support and has contributed well to the raising of standards. There is good identification of priorities for improving the quality of education and raising standards. There is ongoing development of the school's procedures for budget setting and monitoring and for the strategic planning of the school's development as governors and headteacher increasingly work together to ensure that the school provides the best quality education that it can. There has been increased involvement of members of the governing body in the corporate decision making process since the time of the previous inspection.
73. Routine administration, day-to-day organisation and both internal and external communication are well organised. The daily life of the school runs smoothly. Clerical staff undertake their responsibilities effectively and with enthusiasm. The school's most recent auditors' report found little to criticise. Its recommendations were given serious and appropriate consideration by the governing body and all have been addressed satisfactorily.
74. The governors are aware of the need to obtain value for money and have good procedures for ensuring that best financial value is obtained when purchasing products or services. Consultation procedures are well embedded, with governors making use of a variety of information from parents, staff and pupils. Many, but not all, governors are aware of the principles of best value and are beginning to make use of their findings to guide the future development of the school. They take their responsibilities as critical friends of the school seriously and have an understanding of the need to challenge what is being done in the school to assess the impact on learning. They are making some effective comparison with how school standards compare with those expected and are aware of trends in performance, but further development is needed to ensure the process has the necessary rigour. Nevertheless, there is an increasingly clear understanding of the educational strengths and weaknesses of the school.
75. The school makes good use of new technologies. In addition to the support of routine administration activities, where computerised systems are well used, the

school is moving forward to embrace the benefits of information and communication technology in areas such as financial and assessment monitoring and record keeping.

76. Internally there is sufficient accommodation for the school to teach the National Curriculum effectively. It is in good condition, well maintained and the level of cleanliness is good. It has been a school priority since the appointment of the present headteacher to raise the quality of the learning environment, and new carpets, furniture and decoration have lifted it to one that provides a pleasant, welcoming and stimulating environment for learning. Disabled access is good but there is no specialist toilet provision for pupils with physical disabilities. The improvement strategy continues, with plans to change the location of some of the toilet blocks that are inappropriately located immediately adjacent to teaching areas. The site maintenance officer works hard to keep the school in good order. He provides good support to the school community. Classrooms are of adequate size and are well managed by teachers who make effective use of the available space.
77. The school is organised on an open plan basis with a number of specialist resource areas that can, when used properly, enhance the quality of education provided. Frequently, however, they present teachers with a challenge as, unless there is support in the classroom, the space cannot be used without a loss of direct supervision. Some changes have already been made that have improved matters and the school, through its development plan, has recognised the need to further review the organisation of the building to address these organisational difficulties. During the inspection it was noted that the accommodation arrangements in parts of the school meant that there was distraction from adjacent classrooms, which had an adverse impact on children's learning, due to the open plan nature of the school. Therefore opportunities for reflective thought are limited. Public areas and most classrooms provide a stimulating environment with a good mix of pupil-produced material linking well with commercially produced products.
78. There is sufficient playground space for the size of the school. It is of good quality with provision for pupils to sit and talk quietly. Children under five in the reception class have satisfactory access to their outdoor play entitlement. Extensive well-maintained grounds enhance the appearance of the school. Grassed areas, mature trees, a wooded area and a profusion of planters and other flowers and shrubs enhance the outdoor facilities provided by the school, offering the pupils a variety of experiences that enhance the educational opportunities provided.
79. There is an experienced co-ordinator for special educational needs, who is well informed and conscientious and is a member of the senior management team. She has established very thorough administrative systems and all the documentation is well kept and organised. All the class teachers and the support staff are involved in the drawing up of individual education and behaviour plans. The reviews take place regularly. There is a governor for special educational needs who liaises with the co-ordinator. Time is provided for the co-ordinator to

manage the administrative systems but there is insufficient opportunity for her to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classes. In this respect her role is under-developed. The school might usefully consider this in order to ensure that, for example, teachers are taking account of targets in education plans in their lesson planning and that the work set for individual pupils is challenging and meets their needs. In these respects the teachers would benefit from further in-service training.

80. The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers and support staff to teach the National Curriculum effectively. New staff are appropriately introduced to school systems, and induction procedures are good. Appraisal of staff is effectively managed and in-service training is linked to the school's priorities for raising standards. All staff are committed to school improvement and are very keen to raise standards. Resources are generally good, but there is a shortage of pitched instruments in music, and the school could benefit from more computers.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

i. Raise standards in mathematics, science and writing by the end of Key Stage 2 by:

- rigorously providing further opportunities for pupils to problem solve in mathematics;
- developing their skills of investigative and experimental science by building upon their prior knowledge and having clearer expectations of what they should achieve at the end of each year;
- ensuring that spelling and punctuation errors are used as teaching points and that rules of spelling and grammar are rigorously taught;
- developing literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum;
- providing further opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum by limiting the use of worksheets; and
- providing in-service training for teachers on the higher levels of the programmes of study for mathematics and science so that more challenging tasks can be set for higher attaining pupils.

(paragraphs 9,12, 15, 31, 35, 41, 103, 114, 123, 128, 132)

ii. Ensure that data from assessments is rigorously used to inform teachers' planning.

(paragraphs 5, 63, 107, 114)

iii. Develop the role of the co-ordinators so that:

- they have a clearer overview of standards in their subjects by monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work in books; and
- they plan with staff to identify opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology in the teaching of their subjects.

(paragraphs 14, 71, 153, 159, 179)

iv. Improve the good quality of teaching even further by:

- ensuring that there is consistency in teachers' marking and that pupils' mistakes are used as teaching points;
- ensuring that above average attainers are effectively challenged; and
- developing the role of support staff to ensure that they are effectively involved in planning, assessing, preparing resources to develop pupils' learning and that they are strategically deployed in targeting, over a fixed period of time, pupils who have the most need.

(paragraphs 21, 40, 41, 45, 79, 106, 130)

The governors may wish to take the following minor issues into consideration:

- as and when funds allow, improve the accommodation to ensure that noise does not carry when teachers give valuable instructions;
- improve the quantity of pitched instruments in music and the number of computers in classrooms; and

- further improve communication with a minority of parents, so that parents and staff work in unison for the benefit of the pupils.

