

INSPECTION REPORT

DALLAM COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 110972

Headteacher: Mrs J Watson

Reporting inspector: Mr S O'Toole
20891

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th February 2002

Inspection number: 194497

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: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Boulting Avenue
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Warrington
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Speakman

Date of previous inspection: 19th May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20891	S O'Toole	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Art and design Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What could the school do to improve further
31729	B Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
27324	D Crow	Team inspector	The foundation stage Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
10068	A Wilkinson-Tilbrook	Team inspector	English Geography History	
20301	P Isherwood	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology	
27899	G Beasley	Team inspector	Science Music Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dallam Community Primary School is of average size. Because of its provision for special educational needs it draws its pupils from a wide area, including the surrounding local authority housing estate. A total of 188 pupils attend the school made up of 99 boys and 89 girls aged from four to eleven and 29 children attend part-time in the nursery. The school has two enhanced provision classes and a developmental unit maintaining places for 35 children with statements of special educational need for communication difficulties. Almost all pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds and live in an area that is economically very disadvantaged. No pupils have English as an additional language. Just over half of the pupils (112) have special educational needs which is well above the national average. A quarter of pupils have statements of special educational needs which is well above average. Nearly half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is above average. Children are admitted to the nursery in the term after their third birthday. On admission to the school, most pupils have levels of attainment that are well below those expected for their age, and have very poor communication and language skills. Since the previous inspection the number of pupils attending the school has fallen. There have been several changes of staff in recent months and two teachers are on temporary contracts.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good quality of education and has an award for raising achievement since the previous inspection. Although standards in English are well below average and below average in mathematics, the pupils make good progress and achieve well given their very poor skills on admission to the school. Standards in science are average. Most of the teaching is good. The headteacher provides determined and effective leadership. The school is managed well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve well and make good progress in most subjects.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and it is very good in the enhanced resource classes.
- The teaching is good.
- Pupils are cared for very well by thoughtful and considerate staff and personal support and guidance is excellent.

What could be improved

- Attainment in English and mathematics throughout the school.
- Standards throughout the school in history and geography and religious education
- The work of subject leaders in monitoring religious education, history, art and design and physical education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was inspected in May 1997 it has made good improvement. The school has successfully tackled the issues in the previous inspection report and is better than it was. Standards have improved particularly in science, information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design, although more remains to be done to improve

performance in national tests in English and mathematics. The standard of teaching is better than it was. Leadership and management have improved and the governors take a more active part in school development. The school is well placed to build upon the quality of education it provides.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E*	E	E	C
mathematics	E*	D	E	D
science	E*	C	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Since the previous inspection the school has significantly increased the percentage of pupils attaining average standards in national tests against a background of educating an increased proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this represents good achievement. The school has improved standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 at a rate above that of the national improving trend. Although standards in English and mathematics were well below the national average in the 2001 tests, they were average in science. When compared with schools with similar intakes, standards were well above average in science, average in English but below average in mathematics. In the national tests at end of Year 2 in 2001, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools standards were below average in English and average in mathematics. Standards in science were below average. The school sets challenging targets and is on course to achieve them. Given the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and pupils' very low attainment on admission to the school, standards are sufficiently high. The school has successfully reduced the difference in performance in national tests between boys and girls. Comparisons with all and similar schools are unreliable given the high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs.

In spite of the good progress made in the nursery and reception classes, attainment in all of the areas of learning is below that expected by the time the children start in Year 1, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. The school provides sufficient challenge for the more able and they achieve appropriate standards for their age and above average levels in science. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English are well below average, and below average in mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in science are below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well in practical aspects of their work, for example, in science, shape, space and measures in mathematics, some aspects of art and design and design and technology where they are not as dependent on their knowledge of English for success. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are average in information and communication technology, physical education, art and design and music. Standards are below those expected in religious education, history and geography. Computers are not used sufficiently to support work in other subjects. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are

improving steadily but their ability to apply these skills in other subjects is hampered by their limited comprehension of a wide range of texts, poor vocabulary and understanding of ideas.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils show interest in lessons and have positive attitudes. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress in personal, social and emotional development.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The pupils have a very good understanding of the school's code of conduct. A minority of pupils disrupt some lessons. There have been eight exclusions for bad behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Many pupils struggle to maintain concentration and to take the initiative in learning. Relationships are satisfactory most pupils play well together and share equipment and resources.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below the national average. Several pupils are regularly late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and it is good. Although learning is good overall there are some areas for development which include extending pupils' skills in research, using their initiative and extending their confidence in working independently. Several teachers have only very recently joined the school. In a few lessons, in spite of generally good discipline and behaviour management, the unsettled behaviour of a few pupils hampers the learning of others. Learning is also affected by the pupils' poor vocabulary and language skills. Overall, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. However, there are some aspects of the teaching of reading which could be better. The school has focused satisfactorily on developing literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects but there are insufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in the enhanced resource classes is very good with some excellent features. In the other classes, pupils with special educational needs are taught well and receive well-focused and effective support from the classroom assistants. Teachers and support staff have a good understanding of the pupils' needs and how to meet them through effective planning and guidance. There is good teaching in the nursery and reception classes which enables the children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Planning is good in English, mathematics and science because it identifies different objectives for the various abilities in the classes. Most pupils work hard, show interest in their lessons and concentrate. The pupils respond well to the challenge of practical work in art and design and design and technology. The marking of English is good as it guides pupils' on how they might improve. Areas for further development include ensuring that pupils' attention is held through more

practical opportunities, extending opportunities for speaking and listening and making more effective reviews of learning at the end of lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is a good curriculum in the foundation stage. There is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. The school makes suitable use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. There are limited opportunities to use computers in most lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The work of the enhanced and mainstream classes is very effective. Individual education plans are well-focused and used very effectively to plan work. Support staff provide very good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are good procedures to promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are prepared appropriately for life in a culturally diverse society. There is good use of visitors and visits to enhance pupils' learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The staff are caring and thoughtful and take account of individual personal needs excellently. Assessment is used well in mathematics and science to plan work, although the assessment of reading in the juniors is not sharp enough.

The parents' have positive views of the school and the school provides good information about their children's progress. The way the school involves parents of children with special educational needs is very good. The school has good links with other schools and the community, and very good links with outside agencies.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides very good, strong and effective leadership and is supported well by her colleagues and governors. The changes in staff have meant that there is a need to improve the role of subject leaders in monitoring the pupils' work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Effectively. The governors are involved in strategic planning and in reviewing curriculum developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school takes good measures to check on its performance and this has led to steady improvement in standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors and headteacher use funds wisely and tender for important spending decisions ensuring best value for supplies and services. There are sufficient teaching staff and a good number of very effective support staff. Resources are satisfactory although there are some shortages of software for information and communication technology, physical education apparatus and artefacts for religious education. The buildings are spacious and in very good condition.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The approachability of staff and their care for the children, particularly in the enhanced resource classes.• The progress made by all groups of pupils.• Their children like school.• How the school is led.• The quality of teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The extra-curricular activities.• Consistency in homework.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of the parents. Homework is satisfactory and there is an adequate number of extra-curricular activities for the juniors but little for the infants.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall standards in most subjects have improved since the previous inspection although more remains to be done to raise attainment particularly in English and mathematics. Nevertheless the pupils achieve well given the following factors:
 - Attainment on admission to the school is very poor, particularly in language, literacy and social skills;
 - There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs;
 - Pupils in the enhanced resource classes take part in national tests and, because of their particular difficulties in communication, depress the school's overall performance;
 - Levels of mobility are high and many pupils attending the school have had their education disrupted by changes of school;
 - There have been several recent changes of staff;
 - The majority of pupils have poor socio-economic backgrounds;
 - Attendance is below average;
 - There is an above average level of exclusion and a few pupils disrupt some lessons.

2. The staff of the school work hard to compensate for these factors through:
 - Good teaching, including the very good support of classroom assistants;
 - Providing good opportunities to raise the pupils' self esteem;
 - Using assessment and target setting to pinpoint areas in which the pupils might improve;
 - Effective additional and often individual support for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties;
 - Rigorous monitoring of attendance and punctuality;
 - Providing opportunities for parents to participate in family literacy project;
 - Very effective monitoring of the pupils' academic and personal development and the use of high quality records of achievement which involve pupils in identifying their own progress and areas for development.

3. Children start in the nursery with very poor levels of skill and understanding in almost all areas of their development, they have very limited language and literacy skills and many lack confidence in working and playing alongside others. The provision and teaching in the nursery class have improved since the previous inspection and the children now make good progress. This progress is built upon in the reception class. In spite of the good progress made, attainment by the end of the reception year is below that expected of children of this age in all areas of their development. Very few children attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, creative and physical development. They improve their personal, social and emotional skills, co-operate well and play and work together effectively but lack confidence in working independently.

4. The results of national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 showed that standards were well below the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. When compared with schools with similar intakes, standards were average in English and well above average in science. Standards in mathematics were below average. These results represent good success for the school given that half of the pupils had special educational needs and a quarter had statements of special educational need.

The results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. Teacher assessments in science showed that standards were below average. Comparisons with similar schools showed that standards were below average in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics. Inclusion of the statemented pupils from the enhanced resource classes affects the overall attainment in national tests. The school has an award for raising pupils' achievement over the last four years. The rate of improvement has been above the national trend in both the infants and juniors. The school identified that generally girls were achieving at higher levels than boys overall and has used this information to focus on boys' attainment. It has met with good success and there was little variation in the performance of boys and girls in the national tests in 2001. The school sets suitably challenging targets and is on course to meet them.

5. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Years 2 and 6 standards in English are well below average. The pupils have poor speech and find it difficult to communicate in formal situations in front of groups. Their listening skills are improving, through additional opportunities in circle times, discussions in classrooms, but are still below average. There are insufficient opportunities for role-play and drama. The school has placed a good emphasis on improving writing and pupils have made good progress in this aspect of their work although standards are below average. Standards in reading are well below average. Basic techniques using the National Literacy Strategy are satisfactory but there is insufficient rigour in monitoring pupils' progress, too few opportunities to listen to stories and irregular opportunities for home reading. Pupils easily forget what they have been taught and have problems in recalling technical vocabulary which hampers their progress in other subjects.
6. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. At the end of Year 6 pupils have average skills, knowledge and understanding in shape, space and measures. Their improved performance in this aspect of their work is due to the good opportunities to carry out practical tasks using good apparatus. Pupils' understanding of mathematical ideas and competence in solving problems is hampered by their limited vocabulary. Pupils have limited understanding of graphs and charts and make insufficient use of computers to support their work in this aspect of mathematics. The improvement in performance by the current Year 6 when compared with that of 2001 is due to the school's increased emphasis on the teaching of mathematics, improvements in planning and the effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy.
7. Inspection evidence shows that standards in science are below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Pupils' success in science, particularly in Years 3 to 6 is due to effective teaching and good opportunities to take part in a wide range of practical experiments. The teaching of scientific vocabulary is also effective and this helps the pupils to understand scientific terms and methods. The school provides an interesting and challenging science curriculum which is taught well through practical opportunities for pupils to experiment and investigate.
8. Standards in information and communication technology have improved much since the previous inspection and are now in line with national expectations overall by the end of Years 2 and 6. This good improvement has been achieved through better resources and more regular opportunities to use computers. However, there are shortages of software and teachers do not make sufficient use of information and communication technology in most other subjects. Standards in design and technology, art and design, music and physical education are in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are good at the practical aspects of these subjects as they do

not rely as heavily on written work. Standards in religious education, history and geography are below those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Although there is adequate coverage of these subjects and some imaginative teaching, particularly in history, the pupils' understanding is hampered by their weak skills in reading and limited general knowledge.

9. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in most subjects. They apply skills such as handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar in their writing but lack flair in expressing themselves fluently. Pupils struggle with research because of weak reading skills but they are aware of techniques such as note taking to aid them in collating information from books. Many pupils lack enthusiasm for reading. The pupils use skills in measuring appropriately in their work in making models in design and technology. They apply what they have learned about co-ordinates to reading maps in geography lessons. They are also aware of patterns and symmetry in their work on Islamic art and printing.
10. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes make very good progress because they receive very focused support from skilled teachers and support staff and the small size of groups helps to ensure that they receive almost individual attention. The pupils achieve well. The effective use of individual education plans, which include sharply focused targets, guide staff on planning well-matched work and the pupils are clear about what is expected of them. Several pupils in the enhanced resource classes succeed well in several areas and in these cases the pupils join mainstream classes to work. A good success is that some pupils eventually transfer to their own groups for all lessons. The parents' view that their children achieve well is fully justified by inspection evidence.
11. Pupils in the mainstream classes with special educational needs make good progress. They benefit from well-planned work linked to the targets in their individual education plans and some receive additional support. They make good progress in basic skills in English and mathematics and, although their attainment in these subjects is well below the national average, the pupils do as well as they can. There is sufficient challenge for the more able and average pupils and they make good progress. Boys and girls progress at similar rates although a few pupils, mainly boys, have behavioural difficulties and this hampers their progress and sometimes interferes with their classmates' progress. Progress is at its best in writing, listening, mathematics, science, art and design, music, and design and technology. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, speaking, history, geography and religious education. The variation in progress between subjects is due to pupils' limited language and literacy skills and the quality of teaching. Progress is mostly consistent through the school but there are some variations. Temporary teachers have taught the current group of Year 2 pupils. This has led to inconsistencies in developing some basic skills. The situation will be resolved from next term with the appointment of the new deputy headteacher.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to school and their work are satisfactory, with most pupils involving themselves in lessons and joining in with play and related activities. The pupils respond appropriately to literacy and numeracy sessions and this is partly due to the organisation of lessons which include opportunities for the pupils to carry out a variety of activities which helps them to maintain concentration. Many contribute thoughtfully to discussions in literacy and listen carefully although their responses are hampered by limited vocabulary. Pupils generally show good interest and involvement in practical lessons. They enjoy art and design and take care when using resources. In design and

technology they enjoy making models and often concentrate well on improving their products. Most of the pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work. They concentrate well on their work, for example, when working on plotting co-ordinates in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes mostly have positive attitudes and good behaviour. The small size of classes in these units and the large number of adult helpers assist pupils in adjusting to the demands of working co-operatively and collaboratively well. In the nursery and reception classes, the children are enthusiastic about lessons. They enjoy the practical opportunities provided and make good gains in their personal, social and emotional development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In a few classes, some pupils are lethargic in lessons and make little effort to please the teacher. In a small number of lessons a few pupils were disruptive. The majority of pupils in the class usually ignore these incidents but, occasionally, enough pupils involve themselves in poor behaviour to divert the teacher's focus from class teaching to the management of the class.

13. Behaviour in and around the school is satisfactory. Most pupils are well behaved and biddable which results in their contributing to lessons, especially those which interest and excite them, such as practical science lessons. Without exception, pupils in the special provision classes behave well and work hard. School rules are well publicised and well understood by pupils. Around the school, in assembly, and in the playground, there is a high level of supervision, with pupils being able to earn rewards for good behaviour, such as not running in the corridors. Pupils' behaviour is mostly good at these times. There are occasional angry outbursts by a very small number of pupils, which may lead to violence and the temporary exclusion of the pupil concerned. The school places great effort upon helping pupils to manage their emotions and it is only after all support procedures have been exhausted that the school is compelled to exclude pupils. During the last year, eight pupils were excluded on a temporary basis. A significant number of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire stated that they thought that the behaviour in school was not good.
14. In general, pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The pupils have a respect for the feelings of others and, through circle time and the study of fables and parables, they understand that their actions will have an impact upon others. Relationships throughout the school are satisfactory with most pupils recognising the need to take turns and to listen when others are speaking. However, few pupils act upon their own initiative and take personal responsibility for features of school life. Most lack confidence in using their initiative.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory. During the last year, the rate of attendance was 92.2% which is well below the national average, and the rate of unauthorised absence is above the national average. The rate of attendance has declined since the previous inspection. Much of the absenteeism is due to illness, and the school keeps detailed records of these outbreaks as part of pupils' welfare monitoring.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good overall. Of the 59 lessons seen during the inspection, 16 were very good or excellent, 25 were good and 15 satisfactory. Three lessons were unsatisfactory. There is good teaching in the reception and nursery classes. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes make very good progress because of the very good teaching which often has excellent features. In the mainstream classes, the pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching. Teaching successfully meets the needs of pupils of all abilities because of a

strong commitment by all staff to encourage pupils to achieve well. The support staff make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

17. Teaching in the enhanced resource classes is very good with some excellent features. Staff have a very good knowledge of the variety of educational, emotional and physical difficulties of the pupils and combine this with a thorough understanding of how best to help individuals to make progress. There is a very strong emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and the success of the teaching of English and mathematics is due to approaching each new aspect with thorough preparation and planning which is matched to the needs of the pupils. The programmes of study developed are matched carefully to targets in the pupils' individual education plans and all staff are very familiar with the targets. They keep a careful watch on the pupils' progress and regularly assess the pupils through observation and discussion. This information is then used to plan the next step in learning. Learning is successfully enhanced by a very practical approach and well-focused questions, which are sufficiently challenging. Teachers and support staff are very skilful in intervening at the right moment with a word of encouragement or guidance to avoid the pupils becoming frustrated. The staff make good use of ideas and techniques from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to plan their work. Much is expected of the pupils and they respond well by working hard and behaving well. Pupils show interest in their work. Teachers are very skilful in identifying pupils with particular strengths. For example, in a mathematics lesson, questions were geared to challenging the more able which helped to promote their self-esteem. There is very effective teaching of the other subjects, often underpinned with a wide range of practical activities which aid the pupils' understanding. In an excellent history lesson, the teacher captured the pupils' imaginations as they handled antique objects and gained a real understanding of how things change over time.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes is good. The support provided for those with statements of special educational needs is very good as teachers and support staff focus well in planning their lessons to enable the pupils to reach the targets in their individual education plans. Most targets are clear and measurable, for example, being able to read a certain number of words or recognise particular letter sounds. Occasionally, the targets are too general, particularly in the area of behavioural need and, as a result, it is difficult to measure progress. Individual education plans are linked particularly well to the English aspect of the National Curriculum.
19. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good overall with some very good teaching in the reception class. The children make good progress in each of the areas of learning because of the suitable range of activities provided and the effective balance between opportunities for the children to choose and times when they are guided by the teachers or support staff. The staff work together well to ensure that the needs of the children, including those with special educational needs, are met. The nursery teacher carefully identifies the needs of the children through effective assessment shortly after the children are admitted to the school. This information is used to plan work, which includes many opportunities for the children to work practically by using a good range of apparatus. This approach works well as the children feel confident and secure. Early communication skills, including teaching about the sounds and shapes of letters, are successfully promoted. The teachers in reception and nursery classes take good care to explain activities thoroughly. There are good opportunities for the children to explore and extend early language through role-play. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good as the staff get involved with the children through role-play and discussion in seeking to extend the children's vocabulary. All staff work hard to encourage clear speech and by telling and reading stories stimulate an interest in

books. The staff are very caring and are also skilful in promoting independence by encouraging the children to work on their own by providing tasks which are at the right level for the individual. They also develop confidence through asking supportive questions, providing helpful guidance and by giving support when it is needed. Mathematical development is taught well through many practical activities, opportunities to learn number rhymes and good use of equipment. The staff plan a good range of activities and there are daily opportunities to count, recite number rhymes and match and sort objects. The children respond well to these practical opportunities and often maintain good levels of concentration. The other areas of learning are taught well, although the children's progress is often hampered by their limited social and language skills. The staff in the nursery and reception seek to make the classrooms interesting and stimulating places where the children will want to learn. They are largely successful and this contributes to the children's personal, social and emotional development well.

20. Most of the teaching at the school is good. Teaching in several year groups has been affected in recent months by several changes of staff and the pupils' learning has suffered from lack of continuity, particularly in Year 2. However, the appointment of a permanent member of staff from April 2002 should restore consistency. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good but there are weaknesses in the teaching of reading in the juniors. Overall, the teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and use it well to plan lessons which include suitable challenge for all abilities. Literacy lessons are planned to include a suitable balance of activities and at the start of lessons the learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them. This part of the lesson is usually successful as pupils are left in no doubt about what is expected of them. The staff make good use of a range of resources and are particularly successful in promoting writing skills which have been the focus of school improvement in the previous few months. Pupils respond well to opportunities to write in a neat and joined script and most make reasonable attempts to spell words correctly. During the introductions the teachers explain carefully the skills to be developed and review these objectives during the main part of the lesson. However, at the end of lessons many pupils lose interest and find it difficult to review what has been learned and this aspect of the teaching needs to be reviewed. The teaching of reading is covered well in Years 1 and 2 with regular practice and review but in the juniors most teachers keep insufficiently detailed records and do not sufficiently involve parents with reading at home. There is a good emphasis on improving reading in Years 1 and 2, through teaching about the sounds that letters make and regular opportunities for the pupils to take reading books home. The family literacy programme is beginning to have an impact and teachers are now more aware of the potential support available from parents. Support staff contribute effectively to listening to pupils read and often pose good questions to check on the pupils' understanding.
21. The teaching of mathematics is good and the staff use the National Numeracy Strategy to plan lessons. There is an appropriate balance between mental arithmetic and practising skills. The pace of most lessons is good. Most pupils enjoy mathematics and work hard during lessons. They benefit from the tight structure of lessons as they are sure what is expected of them. In both English and mathematics the pupils generally respond well and most work hard, concentrate and persevere. Teachers have sufficiently high expectations of the pupils and encourage them to present their work well. There is a suitable emphasis on teaching the vocabulary of mathematics and this helps the pupils to solve simple problems, although many struggle with complex mathematical ideas. The limited opportunities for pupils to solve problems is an area for development in the teaching of mathematics, as is the marking of pupils' work.

22. The teaching of science is good and the teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use well to plan work which is often of a practical nature and helps the pupils to understand scientific ideas. Teachers have improved their subject knowledge of information and communication technology since the previous inspection and there are plans for further training to guide them on using computers more, in lessons other than information and communication technology. More remains to be done to include the use of computers in lesson planning to help the pupils to refine their skills.
23. Teaching in most of the other subjects is satisfactory with some good features. Strengths include the use of a good range of artefacts to enthuse and interest the pupils. Teachers explain activities well and often repeat the instructions to ensure that all pupils have understood. During lessons they and the support staff are busy about the room offering guidance and encouragement. There is good use of praise and reward but in several subjects there is a lack of focused marking to guide pupils on how they might improve. The school has recently introduced target setting and these targets are used well to guide pupils on improving their performance in English. Marking in English is often linked to the targets
24. Homework is used satisfactorily overall but insufficiently in reading in the juniors. Teachers plan lessons well and take account of the differing abilities in the class. They often set work which is matched to pupils' needs, and this helps to build the pupils' confidence, as they are able to cope with work at their level. Most lessons are well structured and provide opportunities for pupils to work as whole classes, in small groups and individually. Often at the beginning of lessons the teachers introduce new vocabulary but this good practice is not consistent. In most lessons and classes, discipline is calm, measured and effective but in a small number of lessons pupils are not managed as well as they should be and this slows the pace of learning. Sometimes, pupils with behavioural difficulties are disruptive and spoil the lesson for their peers by being truculent and bad mannered. Most teachers deal with these situations effectively. These problems occasionally surface after a break. The teachers make good use of resources in practical lessons and encourage the pupils to take care of equipment and materials. In a good art and design lesson in Year 1 the pupils measured out paint, carefully mixed it and applied good creative effort to their painting of a woodland scene. There were some excellent lessons in Year 6 and the enhanced resource classes when learning proceeded at a brisk pace and the pupils were challenged very well. A significant characteristic of the excellent teaching was the very high expectations of all pupils' performance, including the more able and those with statements of special educational need.
25. An area for improvement in the teaching is the application of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Occasionally, this is done well, as in a formal lesson in Year 6 when pupils had to listen carefully and write down their answers at speed. Although the school has done much to improve pupils' writing, more emphasis is needed on extending pupils' speaking and listening skills through role-play and drama. Pupils' learning is at its best when the teachers provide practical activities. Pupils were keen learners in a music lesson which involved making and performing their own compositions. The teacher capitalised on their enthusiasm and extended their work by adding further challenges. Some pupils struggle with expressing themselves clearly in speech and in writing and this leads to some frustration.
26. In a few lessons the teaching is not good enough as instructions are too complicated and the pupils become restless. This situation has been made worse by the frequent changes of teacher in some classes. Nevertheless, there is good support from the headteacher and support staff to compensate for this weakness. Pupils work at an

appropriate speed and in most subjects apply good effort, although the pupils' short attention span means that learning slows towards the end of lessons and this is made worse when lessons go on too long. Their limited speaking skills hamper the contribution they make in some lessons. For example, in a circle time few pupils were able to speak clearly and express their opinions about their own gifts and talents. The teachers try several ways of making lessons interesting. The pupils have good opportunities to take part in visits, often subsidised by the school, and the pupils speak enthusiastically about these trips. They have a good impact on learning.