(paragraphs 25, 65, 77, 80, 172)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	23	51	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	n/a

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.2	School data	0.1
National comparative data	5.2	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	11	12	13
	Total	25	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (95)	90 (95)	97 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	11	12	13
	Total	25	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (95)	93 (100)	97 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	18	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	23	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (61)	76 (87)	86 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	23	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (57)	76 (74)	83 (70)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	182
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	26.0

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	1	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	370,564
Total expenditure	362,883
Expenditure per pupil	1,779
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,088
Balance carried forward to next year	33,769

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

155

Number of questionnaires returned

57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	46	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	26	58	11	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	11	60	21	7	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	53	23	7	0
The teaching is good.	25	68	5	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	33	33	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	39	11	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	54	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	23	49	16	5	7
The school is well led and managed.	21	49	12	9	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	19	70	5	4	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	5	37	32	9	18

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were concerned about behaviour, homework and information on children's progress because many of them work and cannot always attend parents' meetings. They did, however, say that they could contact the school to arrange an alternative visit.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

81. Children enter the reception class in the term in which they are five. Many of them have attended playgroup and their attainment on entry is average in all areas of learning. Several children who are above average attainers have good skills in speaking and listening and number, and their attainment on entry is above average. During the time of the inspection there were 26 pupils who were in the Foundation Stage of learning. Children are taught by a full-time teacher and a classroom assistant (practitioner). Provision for children who are under five is good. The school has very good induction procedures and all children are well known to the staff before they start school. Staff work very well with parents, parents are invited to attend reading club with their children and staff are available to speak to parents about pre-reading skills. Children are visited at home by the staff and children come into school on half-day visits so that they are familiar with the school before they start their education. At the end of their year in the reception class, most children will attain the early learning goals, with the above average attaining pupils exceeding them, in all areas of learning. Overall pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is because the school makes good provision for these young children. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. The curriculum is vibrant and exciting and is very well planned to enable children to learn using all of their senses. The quality of teaching is good, and children use a good range of attractive and colourful resources. The teamwork of the teacher and support assistant is very good. Regular observations are kept of the children and there are very good systems of communication, set up by the early years co-ordinator, between teaching staff and parents. This contributes to the good gains that these young children make in their learning because children feel secure in a stimulating learning environment and, due to the very detailed assessments and good use made of them, children make good gains in learning.
82. Overall, provision for the Foundation Stage of learning is good.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. By the time that they enter Year 1, children attain the early learning goals and make good progress. Children have opportunities to choose their own activities, selecting their own materials and working happily together. They take turns confidently and help one another out when counting money in the water tray. They co-operate well, knowing the difference between right and wrong, and learning to care for one another. In the dining hall they eat carefully, have good table manners and know the components of what constitutes good behaviour. They know that legs should not swing on chairs because it is dangerous and that running in the classroom is not allowed.
84. They develop good relationships with adults and they are well behaved, sitting and listening attentively when the teacher gives explanations. When playing in

the home corner they share the three bears' costumes and are very polite when a child in role as Goldilocks apologises for eating their porridge, offering her some more but with lots of honey on it. The quality of teaching is good. Practitioners ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to become independent learners. Children play musical coats when learning how to fasten their buttons. Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to become familiar with identifying their feelings in an appropriate manner, through the good teaching of circle time. Practitioners use praise regularly to build up the children's self-esteem. They know how young children learn and they provide a caring and secure learning environment, which ensures that pupils develop positive attitudes to learning.

Communication, language and literacy

85. By the time that children enter Year 1 they attain the early learning goals in language and literacy and make good gains in learning because of the good quality of teaching. Above average attaining pupils exceed the early learning goals in speaking and listening, reading and writing because they are appropriately introduced to the early stages of the National Literacy Strategy. Children express their ideas clearly and listen well to one another. They thoroughly enjoy stories with repeating phrases, such as 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They make marks with pencils when ordering their money from the local bank and sign their cheques when paying money into their accounts. They can write their names, and make simple tables for pictures and displays. Those of higher ability complete simple sentences, choosing words from a selection to go with a picture. Reading skills develop well and most children are well on in the reading scheme. Teaching of communication, language and literacy is good. Practitioners understand the literacy strategy as applied to young children, using it to focus on sounds and letters. Practitioners make a point of ensuring that parent helpers hear children read and keep a careful record with evaluative comments on developing skills which helps to ensure continuous progress. Practitioners ensure that every opportunity is taken to develop children's vocabulary in a very stimulating learning environment, which has very good quality displays and exciting learning resources.

Mathematical development

86. All children make good gains in their learning and attain the desirable learning outcomes by the time they enter Year 1. Higher attaining pupils can recognise numbers to 30 and beyond and form their numbers correctly. These pupils exceed the early learning goals in mathematical development. They can do simple additions and subtractions up to 10. Average attaining pupils can use language of longer, shorter, heavier, lighter, more, less when comparing two quantities and they are starting to use the vocabulary involved in addition and subtraction. They can use the language of position and they use number fans well when adding up numbers to 10. They can partition a given number of objects into two groups and they can name cubes, cones, spheres, rectangles and triangles. They are starting to use tally charts and can distinguish between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. The quality of teaching is good.

Elements of the literacy hour are effectively introduced and practitioners teach basic skills of numeracy well. Children are effectively managed through good questioning and their understanding of the main teaching points is checked constantly.

87. The teacher and practitioner have good knowledge of how children learn and plenty of opportunities are provided for the children to find coins in water, make shapes in collage, trace numbers in sand, make numbers out of plasticine and play games. This ensures that children use their senses in learning and make good gains in their understanding. The evaluation of lessons and recording of children's difficulties ensure that appropriate opportunities are provided for children to practise the skills that they do not fully comprehend. This ensures that children have a wide range of learning contexts to consolidate their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

88. The development of knowledge and understanding of the world is good and children attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Children know that the Bible is a holy book that contains stories. They know that Noah built the ark and they know that an act of faith is to obey without asking too many questions. They understand that Noah saved many animals and that Mrs Noah must have had a lot of tidying up to do after the animals.
89. They can discuss the difference between pushing and pulling and they demonstrate sound early investigative skills when they predict whether a box will move faster on the floor by pulling, pushing or using wheels under the box. They make vehicles and they investigate which shapes are best for wheels. They plant seeds and watch them grow, they discuss how the weather changes according to seasons and they select from a range of materials to make puppets, lift the flap books and kites. They use computers well and they can name parts of the keyboard appropriately.
90. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Planning is clear, listing a range of activities that will develop children's skills of observation, hypothesis, prediction, measuring and estimating. Practitioners intervene appropriately in the children's learning and ensure that children stay on task. Staff appreciate the help given by parents and parent helpers contribute significantly to the children's learning by giving up their time freely and helping children produce interesting displays.

Physical development

91. By the time that children enter Year 1 they attain the early learning goals in physical development. In games they can send and receive balls, roll them, push them away and take them for a walk using their feet and hands. They can aim appropriately at a target and they can pass to one another. Children can skip, jump, slide, throw, bounce, and they can roll balls to one another. Children are well co-ordinated. They listen to instructions and they travel on the floor area using their limbs appropriately. They have a good awareness of space and try not to bump into one another. They play well together in the enclosed and secure outdoor play area. They have good fine motor skills and demonstrate appropriate pencil control skills.
92. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned with appropriate emphasis placed upon the teaching of skills. Children are taught good habits of lining up quietly, changing into their physical education clothes and observing rules of health and safety when moving apparatus. Practitioners demonstrate what is expected of the children and this enables them to make good gains in learning. Time is used effectively, good explanations are given and praise is used constructively to move children on in their learning.