27. In summary, most of the teaching is good and learning is enhanced by the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Planning is thorough and focuses on the needs of pupils of different abilities. There is generally good teaching of the basic skills, although reading receives insufficient emphasis in the junior classes. Most pupils behave appropriately but a few pupils with behavioural difficulties sometimes disrupt learning. Teaching is most successful where lessons include practical activities and time is used well to keep the pace of learning moving.

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

28. The curriculum for pupils in the infants and juniors is satisfactory. It includes all subjects and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are satisfactory policies and long and medium term plans in place for all subjects and the school has implemented national guidelines for most subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, pupils only have limited opportunities to apply their information, communication and technology skills to other subjects, because current staff have insufficient training in this area. The school follows the religious education syllabus as agreed by schools in Cheshire. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They have full access to the curriculum and when they are withdrawn from the class, it is part of a well thought out systematic programme.
29. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage i.e. the nursery and reception class, is good and is planned effectively in accordance with the nationally recommended Stepping Stones towards the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. These areas are Personal and Social Development; Communication, Language and Literacy; Mathematics; Creative Development and Physical Development. The teachers provide a wide range of stimulating activities, including opportunities for children to choose and work independently and also to benefit from working with adults. This has a positive effect on developing children's learning. The curriculum for children in the nursery has shown very good improvement since the last inspection when it was described as poor.
30. The school has adopted the national strategies for numeracy and literacy satisfactorily. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well but are not sufficiently developed or applied in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. Planning and subject guidance have improved since the previous inspection and this enables teachers to plan work which is generally matched well to pupils' abilities. There are subject leaders for most subjects but recent staff changes have meant several changes of responsibility and some subjects do not have a permanent co-ordinator. In the main, this does not have a detrimental effect as the school now has secure systems to ensure the consistent teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

31. Pupils with special educational needs in all classes have access to the full curriculum and this has a positive effect on learning. When there is withdrawal from a lesson this is as part of a planned programme. There are a very small number of occasions when the actual time of withdrawal needs to be modified, for example, in physical education where some pupils miss the start of the lessons. There are good procedures in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes also have full access to the curriculum and thorough planning ensures that it is matched well to the needs of individuals.
32. The school provides a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to participate in netball, chess, and recorders during the week, and after school on Fridays 'reward football' takes place to recognise efforts made by Year 6 in managing their own behaviour. All pupils are involved in the school productions each year, and Year 4 pupils benefit from a residential activity course in Burwardsley. An independent neighbourhood nursery is due to start within the school and this will provide additional opportunities for extra-curricular activities in the near future.
33. The school provides well for the personal, social, and health education of all pupils. Through class discussions, known as 'circle time', incidental opportunities, and taught elements of some subjects, such as religious education and science, pupils are presented with an effective programme of study. Staff have received recent training in circle time presentation and this is helping teachers to address and support the needs of their classes. Drugs awareness is undertaken as part of the science scheme, and the school health advisor provides support for the teacher in the presentation of sex education for older pupils. Teachers and other adults in school take all opportunities to provide positive role models for pupils, and school assemblies are used well to present pupils with moral and social instruction.
34. The school has good links with the community. All year groups undertake visits to museums and other places of interest which are linked to study topics and provide pupils with social occasions in addition to learning experiences. The school places great emphasis upon educational visits and the governing body has made special provision to ensure that a rich and varied programme is available to all pupils. Strong links exist with three churches and these provide support for assemblies and the 'Bible Explorer' programme being pursued by Year 6 pupils. Visitors to school have presented music and a poetry workshop, and storytelling on the themes of child protection and bullying. Some visitors have worked with a number of classes on themes pertinent to circle time.
35. The school has good links with the high school to which most pupils transfer. Year 6 pupils make four visits during the year to help to develop their information and communication technology skills and to get to know the school and its staff. The head of Year 7 makes several visits to school to meet the pupils and to discuss their pastoral needs. There are good curricular and pastoral links with the high school, particularly in information and communication technology, mathematics and between the co-ordinators for special educational needs. Pupils from the high school and NNEB students from a local college are welcomed in school to undertake their work experience programmes and contribute enthusiastically to pupils' learning.
36. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall. The school works hard to ensure that every child feels special and that everyone has an important role as a member of the school community. The very good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into the full life of the school is a clear example of this. There is an attractive display of achievement certificates in the school and a 'loving

cup' is awarded to a pupil at the end of Year 6 for the 'care and consideration' that they have shown throughout their time in the school.

37. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted satisfactorily. Pupils are encouraged to consider the impact of their actions on others and circle time provides good opportunities for them to consider the feelings of others. Religious education lessons play an important role in raising pupils' awareness of the values and beliefs of others and the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) stresses the importance of valuing all individuals. In assemblies there are good opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider important issues and to participate in the daily act of collective worship.
38. There is a particular strength in the provision for moral development, with a number of effective, planned opportunities across the curriculum in all classes throughout the school. Teachers encourage pupils to consider others' feelings and emotions as they discuss sensitive issues, such as conflict and anger management. In assemblies, the pupils are encouraged to think about their influence on the environment. Issues, such as bullying and caring for each other, are discussed openly. Pupils are encouraged to think about the impact of their actions on others. In an assembly about litter, it was brought home to them their responsibility for caring for the environment. In another assembly, a lively approach to the story of Daniel and the Lions' Den helped pupils to think about 'doing the right thing' in difficult circumstances. Pupils are taught effectively about the differences between right and wrong and displays around the school emphasise care for others and school rules. Staff are consistent in their approach to guiding pupils on how to behave and the reward and sanction system works well.
39. Social development is promoted well. Throughout the school, pupils are given many good opportunities to work cooperatively and collaboratively both in the classroom and in after school clubs. Pupils who have difficulties in forming relationships are extremely well supported by the very good role models that are provided consistently by all staff. Despite the significant number of pupils with extremely challenging behaviour, the school promotes its behaviour code successfully in all classes. Teachers go to great lengths to explain the need for good behaviour in an orderly society and make it clear to the pupils that their poor behaviour prevents them from teaching and prevents other pupils from learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to socialise in a variety of contexts, including residential visits.
40. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and contributes positively to preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society. The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to explore their own culture through art, music and literature. In the library there is an effective display of the work of different artists and authors. A number of music and theatre groups regularly provide concerts and theatre workshops for pupils. In art, they learn about Aztec art and Islamic patterns and explore the style of famous artists and art in Tudor times. Pupils also consider the attitudes, values and assumptions of other cultures. In religious education lessons pupils make lamps for Divali and in English pupils have written their own version of the story of Rama and Sita. In music pupils to listen to many different styles of music, for example, Vivaldi and Debussy, they sing West Indian Calypsos and compare songs from the Victorian music halls with modern day synthesisers. The nursery aims to prepare children well for life in a culturally diverse society by making them aware of different festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Divali.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school provides very good educational and personal support and guidance for pupils, and the procedures employed for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are excellent. Through the promotion of positive attitudes and self-esteem the school strives to create a happy, calm and safe environment for all its pupils. The school has appointed a 'pupil inclusion co-ordinator' to monitor attendance and behaviour, to co-ordinate circle time activities, and to provide pupils with an anger management counsellor. With the headteacher, she greets pupils and their parents as they arrive at school in the morning, conveying positive messages to pupils and helping to resolve any concerns that parents may have. She provides support for pupils in class and facilitates the pastoral support programme which is a school based intervention to help individual pupils manage their behaviour, and to help avoid exclusion from school.
42. The formal monitoring of the behaviour of target groups is used to inform the regular reviews of individual behavioural plans (IBP). The co-ordinator works on a structured approach with pupils having IBPs, which includes such features as impulse control and listening skills. Each week a behaviour support teacher attends school to intervene with individual pupils and to help discuss behaviour management strategies with teachers. Through inter-agency efforts, social and emotional support is made available for pupils and their parents. These initiatives impact well on learning.
43. Pupils' attendance is monitored very closely with a regular analysis of each class's attendance rate being published. Records are kept of all latecomers and punctuality is rewarded. First day contact is made when pupils are absent without notification and, if appropriate, the education welfare officer is asked to interview the parents.
44. Academic records are maintained for all pupils and these enable teachers to support those pupils who are experiencing difficulties in certain subjects. Records of achievement are held for all pupils and pupils select their best work for these files. The records are of very good quality and, in addition to progress reports, detail what pupils enjoy, are good at, and are looking forward to. Personal and academic targets are set by adults and pupils, providing positive stepping-stones with which to measure progress year on year.
45. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Teachers consult the special educational needs co-ordinator and set targets for pupils. If the action taken is not successful, an individual education plan is put in place. The special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers regularly review the plans to ensure that pupils are making progress towards their targets. The school has very regular contact with the learning and behavioural support services. The school uses the advice and support from these services well, for example, when working with pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. There is very good provision for speech and language needs, both within the enhanced provision classes and the main school. The regular assessment of pupils with special educational needs ensures that teachers and support staff monitor progress effectively.
46. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall and good in mathematics and science where the information is used well to agree targets for improvement with pupils. Assessment in English is satisfactory. Procedures for recording pupils' progress in reading, however, are inconsistent and do not give sufficient guidance for improving standards in the junior classes. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and the information is collated and used well to make necessary changes and improvements to the curriculum. This has been a major factor in improved results

in science at the end of Year 6 and represents good improvement since the previous inspection when assessment was a key issue for improvement. However, assessment in design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education is underdeveloped.