Creative development

93. Creative skills develop well and children attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Children love painting, sticking, gluing and collage work, and play collaboratively in the Travel Agent, ensuring that everyone is aware of the cost cutting bargain flights available to Spain. Children use paint appropriately and are taught how to use a paintbrush correctly and not to apply too much water. They use tissue paper in a variety of ways (scrunched, flattened, torn) to make a seascape picture, clearly defining the horizon. They produce mobiles of different forms of transport depicting cars, trains, buses, planes and boats, and in music they can identify basic instruments. They can keep a steady beat, can click their fingers and clap their hands in time to the music and in acts of collective worship they sing in tune.
94. They can identify the colours in Van Gogh's Sunflowers and they can weave appropriately using three different colours. The teaching of creative development is good. Practitioners use time effectively and ensure that children are provided with a wide range of stimulating learning experiences. Resources are well used and children are encouraged to choose their own resources for learning, which they do well. Children are encouraged to mix their own paints and tidy up after themselves, but they are always supported by the practitioners so that they experience success. The good quality of teaching ensures that children make good gains in their learning.

ENGLISH

95. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, results in reading were well above the national average. In contrast, the writing test results

were below the national average. A comparison with schools in similar contexts shows that pupils' attainment in reading is above the expected levels but is well below in writing. The trend over time has been variable and results have fluctuated from year to year, with three years of very high standards both in reading and in writing. There has been a downward trend in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 when compared with results in 1999, this is because the cohort of pupils who took the test in 2000 had a high percentage of pupils of average and below average attainment and with special educational needs.

96. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests in English were in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below the national average. In comparison with results in the 1999 national tests, there is a significant improvement in pupils' attainment. The trend over time in the school's National Curriculum points is broadly in line with the national trend. Girls significantly outperformed boys in the 2000 tests. The school has made its own analyses of the latest test and assessment results and is taking appropriate action to address the weaknesses. For example, suitable literature to encourage an enjoyment of reading has been provided, written tasks have been reviewed and additional support is available as required. In pupils' work inspectors found no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, but there is a need for the school to challenge its above average attainers.
97. Standards are not as high at the end of both key stages as previously judged in the last inspection, especially in English at the end of Key Stage 2 where standards in writing have regressed. This is partly attributable to pupil movement to and from the school, but is mainly the consequence of pupils' teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 being disrupted over the last few years by staff absences and changes of teachers. Furthermore, the present Year 6 class has many pupils who did not have the benefit of starting their education at Elworth Hall and have therefore not acquired good grounding in basic skills. Over a third of this year's Year 6 class is on the special educational needs register and there are very few higher attaining pupils. During the last year, new teaching appointments have ensured staff stability and inspection evidence shows that this is already having a beneficial effect on standards.
98. Inspection findings show that, by the end of both key stages, standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average. Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average and, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are just below the national average, due to the high percentage of pupils who are of below average attainment and those who are on the special educational needs register. When the children start school, attainment on entry is average in speaking and listening. They make good progress and, by the end of Key Stage 1, most are able to talk confidently about their experiences at school and respond happily to questions. They can extend their responses with more information if required. They listen attentively to their teachers and show clearly that they understand what they have heard. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils acquire above average speaking skills. They answer questions confidently and offer perceptive thoughts and ideas during discussions. The pupils interviewed during the inspection understood the

conventions of discussion, listened attentively to their peers and waited their turn to speak.

99. Good progress is made in reading at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress is made in Key Stage 2. Reading standards for pupils at the age of seven are currently above average. Pupils have a good knowledge of letter sounds and make effective use of pictures to interpret meaning when reading. Most read with good expression to convey meaning. They are able to talk sensibly about the content of the books they are reading and are able to describe and offer preferences about the characters. Pupils' reading diaries show that most have their reading listened to on a regular basis at home. Most pupils know the function of contents and index pages and the most able are confident in their use to seek further information. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 are enthusiastic readers. They speak with pleasure about the books and stories they have read. In discussing their favourite books and authors, a good proportion of the pupils referred to a wide range of popular writers for children. Year 6 pupils have been particularly inspired by the work of Michael Morpurgo and most are able to compare and contrast a wide range of his writing enthusiastically. They state their particular preferences clearly and perceptively. Reference skills are satisfactorily developed. Research skills across subjects are not, however, as well developed. Able pupils are not provided with sufficient challenges and opportunities to seek information from various sources to study a topic in depth.
100. Writing is correctly recognised within the school as the weakest element of the subject. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils write for a range of purposes such as rewriting favourite stories, composing their own imaginary accounts of the adventures of a monster or a bear, and writing poems, book reviews and letters. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils, when retelling the story of 'The Boy Called Moses', demonstrate their ability to use interesting vocabulary and to spell imaginative words correctly. Lower attaining pupils find writing difficult and manage only a few sentences in response to written tasks. They know that sentences require a capital letter and a full stop, but do not apply this knowledge consistently.
101. At Key Stage 2, there is good focus on the development of pupils' writing through reading. Pupils are guided effectively to improve presentation and prose writing by using literary and grammatical devices that they learn about in their guided reading. Pupils are motivated to write for a range of audiences and to talk about their work in plenary sessions. By the end of the key stage, pupils can record logical arguments for and against an issue such as fox hunting or school uniform. They have produced well presented imaginary ships' logs, based on the work of a favourite author. The range of work also includes poetry, descriptive, imaginary and play writing as well as letter writing in a variety of forms. Many pupils demonstrate a sound ability to use well-chosen adjectives and descriptive language to make the writing more interesting. They are generally able to paragraph and punctuate their work but they have difficulty in spelling and in using correct punctuation consistently. This reduces their attainment to below the national average. The majority of average attaining pupils in the present Year 6 will not achieve the expected level in writing for their age group in the

2001 national tests, but about one-third of the higher attaining pupils will. This is a significant improvement on the standards attained by last year's cohort. In spite of the good teaching, this present cohort of pupils will not meet the expected level because many of them entered the school in Year 4 and Year 5 and have not had the benefit of being educated in Key Stage 1 where basic skills of writing are rigorously taught.

102. There are several good examples of literacy being used across the curriculum, for example, eye witness accounts by Year 4 pupils of the Second World War and the persuasive writing by Year 5 pupils on environmental issues. However, literacy skills are, in general, inconsistently developed across the curriculum.
103. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their personal targets. They are provided with effective support from the classroom assistants.
104. The quality of teaching is good overall, with 33 per cent very good and 22 per cent satisfactory. This is an improvement from the last inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching was identified. The National Literacy Strategy is securely in place and, during the literacy hour, teachers show good subject knowledge, which is conveyed to pupils by patient explanation and is enhanced by careful questioning, used both to extend and to reinforce pupils' understanding. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment and well supported to make satisfactory progress in each lesson. Texts for close study are well chosen for their interest and quality of language. The good or very good teaching is characterised by several features. Learning intentions are identified clearly in lessons and shared with pupils. This means that pupils understand and can explain what they are learning. Lessons are marked by high expectations of both behaviour and pupils' capabilities. There is a brisk pace to the lessons and pupils are fully involved in challenging activities that match their learning needs. All this was evident in a very good lesson where Year 4 pupils demonstrated their ability to understand persuasion techniques and to use presentational skills effectively when organising advertising campaigns. In the lessons where the teaching was satisfactory, teachers did not always challenge the most able pupils effectively to make sure that they reach an appropriate level of attainment.
105. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall but there are inconsistencies across the school. In the best practice teachers' comments, whilst supportive, also identify where pupils need to improve their work. Other marking in some books is superficial and lacks clear purpose.
106. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post since the beginning of the academic year. She is already carrying out her duties effectively and is well informed about the requirements of the subject. She has a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and, as a result of her own analysis of last year's National Curriculum results, has identified writing skills and the general performance of boys in Key Stage 2 as areas that need to be developed and improved. In order to address these issues she has organised staff sessions to get corporate ideas for development. As a result, a school

portfolio of children's writing has been developed and the examples contained have been levelled according to the criteria used for the National Standardised Assessment Tests (SATs). She has also begun to monitor the teaching of writing in some classes. She has widened and increased the range of fiction and reference books to ensure that boys' and girls' interests are suitably met. Resources are good and are well used to promote learning. In general, information technology is used effectively to promote pupils' learning in English. The use of assessment information to guide planning and to inform teaching and learning is not secure and, as yet, has not had a sufficient effect on standards, particularly in writing. This is an area that the co-ordinator has already identified.

107. Since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2, whilst standards in speaking and listening and reading are good, standards in writing are not as high as they were previously.

MATHEMATICS

108. Standards in the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were in line with national averages when compared to all schools and below those compared with similar schools. This is because the academic profile of pupils who took the tests was largely skewed towards average and below average attaining pupils. This reflected a lowering of standards in comparison with previous years. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of both key stages are beginning to rise again, with standards being above the national average in Key Stage 1 and in line in Key Stage 2, with every indication that they could be above the national average in the near future. This is largely due to the good quality of teaching seen.
109. National test results show that, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards were below the national average for all schools and well below when compared with similar schools. This reflected a lowering of standards compared to the previous years. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are rising, especially in Years 3 and 4, and that, due to the good teaching in Year 6, the standards are approaching those expected nationally. It is significant that in Year 6 half of the pupils have transferred to the school during Key Stage 2 and a third are receiving support for special educational needs. However, it is also apparent that in both key stages, whilst assessment procedures are good, their use is under-developed. This results in a lack of challenge in the tasks set particularly for higher attaining and gifted pupils and so the numbers attaining the higher levels in the national tests are not as high as they should be. Six out of eight staff have recently been appointed and a new deputy headteacher, who is to be the mathematics co-ordinator, takes up his position in the near future. The quality of teaching overall is now good and pupil learning, over the short term, is mainly good. Over a longer period there has been some under-achievement, especially in Key Stage 2. The headteacher and governors are aware of this and the school improvement plan clearly identifies strategies that will be undertaken to raise standards. In both key stages the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well.

110. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are developing a good understanding of number and use this knowledge in calculating sums of money up to £1. Higher attaining pupils are working with numbers over one hundred. They have a sound knowledge of the four rules of number, place value, odd and even numbers and other sequences. Problem solving and investigational skills are being developed through work on shopping and pocket money. Pupils learn to measure using metres, centimetres, kilograms, grams, litres and millilitres. They study time and know about hours, minutes and seconds. The properties of two and three-dimensional shapes are studied and pupils are learning to identify a right angle. Data is collected in surveys and used to produce simple block graphs but, although there is some evidence that information technology is used, it is generally under-developed in mathematics. Although teachers' planning indicates differentiation of work for pupils of different capabilities, this is not as effective as it might be and there is evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work that higher attaining pupils are not always appropriately challenged. In the lessons seen, teachers encourage discussion well and ensure that pupils use the correct mathematical language.
111. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are developing sound calculation skills, although the pace at which they are working is sometimes rather slow. They learn about equivalent fractions and those with mixed numbers, percentages and decimals. Higher attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of long division, can multiply by two digit numbers and know about negative numbers. The use of calculators could be further developed. Currently pupils have little knowledge of the use of unknowns in algebra, although they are using brackets in mathematical calculations. Work in number is linked to problem solving and to the collection of data for graph work. There is evidence that some work has been done on co-ordinates and probability. As in Key Stage 1 the use of computers is under-developed. In shape, space and measure pupils are developing an understanding of volume and surface area. They know about acute, obtuse and reflex angles and solve problems about cuboids, the calendar and time. Their knowledge of shape increases through work on the properties of a variety of two and three-dimensional shapes. Overall pupils show an interest in the subject but their present level of skill is no greater than that expected for their age.
112. In both key stages pupils' learning is good and most demonstrate positive attitudes. All pupils benefit from the mental/oral sessions at the beginning of the numeracy hour. Occasionally the pace of these sessions is a little slow and the pupils are not made to think as rapidly as they might do. Often the oral questioning is rapid and challenges the pupils appropriately. The strengths are the coverage of number and shape, space and measure. There is a need to pay further attention to problem solving and mathematical investigations and to extend the amount of work set in data handling, paying further attention in all areas to the use of information technology. Pupils show that they are able to work sensibly and co-operatively in groups.
113. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers are adhering to the numeracy strategy framework but are not always using the higher levels to challenge the pupils further. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is less secure in Key Stage

2 in the higher levels of the programme of study and data from assessment is not rigorously used to inform planning. This results in pupils consolidating their knowledge rather than extending it and leads to rates of progress being inconsistent. Teachers have a secure general knowledge of the subject and give clear explanations. Teachers often challenge pupils, for example, in a Year 4 lesson on the use of the eight points of the compass and angles of 45, 90, 180 and 360 degrees. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and there is often a sense of humour evident. The pace of lessons is usually good, particularly evident in Years 1, 4 and 6. In both key stages teachers have good questioning skills and use correct mathematical language. This often enables pupils to articulate the thoughts they have in their heads. There is evidence that mathematics is satisfactorily used in other subjects but this is an area that could be extended in the future. Time is normally well used, although there are occasions when the plenary session is very short or has to be missed out altogether. Care should be taken by teachers that worksheets are not overused, as often these lead to the incorrect differentiation of tasks. Although assessment procedures are good, teachers' planning does not adequately account for what pupils have learned previously. This results in some under-challenge for higher attaining pupils. Learning objectives are clear but teachers do not consistently indicate the levels of attainment they are aiming for with particular groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by teacher assistants and, when this occurs, they make good progress. Targets are now being set for individual pupils and this is having a beneficial effect on their attainment.

114. At the present time the headteacher is co-ordinating the subject and has undertaken effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Feedback has been given to teachers and so the school is aware of the developments that are needed, particularly when the new co-ordinator takes up his post. Resources are satisfactory and contribute to the average standards that pupils attain.
115. Since the last inspection standards have improved in Key Stage 1 and are now above the national average, whereas in Key Stage 2 average standards have been maintained.