47. Suitable targets are set for individuals and groups of pupils and these are displayed alongside the pupils' work in the classrooms and the corridors. Copies are attached to the inside of books so that pupils have constant reminders of what they are expected to learn next. There are different targets for different groups and individuals matched closely to their learning needs. This allows teachers to address the needs of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs equally well. Teachers' marking in English is good and not only identifies what the pupils have done well but also the next steps in their learning and what they need to do next to improve. It also helps teachers to plan suitable work with relevant challenge to meet the needs of all pupils. However, marking in mathematics is inconsistent.
48. Assessment procedures in the nursery and reception classes are good. Careful assessments are made when the children start school and teachers use these to ensure that a suitable curriculum is planned. However, further analysis of children's attainment in mathematical development is required to make sure that higher attaining children achieve as well as they should in this area of learning.
49. Procedures for monitoring and guiding pupils' personal development are excellent. The school places great emphasis on raising pupils' self esteem and evidence of the range of activities planned to address this is evident around the school. There is a very good number of support staff, who come in to work alongside the pupils helping them concentrate on their work in the classroom and sometimes to control their frustrations. There are comprehensive records of achievement, which contain very good information on how well the pupils achieve in all subjects. Pupils are involved in the evaluation of their work and identify areas for development. This gives them a very good knowledge of what they need to do next to improve. These also include examples of what pupils have done well in their personal development. Achievements are regularly celebrated in assemblies and pupils are proud of their personal achievements. All pupils and staff welcome these occasions, as they like to congratulate those who have succeeded in achieving their personal targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents are supportive of the school and believe that it is well led and managed. All parents responding to the survey state that their children like school and are making good progress, that the school expects their children to work hard, and that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. They think that teaching is good, and would feel comfortable approaching the school with a problem or question. One or two parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with them and that they are not sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on. Several parents are uncomfortable with the amount of work their children are given to do at home, and do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence shows that the provision of homework is satisfactory. There are appropriate opportunities for extra-curricular activities in the juniors but none in the infants.

51. The school has good links with parents and provides them with good quality information about life in school and forthcoming events. In addition to formal documentation and newsletters, parents are encouraged to engage in informal communication and are invited to workshops and open evenings. In its pursuit of the Basic Skills Agency Primary Quality Mark the school has undertaken an extensive analysis of its partnership with parents and has measured the impact of their involvement. Significantly, relationships have improved, with parents being more able to support their children with their schoolwork. Good quality progress reports keep parents informed about the progress of their children.
52. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning. There is an active PTFA, which raises substantial funds to provide additional resources for the school. A few parents help in school and some help on school trips. A number of parents have supported numeracy and literacy workshops and the family literacy scheme has been well supported. Through these activities, parents make a good contribution to their children's learning in school and at home.
53. Teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are problems with a child's learning. They are kept informed about their child's progress. Individual education plans are discussed with parents at parents' evenings. Parents are not involved in reviewing individual education plans. There is regular consultation with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting spoke highly of the provision, particularly that for pupils with language and communication difficulties.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. Leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection and are good overall. The headteacher is a very good leader who enthuses and inspires the staff. She has built an effective team which is committed to raising standards and improving the quality of education. The senior managers at the school are fully involved in decision-making. Governors also play an important part in supporting the school. Parents speak positively about the school's leadership and the way in which the staff are easily approached. The leadership and management are having a positive impact on school improvement and the school has made good headway in addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection report. The school is better than it was and is in a good position to build upon what has already been achieved.
55. The headteacher is acting as special educational needs co-ordinator on a temporary basis. She performs the role very effectively, meeting fully the recommendations of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. The management of the enhanced provision is very good. There are very good procedures in place which, linked to the very good quality of teaching and learning, ensure that the pupils achieve well and are fully included in all aspects of school life. The school has made good progress in the procedures and provision for special educational needs since the previous inspection.
56. The curriculum has been managed well since the previous inspection and suitable schemes and policies have been put in place. Because of recent staff turnover, there have been some changes in subject leadership but in the main they have been dealt with smoothly without disrupting the consistency in developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. However, in religious education, history, art and design and physical education, subject leaders have insufficient opportunities to monitor pupils' learning and this results in some inconsistencies in developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The school has effective systems to monitor and manage behaviour and

is rigorous in seeking improvements in these areas. Support staff working on supporting pupils' behavioural targets and encouraging attendance work hard and achieve much.

57. The governors have developed their role successfully since the previous inspection and now take a full a part in planning and monitoring improvement at the school. The governors are much more involved in the life of the school than they were previously. They fulfil their responsibilities well and are an effective group who support the school well. The headteacher and governors are effective in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. There are good measures to check on the school's performance and to diagnose strengths and weaknesses. The governors have made good inroads into using performance management as a tool to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching. Governors are keen to attend courses and value the training. They are effective in questioning the headteacher on the schools' progress and are keenly involved in areas such as special educational needs and child protection.
58. The school has had an extensive programme of monitoring teaching. The findings from these observations have been used well to guide teachers on how to improve. This has been most successful in English and science. Some subject leaders are involved in monitoring the work of their colleagues but more remains to be done to monitor how the pupils learn, particularly in religious education, history, art and design and physical education. The improvement plan importantly recognises this as a further step in school development and in raising standards.
59. The school has well-focused plans for improvement and subject leaders contribute to its development by producing action plans for their subjects. Priorities are identified clearly and include costs, timescales for completion and measures of success. The governors and headteacher link the school's spending decisions closely to the major areas for development. They keep a careful watch on spending and are ably assisted in this by the very capable administrative staff. The office staff have very good organisational skills and play a pivotal role in helping to keep the school running smoothly. They are very approachable and knowledgeable and often spend time listening carefully to parents thus freeing time for the headteacher.
60. The school has effective systems for financial management and financial control is robust. Funds are used wisely to provide best value for supplies and services. The funding for the enhanced resource classes is used very well and carefully accounted for. The school makes good use of other funds for in-service training and resources. Financial priorities are clearly identified and linked to raising standards and improving quality. The school takes appropriate account of best value by measuring its spending decisions against improvement. For example, the development of the information and communication technology suite has been carefully costed and its success measured against improved standards and teaching. The school also compares its performance against national standards and other local schools. As a result, it sets suitably challenging targets.
61. The school is adequately staffed with experienced and suitably qualified teachers and a good level of support staff. The disruption caused by the level of turnover of teachers has been coped with effectively and has ensured minimal disruption to the quality of education, although there have been some concerns about the quality of teaching. There are good recruitment procedures in place. The school has two newly qualified teachers who receive good support and guidance and who have settled well into the school team. All staff benefit from the guidance in a useful staff handbook. Staff are keen to improve their skills and training is a regular part of their development. Support staff and those working in the enhanced resource units also willingly take part in training.

62. The school has generally good resources although there are some shortages. The library is attractive and in a good site for use but few pupils have the opportunity to use it for research. There are sufficient computers but a lack of software for several subjects and this hampers pupils' progress. There are shortages of resources for religious education, history and physical education. The school's accommodation is very good and the maintenance officer and his staff ensure it is kept in very good condition. The spacious classrooms and attractive corridors enhance the learning environment. There is a large multi-purpose hall and extensive grounds.
63. In summary, the school provides good value for money. The pupils start school with very low levels of skills, knowledge and understanding and make good progress. Although standards are generally below average by the time pupils leave the school, they achieve well. The quality of teaching is good. The school is very well led and managed effectively.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to build upon the school's improvement since the previous inspection, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

1) *Raise standards in English and mathematics:

In English by:

- improving pupils' speaking and listening skills by providing more opportunities for pupils to take part in role play and drama;
- developing a wider, more rigorous and stimulating approach to the teaching of reading including more opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to listen to stories and to read at school and at home;
- keeping more detailed records on the pupils' development of reading skills;
- extending the pupils' knowledge of vocabulary for each subject:
(Paragraphs 5, 6, 12, 20, 24, 25, 82 – 90, 95, 110, 119, 122)

In mathematics by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve problems;
- teaching mathematical vocabulary more rigorously;
- improving pupils' skills in handling data.
(Paragraphs 6, 91 – 97)

2) *Raise standards in history, geography and religious education by:

- extending opportunities for the pupils to learn through practical work;
- increasing and making use of a wider range of resources;
- providing opportunities for pupils to use drama to reinforce what they have been taught;
- improving teaching.
(Paragraphs 8, 115 – 126, 144 – 147)

3) *Extending the role of subject leaders in monitoring in religious education, history, art and design and physical education.

(Paragraphs 30, 56, 58, 109, 143, 147)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

*Improving the use of computers in other subjects.

(Paragraphs 6, 8, 22, 62, 86, 96, 120, 127, 131)

Improving opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and work independently.

(Paragraphs 11 - 14, 18, 24, 27, 39, 41, 87, 95, 113)

*Improving attendance.

(Paragraphs 1, 15)

*Improving resources for physical education.

(Paragraphs 62, 143)

*The school has identified these issues as part of its on-going programme of improvement.

THE WORK OF THE ENHANCED RESOURCE CLASSES

65. Dallam Primary School is the designated base for three enhanced resource classes for pupils with statements of special educational need for language and communication needs. It has provision for 35 pupils who come from a wide catchment area. Each class is staffed by a teacher and support staff. There is also on-site support from speech and language therapists and assistants. This high quality speech and language support is given both in the classroom and in individual sessions. Communication is mainly oral with a very small amount of signing. There is a small number of pupils who would benefit from using signing in addition to oral communication. The staff acknowledge this and are awaiting training in Makaton signing.
66. Pupils have a very wide range of language and communication needs including autistic spectrum disorders. Staff in the classes recognise this and plan their lessons very well to take account of the individual needs of pupils. The quality of teaching throughout all the classes is consistently very good and at times elements are excellent. Pupils' learning is helped by teachers ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of school and classroom routines. Pupils are encouraged to look at and listen to adults when they speak to ensure they develop an awareness of body language. Activities interest and challenge the pupils, for example, in an information and communication technology lesson in Years 1 and 2, where pupils used computers to plan maps. Resources are used effectively to develop learning, for example, in the use of a number line and apparatus to promote understanding of mathematical ideas. Teaching is linked directly to pupils' individual educational plans. For example, reference is made to numeracy targets in a Year 5/6 lesson on the language of shape. All pupils are achieving well and making very good progress towards their individual education plan targets and in their development of literacy and numeracy skills. During the inspection period pupils from the classes willingly read and discussed books with the inspectors.
67. The quality of statements of special educational need and annual reviews is very good. Individual educational plans are of very high quality with targets that are easily measured allowing teachers to monitor progress effectively. Plans link closely to the objectives in the statements of special educational need and incorporate the speech and language programmes very effectively.
68. Pupils in the enhanced provision classes receive their entitlement to the full National Curriculum. All subjects are covered and teachers link these well together with the need for additional support for language and communications development. The classes are seen as an integral part of the school. When it is appropriate, pupils take part in lessons in main school classes. For example, a Year 6 pupil successfully joins a class for mathematics. Pupils are fully involved in school assemblies, trips and have opportunities to develop social skills by mixing with other pupils at break and lunchtime.
69. Overall, the enhanced provision is very good. Given the nature of the pupils' needs it is inappropriate to comment on standards of attainment. Pupils make very good progress and achieve well, benefiting from the very high quality of teaching and support and guidance they receive. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection, raising the standard of teaching and continuing to ensure that pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	13	25	15	3	0	0
Percentage	5	23	42	25	5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	188
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	85

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	38
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	116

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	14	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	9	12	10
	Total	15	18	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (55)	78 (59)	74 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	9	10	10
	Total	15	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (52)	74 (83)	74 (83)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	13
	Girls	8	7	11
	Total	15	16	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (65)	55 (71)	83 (87)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	7	7	10
	Total	16	17	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (61)	59 (65)	76 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	163
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	18.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	7	1
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
	£
Total income	653,677
Total expenditure	657,768
Expenditure per pupil	2,898
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,889
Balance carried forward to next year	26,798

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	217
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	30	0	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	68	32	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	47	12	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	56	15	0	3
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	41	6	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	24	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	56	6	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	50	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	50	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	38	21	0	20

Other issues raised by parents (Very few parents attended the meeting)

Parents were full of praise for the work done with pupils with special educational needs. They praised the work of the headteacher and staff and most felt that the teaching was very effective.