SCIENCE

116. The 2000 National Test results for science show that, by the age of 11, standards are in line with the national average in comparison with all schools. However, in comparison with similar schools, standards are well below average. Teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 show that pupils' attainment in experimental and investigative science was in line with national average. In life and living processes and materials and their properties, attainment was very high, and in physical processes attainment was above average for seven-year-olds. However, there was a significant lack of pupils attaining the higher levels in experimental and investigative science and physical processes.
117. By the end of Key Stage 2, taking the last three years together, the average National Curriculum points score shows that pupils' performance fell below the

national average, and that girls performed better than boys. Inspection findings show a slightly different picture, that standards at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with the national average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Standards are improving because of the very good leadership of the subject, the improved quality of teaching, particularly in the teaching of experimental and investigative science, in both key stages. There is, nevertheless, under-challenge of above average attainers whose rates of progress, whilst satisfactory overall, are inconsistent. This is largely due to the high turnover of supply teachers. Opportunities for pupils to record their findings in a variety of ways are limited, and there is an over reliance on worksheets. This has a negative effect on improving pupils' writing skills. In several classes, in both key stages, teachers' subject knowledge of physical processes is insecure and, over time, there have been inconsistencies in pupils' rates of progress in Key Stage 2 because of the high turnover of supply teachers. The science co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and pupils' exercise books. Plans are in hand to rectify the situation with appropriate support provided by the local education authority in both key stages. There has been a lack of an appropriate balance of knowledge and subject specific skills being taught. Assessment procedures have not been sufficiently rigorous and pupils' work in Key Stage 2 clearly lacked a scientific approach to study. Many pupils had neatly decorated exercise books, which indicates that insufficient time is spent on developing scientific skills of observation, prediction, enquiry and recording results in a variety of ways.

118. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that up until January of this year there has been insufficient coverage of science in Year 5 and, in Year 3 and Year 4, very little use has been made of information and communication technology. The science co-ordinator has carried out a very detailed audit of the strengths and weaknesses in attainment and has undertaken a detailed analysis of pupils' responses to different questions in the test papers. This has enabled specific areas to be targeted for improvement and has subsequently informed curriculum planning. Already this is having a positive effect on raising standards.
119. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are making good gains in learning in scientific enquiry. Standards are high in both key stages. The best gains are made in Year 1 where pupils are taught by the science co-ordinator. Pupils use their good speaking and listening skills in discussing and questioning why it is important to carry out a fair test. They have good observational skills and they can plan a simple scientific experiment, using texts to find information. They make comparisons between their results in relation to the effectiveness of materials for waterproofing and they test objects to classify them as conductors and insulators of electricity.
120. In life processes and living things, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 know about the life cycle of a frog, and that all animals feed and reproduce. They know that taking too many medicines is harmful for the body and that humans need to eat nourishing food and to exercise regularly to stay healthy. When learning about materials and their properties, they can sort materials into groups on the basis of texture and appearance, and they can explain what happens to chocolate when it

is heated. When studying physical processes pupils know that switches can be used to control electrical devices but they cannot explain why the switch can be at any point in the circuit. Pupils have not studied forces and motion and light and sound in much depth but they know that pushes and pulls are examples of forces and that there are many kinds of light and sound sources.

121. Pupils know that sounds get fainter as they travel away from the source but average attaining pupils struggle to explain this phenomenon, whereas higher attaining pupils can explain why this happens because they have developed understanding of cause and effect.
122. During the inspection pupils made good short-term gains in their learning because of the good quality of teaching. However, over time, taking into account the scrutiny of pupils' work, progress has been satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils are making satisfactory progress but this could be better if further opportunities were provided to develop their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in recording their results in a variety of ways, and writing up their experiments without having to rely upon standard worksheets.
123. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are broadly in line with the national average, with pupils making good progress in experimental and investigative science, although progress in all other attainment targets, while satisfactory overall, is inconsistent. Very little coverage of physical processes is seen in the work of the present Year 5 class. However, rates of progress have improved since January when a new teacher was appointed, and there is evidence to suggest that standards are gradually improving.
124. By the end of Year 6 pupils have good knowledge of fair tests and they understand why they must keep all variables constant except the one under test. They know that predictions must be based upon scientific reasons rather than just guesses. They communicate their findings using appropriate scientific language but they do not have sufficient opportunities to record their observations using a varied range of tables and bar charts. In life processes and living things pupils can use scientific names for some major organs of body systems and they know how the eye, heart and ear function. Their knowledge of food chains, whilst satisfactory overall, could be better in relation to identifying predators and prey.
125. In materials and their properties, pupils can classify solids, liquids and gases but their scientific language is insufficiently developed to describe accurately differences and similarities in materials that they encounter, for example when distinguishing between liquids and gases in terms of flow and maintenance of shape and volume. Pupils' progress in physical processes is barely satisfactory and pupils' prior knowledge is not sufficiently well built upon. Whilst pupils can describe why a bulb fails to light because of a break in an electrical circuit, they do not explain in detail that electricity flows around the circuit. They know that gravity is a force but find it difficult to explain forces acting on a parachute as it falls to earth. This is because they have difficulty in thinking in abstract terms

because there has been too much emphasis on developing skills of experimental and investigative science at the expense of other attainment targets.

126. The quality of teaching is generally good in both key stages but it will take some time for this good quality of teaching to have a positive impact on pupils' achievements as the teacher in Year 6 has a lot of catching up to do because the present pupils have gaps in their knowledge, due to previous inconsistencies in teaching.
127. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge overall but would benefit from further in-service training to develop their knowledge of the higher levels of programmes of study. The best examples of good subject knowledge are in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5 when pupils are taught by the part-time teacher. As part of their performance management targets, teachers have rightly identified the need to continue their professional development through further training.
128. Teachers manage pupils well but occasionally do not rigorously reprimand pupils who are not paying attention, especially in Key Stage 2. This limits progress because pupils then ask the teacher to explain things that others have understood. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. A weakness is that teachers do not consistently insist on high levels of literacy in science. Opportunities to teach spelling and how to use a range of styles when writing up experiments are missed because there is an over reliance on worksheets. Expectations are generally higher in Year 1, Year 5 and Year 6. Very good science lessons were seen in Year 1 and Year 3 when teachers set up experiments for pupils. The whole class waited with bated breath to see a volcano erupt in Year 3 when pupils mixed vinegar with baking powder.
129. Support staff are used well to help pupils with special educational needs and this ensures that these pupils make good progress. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of each topic but this information is not used sufficiently to plan work to challenge higher attaining pupils. The co-ordinator is fully aware of this and developments are in hand to rectify it. There is a weakness in teachers' marking in that not all pupils date work appropriately and marking does not always inform pupils of how they can improve the quality of their work. Spelling mistakes are not used as teaching points and this limits progress.
130. Pupils generally have good attitudes to learning and behaviour is good. On occasions pupils do not stay on task but teachers quickly rectify this with their good questioning skills.
131. Resources are satisfactory and are used well but further opportunities could be provided for higher attaining pupils to develop their skills of independent research.
132. Since the previous inspection, average standards have been maintained at the end of both key stages, but the quality of teaching has improved from being satisfactory to good. However, because the staff have only worked together for a

short time as a team, this good teaching has not yet had a positive impact on standards.

ART AND DESIGN

133. Pupils attain above average standards in art and design at the end of both key stages and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The expertise, very good subject knowledge and guidance offered by the art co-ordinator are contributory factors to the standards that pupils attain.
134. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have good understanding of line, tone and shape and understand that correct shading techniques produce texture. They have good knowledge of colour mixing and they know that skin colours are varied. They can mix yellow, red and white paint and can add darker colours to create freckles. Pupils can use paintbrushes well and know that by using the tip of the paintbrush different effects can be produced. They know that lips do not look like bananas and they are aware that people's faces have different shapes.
135. They can work in the style of Klee and Mondrian and produce a range of animal paintings inspired by the music of Saint Saëns. They have produced some very detailed paintings representing energy, inspired by the painting of Miss Lala; their representations of Andy Warhol's work depict good skills of observation and comparison. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good gains in their learning because art is closely linked to all other curriculum areas.
136. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils, inspired by a visit to Hanley Museum, can talk about metaphors and symbolism in paintings. They create a collaborative painting in the style of Fiona Rae and name it 'Serious Smacking'. They can identify abstract images and shapes, and pupils with special educational needs have made a colourful response using a range of shapes and colour to represent their response to Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons'. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have produced three-dimensional geometric shapes in the style of Kandinsky and for World Book Day they have produced enlarged illustrations of characters from 'Alice in Wonderland'.
137. By the end of Year 6, pupils have worked with a full range of media using oils and pastels, exploring texture using paint and Polyfilla with reference to the work of Van Gogh. They have made colourful stained glass windows and their landscapes of the school environment show that they have good knowledge of perspective. Pupils have good smudging and blending techniques and they have very good skills of creating a variety of effects with their paintbrushes and they use sketchbooks appropriately to develop their techniques.
138. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning because they work with a variety of media, for example, when interviewed, they were highly appreciative of the opportunities provided for them to learn many new skills such as tie and dye T-shirts when working on the Swinging Sixties in their history topics. Pupils are keen to learn, they share resources appropriately and their sketch books indicate

that they are keen to improve their skills by the various attempts they make to get things right.

139. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers in both key stages use art very well to support other curriculum areas. The display work around the school is of very high quality and the art co-ordinator executes her duties very well by providing a high standard of artwork that other teachers aspire to. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is good. Planning is clear and it defines the learning objectives; scrutiny of teachers' plans indicates that continuity and progression of teaching subject-specific skills are assured. Teachers manage pupils well and insist that they produce their very best work and this results in standards being above national expectations at the end of both key stages. The use of good quality resources contributes to the high standards that pupils attain. The school has ensured that high standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

140. Due to timetable arrangements during the week of the inspection only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and none in Key Stage 2. Judgements have mainly been made through a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and by talking to both pupils and teachers. At the end of both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards that are at least in line with national expectations and the school is well placed to raise these standards further in the future. Although this judgement reflects a lowering of standards compared with the previous inspection, it should be noted that much emphasis has recently been placed on the core curriculum areas of literacy and numeracy in an attempt to raise standards. Furthermore, the school has had many staff changes in the last year. There is evidence that these new teachers are beginning to make a substantial contribution to the development of the subject, hence the opportunity to raise standards further in the future.
141. In both key stages pupils are learning to design, plan, make and evaluate. This is evident in the lesson seen and in work on display around the school. However, rates of pupils' progress are not completely consistent throughout the school. In art, for example, pupils use a sketchbook but in design and technology there is no similar consistent evidence that the processes of designing, planning and evaluation are recorded from year to year. There is occasional evidence that this is done in displays around the school. Pupils use a suitable range of materials and tools when making various items but there are occasions, especially in Key Stage 2, when more attention could be placed on the quality of the finished product. Suitable emphasis is given to food technology, although facilities available to the school for this area of the subject are limited.
142. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 design, make and evaluate bookmarks. They make moving pictures, using pulleys and levers, and in food technology make Christmas cakes and a fruit salad. Good links are made with other subjects such as science and English in work linked to material collages, levers and pulleys and monster bookmarks linked to reading the book 'Where The Wild Things Are'. Year 2 pupils develop sewing skills when they design and make a 'Friendship

Blanket'. Pupils learn to cut, stick and join. They design and make different forms of transport, using a variety of materials and large construction kits. Excellent teaching is seen in Year 1 when pupils investigate the best ways of fixing a removable paper hat or bow tie to a human figure. Pupils are challenged to investigate different types of fastenings and to explain why they think their choice is the most suitable. They show very good skills of reasoning, cutting, sticking and designing. In this lesson they are encouraged and stimulated by the excellent organisation and explanations of the teacher. They are also encouraged, through discussion to evaluate their work. The rigorous teaching of subject specific skills, as evidenced in Year 1, and the opportunities provided for pupils to become independent learners contribute to good short term gains pupils make in their learning.

143. Pupils in Key Stage 2 design and make paper aeroplanes in work linked to science. They follow written instructions and evaluate how successfully the models fly. Pupils were successful in a County Challenge, which required them to design and make a food product to raise funds for the school's Millennium Celebrations. Year 5 pupils design a balloon-powered vehicle. They draw their plan, list the materials needed and explain how the model changes from its original design and why. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the finished model is well presented and of good quality. Pupils also make photograph frames for Mother's Day, puppets and develop skills in weaving and stitching. The school should consider developing skills of disassembling and also encouraging the pupils to understand that the function and appearance of a product are important and that consumers sometimes buy goods for their appearance rather than the function.
144. As only one lesson was seen during the inspection it is difficult to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, but it is apparent that teachers' subject knowledge is never less than satisfactory. It is apparent that teachers are aware of many of the processes involved in design and technology and do make successful attempts to link work to other curriculum areas. There is a need to ensure consistency in the amount of time given to the subject in each year and in the way that it is taught, for example, in ensuring that there is a fully understood progression of skill development from one year to the next. In the lesson seen, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils was excellent. This was due to the high quality of teaching they received, which inspired them, and to their enjoyment of the practical nature of the subject.
145. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed to the school and is at the moment only taking a very general overview of the subject. She is, however, knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is becoming aware of how the school can make further developments in the future. For example, in developing a school specific-scheme of work from the QCA documentation, in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, in developing practical skills of making and in developing a whole- school policy of teaching to ensure consistency and progression from year to year. Assessment procedures are in place and are used appropriately, especially in Key Stage 1. Pupils are aware of safety issues when

using various tools and materials. There is a good range of resources available and this contributes to the average standards that pupils attain.

GEOGRAPHY

146. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, but there are times when above average attainers are under challenged because tasks set are not sufficiently demanding, especially in the amount of recorded work that pupils are expected to complete. This is because there is an over-use of worksheets, which prevents pupils from developing their extended writing skills. During the inspection it was only possible to see a limited number of lessons but observations have been made on the evidence of policy documents, discussions with staff and pupils and the examination of pupils' work and displays. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
147. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of their immediate location. They can record accurately their route to school, they know about local shops and they can make simple maps to plot their location. The work planned enables pupils to learn about places beyond their locality, such as Tocuaro in Mexico. They are beginning to use geographical vocabulary such as field, mountains and roads in the right context. They are able to talk simply about some similarities and differences between the two regions.
148. Pupils at the lower end of Key Stage 2 build upon their previous knowledge and understanding. Year 3 pupils have made a local study of Elworth and display a satisfactory understanding of the work covered. Year 4 pupils have compared life in an Indian village with their own area. They have used secondary sources such as maps, atlases and the Internet effectively to support the work. They are able to locate Bangalore on the world map and they can compare some features of landscape, weather and life there with those of Elworth. They use geographical language confidently during discussions. Year 5 pupils are doing a local survey of the effect of traffic in the area around the school and talk knowledgeably about its effects on the environment and the dangers posed.
149. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils consolidate what they have learnt but standards could be higher if the school planned further opportunities for pupils to extend what they have learnt in literacy and numeracy in this subject. The quality of teaching is generally good. In one lesson observed it was very good. In connection with their study of India, Year 6 pupils cooked Naan bread and compared it to the bread they normally eat. They also participated in a tasting session of various Indian foods purchased from a local supermarket. The work was well planned and organised. The seven parent and governor helpers who supported the teacher in the lesson were effectively deployed and gave very good quality support. Pupils demonstrated very good ability to follow instructions, answer and pose questions and co-operate effectively within a group. Very good cross-curricular links with science, religious education, history and literacy were developed. Pupils displayed a good understanding of the effect of cold and heat on varying ingredients and the effect of an agent such as yeast on other ingredients during the cooking process. They understand how different religions celebrate some foods and they know of changes that have occurred over time in the cooking and presentation of various foods.
150. Pupils in both key stages have good attitudes to learning because the curriculum is broad and balanced and relevant.