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

70. Children enter the nursery class the term after their third birthday. They attend part-time for either a morning or an afternoon session and then transfer to the reception class full-time, at the start of the academic year in which they become five. At the time of the inspection, there were 56 children in the Foundation Stage. The attainment of most children on entry to school is very poor. This is confirmed by teacher assessment. In particular, the children have very poor communication and language skills. Teaching in the nursery class has improved considerably since the last inspection and currently teaching is good throughout the Foundation Stage. This results in children, including those with special educational needs, making good progress. Despite this, attainment in all the areas of learning is below that expected by the time they enter Year 1 and few children will achieve the Early Learning Goals. Many children enter Year 1 with well below average communication and language skills. The Foundation Stage assistants provide good support, which makes a positive contribution to the children's learning. The Foundation Stage is well led by the co-ordinator although she has had insufficient opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning in the nursery and reception class and thus enable her to become fully effective in her role. Work is carefully planned to match the nationally recommended Stepping Stones to learning. Regular and good assessments of children's learning are undertaken so that all staff have a clear idea of where children are at in each of the areas of learning. This enables teachers to plan future work accordingly. Staff work well together as a team.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. This area of learning is given a high priority by staff in the Foundation Stage. The teaching is good which enables children to make good progress in developing this aspect of learning. Overall, children co-operate and play and work well together but by the time they enter Year 1, they still lack confidence in working independently and rely heavily on the support of teachers or their assistants. The nursery and reception classes are suitably organised so that children can access equipment easily and readily and make choices about what they need. Children are appropriately encouraged to take responsibility for tasks and they respond well to this. In the nursery, they pour their own drinks at snack-time and in the reception class they help in putting apparatus out and away in physical education sessions. Teachers are effective in making children become aware of what is right and what is wrong and by the time they enter Year 1 most children behave well. They know how to take turns when sharing resources and handle books and equipment with care and respect. They generally show interest and concentrate well when work is of a practical nature or when learning is made fun, for example, through the use of games. However, when teaching is less stimulating, the children rapidly lose interest and become restless. Appropriate opportunities are provided for children to learn about and respect their own and other cultures. They participate in Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Harvest Festival, and learn about the celebrations of Divali and Chinese New Year. Through topics, for example, 'Animals' and 'Mini-beasts', children learn how to treat living things with care and respect. Staff act as good role models and the children respond positively to the high standards set for them.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Many children have very poor language and communication skills on entry to the nursery. Although teachers provide a good range of opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, most children do not attain the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. In both the nursery and the reception class, children are given good opportunities to develop their communication skills through participating in role-play. Related to their current topic 'People Who Help Us', children in the nursery were pretending to be doctors, nurses and patients. Learning and using the correct name for things, such as 'stethoscope', was appropriately extending children's vocabulary.
73. Through language and literacy sessions in the reception class, children develop a sound understanding of how to build words. Virtually all children learn to enjoy stories and to join in singing rhymes. Through these activities they begin to understand that words and pictures carry meaning and to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes and letters in words. By the time they enter the reception class, children know how to handle books correctly, holding them the right way up and starting at the beginning to turn over the pages in order. In the reception class, many children are beginning to recognise a few familiar words and more able children read a simple book using a number of reading strategies, such as phonic and picture clues to help them read unfamiliar words. However, most children have a very limited vocabulary when talking about what is happening in their story and often their speech is not clear.
74. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are systematically taught to recognise and identify letters of the alphabet and the sound associated with them and, by the time they enter Year 1, many children know a good number of these and a few higher attaining pupils know most of them. Good opportunities are provided for children to begin to develop their writing skills. In the nursery, they are encouraged to hold their pencils with an appropriate grip and to develop increasing pencil control. They make marks on paper to represent words, for example, when 'writing' a letter from Goldilocks to the Three Bears. More able children in the reception classes are able to form many letters correctly and to make a good attempt at writing a simple sentence. During a literacy lesson observed, one more able child, related to a story they were reading, wrote 'I want to see the Joglus' (I want to see the jugglers). The teaching of language and literacy skills in the Foundation Stage is good which results in good learning taking place. Teachers mark children's recorded work very well. It is annotated to show how much help needed to be given and comments indicate the standard that has been achieved. This is a valuable tool to outline the next steps for learning so that work can be planned at an appropriate level for each child.

Mathematical development

75. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good and sometimes very good. However, because of their low levels of attainment on entry to school, many children will not attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children of all abilities make good progress. In the nursery, frequent opportunities are provided for children to sort, match and order objects and to recreate simple patterns. Many children know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, triangle and square. Some more able children know and name more complex shapes, such as hexagon. In the reception class, children undertake simple investigations. For example, they find out which three-dimensional shapes will roll and which will slide. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers place an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of number skills through a range of practical activities and games. In a very good lesson observed in the reception class, children were developing a very clear early understanding of addition and subtraction and the use of terms, such as 'more' and 'less' through their

involvement in singing 'Ten Little Speckled Frogs'. Many children learnt that eight and one more is nine and that one more is ten. One child observed that taking one away is the same as counting backwards. Many children can count accurately to ten and some children can count beyond this. However, their recognition of the corresponding numerals is less well developed. Through sand and water play activities, children are beginning to develop an understanding of capacity and to use and understand terms such as 'full' and 'empty'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Children start in the nursery with very limited general knowledge. The quality of teaching is good and children learn well. Although they make good progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world, many children do not achieve the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1 because of their limited vocabulary and lack of confidence in expressing themselves. Topics and themes are well planned and linked appropriately to the Early Learning Goals. Children's experience is sometimes broadened by visits out. For example, children in the nursery experienced a trip on a ferry to Seacombe.
77. Children are given good opportunities to explore and investigate. During the time of the inspection, children in the nursery were investigating which materials were attracted to a magnet and which were not. Through play with wheeled toys, children in the reception class investigate push and pull forces and know that these forces can make things move. The teachers provide a good range of construction kits, tools and materials and teach children appropriate techniques to enable them to develop their designing and making skills.
78. Children are given regular opportunities to develop their understanding of information and communication technology. Their computer skills, such as controlling the mouse, are developing well and children competently use listening centres to listen to stories. Through topics, such as 'Myself', children are appropriately encouraged to think about and discuss past and present events in their lives. They learn about their senses and know the correct names of some of the parts of their body, such as elbow.
79. Teachers make good use of the local environment. Nursery children take walks around Dallam to look at some of its features, such as the play area, the church and a variety of local shops. Children in the reception class take regular walks in the school grounds to note the changes that take place through the seasons. Children begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of their own culture and beliefs and have opportunities to learn about those of other people. Overall, children are given good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through first hand experiences and effective use is made of questioning to encourage children to think about how things work and why they happen.

Physical development

80. Teachers provide children with appropriate opportunities to develop their physical skills and the quality of teaching is good. However, despite making good progress, many children will not attain the expected levels for physical development by the time they start Year 1 because, overall, they enter school at levels below those expected for children of their age. In the nursery, the children have daily opportunities to play outside. However, they lack confidence and control in their movements. They manoeuvre wheeled toys with reasonable control and without bumping into each other. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff provide the children with regular opportunities for using a

range of small equipment to develop skills such as throwing and catching. They also participate in physical education lessons in the hall. These lessons are well planned by the teachers, who ensure that children are appropriately aware of the need for 'warming up' and 'cooling down' periods. Children receive plenty of encouragement from the teachers, which results in all of them being keen to participate. Instructions are clear and children follow them enthusiastically. They are able to 'find a space' and they learn to move in a variety of ways. For example, during the inspection week, children in the reception class were learning to skip around the hall. However, currently there is not a sufficient range of large apparatus to develop children's balancing and climbing skills to their fullest extent. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills and children begin to use scissors, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes and small construction equipment with increasing precision and control, although many children find this difficult.

Creative development

81. Children make good progress in developing creative skills but many do not attain the expected goals before they enter Year 1. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are being given good opportunities to use a variety of equipment and materials. The teaching is good. The children enjoy drawing and painting and like exploring the effects of colour on paper. Some children make satisfactory attempts at drawing pictures of things they see, although many children find controlling brushes and pencils difficult. Children in the reception class produced some interesting observational drawings of a teddy bear. Linked to work in information and communication technology, they used a photocopier to print out a copy and to make the prints larger and smaller. Creative work is also sometimes used effectively to develop and reinforce learning in other areas. In the nursery, children printed patterns with shapes, such as circles and triangles, linked to their work in mathematics. However, many children have difficulties in finding the right words to discuss their work satisfactorily. Children have frequent opportunities to sing and some children can sing simple songs from memory, although very few children are able to sing clearly and in tune. There are many good opportunities provided for children to participate in imaginative play. Related to the themes and topics being undertaken, staff create play areas to help stimulate children's imagination. For example, in the nursery, children are enjoying role-play in the 'Dallam Medical Centre', related to the current topic 'People Who Help Us'.

ENGLISH

82. Standards in English have improved since the previous inspection. The results of the national tests in 2001 showed that standards were well below the national average in English by the end of Year 6. When compared with similar schools standards were average. Results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that standards in reading and writing were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools standards were below average in reading and writing. However, there is a very high proportion of pupils with difficulties in learning particularly those with a statement with special educational needs. The school improvement project on speaking and listening has been implemented and is now an integral part of the Literacy Strategy and is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress in listening. However, this programme is not consistent throughout the school. Although standards are low there has been some improvement in attainment, especially in writing. This improvement is a result of better and more focused teaching, more effective monitoring of teaching and changes to the way the school uses the National Literacy Strategy. The school has

received an award for raising pupils' achievement as the level of improvement over the last four years has been above the national trend.

83. Pupils at the start of Year 1 lack confidence in speaking and have a very limited vocabulary. Their listening skills are also poor. This presents a significant barrier to their learning especially for the younger pupils. Pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. The school identified that generally girls were achieving at higher levels than boys and has used this information to focus on boys' attainment. This has been successful and there are now no significant differences between the attainment of girls and boys.
84. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English overall are well below the national average. By the end of Year 2, pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well below the national average. Pupils do not articulate clearly, they lack confidence in talking and many have a very limited vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, listening skills have improved but pupils do not always listen carefully or respond appropriately to each other. Many pupils still have poor speech and find it difficult to communicate in both small and large groups. They have difficulty in using and retaining technical vocabulary and this hampers their learning. Many find it difficult to talk about their work or contribute to and lead discussions in class. Attainment in speaking and listening remains well below that expected by the end of Year 6. Standards of speaking are lower than they could be because there is insufficient emphasis on this aspect of English in lessons. The school is not yet providing enough planned opportunities for pupils to practice their speaking skills; role-play; drama and improvisation are seldom used.
85. Reading standards are well below average. The school has recently put into place a structured programme to teach pupils about the sounds that letters make and supports guided reading in literacy lessons but this has not yet had a significant impact on raising standards. By the end of Year 2, pupils have limited word-building skills and find it difficult to talk about characters or express opinions about events and ideas in stories. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts confidently and show their understanding of the use of punctuation but they do not read with fluency and lack expression in their reading. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently use a dictionary and thesaurus in literacy lessons but they have very little knowledge of a wide range of books or different authors. They lack expression in their reading and show limited understanding of significant ideas and themes. In Years 5 and 6 there is a 'buddy system' in which pupils read to each other in class but they do not regularly take books home and this hampers opportunities for pupils to extend their interest in, and knowledge of, reading. Discussion with pupils reveals that they do not appear to value or enjoy reading and, if given the choice, prefer to draw or write rather than read. The home-school reading programme is identified as a priority in the school's literacy action plan but currently there is inconsistency in the way it is implemented throughout the school.
86. The school has made improvement in writing a priority target in its planning and there are signs that standards are rising. However, despite the level of improvement attainment remains below the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In literacy lessons, there is appropriate emphasis on the techniques and skills of writing and teachers stress the importance of correct spelling, grammar and punctuation but these are not consistently used in pupils' work in other subjects. The quality of handwriting and spelling improves as pupils progress through the school so that by the end of Year 6 pupils have developed a well-formed and legible script. There are good opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes, for example, instructions, letters, traditional stories and factual accounts. They also write for a range of audiences. In Year 4 and Year 5 pupils wrote 'Roxanne's Bear', an extended story for younger readers and there are good examples of thoughtful and lively writing that is developed in

interesting ways. In Year 6, pupils wrote a short poem called a kenning in which they used adventurous and exciting words to very good effect. Good examples of writing were seen in composition books in all year groups but pupils do not always apply the skills they are taught in literacy lessons to other subjects. This means that in history, geography and religious education there is very little emphasis on pupils' literacy skills and the standard of literacy in these subjects is low. Limited examples of written work produced using computers were visible in classrooms and workbooks and this remains an area for further development.