151. A weakness in pupils' geographical understanding across the school is their inability to discuss and understand how physical and human processes can change the features of a place and how these changes affect the lives and activities of people living there.
152. Overall the co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has audited the school's resources and added to them to ensure that they match the areas of learning being covered satisfactorily; they are now easily accessible. So far the co-ordinator's opportunities for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching have been limited to checking teachers' planning and advising them if required. Likewise, methods for evaluating how well pupils are learning have not yet been formally put in place. The school is aware of the need to develop assessments and provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.

HISTORY

153. Standards in history meet national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. There has been a slight decline in standards since the last inspection when they were deemed to be above national expectations. In addition to lessons observed, judgements have been made on the basis of policy documents, a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils.
154. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding about various important personalities who contributed to historical events, for example, Guy Fawkes, Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling. They also have a satisfactory understanding of the passage of time through learning about their own families and the locality. They have good skills of observation and they can identify the differences between schools in Victorian times and those of today.
155. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have studied most of the units of the history curriculum. Good use is made of secondary sources such as old photographs, maps, costumes and artefacts to support and add relevance to the work. Year 3 pupils display interest and satisfactory recall of the work they have done on the Tudors and in their study of past and present Elworth. Year 4 pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about evacuation and other effects on children during World War Two. Their written accounts of the period are of good quality. Year 5 pupils display clear recall of the events depicted in a Victorian day organised in the school by the teachers and a group from a local education centre. They display good knowledge of school and home life during the Victorian period. Through their study of the Ancient Greeks, Year 5 pupils identify roots of words used in English that derive from Greek words, for example, 'logy' and 'graphy'. They know how a Greek theatre is designed and have some knowledge of the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology. Good cross-curricular links have been made with art through studying vase patterns and Greek pottery. Year 6 pupils have studied the 'swinging sixties' era and have produced individual folders that include characters and main events from the period. They are able to talk perceptively about their findings.
156. Pupils across the school display interest and enjoyment in the work covered and have good attitudes to learning. Their recall and understanding of the work covered is good. Many, however, are unable to discuss the main causes and effect of the events and periods they have studied. A number of pupils are not provided

with sufficient challenges to pursue their studies in greater depth and consolidate their learning rather than extend it, and this results in satisfactory achievement when in fact it could be better.

157. In a lesson in Year 2 the teaching was of satisfactory quality. A grandmother's experience was effectively used to support the teaching and to add relevance to the content of the lesson. The planning and organisation of the work were satisfactory and good relationships existed between the teacher and pupils. Scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' work reveals that teaching is at least satisfactory as the full programmes of study are covered. Learning objectives are clearly identified and listening skills are appropriately identified. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of literacy and numeracy in history are in the early stages of development and, whilst satisfactory overall, could be better.
158. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Plans are monitored and the co-ordinator supports staff through information and advice. There is no monitoring of teaching in the subject. Assessment procedures to inform future planning and development are under-developed and the school has recognised this as an area to be addressed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

159. Standards are satisfactory at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils' achievement in relation to prior attainment is sound. Pupils' learning is generally good, including those pupils with special educational needs, but more could be done to challenge those pupils of above average ability. The school has maintained the sound standards identified in the previous inspection.
160. The quality of teaching is good. The teaching of basic skills is effective and explanations are clear. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good and an area of improvement since the last inspection. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to support some subjects in some classes, but this is not consistent between subjects and classes. All teachers are firmly committed to improving the provision they make for pupils and many are becoming enthusiastic about the potential of the subject to enhance learning in other subjects. However, the rate of learning in all classes is adversely affected by the lack of computers and the consequent need for pupils to practise what they have been taught at various times throughout the week. Nevertheless, teachers throughout the school make good use of limited facilities. The management of pupils is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2, consequently pupils work hard to master new skills, have good attitudes to work and behave well on all occasions.
161. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very positive. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 talk confidently about their use of information and communication technology both in and out of school and of its many uses.

162. The adoption of national guidance has brought coherence and direction to the long term planning in the subject, coverage being monitored by the subject co-ordinator. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but data from assessment is not rigorously used to plan the next steps in learning. Pupils' progress is recorded on a tracking sheet, which, together with an individual portfolio and work disk, forms an on-going record of achievement. As this has just been established it will take time before it is fully established throughout the school. Skills to be taught are listed by each teacher in their medium term plans.
163. The school has taken adequate measures to prevent Internet access to undesirable material and has given pupils clear guidance on using e-mail safely and properly.
164. Pupils' access to the Internet is always under adult supervision. A useful list of web-sites is kept by each machine and Key Stage 2 pupils regularly use 'Ask Jeeves' to access information.
165. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were able to use an art program to create a picture, produce a pictograph and pie-chart of favourite fruits, and to use a mouse and tools successfully to alter size and colours on the screen.
166. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 showed they were able to import a picture into a word document, cut and paste to edit a word document, and use Excel for spread sheets and graphs. Pupils in Year 3 were seen using a floor turtle successfully to investigate degrees of turn, clockwise and anti-clockwise, to support learning in a mathematics lesson.
167. The subject co-ordinator has been instrumental in the task of raising staff awareness and expertise in the subject. Funding by the National Grid for Learning has enabled the school to install new computers in each class but, at present, further computers are needed in order to give each class access to the Internet. Training for all staff, which is given priority in the school development plan, is already in place to give staff confidence in using new machines and to appreciate the full potential of the Internet.

MUSIC

168. Standards in music are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. All groups of pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
169. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can identify and name a selection of instruments. They can clap out rhythms, beat out a tune, tap out the syllables of their names and sing in tune. They are developing good skills of composition and they can compose a simple musical story of a journey to the seaside. Pupils can identify long, short, loud and soft sounds and they can work well in a group, knowing when to come in at the invitation of the conductor.

170. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above national expectations and all groups of pupils are making good gains in learning. The school has recently employed a part time music specialist and his excellent teaching skills are having a very positive effect on standards. Pupils sing very well and they are aware of the effect musical sounds have on the listener. They sing two-part harmonies with accuracy and, when rendering the 'Rainforest Song' pupils sing with both accuracy and flow. They can identify a range of styles, from classical music to blues, and they can accurately describe the effect composers wish to create. Instrumentalists attain high standards and their skills are used to add texture to the music that pupils compose. When practising songs the specialist music teacher used intonation in his voice that quickly stimulated pupils' interest and his passion for the subject encouraged all pupils to attain high standards.
171. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 because it is taught by a specialist teacher. An excellent lesson was seen in Key Stage 2 where pupils made very good gains in learning. In this lesson the teacher used time very effectively. His excellent command of the subject knowledge made learning exciting for the pupils because of the high expectations used, both in enabling them to use technical vocabulary and in teaching them a song with complex rhythmic patterns in the short time available. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils and enjoy teaching the subject. This enables pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and a desire to succeed. Teachers are clear about what is expected of their pupils and know how they will achieve it. The good use of modelling enables pupils to be accurate when pitching tunes and is leading to good levels of performance. Pupils behave well in lessons because they are interested in what they are doing. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on her role but is proving to be keen and willing and has good knowledge of how to develop multicultural aspects of this subject further. Resources are generally satisfactory. However, the number of pitched instruments is limited and this restricts progress when pupils are working in large groups.
172. Assessments at present are not formalised and, whilst teachers have a general overview of standards, they are not using assessments rigorously to match tasks to pupils' needs. This results in higher attaining pupils not always being sufficiently challenged. Pupils in both key stages take part in performances and thoroughly enjoy the end of term productions, which are written by the art co-ordinator.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

173. The great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are attaining standards that are above national expectations and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, whilst in Key Stage 2 they are attaining standards in line with those expected nationally. Although this reflects a regression in standards at Key Stage 2, as new members of staff become increasingly established in the school there is every possibility that standards will rise in the future. Teachers'

planning covers all elements of the programmes of study and the subject is allocated sufficient time.

174. Younger pupils are making sound progress in developing throwing and catching skills. They are also showing good progress in developing skills in using hockey sticks and tennis rackets, learning to control a ball, dribble and pass to a partner. Pupils are becoming adept at the basic movements of running, hopping, skipping and jumping and move about the hall and playground safely. In a gymnastics lesson in Year 1 pupils show that they are developing good routines in the subject. They come into and leave the hall quietly and sensibly, have a good understanding of safety requirements, are learning to put out and away large pieces of apparatus and show an understanding that physical education is a lesson in which they must be quiet and sensible in order to listen to the instructions of the teacher and for safety reasons. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to show confidence and a degree of poise in their movements. For example, they are aware of starting and finishing positions for sequences of movements and are being taught how to move between large pieces of apparatus. They construct sequences that include a balance, jump and a roll.
175. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to construct sequences of movements involving twists and turns, and show an understanding of different levels and directions. However, the standard of their work varies depending on the quality of the teaching. Pupils in Year 4 make good progress in gymnastics but overall there is a lack of progression in the quality of movement from that seen in Key Stage 1. This is because, up until now, the school co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor standards and advise staff on continuity and progression. Year 3 pupils, over a four-week period, devise a dance routine in a link with the literacy genres of mystery and adventure. They produce an imaginative dance with some of the higher attaining boys showing very good facial expressions and movement that reflect the music being used. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have swimming lessons each year and, by the time they leave the school, a large majority can swim twenty-five metres. The school takes part in a local swimming gala. Competitive sporting opportunities are also available in netball and soccer. Activities in netball, soccer, basketball and athletics also contribute to the skills pupils acquire. Four members of staff and a large majority of Key Stage 2 pupils take part in these activities. Year 3 and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to go on residential visits where they are able to experience outdoor adventurous activities.
176. Pupils enjoy the lessons and invariably put a lot of effort into the activities. Their attitudes and behaviour are good overall, especially in Key Stage 1, where examples of very good attitudes were seen. Most pupils are sensible, aware of the safety requirements of the subject and able to work co-operatively with partners or in larger groups. This is especially the case when class routines have been well established by at least good teaching. There are occasions in Key Stage 2 when pupils demonstrate that these routines are not secure. Noise levels rise, concentration lapses and the standards pupils attain are not as high as they could be. This also results in the increased possibility of accidents occurring. In

all but one of the lessons seen both pupils and teachers were appropriately dressed.

177. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are conscientious and enthusiastic and plan thoroughly. Most are confident and have good subject knowledge. The best teaching occurs when teachers insist on appropriate routines for the subject that ensure high standards of health, safety and pupil behaviour. Many teachers have high expectations of the standards that pupils can attain and this is particularly apparent in Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. When teachers are confident enough to take an active part in the lesson they provide very good role models and this has a positive effect on the standards attained by pupils.
178. The co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, has only recently been appointed to the school. There are current plans to develop resources, review the policy and the scheme of work, develop assessment procedures to ensure that pupils' skills are progressively built upon and to introduce more opportunities. There is also a need to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to provide in-service opportunities, using the skills that are already present in the teaching, for example in Years 1 and 4. The accommodation for physical education is good. There is a large hall and a good-sized playing field that contains a small adventure playground.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

179. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school, both in their learning about religion and learning from religion, and achievement is satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. Religious education lessons, circle time and school assemblies all contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral and social education. The previous inspection judged attainment at Key Stage 2 to be above expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. There has been a slight decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 because of the particular academic profile of pupils in Year 6, where many pupils are on the special educational needs register. Furthermore, there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to develop their writing skills through religious education because there is a tendency for teachers in Key Stage 2 to rely on worksheets and this limits pupils' opportunities to develop their writing skills.
180. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 develop an appropriate awareness and appreciation of Christianity and other world faiths. Through the use of pupils' own experiences, teachers help pupils to consider other people's beliefs and feelings. Links with literacy are made when pupils discuss and write about this.
181. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good. They show respect for the beliefs of others and a thoughtful, caring attitude. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted well through activities associated with religious

education. The school encourages the values of co-operation, tolerance and respect.

182. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident when discussing world faiths and understand the beliefs associated with them. They understand that having a faith usually involves belief in a deity, visiting a place of worship, holding ceremonies and showing respect. They relate what they have learnt to their own experience and understand that others may have different beliefs to their own. Visits have been made to the local church and the vicar is a regular contributor to school assemblies. Pupils record their work in a 'Book of Beliefs', a feature which is consistent throughout the school. Pupils' ability to use appropriate terminology to explain matters of religious belief is good.
183. The quality of teaching is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Planning of lessons is thorough. Teachers are confident in their teaching, well supported by a clear scheme of work that closely follows the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The pace of lessons is good and time is used effectively. Questioning is used effectively to establish what has been learnt. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Drama is used very effectively as a means of expression to illustrate religious stories, for example, Year 4 pupils acting out a Hindu story about Rama and Sita, and as a means to emphasise with characters within them. Pupils are responsive and interested in the subject matter and make thoughtful and constructive comments. As a result of this their behaviour is good.
184. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her subject and management is good. She has a good understanding of the subject and her current and future plans for development are appropriate. The range of religious artefacts is put to good use, together with other source materials to help illustrate and enhance their teaching. The displays of pupils' work and artefacts relating to world faiths are a strength in the subject and contribute greatly to pupils' understanding.