87. The quality of teaching and learning in English lessons is mostly good throughout the school, but the teaching of reading in the juniors is satisfactory. During the inspection some very good and excellent teaching was seen, particularly in Year 6 and all of the enhanced special needs classes. On rare occasions teaching is unsatisfactory. This is due to teachers' lack of confidence and the very challenging behaviour of some of the pupils. Pupils' learning is good overall but in some instances the pupils lack sufficient attention and their concentration span is limited. These factors slow down the rate of learning. Most pupils work reasonably hard and also try to present their work to an appropriately neat standard. Their limited vocabulary has a significant effect on their ability to read fluently and with expression and a few give up, although most persevere and use skills, such as building words from the sounds that letters make, effectively. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to enhance the pupils' skills in writing through word processing. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out research using the Internet to extend pupils' reading skills. English is used satisfactorily to support work in other subjects, although the pupils' lack of confidence in a wide range of communication skills reduces the impact of writing in subjects such as history and geography.
88. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into a wide range of activities and taught well. The best lessons begin with a purposeful introduction in which the teacher sets the scene imaginatively, using texts that interest and excite the pupils. Thorough planning and good preparation ensure that pupils clearly understand what is to be learned and remain involved and interested throughout the lesson. Teachers are enthusiastic, committed and knowledgeable; they value pupils' contributions highly, and skilfully encourage the pupils to pay careful attention. The pupils respond positively and confidently to the teachers' questions and are keen to make a contribution. Where there are practical activities, pupils find learning fun and are highly motivated. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 enhanced resource class, the pupils were encouraged to recognise the differences between play script and prose through acting out the scene with excellent and realistic costumes. The use of support staff contributes very effectively to pupils' learning and the good use of praise and encouragement motivates pupils to 'have a go'.
89. The subject is well led and managed and there has been effective monitoring in place to ensure that all staff follow subject guidance. However, there have been several recent changes of staff and this has affected the consistency of all teachers setting appropriately challenging work for pupils and this has resulted in uneven progress in Year 2. There has also been a substantial increase in the number of pupils with difficulties in learning, particularly those with statements of special educational needs. Homework is used satisfactorily in some classes to improve pupils' spelling and there are opportunities for pupils to write at home. The highly effective marking of pupils' books makes a significant contribution to the improvement in writing. Clear guidance is given in a supportive and encouraging way to show pupils how they might improve their work. Pupils' English books now have target sheets attached to them and there are both individual and group targets in writing. These are having an increasing impact on motivation as well as giving teachers a useful insight into pupils' progress.

90. There is a suitable range of resources to support the teaching of literacy and sufficient variety of reading books. There is an attractive library but the range and quantity of books in the library are somewhat limited and insufficient use is made of the library to promote pupils' research skills. The school makes good use of assessment data from both writing tasks and national tests to analyse pupils' performance and, with the exception of reading, teachers keep accurate records of pupils' progress. The procedures for assessing pupils in English are satisfactory, although in Years 3 to 6 there is insufficient rigour in tracking pupils' progress in reading. The school is now moving towards a more effective analysis of the information available to them in order to inform future planning and to give more focus to the attempt to raise standards further.

MATHEMATICS

91. Inspection findings are that standards in mathematics are below average at the end of both Years 2 and 6. The most recent national tests show that standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well below average when compared to all schools. Standards are average when compared with similar schools at the end of Year 2 and below average when compared to similar schools at the age of 11. Given the very much larger than average number of pupils with statements of special educational needs, comparisons with other schools are unreliable. Pupils' low language skills have an effect on their ability to understand written problems. They often understand the four rules of number but have difficulty in understanding written questions. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, particularly in the area of mental mathematics throughout the school, and shape, space and measures in Years 3 to 6. Opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve problems and collect, analyse and handle data are limited. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress and achieve well. Work set at the correct level and additional support from staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with other pupils.
92. Recent improvements are directly related to good teaching, the effective use of assessment to set targets to meet the needs of different attainment groups. The school identifies areas of strength and weakness by analysing the results of national and other tests. This information is then used effectively to develop learning. This has been successful in raising the performance of boys in national tests to a similar level to the girls.
93. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a secure understanding of numbers to 100 but few are able to solve problems using larger numbers. They confidently add and subtract two digit numbers but a number of pupils need aids or support to carry out these operations. Many pupils recognise the value of coins and the higher and average attaining pupils carry out simple addition of money. Pupils identify a number of two and three-dimensional shapes, classifying them using properties such as number of sides and faces. They do not have a secure understanding of reflective symmetry. Measuring skills vary, the higher attaining pupils measure accurately using span, stride and rulers. There are pupils who find measuring difficult. Because of limited vocabulary, pupils find it difficult to discuss their work and explain their thinking. Few are able to use specific examples to illustrate general points.
94. By the end of Year 6, pupils have further developed their understanding of number. A significant minority of pupils order numbers with up to seven digits. They round to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000. There are a number of average and low attaining pupils who find this difficult. Most pupils carry out addition and subtraction mentally and many have a reasonable mental recall of multiplication tables. They are not confident in using their

knowledge to solve real life problems because they have been given insufficient opportunities to carry out investigative work. In Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of plotting co-ordinates in all four quadrants. Most pupils order negative numbers correctly. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and space. They identify a large range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, classifying them according to their properties. Areas and perimeters of shapes are calculated using formula. Skills in the collection and interpretation of data are limited because of restricted opportunities for pupils to instigate and carry out their own investigations.

95. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good overall and during the inspection teaching was never less than satisfactory. It is of particularly high quality in the enhanced resource classes and in Year 6. The high quality of teaching has a positive effect on learning and is a significant factor in improving achievement. Where teaching is very good, pupils learn very well because teachers provide activities which challenge and interest them. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher related negative numbers to real life when she talked about temperatures. The use of white boards and number fans enables teachers to assess what the pupils know and understand. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers ensure they are included in all aspects of the lesson. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes in Years 1 and 2 were actively involved in practical tasks, adults interacted well developing language skills effectively and pupils were given opportunities to speak and put forward their own ideas. Pupils respond very well to the good quality teaching. Most stay on task even though the work is challenging. When working in groups, most pupils relate well to each other. There is a small minority who need reminding about their behaviour but these pupils are managed effectively by teachers. Resources, such as number squares and number lines are used effectively.
96. Lessons are planned using guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy. The oral or mental starters are usually brisk and keep pupils interested. Group sessions are successful because work is set at different levels to meet the needs of the pupils. The final or plenary sessions are often weaker than other parts of the lesson, as time is lost when teachers reorganise pupils. In some classes final sessions appear to be an add on, rather than an important part of the lesson during which the teacher assesses if pupils have achieved the objectives or targets for the session. Analysis of pupils' work shows that the quality of marking is inconsistent and often does not suggest ways to improve learning. There are few examples of teachers developing mathematical vocabulary in their marking. When teachers do address these issues, the marking is of high quality and develops learning. The teaching of the basic skills of number is particularly effective in the mathematics lessons. The development of numeracy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils measure and estimate in design and technology, they record using graphs in science but do not always interpret the data they have collected. There is satisfactory development of pupils' literacy skills in mathematics. Pupils read and record problems. The development of mathematical vocabulary is inconsistent through the school. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics is just satisfactory. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers to investigate, record and interpret data.
97. There is a very recently appointed subject leader. There has been regular monitoring of teaching and learning in the classrooms and this is having a positive effect on raising standards. There are good assessment procedures in place and these are used effectively to develop learning. The school has made good improvement in the teaching of mathematics since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

98. Results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that standards were below the national average and below those of similar schools. The national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2001 showed that standards were in line with the national average and well above those of similar schools. Standards in science have improved well in the last few years, particularly in the juniors. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils of all abilities make good progress.
99. The good improvement in standards since the previous inspection particularly in the juniors, is as a result of better teaching, higher expectations and a detailed scheme of work, which makes sure that pupils learn the full range of scientific themes. Particular emphasis has been put on scientific enquiry and this practical approach to learning motivates and interests pupils and means they learn new scientific processes by carrying out their own investigations, noticing for themselves what happens rather than being told. The curriculum is structured so that pupils revisit their earlier learning before moving onto new topics and this helps them to remember previous facts. Pupils are therefore more confident to have a go when learning new concepts and achieve well. Pupils in the enhanced classes follow the same curriculum and achieve very well. All pupils work in small groups because of the number of support staff who provide very good support in lessons.
100. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are below average. Although an average proportion of pupils attain average levels, the number attaining higher levels is below that expected. Pupils' progress is good overall, although this is more marked in Year 1. Expectations in Year 2 this year have been too low because of changes of teacher and progress has been uneven. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen significantly during the last four years. Because of the number of pupils in the school with special educational needs and the high number of pupils who have had their education disrupted by changes of school, this improvement is not always reflected in the results achieved in national curriculum tests. Nonetheless, achievement is good and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
101. The quality of teaching is good across the school, although teaching in Year 2 has recently been unsatisfactory because of changes of staff. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons, which ensure that the pupils are actively involved in practical investigations. This practical approach makes sure that they understand exactly what is happening. Pupils enjoy science and respond particularly well to opportunities to experiment and observe. For example, by the end of one lesson when finding out which is the best material to prevent an ice-cube from melting, Year 3 and 4 pupils knew why and how to make their test fair and realised why they needed to keep one ice cube uncovered as a control. By the end of Year 6, many pupils are beginning to offer suitable reasons why things happen as they do. Because of the practical investigation, they were able to say that the solutions which contained salt and sugar could not be separated by filtering, whilst those that contained sand and coconut could, giving appropriate reasons for their decisions.
102. Pupils achieve appropriately well in their understanding of physical processes, life and living things and materials and their properties. They have a secure understanding of the variety and uses of materials and are able to categorise them according to properties. Pupils in Year 6 know about the life cycle of plants and animals and understand that the environment has an effect on them. The practical nature of lessons motivates pupils, who are keen to learn as a result. When learning about how the Earth rotates around the sun and spins on its axis, pupils watched, fascinated, while the teacher

demonstrated how different parts of the globe lit up as it spun around. Through careful questioning and demonstration, pupils were able to work out which way the Earth spins. Afterwards, pupils 'acted out' correctly how the Earth moves around the sun and the moon around the Earth with some dizzy spells occurring as a result. Because of the emphasis given to pupils learning correct scientific vocabulary, pupils use scientific terms to describe what they have found out and their written accounts reflect the use of this language. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to record their investigations using graphs and tables. This means that pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to interpret the information they have collected and to draw conclusions from their results as often as they ought.

103. Subject leadership is good. There has been a complete review of the curriculum so that the scheme of work covers all aspects of science and ensures that pupils learn the necessary skills to develop scientific knowledge and understanding. The school has reviewed the way that the units of work are organised in the juniors to make sure that all pupils get a regular weekly science lesson and themes are revisited frequently to help them to remember important scientific facts and processes and to practice their skills of investigation and enquiry. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning closely through observing lessons and offering advice. Discussions between teachers take place regularly so that they are all up to date with latest methods and resources. Links to information and communication technology are currently unsatisfactory but this development has been identified in the science action plan. Assessment procedures are good overall and careful tracking of pupils' achievements makes sure that suitable targets for improvements are set. Analysis of the way that pupils answer test questions has led to improvements and changes in the curriculum to make sure that pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to achieve well. The priority in the school is to raise standards further, especially in Year 2.

ART AND DESIGN

104. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in art and design are in line with those expected of seven and 11-year-olds. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is due to a better-organised curriculum, more consistent and effective teaching and a wider range of opportunities for pupils to develop skills and techniques. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most aspects of the subject, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out three-dimensional modelling. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes thoroughly enjoy art and the teachers are skilful in promoting manipulative skills, co-operation and collaboration work in lessons, so that the pupils make good progress, achieve well and attain standards which are appropriate for their age. The quality of teaching is good.
105. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes make good progress in art and design and are guided very successfully through expert teaching. The staff provide interesting and stimulating experiences for the pupils to work in a wide variety of media. Their work on an Aztec scene did much to enhance their understanding of that civilisation and showed a good variety of techniques and skills.
106. By the end of Year 2, pupils have an appropriate understanding of a range of skills and techniques and they use their knowledge to present their work well. They talk competently about how to mix colours and speculate, often accurately, which colours can be mixed to produce a desired effect. The pupils benefit from enthusiastic teaching and opportunities to use a wide variety of media. In Year 1, the pupils experimented with a variety of fabrics to produce interesting and attractive woven designs. The teacher

used the opportunity to discuss measuring, estimating and size to further the pupils' mathematical understanding. Pupils experiment with paint and show good care in adding detail using a variety of brushes. They maintain good levels of concentration and work hard, applying good creative effort. The pupils make good progress in recognising and depicting facial features. The teacher provides good opportunities for the pupils to study a range of portraits and encourages the pupils to use inks to create a background before adding a self-portrait using felt-tip pens. The stunning results were much prized by the pupils and showed good attention to detail.

107. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge of a wide variety of techniques, including painting, printing and using fabrics. The teachers enliven the corridors with displays of pupils' work and examples of the work of famous artists which contribute much to the pupils' cultural development and understanding of artistic techniques. Pupils often use their skills in art to illustrate their work in other subjects. The teachers achieve a good balance between developing skills and allowing pupils opportunities to experiment. The teachers capitalise on the pupils' enthusiasm for art and design. Pupils enjoy practical activities and in most lessons there is a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere so that learning proceeds at a good rate. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils were given very clear instructions by the teacher and, with the help of the support assistant, they carefully combined several techniques to make prints. They used tools carefully and showed good progress in planning their work. They applied paint carefully and created effective symmetrical patterns. This work linked well with what they had learned in mathematics.
108. Year 6 pupils benefited much from very skilful teaching in making prints in the style of William Morris. They used a good range of techniques and worked with much care over an extended period of time. The results were vibrant and effective showing a strong awareness of colour and sense of design. Throughout the school, the pupils make good use of sketchbooks to record their observations. Teachers encourage the pupils to experiment with different techniques and apparatus in these books and then provide good opportunities for the pupils to practise and refine their skills in, for example, drawing buildings. The teachers draw the pupils' attention to particularly successful work by discussing it with the class and this enables the less confident to pick up ideas for use in their own pictures. Information and communication technology is used occasionally to support the teaching but pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use the Internet to access websites in museums and art galleries to extend their knowledge.
109. The subject leader has a good understanding of how to develop the subject. The school makes use of a variety of guidance to ensure consistency in developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. However, there is no formal system to monitor and evaluate standards and to check on pupils' progress. The school has suitable resources and a good range of prints on show to stimulate the pupils' interest.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. Attainment in design and technology has improved since the previous inspection and is now broadly in line with expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well and make good progress. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress. In the junior classes, the design and making elements are stronger than evaluation skills. The school has worked hard recently to develop evaluation skills but older pupils find this difficult without adult support, because of their limited range of vocabulary. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below the expected level and progress was unsatisfactory. These changes have been brought about by the introduction of a new scheme of work and an improvement in the quality of teaching.
111. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a clear understanding of the design process. They draw simple plans before making models, for example, puppets. The designs are labelled appropriately. Stitching skills are developed and pupils produce good quality products. Care is taken in finishing the puppets when pupils use string and sequins to put on hair and facial features. Pupils make positive comments about what they have made. In the food aspect of the subject, pupils make fruit salad and develop their skills by making cakes, following a simple recipe appropriately. Because of their limited language skills, they are not confident in explaining why they have chosen particular materials or tools.
112. By the end of Year 6, pupils have started to produce more detailed drawings. In Year 3, pupils develop their sewing skills by practising a range of different stitches to see which produces the strongest seam. Careful attention is paid to the quality of the finish on the products. Pupils consider the purpose of their product, for example, when they design biscuits for Halloween and wrapping paper for Christmas. By Year 5, pupils design toys with moving parts. They also design and make musical instruments. Pupils in Year 6 are starting to evaluate structures but there are few opportunities for pupils to instigate their own independent designs. Pupils are not confident in adapting designs as they struggle to explain processes.
113. Teaching is satisfactory overall and has a positive impact on learning. Teaching is good in the infants. The pupils enjoy design and technology. Lessons are satisfactorily planned and on occasion the teacher makes good use of pupils' interests. For example, work done by two pupils at home was used effectively by the teacher to develop evaluation skills. The teachers use questions well. In one lesson, the teacher asked pupils to think about ways of improving the musical instruments, for example, by using a different material for the drum skin. Most pupils concentrate very well but a small number need reminding about their behaviour and, as a result, time is lost. In the enhanced resource classes, the teaching is good overall with some very good features. Strengths in the teaching included a very good recap of previous lessons. The teachers seek to improve the pupils' speaking and listening skills through the effective use of questions. Vocabulary is very effectively developed by the use of a subject specific 'word wall'. Teachers provide suitable challenge for the pupils through asking open-ended questions such as, "What are finishing techniques?" Resources, including a selection of musical instruments are used effectively to develop learning. The use of support staff has a very positive effect on learning. Pupils respond well to the challenging teaching showing good attitudes and behaviour. Discussion with pupils shows that most are interested in design and technology and are proud of the work they produce. Teachers use questioning and support to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in the lessons.

114. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed effectively in design and technology. Pupils develop speaking and listening skills in introductory sessions. They record what they are going to do and, for example, produce lists of ingredients and recipes. Mathematical skills are developed when pupils measure and weigh. There is some use of information and communication technology but this is not well developed. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed well in the subject. Pupils feel their work is valued when it displayed effectively. There are opportunities to work together, sharing materials and developing social skills. Work on food links well with the science topic of healthy eating.
115. There is good management of the subject. The recently introduced scheme of work has led to teachers being more confident in their teaching of the subject. Assessment is at an early stage in the subject and, as a result, there is not a step-by-step development of skills as pupils move through the school.

GEOGRAPHY

116. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is below national expectations and attainment is not as high as at the time of the previous inspection. The fall in standards since the previous inspection has been due to lack of consistent emphasis on teaching geographical skills and knowledge. Scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that pupils are now given suitable opportunities to examine their local environment and to look at ways in which the locality could be improved. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made unsatisfactory progress but this is now improving because of a better focus on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
117. By the end of Year 2, standards are below average. By starting with the immediate environment, pupils in Years 1 and 2 look at different features of the school and are given opportunities to develop early planning and mapping skills. The travels of 'Barnaby Bear' as he journeys to Spain are used as a stimulus to evoke in the pupils a sense of the wider world and the different countries, climates and cultures that exist beyond their own experiences. Pupils have a poor knowledge of the world in which they live and staff work hard to ensure that pupils acquire appropriate geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. Discussions with pupils show that, although they know much of the work that has been covered, they do not yet have a sound base of geographical knowledge, and mapping skills are at a very basic level.
118. By the end of Year 6, attainment is below average and progress has been inconsistent. The situation has not been helped by the fact that pupils in most year groups have already had several different teachers during the past year and what pupils have previously learned has not always been systematically built on and developed. The limited language and literacy skills of pupils mean that the quality and amount of work that is in pupils' books does not always reflect the quality of planning and teaching or the depth of the curriculum coverage. There is now a good quality policy document and scheme of work to support teaching and the school is taking on board national initiatives to help further development of the subject and to raise standards.
119. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are provided with a suitable range of learning opportunities. They consider different ways of improving their environment as they examine noise pollution around the school and consider the importance of re-cycling and the need to improve the environment. The extended topic on water looks at the importance of water for many vital purposes in Year 5. This is successfully built on in Year 6 as pupils examine the physical features of rivers and develop an appreciation of how these can change the

character of places. However, the pupils lack geographical knowledge of the wider world. Their geographical vocabulary is not well developed and, although they can recognise simple symbols on maps, they have difficulty naming major cities and physical features in the United Kingdom, Europe and across different continents. They have very little knowledge of the continents and many are not aware that Britain is part of Europe. They find it difficult to make geographical comparisons between different localities or to explain their views on environmental change. They have not been consistently provided with opportunities to locate a range of features in an atlas or on a globe and this impacts negatively on their learning.

120. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are generally positive. They listen attentively in class and are ready to contribute to discussions. Behaviour in class is good and pupils quickly settle down to the set activities and work at a steady rate. Overall, teaching is now satisfactory and very good in Year 6, but pupils have difficulty in remembering what they have been taught. In most lessons, planning ensures that tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers make use of a good range of practical activities, especially computers, to ensure that pupils learn through activity. Teachers maintain very good relationships with the pupils, which very effectively promotes their self-esteem. However, the scrutiny of pupils' books shows that the set tasks are not always sufficiently matched to the differing abilities of the pupils and that marking does not consistently outline to the pupils what they need to do to improve.
121. The subject leader has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and there are clear targets for improvement. With the introduction of national guidance for geography, the school has ensured satisfactory coverage of the subject. The regular scrutiny of planning and of pupils' work, together with regular monitoring of teaching, ensures that the subject leader has a clear overview of how well teachers are teaching and how well pupils are learning.

HISTORY

122. Overall, pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Currently, pupils are not achieving as well as they could be, and this represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection. Standards are not as high as reported in the previous inspection because there has been insufficient consistency in the teaching. There has also been a substantial increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with statements of special educational need. Overall, progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory and this is due largely to insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in history. This situation has now improved and pupils, including those with special educational needs, now make satisfactory progress. Pupils' progress in history is hampered by their lack of suitably developed reading and writing skills and their limited vocabulary.
123. By the end of Year 2, attainment is below national expectations across all elements of the history curriculum. Attainment is held back by pupils' poor language and literacy skills, and by a lack of ability to find out information for themselves. Between Years 1 and 2 pupils' understanding of chronology is slowly developing, pupils confidently identify and describe differences between the present and the past. In Year 1, they bring a favourite toy into school and look at pictures and photographs comparing artefacts of today with those of their grandparents. Year 2 pupils know about the reasons why people wear poppies on Remembrance Day. They know the story of poppies growing in battlefields and some can link this to the importance of remembering the soldiers in both

world wars. They have very little knowledge of the lives of significant men and women who lived in the past because of limited opportunities to learn about them. Pupils' retention of what they have learned is often poor, and they have only limited knowledge across a narrow breadth of experiences. This has a detrimental effect on their progress.

124. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is below that expected of 11-year-olds. However, progress is now satisfactory. Progress has been uneven and unsatisfactory because several different teachers have taught the current cohort. Pupils have a satisfactory sense of chronology. They appreciate how books and a variety of information sources can support historical enquiry, but they are often hampered when carrying out research by their poor literacy skills. Older pupils have a knowledge of the life in Victorian times but they do not have enough appreciation of how past events shape the events of the future because they struggle to explain complex ideas as their vocabulary is limited.
125. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory overall with some good features. However, teaching in the past has been inconsistent as it has not focused sufficiently on developing key skills and understanding and the strategies to extend pupils' historical knowledge have been limited. There is now effective and detailed planning with clear and useful learning objectives for each age and ability group. The topic on Victorian Britain has been particularly well researched and planned. Pupils learn more effectively where there is a range of practical experiences on which to draw. For example, when re-enacting the Antiques Roadshow, the pupils handled Victorian artefacts and learned about their origin in an exciting and informative manner. Some teachers make imaginative use of resources and this stimulates learning. By using extracts from films, photographs and artefacts on Victorian life, the teacher enabled pupils to gain a real understanding of what they are studying. In a few lessons, tasks are not sufficiently closely matched to pupils' level of ability and this slows learning. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in their learning or to dramatise events in order to bring activities to life.
126. Within the enhanced resource classes, support staff make a significant contribution to the lessons and this ensures that all pupils understand and make progress. With the introduction of national guidance for history, the school has developed a complete overview of the areas taught to pupils and there are clear targets for developing the subject further. Overall, there are sufficient resources to match the needs of the curriculum and the school makes good use of the library loan service to supplement these. However, there is a shortage of computer software to support pupils' learning

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection through improved resources, teaching and opportunities for the pupils to use the computer suite. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with those expected for seven and 11-year-olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in most aspects of the subject, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers to research information and to enhance their work in other subjects. Pupils in the enhanced resources classes have good access to computers both in the classrooms and in the computer suite and they make good progress. Boys and girls work equally well when using computers and achieve similar levels.
128. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes make good progress in information and communication technology and achieve well. The teaching is good in these classes and

the pupils are keen to use computers. They take much pride in using a range of software to present their work. Pupils concentrate well when using computers and, because they are given support by adults, improve their skills effectively. The pupils make good gains in using word processing to present their work. Pupils are really enthusiastic about their work in information and communication technology because the teachers provide stimulating opportunities for the development and practice of key skills. The pupils work well together although some prefer to work on their own.

129. By the end of Year 2, pupils use word processing at an appropriate level for their age. They know that different fonts are useful in presenting work to produce a desired effect. They have a secure knowledge of several function keys and recognise and name some of the tools on the toolbars. Pupils use a variety of painting packages to improve their manipulative skills and control a mouse well. The pupils amend their mistakes and work hard to present their work well. They know that information and communication technology is used widely in the world around them.
130. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain appropriate standards for their age in using basic skills on the computer. They have a secure knowledge of several processes and use tools such as the spell checker to ensure their work is correct. They also know how to use tabs to set the pages correctly. The pupils apply their literacy skills satisfactorily and the teachers make good use of skills, such as making a newspaper, to enthuse the pupils and to encourage them to extend their writing. Pupils successfully enter data and have a basic understanding of spreadsheets. They know how to load, save and print their work. Most pupils have some experience of using the Internet and of sending electronic mail within the school but they have insufficient opportunities to use computers for in-depth research. Pupils have appropriate skills in control and modelling and understand that computers are useful in planning and modifying procedures.
131. The computer suite is a valuable resource and all classes use it. Some classes also make use of computers in the classrooms. Nevertheless, computers are not used sufficiently to support teaching in other subjects which hampers pupils' progress particularly in history, art and design, science and mathematics, and this is an area for development. There are sufficient computers but there is an inadequate range and quantity of software.
132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have improved their subject knowledge since the previous inspection and are reasonably secure in most aspects of information and communication technology. The school has plans to extend the training of staff in the next few weeks. Teaching methods are effective in introducing new skills to each year group and there have been consistent gains in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Lessons start with well-paced introductions and clear instructions. Teachers review what has been learned at the end of lessons. The pupils are keen to learn and enjoy the subject very much because it enables them to learn through practical activities. Pupils work hard and maintain good concentration throughout lessons. They show a willingness to explore new programs and persevere well. The teachers focus appropriately on extending the pupils' knowledge of technical vocabulary and ask well-focused questions to check on the pupils' understanding.
133. The subject leader has a clear understanding of the next steps in developing the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and the school has plans to improve the recording of pupils' development of skills and to introduce regular assessment in the near future.

MUSIC

134. There is a mixed picture of attainment in music across the school and standards are better in some classes than in others. The new scheme of work has improved teachers' subject expertise and consequently more practical activities are planned for pupils to take part. Lessons are interesting and pupils are motivated to take part as a consequence. These improvements are beginning to have an effect on standards. Since the previous inspection standards have been maintained and continue to meet expected levels in music at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory across the school. In those classes where pupils have more positive attitudes, learning is not interrupted and achievement is good. Support staff provide very good support to pupils' practical group work in lessons. Pupils in the enhanced resource classes follow the same curriculum and because of their positive attitudes and good teaching achieve very well.
135. Pupils in Years 1 to 5 and those in the enhanced resource classes sing well. They sing in tune and with good volume. All words can be clearly heard because of the clear diction, even when singing a favourite hymn, which contained short and quick rhythms in a West Indian style calypso. Year 6 pupils show less enthusiasm and need a lot of encouragement to take part during assemblies and hymn practice, leaving younger more enthusiastic pupils to carry the singing. The recorded music used to accompany pupils is lively and lifts the singing effectively so that pupils' voices are always set off well. All pupils know a range of songs and older pupils recall a number of rounds and two-part arrangements that they sing. Christmas and end of year concerts are remembered fondly by those who take part. The school plans to introduce a choir shortly and this will provide additional opportunities for pupils to perform.
136. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In some lessons, teaching is good and this is enabling pupils to achieve well for their age. Pupils enjoy playing the instruments and are creative when making up an accompaniment to a song or favourite story. Music is chosen carefully to make sure that it supports the development of planned skills and knowledge and understanding of how different moods are created by the composer. In Year 1, pupils listen carefully to a variety of music. Effective teaching through the use of questions and tone of voice inspires the pupils to talk about what they have heard. For example, they discussed the images created by evocative music, nodding their heads in time to the beat. Pupils often describe musical images in simple terms, such as frozen ponds and icy puddles, and choose suitable instruments to represent the sounds that remind them of their images. There are some good strategies to involve pupils and to add excitement to learning. Teachers give pupils opportunities to practise on their own and then perform their compositions. The pupils respond well in these instances and perform their 'cold' music using Indian bells, sleigh bells, triangles and tambourines, describing how the clapper sounded 'like a dog's tongue' and 'the chattering of teeth'. Pupils handle the instruments carefully and most perform sensibly. This was not the case in one lesson when a few older pupils treated the instruments with a total lack of respect during their group compositions. Learning is frequently organised through practical activities and games, which are fun and therefore motivate all pupils to take part. For example, in Year 2 the pupils had great fun composing more and more difficult rhythms for their partner to copy as an echo, showing satisfactory skills.
137. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The recently introduced scheme of work is already beginning to raise standards in pupils' skills because of the increased confidence and guidance it has given to teachers who now have the expertise to teach skills effectively. The recorder group supports the development of musical skills well. Suitable coverage of music from different periods and countries makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Assessment procedures are currently unsatisfactory but the school has identified this in the action plan for development

shortly. Although some use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject, these planned opportunities are too infrequent and not consistent enough. Each class has its own box of percussion instruments, which are a suitable number, quality and range to support learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Because of the arrangement of the timetable, it was only possible to observe gymnastics lessons during the inspection week. The evidence from planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that all aspects of the national guidance on physical education are being undertaken satisfactorily. This evidence and that gained from observations in lessons indicate that overall standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards and progress are similar to those identified in the last report. Throughout the infants and the juniors, teachers appropriately emphasise health and safety issues and the need for pupils to be aware of the effects of exercise on the body. In all the lessons observed, teachers ensured an appropriate amount of time was allocated to 'warming up' and 'cooling down activities.
139. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that exercise causes you to breathe more deeply and your heart to beat faster. They understand about the need to 'warm up' and 'cool down' and how to get apparatus out and put it away safely. In a lesson observed in Year 1, pupils explored different ways of moving and balancing. The majority of pupils have developed satisfactory control and co-ordination in their movements and more able pupils can perform a simple sequence of balancing movements with a fair degree of success.
140. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with those expected. Throughout the juniors, pupils build satisfactorily on the skills they learn in the infants and have a greater degree of control and co-ordination in their movements. For example, in Year 5, pupils developed different ways of rolling, balancing and travelling with changes in direction. More able pupils were able to develop good ideas to link these movements together. However, less able pupils had difficulty thinking of ideas for themselves and tended to copy others or giggle and become silly. Year 6 pupils are able to talk fairly knowledgeably about the effects of exercise on their bodies and its value to health and fitness. Pupils are provided with suitable opportunities to learn to swim. Records and discussions with pupils indicate that by the time they leave school nearly all pupils are able to swim and have suitable awareness of water safety and standards are average in this aspect of the subject.
141. Currently, there is little opportunity for pupils to benefit from after-school sporting activities. Netball and football take place after school, and a local initiative has given pupils the opportunity to participate in 'tag' rugby.
142. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers give careful attention to safety in using equipment and pupils co-operate efficiently to set the apparatus out and clear it away at the end of the lesson. Instructions are clear and pupils respond appropriately to these and mostly perform with enjoyment and enthusiasm. Teachers give positive encouragement to pupils and this improves their self-esteem and confidence. They use pupils effectively to demonstrate good techniques with resulting improvement in the performance of other pupils. Overall, pupils co-operate well together and are willing to help each other where necessary. Sometimes, aspects of physical

education are appropriately linked to other subject areas. For example, linked to their work in history on the Tudors, pupils learned to dance in the style of the Tudors.

143. Although plans are in progress to appoint a subject leader at the end of the academic year, there is currently no co-ordinator for the subject. This has a negative effect on developments within the subject and there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning. Assessments undertaken are only informal and provide insufficient information about pupils' progress to enable them to develop their skills and abilities to the greatest extent. This is further hampered by the current lack of large apparatus in the hall.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. The previous inspection reported that standards across the school were below those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is still the case, although pupils' knowledge of Christianity meets the expected standards. Visiting speakers make a significant contribution to this, particularly the Bible Explorer sessions in Year 6. All pupils look forward to these sessions because they learn about the people, books and stories of the Old Testament through interesting and fun activities. A mixture of acting and hand gestures help them to remember the significant facts and details about the prophets and provides suitable opportunities for them to learn about the Bible in a practical way. Satisfactory teaching in other lessons ensures that pupils have suitable opportunities to consider the values and beliefs of others and to consider carefully the purpose and meaning of the celebrations and customs of a range of religions. The school follows the scheme of work used by most schools in Cheshire and supplements this with selected units from the national scheme of work.
145. Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to pupils show that most have secure knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs. Pupils in Year 1 recall the Christening service in some detail to make their Christening cards relevant and suitable to their purpose. Year 2 pupils have learned a number of stories from the Bible and can recall significant detail in these. Pupils in Year 2 have also learned about the symbols and main celebrations of Hindu and Moslem faiths. Their knowledge and understanding of these different faiths is limited and pupils have real difficulty talking about these beyond stating facts because of their limited language.
146. The quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. Suitable activities are planned which allow the pupils to think carefully about the various beliefs, religious practices and celebrations in a number of religions, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Judaism. In Years 3 to 6 most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different faiths but their understanding of the purpose and meaning of religious practices and celebrations beyond Christianity is less secure. Although pupils in Year 6 can recall the name 'Ramadan' they are unable to say why Muslims fast during this time. Similarly, they are unable to say why Christians recognise Lent, although they can remember giving up treats at least once during the year. Pupils in Year 6 know that Mohammed is the most important prophet of Islam and that Muslims face Mecca when they pray every day but they are unable to recall reasons for this. Similarly, although they have heard of the five Pillars of Islam, none of the Year 6 pupils interviewed could recall what any of these were. This is partly due to pupils' poor memory recall and also to their poor understanding of religious terms, which hampers their skills, and understanding of religious concepts. There is also an over-reliance on writing and listening as a means of learning and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities in lessons

147. Although there is no subject leader currently, the previous coordinator has ensured that the curriculum gives pupils broad and balanced experiences. Provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. The action plan for the subject identifies appropriate targets for improvement in the curriculum, teaching and learning, and identified outcomes are linked to raising standards in the subject. Religious education makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Additional artefacts are required to enhance the quality of learning through practical activity.